

may gain admission to certain social circles, activities, and opportunities (Calarco 2011; Lareau 2003), beyond the effects of education (Scherger and Savage 2010).

Social capital is prominent in stratification research (Demchenko 2011; Li et al. 2008) and has been the subject of a few teaching activities (e.g., Giuffre and Paxton 1997; Groves, Warren, and Witschger 1996; O'Brien and Foley 1999; Roberts, Mason, and Marler 1999) but is still underrepresented in the introductory classroom and in published teaching activities and simulations (Cook 2005). Although a few teaching activities focus on cultural capital (e.g., Isserles and Dalmage 2000; Wright and Ransom 2005), these appear to be especially rare. Additionally, these activities do not make connections to other types of capital or use grades as a reward. Building on existing simulations of economic stratification (e.g., Coghlan and Huggins 2004; Wills et al. 2005) by incorporating social and cultural capital could help illustrate how these factors function together to constrain upward mobility.

I propose that to maximize stratification teaching effectiveness, instructors should create simulations that incorporate agency, use grades as an (ostensible) reward, use three types (economic, social, and cultural) of capital, and work in the instructor's specific institutional context. *Beat the Bourgeoisie* does so. In this article, I evaluate its effectiveness across two institutional types—a large research university and a small liberal arts college. As recommended (Garoutte and Bobbitt-Zeher 2010; Paino et al. 2012), I conducted the study with the same instructor across institutions.

BEAT THE BOURGEOISIE: HOW THE SIMULATION GAME IS PLAYED

Beat the Bourgeoisie is a simulation game designed for use with classes of 15 to 70 students. Because class sizes at larger schools are often larger than 70, if available, teaching assistants could conduct the game during smaller discussion sections of the class. The game itself lasts about 30 minutes but requires additional time to discuss its implications and student reactions. The game requires no materi-

als, but it is helpful to have some classroom space to move around, a few movable chairs, and a chalkboard visible to all. The game is played after students have completed readings, heard a lecture, engaged in classroom discussions about stratification, and learned Marx's (Marx 1977 [1867]; Marx and Engels 2000 [1848]) definition of the proletariat and bourgeoisie (i.e., a two-tiered system of bourgeoisie who own the means of production, need not work for pay, and have power to make rules that exploit the proletariat). Table 1 summarizes the main steps of the game and when they occur.

Setting Up the Game

First, I tell students that we will devote our class to an open-book, open-note stratification trivia game and that all members of the winning team will get extra credit points. (I also mention this in the previous class so students can prepare.) I then separate the class into two groups—a small group of four or five students and a larger group composed of the rest of the class. For later simulation of cultural capital, I ensure that I select a student for the bourgeoisie group who is wearing an "upper middle class" piece of clothing (e.g., polo shirt). (I have never noticed any effect of student personality [shy versus outspoken] on the way the game plays out, so I do not choose specific types of students for each group.) I ask the small group to move to a group of seats located in a circle close to me and physically separated from the rest of the class. I then tell the class that the small group is the bourgeoisie and the large group is the proletariat, and I inform them (accurately) that anyone from either team who correctly answers a question will earn one point for their team.

Second, I approach the bourgeoisie, who are now at a distance from the proletariat. I whisper to them (so the proletariat cannot overhear; for maximum emotional impact) that if they do not know the answer to a question, they can (just once) get one free point anyway by simply raising a hand and telling me, "My good friend, President [their college president's name], says the answer is Durkheim." This is to simulate the advantage provided by prestigious and powerful social capital connections.

Third, I announce the rules of the game to the whole class. I remind them that only one team—the

Table 1. Summary of Major Events in Simulation Game and When to Implement Them.

Timing within Game	Events
At setup: before game begins	Create bourgeoisie and proletariat groups. Explain “social capital free pass” to bourgeoisie. Explain game rules to entire class. Tell proletariat to stand for the entire game. Distribute unequal “starting points” from “parents.”
At beginning of game	Ask trivia questions (continue throughout game).
One-third through game	Collect “annual taxes.”
One-third through game	Allow bourgeoisie to use “social capital free pass.”
Halfway through game	Distribute “stock market gains.” Grant point to bourgeoisie because of clothing, etc.
Three-fourths through game	Instruct bourgeoisie to implement “layoffs.”
Throughout game	Give bourgeoisie group second chances to answer. Tell bourgeoisie that because you know them, an incorrect answer just denotes having an “off day.” Tell bourgeoisie that the proletariat often complain about their position. Simulate disgust for how few points are gained by the proletariat group. Tell proletariat group they need to try harder.
After game is over	Discuss responses to game and connect it to real life.

one that earns the most game points—will win the extra credit points and that the extra credit points will be given to everyone on their team. I inform them that they (1) may use books and notes; (2) may consult with others on their own team; and (3) must raise their hands and be called upon by me before giving an answer.

