

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Curriculum Manual

Suzanne Zilber, Ph.D. © April 16, 2016, 5th Edition
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Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Curriculum Manual

Welcome and thank you for your interest in this participatory journey on class issues in Unitarian Universalist life.

In the spirit of love, we must look at how class influences our relationships in this faith and seek to invite greater inclusion. We need to become more effective at welcoming and including people from all class backgrounds.

In the spirit of service, we must learn to collaborate with Americans living in chronic poverty or struggling in our current economy.

We need new language to better discuss the dynamics of class and classism. We need to learn how to work more effectively in cross-class alliances to create systems-level change. When Unitarian Universalists are equipped with class and classism awareness, we can be more effective in selecting and implementing social justice action.

Because all oppressions intersect, dealing with class connects us with issues of race, disability access, democracy, and the environment.

At this critical historic moment, the Escalating Inequality action issue encourages us to address class as both a diversity and a social justice issue.

The above statements are excerpts from the speech Suzanne Zilber gave at the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly 2014 to support the Escalating Inequality Congregational Study Action Issue with input from UU Class Conversations

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To ensure you have the most current edition of this curriculum, go to
www.uufames.org/content/class-conscious
Please ensure facilitators are using the same edition.

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Acknowledgements

Biggest thanks to Terry Lowman, from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames and the First Unitarian Church of Des Moines, who got excited about this issue at an earlier workshop, put forward a Congregational Study Action Issue on this topic in 2012 and asked me to write a curriculum for possible use with a CSAI.

Thank you to Dick Burkhart and UU's for a Just Economic Community for their leadership in getting the Escalating Inequality CSAI selected in 2014! Thank you to Alex Kapitan and Jessica Halperin in the UUA for including this workshop in the Study Guide for the CSAI.

Thank you to the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Summer Assembly for being my field test site for 3 years for a different version and for sharing class stories in a survey. A an extra thank you to Mary Mahern for her supportive attending all three years.

Thank you to the Unitarian Sunday School Society for a grant to support more intensive research and a field test. The Unitarian Fellowship of Ames also provided funding for documentary reviews.

Thank you to Linda Lemons and intern minister Linda Barnes for agreeing to host and facilitate the first Field Test at First Unitarian Church of Des Moines, Iowa. Thank you to Shari Woodbury, intern minister at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Columbus (Indiana), and that congregation for field testing the July 2014 version called Economically Just Congregations: Becoming Aware of Class and Classism.

Thank you to Rev. Brian Eslinger for getting my congregation involved in class issues in 2001 and Rev. Kent McKusick in Ames now for his enthusiastic support of the project and facilitating access for website distribution.

Thank you to Erica Baron and the the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of the Catskills, in Kingston, and Erin Pederson and Lee Molgaard and the UU Fellowship of Ames for field testing version two of Class Conscious.

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Big heartfelt thanks to Dr. Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rev. Dorothy Emerson, and Denise Moorehead and others in UU Class Conversations for their collaboration, deep knowledge, and feedback. And a "can never be big enough" thank you to my life partner Adin Mann, for all sorts of coaching, work, and his ongoing commitment to social justice issues.

Suzanne Zilber

Ames, Iowa June 12, 2015

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Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Forward

I wrote this curriculum because I wanted to work through my issues with privilege and classism and create a resource to strengthen our UU congregations. I developed this work first for psychologists and then started to develop it for UU's in 2011 at the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Summer Assembly. I wrote this curriculum because I was asked to by another UU. I was asked to after it looked like the national UU Association was interested in class issues at the 2012 General Assembly and we hoped that it could be voted in as a congregational study action issue in 2014. And hurray it was!

It might help to know a little bit about me and how I came to be interested in these issues.

I was born in the early 60's in Shaker Heights, Ohio, a middle and upper middle class suburb of Cleveland. My family was upper middle class, attend a Reformed Jewish synagogue, and we are White. When I was young, my mom was not employed outside the home, but my family still employed African American women to help with housework and childcare for four children. My first experience of having discomfort with class differences occurred when I was 4 years old and one of our "maids" brought her same-aged daughter over and we played on my swing set together. I was confused and concerned by the question — "who is with her daughter while she is with me?" I liked the women who took care of me, they brought me candy cigarettes, made beautiful pastry swans, and made me laugh.

In elementary school, I did not think of my family as rich, because my mother's parents were very obviously rich. They owned a home with an indoor swimming pool, traveled around the world, and collected antiques music boxes and other inventions. Then my family moved to a larger house in 5th grade — a house with 7 bedrooms — 2 of those bedrooms were originally designed for servants with an extra staircase that led to the kitchen, and then I thought, "we are rich".

Shaker Heights had intentionally become racially integrated, so I got to become friends with Black girls from my same social class in the public school system. However, inequity was still apparent to me. In middle school, I took public transportation and noticed that at the end of the day, White men with suits and briefcases were getting off the Rapid Transit, and African-American women in white uniforms were getting on to go back downtown. I felt some guilt and uncertainty about what to do with the fact that I had done nothing to earn my privilege. I don't know why I didn't discuss this with anyone, but I simply decided I would use the privilege of a good education to help people less fortunate than myself- so my activism at that point was to be a hard working student. To read the rest of my story, go to www.uuclassconversations.org/stories/

My activism now is to help others be hard working students and potential activists around the issue of class. I am a psychologist and I brought ideas from psychology and immersed myself in documentaries, books, and other workshops to create this curriculum.

You may notice that I do not always give direct instructions on what congregations should do, as I feel that we as an association are still trying to figure some things out, like how to do class-sensitive fundraising. Hopefully, your congregation or organization will develop solutions that work for your group and can contribute to our study action issue process to create recommendations and guidelines.

This curriculum development was partially financially supported by the Unitarian Sunday School Society and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames. This version reflects changes after the Spring 2015 field test in Ames, IA and feedback from UU Class Conversations members.

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Author's Background

Suzanne Zilber, PhD, is a psychologist in private practice with 26 years of social justice programming experience. She has presented “Social Class in UU Congregational Life” workshops for three years at the Midwest Unitarian Universalist Summer Assembly to adults and adolescents. The Unitarian Sunday School Society gave her a grant to develop a curriculum manual that could be used at congregations with non-expert facilitators: Economically Just Congregations: Becoming Aware of Class and Classism. Suzanne worked with UUs for a Just Economic Community to address class issues in the now chosen Congregational Study Action Issue “Escalating Inequality.” She is a steering committee

member of and facilitator for UU Class Conversations. Suzanne grew up in an upper middle-class Jewish family in a racially integrated suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. She has been a member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames for 25 years.



Description of the Curriculum and Document Layout

This curriculum is designed to be conducted at Unitarian Universalist congregations. It is designed for facilitators who may not have that much background knowledge in class or economic inequality issues, so there is a lot of content.

Process

This is an interactive workshop that provides educational content through self-reflection, discussion, videos, read-arounds of quotes from UUs and class writers, readings and mini-lectures. A common pattern of interaction used in this workshop is that participants engage in individual self-reflection with worksheets, then discuss in pairs or trios, and then in large groups. There are large group discussions of videos and readings. Participants do readings after the first four-hour unit to prepare for the second session. There is one activity that is more kinesthetic at the end of the final session- people walk to show where they are in stages of classism awareness.

Content

Why people have avoided talking about class, emotions related to class differences, class indicators, types of classism, intersections with other isms, meritocracy, UU history and contexts,

domains for congregational classism, economic inequality—reasons for and impacts of, class cultures in organizations, becoming a class ally, stages of classism awareness.

Cost

The curriculum is free. Congregations will pay for photocopying the handouts, folders for handouts and flipcharts if they choose to use flipcharts.

Document Layout

This document contains all the materials needed for the workshop.

- Facilitator's Manual with 5 modules and list of references
- Handout Packet
- Facilitator's Resources
- Flipchart file
- Evaluation Forms
- Example Flyer
- High School Youth Program

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Logistics

Time requirements

Total program = 9.5 hours, divided into one 4.25-hour format followed by two 2-hour and one optional 1.25-hour evening programs. The evening programs should follow closely behind so the training can be complete in 2-3 weeks. It is also possible to do this in five modules.

Group size

Ideally, the audience will range from 12-20; it can be done with as few as 8.

Facilitators

The series can be led by one facilitator who should have basic skills in ensuring participation and keeping the agenda moving. It helps to have an assistant with passing out handouts and watching the group.

It helps to have a third person just for logistics- preferably someone who belongs to the church who knows the equipment, kitchen etc. This person should make sure room temperature and lighting are good for everyone.

It is best if facilitators are NOT chairs or members of the stewardship committee if they have knowledge of specific member giving.

Take advantage of Tips for Facilitators from the UUA:

www.uua.org/re/youth/identity-based/btcp/290715.shtml

<http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/ethics/introduction/191666.shtml>

Room Set up

Tables set up in a U-shape with presenters at the open end, near 2 flipchart stands and DVD-TV.

It helps to have tables for participants to write on their worksheets. However, if tables are not available, you can provide clipboards or other writing surfaces.

Equipment:

- 2 Flip chart stands – one will be written on during sessions, and one will be pre-made pages. The flipchart pages start on page 122 and can be enlarged into 20 x 30 pages that can be attached to a flipchart with a big clip on top, so no one has to make flipchart pages by hand. It costs about \$3 per page at your local copy center. Have a flip chart you can write on for EVERY module.
- Flipchart pens
- Nametags and markers
- DVD player and DVD you make for yourself from the clips OR you will need to use the internet and computer projector. It is not legal for the UUA or myself to create a DVD for you. I have provided a list of the video clip internet addresses at the end of logistics.
- Pens or pencils for all participants
- Masking tape for posting sheets of paper
- Handout folders – give out at beginning.
- Chalice – you don't have to have a real flame!
- Watch that lays flat if no wall clock available for time keeping. Do not use your cell phone.
- 5 x 7 index cards and glue stick to put read around slips on
- Pre-prepared Read-Around cards or slips
- Consider providing computer internet access for members seeking to explore follow-up resources.

