

CLASS STRUCTURE AND INCOME DETERMINATION

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To my parents



The Institute for Research on Poverty is a national center for research established at the University of Wisconsin in 1966 by a grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity. Its primary objective is to foster basic, multidisciplinary research into the nature and causes of poverty and means to combat it.

In addition to increasing the basic knowledge from which policies aimed at the elimination of poverty can be shaped, the Institute strives to carry analysis beyond the formulation and testing of fundamental generalizations to the development and assessment of relevant policy alternatives.

The Institute endeavors to bring together scholars of the highest caliber whose primary research efforts are focused on the problem of poverty, the distribution of income, and the analysis and evaluation of social policy, offering staff members wide opportunity for interchange of ideas, maximum freedom for research into basic questions about poverty and social policy, and dissemination of their findings.

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Foreword

Staff members of the Institute for Research on Poverty have contributed a great deal to our understanding of inequality in the United States. For example, in *Public Expenditures, Taxes, and the Distribution of Income: The United States, 1950, 1961, 1970* (Academic Press, 1977) Morgan Reynolds and Eugene Smolensky trace the post-World War II trend in inequality. Similarly, David L. Featherman and Robert M. Hauser in *Opportunity and Change* (Academic Press, 1978) dissect the intergenerational transmission of inequality in the U.S. and how that has changed in our time. Erik Olin Wright's *Class Structure and Income Determination* is a part of this growing body of research. But there is a difference: Wright is the first scholar at the Institute to approach this topic from a Marxist perspective. As a consequence, his book is likely to be even more controversial than others on the ever-controversial topic of inequality.