Fourth, roughly to simulate the physical experience of work by social class, I instruct the proletariat group to stand for the entire game to represent the more physical nature of their jobs. I tell the bourgeoisie that they may sit for the entire game because their “work” is more knowledge-based and sedentary.

Finally, before officially starting the game, I simulate the benefits of unequal economic capital by telling the bourgeoisie that their parents have donated three game points to them so they can get a good start in life. I tell the proletariat that their parents also wish to help them but have few resources; they start with one-and-a-half points.

I then officially begin the game by asking stratification trivia questions. This allows students to use agency and to experience how it relates to the structural barriers or advantages provided by their group membership and how these affect success.

Playing the Game

The heart of the game takes place as I ask about 15 predetermined stratification trivia questions based on information students have learned in the course (e.g., “Approximately what percentage of U.S. households earn at least \$200,000 per year?”). Throughout the game, I grant a point to any group who answers correctly, but I routinely turn my back on the proletariat and call on the bourgeoisie group more often.

Throughout the game I simulate social capital’s effect on second chances by giving the bourgeoisie second chances to answer questions (e.g., “I know you. You’re probably just having an off day. Try again.”). In contrast, I simulate contempt for the proletariat and tell them they are losing because of lack of effort (e.g., “You need to try harder!”). I periodically encourage the proletariat but do not express sympathy for them. If they direct frustration at me for managing the game, I maintain intergroup conflict by joking with the bourgeoisie, saying, “The proletariat complains instead of working.”

About one-third of the way through the game, I simulate economic capital again by roughly estimating federal tax rates at 15 percent (proletariat) and

33 percent (bourgeoisie) and collecting “taxes.” This gives the impression of fairness and illustrates real income tax rate differences. I then ask the bourgeoisie group how many of their points represent capital gains and return some points because capital gains are only taxed at 15 percent. I have found that I can succinctly explain these economic concepts during the game as they arise.

When members of the bourgeoisie use their “social capital free pass,” I initially react as though they are crazy (e.g., “You think ‘Durkheim’ is the answer to [question]? I don’t think so!”) because they have given an answer that makes no sense in the context of the question. I then quickly say, “President [name of college president] is wrong about that answer, but he’s/she’s a good friend of mine, and any friend of his/hers is a friend of mine. I’ll give you a point.”

About halfway through the game, I continue to simulate economic capital by telling students that I hear the stock bell signifying the closing of stocks at the end of a trading day. To simulate the extremely high proportion of stocks owned by the upper class, I tell the bourgeoisie group that their points have doubled. I tell the proletariat group that they too own stocks but only a handful of shares; I grant them half a point.

Also about halfway through the game, I simulate cultural capital by granting one point to the bourgeoisie group after they have *incorrectly* answered a question. I justify this by telling them that I see that their “tastes and preferences” are similar to mine, as demonstrated by a particular piece of clothing worn by a group member. I grant them a point, telling them that they “clearly show discerning taste and should be rewarded for that.” By this point, members of the bourgeoisie group generally seem comfortable and happy with me, know that I am “on their side,” and begin to occasionally joke or chat with me.

I also simulate the way the bourgeoisie creates and enforces rules to maintain power. About three-quarters of the way through the game I allow the proletariat’s points to approach those of the bourgeoisie, tell the bourgeoisie that the proletariat is threatening their power, and ask them to protect it by laying off five proletariat group members (especially those who are the biggest threat to them, such as students who have answered many ques-

tions). Those selected for layoff may sit down but can no longer answer questions or contribute to their group in any way. I then complete the game by asking a few more trivia questions, and the bourgeoisie easily wins the game.

As the game proceeds, students often suggest new rules based on aspects of class that could help their own group, which I incorporate into the game. Instructors must balance many things during the game (e.g., maintaining rapport, tracking points). Instructors using this game for the first time should proceed slowly, limit the number of “events” (see Table 1), and add “events” as their facility with the game increases.

Discussing the Game as a Class

After completing the trivia questions portion of the simulation game, we discuss the activity. I first ask students for their initial thoughts, emotions, and reactions to the game. I then ask them what they learned about social class and meritocracy. I explore as many initial responses as possible until students appear to have exhausted the connections they can make on their own. Usually, students will build on and/or challenge one another’s comments, creating a dialogue that explores the complexities of social class, stratification, unequal opportunities, and meritocracy. I then explore any relevant issues that have not emerged, such as specific examples of how economic, cultural, and social capital advantaged or disadvantaged their group; how social class membership affected motivation; connections to course material; how equal opportunity relates to mobility; whether intervention to ensure equal opportunity is necessary; solutions we can use to ensure equal opportunity; and where these solutions should come from (e.g., private enterprise versus state). Finally, I inform the students that everyone present will receive an equal amount of extra credit points for participating.

ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT: DATA AND METHOD

Sample

Data are drawn from 83 questionnaires administered to students enrolled in one instructor’s