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Logistics page 2

Manual

It works best to three hole punch it and put it in a binder. Text that is in Cambria Typeface is what the facilitator reads out loud. Print pages 101-122 single sided.

Module Overviews

Print these off to have separately and out in front of you while you are facilitating.

Handout distribution

Place printed handouts in two-pocket folders.

Other considerations

I have tried having music for when people are in between or filling out an individual workshop and people just found it distracting.

Expect people to show up late for the weekend offering, so advertise your event as starting at 12:45 PM so you have the full time to complete the program.

Give verbal one minute warnings when you are going to ask people to stop talking in pairs or trios and come back to the full group.

Offer any people who will have difficulty with reading things a reader, or make the document available electronically for those with computer reading systems for take home readings.

Books/Videos

If you own, or your congregation has social class related books and videos, you can display them for participants to look at during breaks.

Evaluation

There is an Evaluation Form for each of the 5 modules.

Please mail completed evaluation forms to :

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Permission for Use

Permission for use: you may use all materials in this work for other purposes as long as you quote or cite the material with "Suzanne Zilber Ph.D © 2016" and list the curriculum in a reference list if you have one. You may also indicate if you modified or were influenced by the work in something you develop. If you want to use quotes by people I quoted, you will have to ask for their or their publisher's permission.

If you come from a different faith background than Unitarian Universalism, I encourage you to consider creating a version of this curriculum that is specific to your faith using the guidelines above. If you do so, please share it with me! In this way, we can promote an interfaith movement around class issues. This curriculum may also be modified for academic use.

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Video Clips used in this Curriculum

Module 1

www.youtube.com/watch?v=nU5MtVM_zFs

Opening sequence from People like US - watch all

Module 2

The video clip The Trouble with Tofu for Module 2 is no longer available via YouTube. A 72-hour online rental of the entire People Like Us DVD is available for \$15. If your congregation wishes to purchase the full DVD, costs range between \$90 and \$150, depending on how your institution is defined. The film may also be available from your local public or university library. To rent People Like Us visit: <http://cnam-film-library.myshopify.com/products/people-like-us-social-class-in-america-home-video>. Facilitators are also welcome to select another clip that feels relevant to their community or have a discussion on food and class.

www.ted.com/talks/majora_carter_s_tale_of_urban_renewal.html

Marjora Carter TEd Talk - watch from 3:11-8:07

Module 4

www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/21/robert-reich-inequality-video_n_3480009.html

Robert Reich's cartoon - watch all

www.ted.com/talks/richard_wilkinson.html

Richard Wilkinson TED Talk watch from beginning to 9:27

You will select one from the items below, they are described in more detail in the manual.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdbHEZpOWPA

Employed but still homeless 11:24 min

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ly718xGmeBk

Poverty's new address in America 5:13 minutes

Clip one www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/video_classroom1.php 3:55

Clip three www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/video_classroom3.php 2:26

Clip five www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/video_classroom5.php 2:30

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MODULE 1 Overview

Introduction and Class as Culture

Proposed timing for
each element

Module 1 Materials:	Gathering together	15 min
Read around cards		
Handouts 1-5	1. Presenter introduction(s)	5 min
Flipchart pages 1-5	2. Chalice lighting	2 min
	3. Introduction to workshop	2 min
NOTES	4. Participant introductions	15 min
	5. Covenant	4 min
	6. Workshop goals/Why class is not discussed	7 min
	7. Video clip: <i>People Like Us</i>	10 min
	8. Discussion of emotions in video	5 min
	9. Mini-lecture on emotions and class	5 min
	10. Break (be strict on time)	10 min
	11. Ladder activity - solo (5 min)	20 min
	Ladder activity - pair (6 min)	
	Ladder activity - large group (6 min)	
	12. Group discussion	15 min
	Read around: <i>What is Class?</i>	
	13. Read around: Class messages	3 min
	14. Self exploration - solo (7 min)	25 min
	Self exploration - trio (9 min)	
	Self exploration - large group (6 min)	
	Break/Refreshments/Evaluation form	10 min

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1. Presenter introductions (5 min)

Presenter(s): Very briefly share why you were chosen or volunteered to lead the workshop. You can share how you have knowledge or background in these issues or just that you have facilitation skills and are an eager learner with the participants to explore the material. Share a one- two minute story of the first time you became aware of class differences.

Flipchart page 1:

<p style="text-align: center;">Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Presenter Name(s)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12:45 PM to 5:15 PM</p>
--

2. Welcome and Chalice Lighting (2 min)

While these are from two different authors, read them as one reading. If you have someone like a minister from your congregation attending, you can invite them to do the chalice lighting:

“We come together this morning seeking a reality beyond our narrow selves, that binds us in compassion, love, and understanding to other human beings.”
(Wayne Arnason)

“We gather this morning to affirm the potential we all share; for building community, for undertaking constructive change, for engaging in mature growth, for achieving greater humanity than we have known.”
(Harold Babcock)

“May our hearts and minds be opened this hour to the power and the insight that weaves together the scattered threads of our experience, and helps us remember the Wholeness of which we are a part.”
(Wayne Arnason)

From:

http://archive.uua.org/programs/justice/antiracism/jtwsunday/jtwshandbook_worship.pdf

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**MODULE 1:
Introduction and
Class as Culture**

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**MODULE 1:
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3. Introduction of the Workshop (2 min)

Flipchart page 2:

- affirm the inherent worth of every person
- value compassion, justice and equity in human relations, and
- support the use of democratic processes in our congregations and society

Looking Inward
Looking Outward

Inclusivity in our Congregations

Social justice Actions

FACILITATOR: Our Unitarian Universalist Principles state that we:

- affirm the inherent worth of every person
- value compassion, justice and equity in human relations, and
- support the use of democratic processes in our congregations and society

Given these principles, we are concerned about the impact of social class and classism on our relationships, democratic processes, and the pursuit of peace, liberty and justice for all.

UU's have a long history of involvement in social justice issues and we want to tool ourselves for social action on the issue of income inequality. Our work to address escalating inequality needs to address our congregations as well as the larger community. Class issues are not outside of us, they are us. Class awareness creates communities in which people from all social classes feel understood and valued. Rev. Suzelle Lynch says that we have more class diversity in our congregations than we can see, as class experience can be invisible and we can be unaware of our impacts.

We are here today to explore language and concepts that will enable us to enter discussions about class with less anxiety and greater sensitivity. Once we are equipped with class and classism awareness, we can be more effective in selecting and implementing social justice action around these issues.

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**MODULE 1:
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4. Participant introductions (up to 15 min)

If you have a small group you can allow people to introduce themselves and why they signed up (15 min or 2 minutes per participant; be firm with timing with each person).

FACILITATOR: I would like you to briefly introduce yourself to the group. Share how long you have been attending this congregation, if you are active on a committee, and what motivated you to participate in today's workshop.

5. Covenant (4 min)

FACILITATOR: To ensure that our work together today is conducted with sensitivity, we need to view ourselves as going on an exploration together and be gentle with ourselves. Forgiveness - of ourselves and others - creates the space we need to do this work. Let's review this covenant:

Flipchart page 3:

Covenant

- Share from life experience, use I statements
- Listen deeply and assume good intentions
- Participate and ensure other's participation ("step up if you tend to be quiet/step back if you tend to share a lot).
- It's OK to say "pass" to reading out loud or sharing
- All questions are welcome
- Put away cell phones and laptops, handouts will be given
- Confidentiality
- Anything else? (write in additions)

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**MODULE 1:
Introduction and
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6a. Workshop Goals (3 min)

Distribute Handout Folders; have participants take out Handout 1.

FACILITATOR: Here are our goals for our curriculum.

Flipchart page 4:

(If you want to just use the handout and skip flipchart page 4, you can do so. I think that bringing people's eyes or attention to the same space in the room creates a sense of group unity in considering the goals.)

Workshop Goals

1. Increase your self-awareness of your own class experience
2. Increase sensitivity to other's class experiences
3. Learn about forms of classism
4. Examine the congregation's policies and culture for possible classism
5. Prepare for action towards a congregation truer to UU values

FACILITATOR: We will meet these goals over the multiple sessions of this curriculum to include: (share the dates and times that follow.)

Go over the whole outline on Handout 1 emphasizing that there will be lots of opportunity for discussion and that activities will vary.

6b. Group discussion (4 min)

FACILITATOR: Why is class not talked about?

Let group generate responses and record on a flipchart page; then only if necessary fill in with material below.

Americans as a group like to think of ourselves as less affected by class formalities than other cultures like British or Indian. Americans have struggled around how to talk about many issues of diversity such as gender, race and sexual orientation but have had some success in those areas. Will Barratt (2011) suggests that social class is about hierarchy – who is better, and that gender, ethnicity etc are about difference, about belonging

to some category. Many can presume the behavioral innocence of someone who belongs in a particular category, but in the realm of class, it is assumed that behavior has contributed to where the person lives on the hierarchy. Unexplored value assumptions contribute to our social class hierarchy constructions, such as materialism and assuming upward mobility is good. We also avoid class related discussions because of the high risk of eliciting strong emotions in such dialogues. We lack a common language and understanding to approach our discussions. Our hope is that today's workshop will offer the beginnings of a common language and understanding.

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MODULE 1: Introduction and Class as Culture

7. Emotions and Social Class (10 min)

Watch video clip from *People Like Us* (9 min); available on YouTube.
Purpose: Application for identifying emotional issues in class.

FACILITATOR: Emotions are a big component of social class experience. While we watch the video clip, please write down the different emotions that are expressed by the people in the film and emotions that you experience while watching. It is OK to have less than kind emotions at this point, just notice them. It is common for people to feel judgmental at some point. We will then look at those emotions in a framework.

8. Discussion of emotions in video (5 min)

9. Emotions and Social Class (10 min)

Purpose: Put their video experience in a framework that will help them understand why class issues elicit certain emotions.

FACILITATOR: We bring a variety of emotions to our experiences of social class. Psychology offers us one framework to understand our emotional reactions to people. When we meet someone for the first time, we automatically make two judgments: whether they're a friend, and whether they have power. These two judgements then affect our emotions towards the other person according to psychologist Susan Fiske as

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described in her book, *Envy Up, Scorn Down*. She found across different countries that primary emotions around social class are PITY, PRIDE, DISGUST and ENVY.

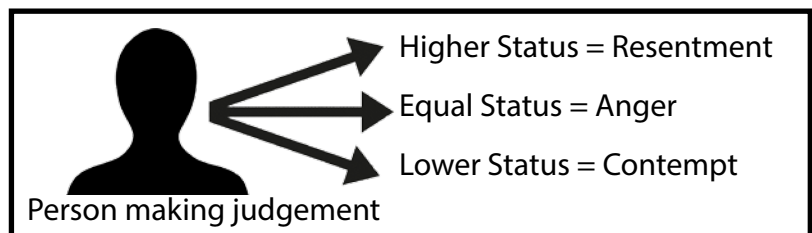
**MODULE 1:
Introduction and
Class as Culture**

Please take out Handout 2.

Flipchart page 5:

EMOTIONS CLASS ELICITS	OTHER EMOTIONS ELICITED
PITY	SHAME
PRIDE	GUILT
DISGUST	ENTITLEMENT
ENVY	ANGER/RESENTMENT
	CONTEMPT

Other emotions that are elicited around social class issues are: ENTITLEMENT, SHAME, ANGER and GUILT. The most dangerous emotion in human relations is CONTEMPT – in fact, marriages that are high in expressed contempt don't make it. Contempt is some combination of anger and disgust. Robert C. Solomon places contempt on the same continuum as resentment and anger. He argues that the differences between the three is that resentment is directed toward a higher status individual; anger is directed toward an equal status individual; and contempt is directed toward a lower status individual. (Solomon R.C. (1993). *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life*. Hackett Publishing.



FACILITATOR: Nonetheless, a person of lower socioeconomic status may still feel contempt for an upper class individual if they perceive them as being of a lower moral status due to their behaviors. So with all these powerful emotions, one can understand why people may want to avoid these issues.

10. BREAK (10 min)

11. Class Indicators: The Ladder: Self-Awareness Activity (solo/pair/group) (18 min)

FACILITATOR: To prepare for the next activity, I would like you to remember your past; you may want to close your eyes to bring up the imagery.

Say the following s l o w l y: Think back to when you were 10 or 12 years old. Bring up an image of what clothing you wore... where you lived... who you came in contact with... who had more... who had less... and whether things are the same or different for you now...

Please take out Handout 3.

Purpose: participants will reflect on their own class experience and will begin make connections between class and other isms. This will personalize the material and also begin sharing between participants about their different experiences.

FACILITATOR: Make a P on the ladder for where you believe you and your family were on the social class ladder when you were growing up in the past. Make an N on the ladder where you believe you are now. Make an F on the ladder for where you would want to be in the future. (SOLO portion 5 min)

It is OK if you put letters in the same places.

Participants usually will ask how to define the rungs on the ladder; encourage them to interpret that for themselves – it doesn't matter. This way we don't get into how people have different opinions about how to define the classes at this point.

FACILITATOR: Pair up with someone you do not know well (or assign them to pairs) and talk about what each put on their ladder. (PAIRED portion 6 min)

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FACILITATOR: What did you use to determine or describe what social class you were or are in? (Large group 6 min)

Write comments on the board or flipchart.

FACILITATOR: What you have identified are “Class markers” or “Class indicators” (Add to Flipchart sheet.)

12. What is Class? (15 min)

FACILITATOR: What do you think a definition of class should be?

Write responses on flipchart.

We are now going to look at some basic definitions.

Please take out Handout 4.

Purpose : Start developing the shared language to discuss class issues.

FACILITATOR: We are going to be reviewing definitions to start to develop a shared language we can use while discussing class.

Participants take turns reading or leader read aloud.

What is Class?

Social Class: Class is more than income. It takes into account income, wealth, education, occupation, status, power, and worldview.

Wealth: What you own minus what you owe. There are differences in wealth based on race and ethnicity due to intergenerational experiences of discrimination.

Class groups: People can struggle to create group labels. In this workshop, we acknowledge that class groups represent clusters of cultural values.

Class Indicators: Things that determine an individual's class OR perceived class.

Culture: Culture is the learned and shared values, beliefs and behaviors of a group. Culture is the "rulebook" for adapting to the environment and survival. Cultural norms so completely surround people that few ever recognize the assumptions on which their lives and functioning rest. They are invisible.

Social mobility: refers to the ability to change class positions. When people improve or diminish their economic status in a way that affects social class, they experience social mobility. Mobility is low in the US now compared with most industrialized countries.

Class Straddler: Someone who grew up in one class and has moved into another class situation.

FACILITATOR: Psychologist and writer Barbara Jensen, a white woman, came from a Minnesota working class background and identifies as a class straddler. She writes, "I looked at the crazy patchwork life I have fashioned, belonging nowhere but almost anywhere. I knew I would always be suspended between worlds: between Minneapolis and New York City; between theater, literature, world travel, and the rooted, easy-going , enduring pleasures of my working class life."
(Reading Classes: On Culture and Classism in America (2012) Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press.)

Downwardly mobile: People from class positions who move into lower class positions due to divorce, job loss, disability, choice, lack of ability to get a job, or other means.

Upwardly mobile: People moving or aspiring to move to a higher social class or position of increased status or power through a variety of means.

**Class Conscious:
Class and Classism
in UU Life**

**MODULE 1:
Introduction and
Class as Culture**

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13. Self Class Awareness (3 min)

FACILITATOR: Our next two exercises are going to explore class-based cultural messages we have received from our childhoods.

Sometimes we get messages about how to survive from our class background.

A survival message that Barbara Jensen learned from her upbringing was “ try not to wish for things you can’t have, it only makes you feel bad.” (p. 12) We will now read class based survival messages that may be given by the same family and be confusing.

Lead activity “Examples of Social Class Socialization Messages” (3 min).
Purpose: to give examples of messages to help people complete their self assessment. Cut the following messages from Facilitator Resources into strips; distribute for participants to read aloud. From Liu 2011 book (pp 212-213).

- Be an independent person and don’t rely on anyone.
- You have to work with others to succeed.
- Spend your money while you have it.
- You have to spend or invest to succeed.
- Saving is important.
- Don’t be gaudy (flashy is trashy).
- Flaunt it if you got it.
- You should always strive for upward mobility.
- You should be happy with what you’ve got.
- If you fail, it’s because you are lazy, but if I fail, it’s because the system is unfair.

Do not discuss these; continue on to next activity.

**14. Cultural Expectations: Self Exploration
(solo/trio/group) (25 min)**

Purpose: to increase awareness of class influences.

FACILITATOR: : You are now going to explore your own particular messages from your upbringing related to class, individually, in a trio and then with the large group. As you complete your form, remember to keep

in mind both the strengths and the limitations of your upbringing.

Please take out Handout 5.

Individual: have participants complete the form (7 min) watch for people to stop writing.

Trio: Instruct participants to create trios with new people to discuss responses to question #2. Ask trios to identify a note-taker to write down themes. (9 min; 3 per person)

Large group: Invite trios to share interesting themes or new learnings (6 min).

Handout 5: Social Class Self Exploration based on form in W. M. Liu 2011 book

1. My first memory of social class in my life.
2. Things I learned about how to survive in life related to my social class background (values and expectations) such as: My parents or grandparents motto about social class and classism would be: (e.g. when the going gets tough, the tough get going). **Consider both strengths and limitations of your background.** We will discuss your answers to this question in groups.
3. Social class is most relevant to my life in the following way:
4. The one thing I do that maintains my sense of social class:

Evaluation

If you are doing modules 1 and 2 in one day, you can simply have people complete one evaluation form for both units. If not, have participants complete the module 1 evaluation form before closing circle.

BREAK with refreshments/evaluation (10 min)

Be sure to accommodate various dietary needs, to include options that are gluten-free, non-dairy, no nuts, etc.

Optional Closing Circle

FACILITATOR: Let's gather in a circle and each of us will share one thing we feel is important to take away from today's experience.

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MODULE 2 Overview

Classism

Proposed timing for
each element

Module 2 Materials:
Read around Types
of Classism cards
Handouts 6-10
Covenant

Optional Chalice Lighting

NOTES

1. Video clip: *Food and Class* 11 min
2. Discussion of video 5 min
3. Review statistics 5 min
4. Video clip: *Intersections with Class* 10 min
5. Definitions handout 5 min
6. Break..... 5 min
7. Read Around & discussion:
Types of Classism 50 min
8. Meritocracy 2 min
9. Reading assignments 2 min
10. Evaluation 5 min
11. Closing Circle and extinguish chalice 6 min

**If you do this module on a separate day from Module 1
START HERE:**

Chalice Lighting

The values of the market operate on the notion of winners and losers. The values of a human economy recognizes the worth and dignity of all people and believe that everyone has a fundamental right to participate in the economy and the decisions that affect it. The market economy measures its success by growth and outputs, and uses indicators like the gross domestic product and the expansion of wealth in the stock market as yardsticks. A sustainable economy measures success by the quality of life for all humans and the impact on the natural environment. (Chuck Collins & Felice Yeskel, p. 224, 2005)

Review the Covenant flip chart page.

**If you continue after a break on the same day,
START HERE:**

FACILITATOR: This next video will begin show how class culture and power can begin to move into classist impacts. Then we will look more precisely at types of classism.

1. Video clip: *The Trouble with Tofu* (11 min)

Play track 3 of DVD *People Like Us: The Trouble with Tofu*.

Purpose: To have the participants see how issues like food, liberal ideologies, and economics intersect with class culture.

2. Discussion of video (5 min)

3. Handout 6: Statistics Related to Social Class in the United States (3 min)

Purpose: Review current income inequalities and intersections with sex, race, disability, sexual orientation.

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FACILITATOR: Look in any news publication and you will see another alarming statistic about how the gap between the rich and the poor keeps growing. This first statistic on this handout is just one of them.

Our national association is very concerned about how oppressions intersect with each other. This material addresses how class intersects with other forms of oppression.

Take out Handout 6. Call on participants to read different sections.

The top 10 percent of earners last year collected more than half of the nation's total income, including market income and capital gains. That's the highest proportion since the government began recording income data more than a century ago. (The Week, 9-20-(2013) p 31)

Market income is one's total income before tax minus income from government sources.

In 2009, 14.3 percent of people in America lived in poverty with differences by geographic region. That is 44 million people.

The following information is based on the 2010 Census.

Race and Poverty

- Blacks were almost two times more likely to be living in poverty than Whites (25% v. 13%)
- For Hispanics, the poverty rate was 23% and for Asian and Pacific Islanders 12%

Median Household Income by Race

For all races	\$50,046	Percentage of families whose savings would run out in 3 months or less
Asian	\$67,022	
Hawaiian & Pacific Island	\$52,776	38%
Whites	\$52,480	79%
Hispanics	\$40,165	73%
Blacks	\$33,578	
Amer Indian/Alaska Nat	\$35,062	

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Median Weekly Earnings by Sex

Women	\$669	So women made 74.5 cents for every dollar that men made.
Men	\$824	

Source of median household data : American Community Survey 1 year estimates US Census.

Disability and Class

In his book *No Pity: People with disabilities forging a new civil rights movement*, (1994) Joseph Shapiro shares that what people with disabilities want is access to being full participants in our communities such that we need to make employment possible for people with disabilities. Some people with disabilities can legally be paid less than minimum wage.

Gender and Sexual Orientations and Class

LGBT people are in every class and race. Individuals in same-sex couples have more college degrees and higher levels of employment than those in different-sex couples. Some studies that suggest that gay men earn less than similarly qualified heterosexual men, which strongly suggests the influence of workplace discrimination. Lesbian households often make much less than comparable gay male or heterosexual households. Transgender people experience much employment discrimination. (Census data and Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues)

African-American woman bell hooks encourages us to stay focused on the class issue: "Class matters. Race and gender can be used as screens to deflect attention away from harsh realities class politics exposes. Clearly, just when we should all be paying attention to class, using race and gender to understand and explain its new dimensions, society, even our government, says let's talk about race and racial injustice." bell hooks, *Where We Stand: Class Matters*.

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4. More Intersections with other Isms (8 min)

FACILITATOR: We will next listen to African-American community activist Majora Carter describe how she straddles two class positions as she tries to fight the environmental injustice that occurs at the intersection of racism and classism. She starts off describing what she has in common with those in the high power audience of her TED talk.

Show video clip: *Majora Carter/TED Talk* (Clip is from minute 3:11-8:07).

Purpose: Provide a concrete example of the intersections of oppressions and some types of classism.

(Side note: As she has risen in power, she has encountered challenges in maintaining her alliances in the South Bronx as outlined by a New York Times article published April 4, 2013.)

FACILITATOR: We will now review some definitions of classism and you can reflect on and name some of these forms of classism in Ms. Carter's story.

5. Handout 7: What is Classism? (50 min)

FACILITATOR: Please take out Handout 7. Call on participants to read different sections.

Purpose: Learn different forms of classism.

What is Classism?

Classism: Similar to other "isms" it comes down to prejudice plus power. It is a form of discrimination which is

the outcome of prejudice
being acted out
with power
resulting in devaluing, restricted
opportunities, and violence
toward members of another group

A simple definition of classism is the systemic assignment of worth or access to power based on social class.

At the institutional level, it is the policies and practices set up to benefit more class-privileged people at the expense of others. Activist Linda Stout defines this as a “system of oppression that gives one group power and privilege over another group based on income and access to resources.” (1996 xiii)

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FORMS OF POWER

Class Capital: Sources of power that can contribute to class situations. (Pierre Bourdieu 1986)

ECONOMIC: control over monetary resources. What you own.

SOCIAL: access to resources based on group membership, relationships, support, and interpersonal networks of influence. Who you know.

CULTURAL: knowledge and skills (e.g. education, knowledge of social conventions and expectations) that confer advantages in a particular setting, group, or institution. What you know.

* * * * *

FACILITATOR: For Social and Cultural Capital, Joe Kadi, an Arab-American, gives us an example of those forms of power from a working class experience base.

He states: “I grew up in an extended family and a small neighborhood where people frequently asked for help and always got it. Broken-down cars, leaky taps, or sick kids didn’t mean a phone call to a costly expert. We knocked on the door of the neighbor who had what we needed”. (p. 5)

Regardless of class status, many people hold some form of social power. To take responsibility for our impacts on others, we have to recognize when we have power.

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Here are some additional forms to think about regarding yourself in different situations.

Forms of Social Power (John R. P. French and Bertram Raven 1959)

REWARD POWER : controls rewards and resources

COERCIVE POWER : controls punishments

LEGITIMATE POWER : authority vested in a role or position

EXPERT POWER : controls knowledge and information

REFERENCE POWER : people like or find person attractive

FACILITATOR: What forms of power do you feel Majora Carter has? (3 minute group discussion)

FACILITATOR: After we take a break we will go over definitions of types of classism with specific examples.

6. Break (5 min)

7. Classism Read Aloud (50 min)

Purpose: Participants may have a hard time coming up with examples of classism on the spot. This activity ensures that the voices of people from different class backgrounds are represented. An additional 16 minutes is built in for discussion during or after examples are read.

Pre-workshop prep: Cut out stories about UU experiences found in Facilitator Resources and paste them on index cards. Number the cards.

During activity, distribute to participants willing to read aloud.

FACILITATOR: To illustrate some of these forms of classism, we will be sharing some experiences that UUs who attended the Midwest UU Summer Assembly in the summer of 2013 shared as well as stories from community activists.

Downward classism is when individuals have negative stereotypes, attitudes and actions towards people with less resources and particularly people in poverty.

We will now read some examples of downward classism. **Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life**

(1) “Our church was raising funds for new chairs for the sanctuary. Each chair cost \$110. Many of us could not afford that much especially at Christmas. A board member who is independently wealthy stuck a chair in the lobby with a bow and her name on it to show that she had bought a chair. We eventually figured out how to contribute, but the chair sat in the lobby for weeks as a reminder of the class divide in our church.”

(2) A friend of mine could not attend my church due to transportation issues in my large city. She instead went to the UU church downtown and attended for several months with her three children. In the spring, she was registering the kids for fall Religious Education and it was only then that she learned there would be fees totaling \$150. She said that was a lot of money for her and was told there may be scholarships. She felt very embarrassed, and sad. I encouraged her to hang in there as she liked the church and I made a call on her behalf and it has worked out for her family to go there. (original text modified for length)

(3) “I have dealt with mental illness for many years and as a result have not been able to establish a real career. I’ve been taking classes at my local university for the past 6 years, and have worked on-and-off part time for the past 10 years. My latest position ended very recently. At camp, I feel a little bit uncomfortable when people ask what I do. When I respond I talk as though my part-time work is ongoing, and I say that I am a university student without mentioning that I am taking a minimum number of credits.”

(4) Community Activist Linda Stout, who is White, wrote the book *Bridging the Class Divide*, which was published by the UU press- Beacon Press. She grew up in poverty to later develop her own very successful community organization. She had to drop out of college because the college raised room and board and would not offer her additional financial aid. She is angry at the school.

“I was so angry with them, and I still am. For years, I thought it was somehow my fault that I didn’t stay in school. When I tell middle-class folks this story, they ask “Why didn’t you do this?...But at that time I did not know what other options were. I believed I had no other options available to me.” “I often define poverty as a lack of options”. Middle-class people “don’t understand that it is a privilege to have options, and that a lot of people don’t have that privilege”. “They also cannot understand the intense pain and shame of not having those options available to you, and as a result, the sense of being a failure that it instills in you.” (p. 25) Used with permission.

FACILITATOR: What comments do you have on these examples?
(4 min)

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When we think of classism, we most often think of downward classism, where someone with more class related power hurts someone with less. However, people with less can be harmful to those with more as they may have some of the power sources we have reviewed.

Given that people higher up the class hierarchy have embedded power, rather than using the term, upward classism, this training will use the term upward class prejudice to indicate when someone with less wealth-based power has a negative stereotypes, attitudes, and actions towards individuals with more wealth.

FACILITATOR: The next three examples are of upward class prejudice.

5) "A former student of mine went to work at a prison as a psychologist. He was outnumbered by other workers who called him an "egghead" and socially excluded him."

(6) "The staff at the Bus Riders Union is mostly college-educated people of color, though most of them grew up working-class. Sometimes there's resentment of them by certain Latinos on the buses, particularly of Chicanos whose Spanish isn't as good. "Who are you to come here educated and not speaking my language?" is the attitude. ...Class tension comes out as ethnic tension. Manuel Criollo (p 32 Class Matters)

(7) "I was concerned when a member of my congregation stewardship committee said that if someone could pledge \$10,000 to our operating fund, it should be no big deal for her to give another \$2000 to make up for a shortfall in our campaign. I felt this assumed that this member had not made any sacrifices to make this pledge, and that this person had unlimited resources."

FACILITATOR: What comments do you have on these examples? (4 min)

FACILITATOR: According to psychologist William Liu "Lateral classism" is defined as negative feelings and actions towards those in the same class group that one is in. This can take the form of pressure from people in a class toward others in that same class to behave in ways they believe are consistent with maintaining class membership. For example, pressure to "keep up with

the Joneses” among some groups or to “not get above your raisin” in other groups. In this curriculum, it is called within-class classism, because the term lateral racism has a different meaning than Liu’s use of the term.

Indirect forms of within-class classism for wealthier people could include describing vacations, and in the UU context, environmentally correct but expensive actions like purchasing a hybrid car, or other emblems of social class. People have expressed concern about the downward and within-class classism that can occur in the Water Communion if people’s sharing of water from their summer focuses on their travels. At the UU Fellowship of Ames, Rev. Kent McKusick modified it so that people shared what commitments they were going to make to the congregation in the coming year.

Here are some examples of within-class classism from different class groups:

(8) “Gettin’ above your raisin” is a phrase I’ve heard all my life. The notion is you want to change social classes. You try to change social classes, there’s this feeling that you’re forsaking the family, you’re forsaking place, you’re forgetting where you came from...and here’s this real fear that if you leave, that you’ll become ashamed of where you came from. Michael Birdwell, history professor, Tennessee Technological University. From an interview Louis Alvarez of New American Media conducted with Michael Birdwell for the PBS documentary *People Like Us*. Used with permission.

People Like Us has a segment your group could view in the future called *Don’t Get Above Your Raisin*, in which Dana Felty, a rural Kentuckian who moved to Washington D.C., talks about being a rural girl living in Washington D.C. and her family member’s reactions and her difficulty fitting in either place.

(9) “Our bridging ceremony for students graduating from high school included the students sharing what they would be doing after high school, and for many it has meant sharing where they are going to college.” A better approach is shared by Sarah Gibb Millspaugh on the Unitarian Universalists for Class Awareness Facebook page: “I was serving a congregation where it was not customary to say anything about where the students were going to college if they were. The senior reflections in the service were about their faith, who they were, and the values they were carrying with them.”

FACILITATOR: What comments do you have on these examples? (4 min)

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FACILITATOR: Internalized classism, meaning feelings of frustration, anger, guilt, shame or depression resulting from social class expectations and pressures. Individuals use a combination of human, social and cultural capital to be congruent with others in their perceived social class group or groups above them, and when they cannot do so, they experience stress or “social class strain” (Liu, 2001).

FACILITATOR: Now we will read examples of internalized classism:

(10) Jim Bonilla grew up as a working class legally blind Puerto Rican and became a college professor. He wrote: “My internalized classism can be triggered by the fear that my writing or research will be criticized as ‘not scholarly enough.’ The ever-present dread that someday I’ll be found out and judged as an impostor in the court of higher education is just below the surface. Even after twenty plus years in the ivory tower, the sense that someday I’ll be found out and judged as not worthy lingers. (120, *Class Lives*, Used with permission.)

(11) Michael Yates was born in 1946 in a mining town. He states: “It is difficult to overstate the power of fear and poverty in shaping how working men and women think and act. Fear of losing a job. Fear of not finding a job. Fear of being late with bill payments. Fear of the boss’s wrath. Fear your house might burn down. Fear your kids will get hurt. I inherited these emotions. I have a PhD and have always had a job that brings forth instant respect from others. Yet I have a deep-seated lack of confidence and anxiety in the face of authority. I can confront the powerful in a group, even if I am a leader of it, but as an individual, I hate any kind of confrontation with authority and always wonder if I have the right to confront. I prefer to remain in the background, to be invisible.” (Used with permission.)

(12) Arab-American Joe Kadi, in *Thinking Class: Sketches from a Cultural Worker* (1996), dedicated a whole chapter to “Stupidity “Deconstructed”. He writes: “Many mechanisms have been created in this rigidly defined class-structured society to keep poor people in our place... One such message is the constant cross-racial image of the worker as stupid. ... force fed images and words from TV shows, newspapers, magazines and movies... I grew up believing we’re thick-skinned, slow witted, impervious to pain, boring. ... It is painful to acknowledge the fact that some of our brains have been fried. Not stupid from birth, but fried from decades of the most boring, idiotic, repetitive work imaginable. I’ve done it. I fought every minute to keep my mind away from the hovering void.

Stupid. They marked my family as stupid, and this confused me. My aunt went from grade school education to neighborhood CPA; she knew all the

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deductions, could add numbers ridiculously quickly and did everyone's taxes for free. My grandfather, literate in three languages, poor, steered Lebanese immigrants through the morass of landlords, bosses, lawyers. My fathers and uncles, with their tenth grade educations, filled out daily crossword puzzles with pens and painstakingly planned, calculated, measured, added rooms on small houses with wiring, plumbing, support beams, ceilings, floor tiles, never a 16th of an inch out." (pp.49-50 Used with permission. Kadi published *Thinking Class* in 1996 using the name Joanna Kadi.)

(13) Barbara Jensen shared how she moved out of internal classism by observing her college educated peers and concluding "It wasn't that they were smarter, or better, it was that they had had privileges I had not. I moved away from a sense of individual shame, and blame, to seeing class as cultural, not just economic injustice." She adds "I also suggest that class has parceled out different aspects of humanity to different groups; everyone loses and gains something important as a result." (pp. 22, 26 Used with permission.)

(14) At the cultural level, it is the ways in which classism is manifested through our cultural norms and practices, often found in the ideology behind something. For example, what counts as "good art"?

Joe Kadi has something to say about that: "Those in power in society have always asserted that art available to everyone isn't much good." She described how her Aunt Rose taught others a dance called the debke, an Arab folk dance, and contrasts that to ballet. She stated. "In a sense, differences between debke and ballet generally capture differences between art/culture created and engaged in by rich people and poor people. Poor people are looking for group participation; rich people often chase performance and star status. Ballet dancers train for years in hopes of performing in high-priced venues; debke dances and two- steppers are usually happy dancing once a week with friends." (pp 21, 24. Used with permission.)

Of note: The movie *Billy Elliot* presents ballet as a route into a higher social class in Britain.

FACILITATOR: What comments do you have on these examples? (4 min)

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8. What beliefs hold classism in place? (2 min)

Purpose: Learn about the concept of meritocracy

FACILITATOR: Many of us in this country hold certain beliefs that are the foundation of classism. One of those beliefs is in meritocracy. Religious leader Rabbi David Wolpe said the following about meritocratic beliefs:

“We all know, deep down, that most of what we have is a product of good fortune. No matter how hard we work, we did not earn our functioning brains of the families into which we were born. We live in cities others created for us, organized by a government, protected by a military shaped by our predecessors. Yet we still point to our accomplishments and proudly proclaim, ‘I did this!’ The well-off salve their consciences by assuring themselves that it is hard work and merit that brought them success, which also leads them to conclude that it is a lack of merit that keeps others from succeeding.” (Rabbi David Wolpe in the Los Angeles Times, The Week, Sept 20, 2013 p 12)

9. Reading assignment for next session (2 min)

Purpose: Offer a more in depth review of meritocracy without using class time.

FACILITATOR: Please bring this reading with you when we gather again on DATE/TIME.

Handout 8: Summary on Meritocracy with excerpts from *Twilight of the Elites: America After Meritocracy* by Christopher Hayes (2012) by Suzanne Zilber

10. Evaluation form (5 min)

11. Closing Circle (6 min)

FACILITATOR: Let's gather in a circle and each of us will share one thing we feel is important to take away from today's experience. (Facilitator models this).

Extinguishing chalice

FACILITATOR: *One More Step* by Rev. Dorothy Emerson;
Used with permission.

Mindful of our highest aspirations,
Bound by common faith and purpose,
And, yet, becoming with ourselves as we are,
Let us take one more step, together,
in our unending quest for dignity, justice and hope

Thank you for your participation today.

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MODULE 3 Overview

Income Inequality and Preparing for Action

	Proposed timing for each element
Module 3 Materials:	1. Chalice lighting & reminder of covenant 2 min
Handouts 11-13 Covenant	2. Updates from last module 10 min
NOTES	3. Intro to Economic Inequality with video and discussion 15 min
	4. Video: <i>Why it Matters</i> 20 min Discussion, Handout
	5. Break 5 min
	6. Videos on how people end up in difficulty followed by discussion 45 min
	7. New rules to reduce inequality 10 min
	8. Preview next module/reading assignment ... 2 min
	9. Evaluation 5 min
	10. Closing Circle and extinguish chalice 6 min

Economic Inequality Evening program, 2 hours

1. Chalice Lighting (2 min)

FACILITATOR: *The Vision we Share* by Eric Hausman in *Deutsche Unitarier Religionsgemeinschaft*

Sometimes, the vision we share for compassion and community is bigger than our actual hearts.

Often, our hopes for a just society that is both free and responsible exceeds what we actually do to create it.

But may we never let our failing and floundering keep us from seeking, again and again, to live out in concrete deeds the hopes and dreams of our collective heart.

May the light of this flame give us courage for the journey.

(Remind group of the covenant; use flipchart page from Module 1)

2. Thoughts from last module (5 min)

Have participants share reactions to the reading on Meritocracy and anything else from last session.

3. Economic Inequality (10 min)

Author's Note: If your congregation has already participated in a viewing of the feature length documentary by Robert Reich, *Inequality for All*, you can skip some of the videos in this module. The video of Richard Wilkinson is important as that material is not covered in Reich's movie. You can also choose to watch the full documentary at a later date.

FACILITATOR: We have a situation in which

- There is class stratification by race, ethnicity and gender
- Class mobility has gone down, meaning it is harder for people to move to higher class levels.

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Class and Classism
in UU Life**

**MODULE 3:
Income Inequality
and Preparing for
Action**

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- Consumerism is promoted in all media creating aspirations for more goods.
- The elite are living very separately from others while making decisions that affect many.

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Today we will be looking at economic inequality. There will be more educational content through videos and handouts and less activities in this session. We will not be going over every detail of the handouts but you can use them to share some of the content from tonight with others.

“In their 1986 Pastoral Letter on the Economy, the U.S. Roman Catholic bishops judged the moral dimensions of an economy with three questions:

- What does the economy do for the people?
- What does it do to the people?
- How do people participate in it?” (from Collins and Yeskel book)

Twenty-seven years later, Pope Francis suggests what the goals of economies should be : “Every economic and political theory or action must set about providing each inhabitant of the planet with the minimum wherewithal to live in dignity and freedom, with the possibility of supporting a family, educating children, praising God and developing one’s own human potential. This is the main thing; in the absence of such a vision, all economic activity is meaningless.” (Letter to Prime Minister David Cameron for the G8 Meeting, June 17-18, 2013)

Right now, the US has too big of a gap between the rich and the poor. This gap violates many of our UU principles including the right to the democratic process, as those with more wealth unduly influence the political process, and the inherent worth and dignity of each person, as people are not being paid fair wages for their work. The ratio of rich to poor can be calculated by something called the Gini Index. The greatest inequality is represented by the value 100, and total equality would be 0. The United States in 2007 was at 45 compared to Sweden at 23 and the UK at 34. The CIA provided these

numbers because the higher the number, the more likelihood for problems in those countries.

So how did we get into our current mess?

FACILITATOR: Robert Reich is a UC Berkeley Professor, former Labor Secretary and a current HuffPost blogger. As you'll see in the video, he's also really good at explaining complicated topics in simple terms.

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Show video: *Robert Reich Explains America's Inequality Problem In 150 Seconds*

Discussion of the video (5 min)

FACILITATOR: The material on handout 9 provides a written summary on why we are in the place we are in right now that you can review after the workshop to remind you of Reich's messages. We will have you look at that handout after another video.

Question: Why has income inequality increased since 1970?

Answer: A power shift led to rule changes.

Rule Changes since the 1970's

Unions	Anti-union climate weakens the power and voice of workers
Trade	Global treaties benefit corporations, not workers or communities
Taxes	Taxes shifted from big investors and corporations to workers
Budget	Public services cut. Corporate subsidies expand
Minimum wage	Not raised to keep up with inflation and increased cost of living
Privitization	Government outsourcing plus no-bid contracts hurts taxpayers, workers, and public safety
Big \$ in politics	PACs and other major campaign contributors have undue influence on legislators and increasingly undermine democracy

(United for a Fair Economy www.faireconomy.org Growing Divide program. Used with permission.)

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4. Why inequality matters (15 min)

FACILITATOR: Why does it matter that we have growing income inequality? Richard Wilkinson will tell us why.

Show first 9.5 minutes of Richard Wilkinson: *How economic inequality harms societies*, TED talk uploaded on October 24, 2011

Book reference: Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (2009) *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*. New York: Bloomsbury Press.

Have participants take out Handout 9; this provides an overview of what Wilkinson said to assist with discussion

Large Group Discussion of Wilkinson (5 min)

From Richard Wilkinson’s TED talk. How economic inequality harms societies

In summary, bigger income gaps lead to increased problems in:

Social Relations	Human Capital	Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child conflict • homicide • imprisonment • social capital • trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child well being • high school dropouts • math & literacy scores • social mobility • teenage births 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drug abuse • infant mortality • mental illness • obesity • life expectancy

5. Break (5 min)

6. Economic struggles and what keeps people in poverty: Personal stories (45 min)

FACILITATOR: So let’s look more closely at how people are falling into poverty or being stuck in poverty.

One question to keep in mind as you watch the videos is to ask what type of choices do the affected people have? A form of downward classism that middle class

perpetrate on lower class people is the assumption of choice. Sadie Dingfelder (2010) wrote that “During Hurricane Katrina, many white, middle-class Americans were puzzled that so many New Orleanians “chose” to stay despite evacuation orders and reports of impending disaster” “As people know now, most of those who stayed in New Orleans did so because they had no choice. They had no transportation, funds or friends in other states, or they had to stay to care for others who didn’t have the means of escape, said psychologist Hazel Rose Markus.” (p. 40)

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MODULE 3: Income Inequality and Preparing for Action

Choose one of the three clips below that you believe would be most effective with your congregation or that speaks to you.

Poverty’s new address in America

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ly718xGmeBk

This addresses poverty in American suburbs. I believe this was produced by the BBC. It is available through the Economist. July 23, 2013. This clip is recommended because it follows a few families. (5:13 min)

Employed but still homeless

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdbHEZpOWPA

December 28, 2012 Shown on Rock Center with Brian Williams, produced by Tim Sandler, Edited by Tim Al-Harby, and the interviewer was Ann Curry. (11:24 min)

Living Wage: Waging a Living is an excellent film but does not make all its segments available for use in a way that easily segmented! In both that film and in the film *A Place at the Table*, there are good examples of African-American women who push to find full time employment and then are further in poverty after gaining employment and losing government benefits.

What we can show, which also includes unionization, is Jerry’s story from *Waging a Living*:

Clip 1 (3:55 min)

www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/video_classroom1.php

Clip 3 (2:30 min)

www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/video_classroom3.php

Clip 5 (2:30 min)

www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/video_classroom5.php

Lead 5 minute discussion on video.

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FACILITATOR: Barbara Ehrenreich in Nickel and Dimed says: "When someone works for less pay than she can live on—when, for example she goes hungry so that you can eat more cheaply and conveniently—then she has made a great sacrifice for you. She has made you a gift of her abilities, her health, and her life. The 'working poor' . . . are in fact the major philanthropists of our society....To be a member of the working poor is to be an anonymous donor, a nameless benefactor, to everyone else." (p. 49)

You may be wondering what we can do to make things better. Lets look at some ideas United for a Fair Economy has for us: www.faireconomy.org/

Please take out Handout 10.

**7. New Rules to Reduce Wealth and Income Inequality
(10 min)**

1. Lift the floor for Lower Income People

- Establish Living Wage standards
- Raise the Federal minimum wage
- Invest in job creation and training
- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Enforce basic labor standards and protections

2. Level the Playing Field for Everyone

- Fair taxes that treat income from investments and work the same
- Medicare for All – provide universal health care
- Trade policies that benefit wage-earners, consumers & the environment
- Quality education as a constitutional right

3. Address the Concentration of Wealth and Power

- Progressive taxation of wealth and income.
- Reduced subsidies for excessive CEO pay
- Campaign finance reform to get big money out of politics
- Reclaim our financial system
 - Break up big banks
 - Provide rigorous oversight of the financial sector
- Accountability for corporations receiving public subsidies

(Used with permission from *United for a Fair Economy* and *99 to 1: How wealth inequality is wrecking the world and what we can do about it* (2012) by Chuck Collins.)

8. Preview of next module (2 min)

Purpose: Review a model of economic class membership. Review theologically how UU may or may not fit for different class groups.

FACILITATOR: Next session will focus on how classism can manifest in our congregation. We will discuss the following readings at the beginning of our next module.

Handout 11: *Class and Unitarian Universalism* by Mark Harris

Handout 12: *Not My Father's Religion* by Doug Muder

Handout 13: *Class Divisions* by Michael Zweig

9. Evaluation form (5 min)

10. Closing Circle (5 min)

FACILITATOR: Share an action step you are going to take to learn more about economic inequality.

11. Optional reading for extinguishing chalice (if you did not use it as a chalice reading before Module 2)

FACILITATOR: "The values of the market operate on the notion of winners and losers. The values of a human economy recognizes the worth and dignity of all people and believe that everyone has a fundamental right to participate in the economy and the decisions that affect it. The market economy measures its success by growth and outputs, and uses indicators like the gross domestic product and the expansion of wealth in the stock market as yardsticks. A sustainable economy measures success by the quality of life for all humans and the impact on the natural environment."

(Chuck Collins and Felice Yeskel (p 224) 2005)

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MODULE 4 Overview

Classism and Awareness Efforts in our Congregation

Proposed timing for
each element

Module 4 Materials: Handouts 14-15 Flipchart page 6 Covenant	1. Chalice lighting & Covenant	5 min
	2. Thoughts from last session	10 min
	3. Discuss UU history and culture readings	10 min
NOTES:	4. UUA growth: minilecture	5 min
	5. Congregational classism handout	5 min
	6. Congregational classism worksheet in groups (Take break when done)	30 min
	7. Reports from groups	30 min
	8. Paired sharing	5 min
	9. Preview next module/reading assignment	2 min
	10. Evaluation	5 min
	11. Closing Circle	10 min
	12. Extinguish chalice	2 min

Congregational Focus, Evening program, 2 hours

1. Chalice Lighting (1 min)

The Future by John Schaar; (c) 1989 by Transaction Publishers. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

FACILITATOR:

The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created—created first in the mind and will, created next in activity.

The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating.

The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination.

May we be active participants in changing the future for the better.

Remind group of the covenant; post flipchart page (3 min)

2. Thoughts from last session and class division reading (10 min)

Purpose: give people a chance to share something important that came up for them after the last workshop and discuss Zweig reading.

3. Discussion of UU history and culture readings (10 min)

Purpose: Put our current goal of greater class inclusivity in the context of UU history and sociological trends. The introduction will hopefully help people prepare to discuss their readings.

FACILITATOR: As we look to become more inclusive, we need to understand how class has shaped the association and our congregations to where we are today. Our class diversity varies by location. Overall, our members are more highly educated and wealthy than many other religious organizations.

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African-American UU Minister Rev. Mark Morrison- Reed expressed how class has become a race barrier for our association:

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“The issue is increasingly one of class and not race,” Morrison-Reed argues. Religions are always bound to culture and class, and Unitarian Universalism has been shaped by its upper-middle-class, liberal, North American values. The reason we don’t have many Afro-Americans is the same reason we don’t have many working-class or poor members. “Look at the average UU education level, 17.2 years, which is almost a master’s degree,” he says. “There are simply not that many Afro-Americans in that demographic.” But, he predicts, as the number of highly educated and middle-class people of color increases in the general population at large, more will be drawn to Unitarian Universalism, as long as we are welcoming to them.

True to my lineage by Kimberly French, *UU World Magazine*, 2-15-2009.

FACILITATOR: Some UU’s have expressed worry that if we shift our religion to accommodate a variety of class-based preferences then we will lose things that are valued by those who are currently active in this association.

Nonetheless, psychologist Suzanne Zilber, the writer of this curriculum, says: “We don’t have to be all things to all people, but we can be more things to more people.”

UU Historian Mark Harris asks “How do we live out a faith where all are truly welcome? Who is our message for?” Our theology... “must be practiced in an ever-intentional manner and in ever-widening circles if our faith is going to be truly transformational. Perhaps this how Unitarian Universalism can fulfill its democratic vision and become more than a faith for a few.” 27

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Participants discuss reactions to Mark Harris and Doug Muder’s articles. (10 min) Facilitator may ask participants to summarize readings for those who have not read them.

4. Minilecture: Why Unitarian Universalism needs to Grow Through Eliminating Classism in our Congregations (3 min)

Display flipchart while facilitator reads following text.

Membership in UUA is flat
High numbers religiously unaffiliated/spiritual but not religious

- They value some aspects of religious communities
- They are not actively looking for one
- They share some UU values

FACILITATOR: Membership in the Unitarian Universalist Association was flat in 2013. The Association reported about 160,000 members and 1,048 congregations in 2013. (*UU World Magazine* Fall 2013, p 44.)

We need to grow and we need the richness and benefits of a diverse membership.

If we believe that Unitarian Universalism is life sustaining, it is reasonable that we would want to make our religion available to more people. We have a significant opportunity to grow our association with the high numbers of people currently identifying as spiritual but not religious or not affiliated with a religion. One-fifth of the U.S. public – and a third of adults under 30 – are religiously unaffiliated today, the highest percentages ever in Pew Research Center polling.

What is interesting and hopeful, is that the religiously unaffiliated can see that religious institutions add value to our nation by “strengthening community bonds and aiding the poor.”

With few exceptions, though, the unaffiliated say they are not looking for a religion that would be right for them. Overwhelmingly, they think that religious organizations are “too concerned with money and power, too focused on rules and too involved in politics.”

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Given our flexibility for spiritual exploration and our possible focus on addressing economic justice issues, UU congregations would be an ideal place for these religiously unaffiliated citizens. So we need to get our act together and be as welcoming as possible.

5. Congregational Classism (5 min)

Purpose: Apply what has been learned to one's own congregation policies and procedures. Participants will share their ideas based on their worksheet. Someone will take notes so that ideas can be shared with the social justice committee, or board, for follow up.

Distribute Handout 14: Domains for Possible Congregational Classism (5 min)

FACILITATOR: Please take a few minutes to read this handout on the domains where organizational classism can show up in congregations. (help anyone who needs assistance with reading)

Influenced by an activity of Class Action; see www.classism.org

Domains for Possible Congregational Classism

Every organization is likely to have practices and policies that reflect classism in society. Each domain of congregational life can be examined in terms of whether it could have a classist impact. Changes can be made to reduce classism and move toward greater inclusiveness of people from all class backgrounds. The questions below are not necessarily to imply that one way is the best, but to get you thinking about possible impacts.

Welcoming New People

- What brings new people to your congregation? How do they find out about you?
- How are people greeted when they come?
 - What types of questions are asked?
 - What types of information is shared?
- Is the congregation accessible by public transportation and is parking adequate?
- What do people see on the walls? What type of art, photographs or written messages are present? What family structures are visually represented?
- What types of clothing and styles might people see?
- What level of language is in brochures, newsletters, emails?
- Are new people asked to contribute financially right away, soon, or not at all?

- How do people join the congregation?
- Can children be in the service with parents on the first visit? Are parents welcome to stay in the nursery or RE on the first visit?

The Communal Observance (worship)

- What type of music is favored? Is music professional, amateur, participatory?
- Who leads or participates in the service?
- Does the sermon assume prior knowledge of certain things? Use acronyms? What level of language is used?
- How is the offertory handled?

Social Space Before and After communal events

- What types of refreshments are offered? Are they free or is a donation asked for?
- What types of humor and voice volume are acceptable?
- Who gets asked to do social things afterward or outside of congregation events?
- What eateries or coffee shops do members tend to gather at outside the congregation?
- Are there potlucks offered, communal meals, are there fees for meals or concerts?
- If there are fees, are certain members always volunteering to have fees waived and what impact does that have?

Children and Youth

- Is there a fee for participation in religious education or childcare?
- What are the behavioral rules? For example, are children allowed to run around?
- Is clothing available so all children can participate in activities outside?
- Is there funding for leadership and oversight of youth activities?
- Are there costs or fundraising demands on youth to participate in activities?
- Is childcare for events, meetings or adult religious education funded by the congregation or charged?

Leadership and Decision making

- How are leaders chosen? Who serves on the board? Who serves as committee chairs?
- How are times and dates set for volunteer work?
- Who does most of the volunteering?
- How are meetings structured to ensure all voices are heard?
- Whose voices seem to be heard more or less than others?
- How are decisions made? How are decisions communicated?
- Who gets thanked and praised, and who does not?

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Social Justice Work

- What is the philosophy or attitude underlying the social justice work?
- Are you providing services or funds to people or organizing with people?
- Is social justice work funded in your budget?

Stewardship/Fundraising and Finances

- Who controls whether a fundraiser can occur at the building or in the congregation?
- How many fundraisers are occurring in your communal space?
- How are expectations for giving set and communicated?
- Is there a required financial contribution to maintain voting membership?
- Are some members recognized more than others for financial giving?
- Where is money spent in the budget?

Connections to regional and national UUA

- Who gets to participate at regional and national levels?
- Is funding provided for people to attend distant events?
- Is money from the budget given to regional and national UUA organizations?

6. Congregational Classism Checklist Activity

(5 min setup) Activity adapted with permission from Class Action

Find out who wants to work on the 8 following topics to analyze how the congregation is doing. If you have a small group, you can split into 4 groups and have groups take two topics. You can also select three topics of focus based on what you know about the congregation or what has emerged earlier in the workshop. Do not spend too much time on the group deciding.

- Welcoming new people
- Communal observance/worship
- Social Space
- Children and youth
- Leadership and decision-making
- Social justice work.
- Stewardship/ Fundraising and finances
- Connections to the regional and national UUA

Put out table tent signs or tape on walls for where these groups should meet (in Facilitator Resources)

Distribute the Congregational Classism Worksheet (Handout 15) to the groups once they are seated.

FACILITATOR: In your group, please select a note-taker for the whole group. To identify concerns, please first think about how people from a working class background or a poverty situation might experience the congregation. You may also identify issues that may emerge for people from an upper class background. Identify both concerns and action steps for the congregation. You can present your findings of classism and next steps in a creative way- such as a skit, cartoon, or song, or it is fine to just report back. You have 30 minutes.

Facilitator should roam and check in on how groups are doing and assist with repeating instructions or whatever is needed. At the 10 minute point, you will want to remind them to start creating their presentation. Then give 5 minute warning and 1 minute warning.

7. Report from Groups (30 min)

If energy is high after the report from groups, have people get into pairs to share one action step they may take after today's session. This will help people settle down.

8. Pairs (5 min)

9. Preview of next session OR Distribute Handout 18 (If you are not going to do Module 5, please distribute Handout 18)

FACILITATOR: Next session we will review class sensitive class activism. We will also look at possible next steps for congregational social action.

10. Evaluation form (5 min)

11. Closing Circle (10 min)

FACILITATOR: Please think about one action step you will take after today and write it down on this (paper, index

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card). Come to a circle to share your next step in one sentence and I will start by sharing mine. (facilitator models this)

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12. Extinguishing Chalice/Closing Words (2 min)

FACILITATOR:

From Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed
(*Singing the Living Tradition* UUA: 1993)

The central task of the religious community is to unveil the bonds that bind each to all. There is a connectedness, a relationship, discovered amid the particulars of our own lives and the lives of others. Once felt, it inspires us to act for justice.

It is the church that assures us that we are not struggling for justice on our own, but as members of a larger community. The religious community is essential, for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen, and our strength too limited to do all that must be done. Together, our vision widens and our strength is renewed.

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MODULE 5 Overview

Class Activism

	Proposed timing for each element	Module 5 Materials: Handouts 16-18 Covenant
1. Chalice lighting & Covenant	3 min	
2. Thoughts from last session	10 min	NOTES:
3. Handout: <i>Class Culture in Organizations</i>	10 min	
4. Group discussion: Class Culture	7 min	
5. Brainstorming: Being Class Allies	5 min	
6. Class Ally Handout review	3 min	
7. Reader's Theatre	10 min	
8. Continuum Exercise	15 min	
9. Closing Circle	6 min	
10. Extinguish chalice	1 min	
11. Evaluations	5 min	

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**MODULE 5:
Class Activism**

Class Activism, Evening program, 75 minutes

1. Chalice Lighting (1 min)

The First Principle of Movement Building

“Anyone who steps out of political passivity to give time to any progressive effort deserves to be honored, appreciated, and treated with complete respect. Disagreements, mistakes, and oppressive behavior call for supportive feedback; they are not justification for abandoning a respectful stance. Solidarity is our only strength.” Betsy Leondar-Wright

Remind group of the covenant; have flipchart page posted. (1 min)

2. Thoughts from last session (10 min)

Purpose: give people a chance to share something important that came up for them after the last workshop. Be very disciplined about this!

3. Class Culture in Organizations (10 min)

FACILITATOR: In order to engage in justice work, it will be helpful to review some class culture differences more systematically than we did in our first module. This review will allow us to be sensitive to how class will affect our interactions in planning and implementing our actions

Dr. Betsy Leondar-Wright was the program director of Class Action and is a Steering Committee member of UU Class Conversations. Handout 16 reflects her work on cross-class organizing.

Please take out Handout 16. Call on participants to read different sections.

Cross Class Organizing

Notes from from Class Matters :Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle-Class Activists. 2nd Edition. By Betsy Leondar-Wright (2014) Class Action, www.classism.org Used with permission.

As it relates to activists working together: “I put the following class culture generalizations forward humbly, generalizing primarily about activists and

expecting contradictory evidence from others' experience to enrich them. My goal in risking generalizations is to make visible some class-culture-based coalition behaviors and dynamics that are often invisible." (17)

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Class culture differences emerge from life experiences such as whether steady work is not attainable, inevitable, or optional, whether one has access to, the expectation of and the experience of getting a four year college degree, and whether people stay in the same community or move a lot.

MODULE 5: Class Activism

Ways members of class groups may approach working in social change organizations.

Low Income	Working & Lower Middle Class	Professional Middle Class	Owning Class
Thinking outside the box, less convention-bound, discouraged by hardship or motivated by anger	Rooted, pragmatic steady workers	Unrooted, competitive steady workers	Thinking outside the box, less convention-bound, unrooted, entitled

Table terms defined:

Rooted – living where you grew up and strong ethnic and/or religious identities

Pragmatic – dealing with things realistically based on practical rather than theoretical considerations. Using experience as a base of information

Competitive – fostered by competing for and in colleges - self worth may depend on feeling smarter than other people – “a major obstacle to cross-class alliance building!” (23)

Entitled – a sense of empowerment to create change, sometimes self funded, which can lead to less feedback and less constraints. This sense can also include arrogance. “Low income activists’ goods ideas too often go nowhere; owning class activists’ bad ideas too often don’t flop.” 21

Steady work versus not steady work “fosters pride in our pragmatism and in our disciplined work habits.”... “Lacking the expectation and experience of steady work (low income and owning class) leads people to be unconventional and to think outside the box (i.e. creative)

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**MODULE 5:
Class Activism**

Combining the gifts of all class cultures

“To be able to organize successfully, low-income and working-class activists need more of the resources they are short on: money, decision-making power, skills, and information. Middle-class and owning-class activists need to share their resources and learn to follow the leadership of those without class privilege. And we need to realize that our motivation to be allies is not some kind of nice political correctness, but rather to increase the size and effectiveness of the movements we care about.” (23)

4. Group Discussion of Handout (7 min)

5. Brainstorming: On being class allies (5 min)

FACILITATOR: what advice would you give to middle or upper class allies about how to behave in cross class projects with working class or people in poverty?

Write answers on blank flipchart page

6. Handout 17 review (3 min)

FACILITATOR: Please take out Handout 17. Call on participants to read different sections. This material reflects the advice of several contributors to the book *Class Matters*, written by Betsy Leondar-Wright.

On being a middle-class Ally

In this workshop, we do not assume that all participants are from the middle class. However, the book this material comes from was written for middle class activists.

- Tips for middle-class activists working with other class groups.
- Put relationships first – allow time for story telling
- Talk less, listen more
- Don't let guilt make you foolish –use your judgment
- Hang in and keep going back
- Support working class issues and be knowledgeable about class issues
- Watch your language – use accessible language and don't correct other's spoken grammar
- Use your privilege strategically
- Have a little humility
- Don't "call people out" publically on their isms, approach them educationally
- Let go of control. A trend is the group with the most resources takes control

- Recognize poverty and working-class people's constraints
- Read Howard Zinn's *The People's History of the United States* and other books about low-income revolts, labor struggles, and life stories.
- Join Jobs with Justice (www.jwj.org) and read their alerts about local labor struggles that need support. Act on them when you can.
- Join the email list for Class Action www.classism.org (from SZ)
- Join 9to5 – for Working Women's issues www.9to5.org (from SZ)

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MODULE 5: Class Activism

For more information: *Class Matters* p 132-138, 145.

On the Ally's Balancing Act: People recognize that it is a balancing act to be an effective ally. Here is a helpful summary from Dorian Warren.

Dorian Warren is an African American from a working class background. He was a graduate student in Political Science at Yale University when quoted for this book. He is currently an Associate Professor of Political Science and International and Public Affairs at Columbia University in New York.

He wrote: "It's a tricky balance. I don't think middle-class people should be silent, because if we do have some skills or insights of strategies, I think we should put them on the table. That doesn't mean that our way is what will happen. But we should be able to contribute, and say 'what about this, what about that?' I do think it is a hard balance to use our skills in a way that is ethical and that is not exercising power by virtue of our class status. It is a balancing act to believe that people can decide for themselves, to critically interrogate your power relations, and not to lose your critical faculties." (p 145)

Notes from from *Class Matters :Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle-Class Activists*. 2nd Edition. By Betsy Leondar-Wright (2014) Class Action, www.classism.org

7. Readers' Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness (10 min)

Preparation: Print off one set of the large type stages from the Facilitator's materials packet –pages13-20. Write the Stage number on the back of the sheets large and in black.

FACILITATOR: OK, we are reaching the end now. We are now going to review a stage model of social class and classism awareness developed by William Ming Liu. He is a first generation Chinese-American psychology professor at the University of Iowa. Suzanne Zilber combined some of his original 10 "statuses" and gave them voices to create 7 stages and Dr. Liu has approved her revision.

(2011) *Social Class and Classism in the Helping Professions: Research, theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. p. 87-97

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As with any stage model, individuals may express feelings and attitudes from several stages and move between stages depending on their current experiences.”

**MODULE 5:
Class Activism**

Have participants stand in a row next to each other. They will read out loud what attitudes their stage represents. Give them their readings.

FACILITATOR: These stages can apply to different social class levels and try to imagine what they might mean for those differences. The “I” in these statements is referring to a person who is at that stage of awareness.

Written by Suzanne Zilber, Ph.D. This is not part of the handouts for participants, but you can give it to them if they ask for it. Make sure the reference is with it.

Stage 1 “Social class is not a big deal to me. I don’t pay attention to it much. People get what they deserve. There is some unfairness in the system, but that is unavoidable. The people on top have earned what they have and the poor need to work harder or manage their money better.”
(Unawareness)

Stage 2 “I can see that there are social class differences and am not sure what to make of it. It bothers me. How did I get into this social class status? All my friends are the same class status as me. It seems that some classes are “in” and some are “out”. (Questioning)

Stage 3 from position of privilege “It is too much trouble to figure all the social class stuff out. I seek out materials and friends that will support my right to be in my social class position but am also unsure what information I can trust. I am going to ignore these issues and focus on my day to day life.”
(Exploration and Justification)

Stage 4 lower income “ here are powerful forces, much greater than me, that have created unfairness in my life. I cannot escape this poverty. People should not try to get “above their raisin” and get uppity. There are rich and poor and society is made to make the rich richer and the poor poorer”.
(Despair)

Stage 4 higher income “I have earned what I have and deserve any privileges I have. Because this world can’t be changed, I have to look out for myself and my family. Our society is just and inequality is a natural product of how people behave.” (The World is Just)

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Stage 5 “I can’t believe the level of inequality in this nation and world! Why won’t others wake up?! I have joined “radical group” to address these issues but have not had a chance to read or think about these issues much but I want to be active now and learn as I go. I do not believe I have contributed to inequality- it is all other’s fault- society’s fault. We need to fight the oppressors on behalf of the oppressed. We need to take revolutionary action and change the whole system.” (Anger and Frustration)

Stage 6 “I have learned a lot now about class and classism and have felt humbled to learn that my own actions have had negative impacts on others, sometimes from another “ism”. I will try to put myself in situations that expose me to people from different classes. I need to learn more about my own class experience to prepare to do sensitive community action and unlearn my “isms”. I am going to try to make a difference in my local community to learn more about how change can happen from others already doing this work and develop my skills. Society will probably be changed by people working in smaller contexts. “ (Reinvestment)

Stage 7 “I have been working with a group that does grass roots community activism for a while now and have learned a lot. I keep up my awareness by seeking out readings and other experiences that keep me up to date on class issues. I pay attention to how I negotiate power and privilege in my life. I have made new friends from other social classes and have learned what we all uniquely bring to the cause. Sometimes I still say or do “ist” things and I get anxious about my negative impact on others and that I will be told I shouldn’t be doing this work. I have learned about some cultural differences and to be more flexible so I can be with different groups. I believe that society is largely unjust, classist, and marginalizing of people from poverty and the poor. The whole of society cannot be changed immediately, but it is important to be part of or start a process of change.” (Engagement)

8. Continuum Exercise: Social Class and Classism Consciousness Model (15 min)

Facilitator decides whether to do this step based on how things have been going.

After the reading, the cards can be placed on the floor or taped to a wall, for all people to walk to first – what stage they were at the beginning of the training, and then second - what stage they believe they are currently at. People can be encouraged to be humble and honest about where they are at, with the understanding that we can only be where we are at and move from there. If you do not do this, go to Closing circle.

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MODULE 5: Class Activism

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9. Closing Circle (10 min)

FACILITATOR: "It is understood that not everyone needs to become a social class activist in particular. There are lots of causes people are involved in! Please still share one thing you will do to move yourself toward a higher level stage around class after this workshop.

Thank participants.

One concern that several UU leaders have expressed is that this curriculum not be used to say- We did this and so we don't have to do anything else or we now have to go out and "save" or "rescue" other people. We won't do those things. We are going to follow up with our committees and board and choose some actions. Handout 18 suggests some possibilities for future actions. You can review those after the workshop.

10. Closing Words/Extinguishing Chalice (1 min)

Standing with the 99%, adapted from Prayer Service for Supporting Occupy Together, Interfaith Worker Justice

FACILITATOR:

We stand on the side of love with the 99%.

We want a society that works for 100%.

How we care for one another is a moral question.

How we divide the nation's prosperity is an ethical question.

How we witness to injustice is a faith question.

Let us go forth to do our part in creating a vision for a more just America.

11. Evaluation (5 min)

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Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

References

Additional Resources

Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community
www.uujec.com

“The Economically Just Congregation program provides a path for congregational study, reflection, and action in response to the economic changes that face us all, but adversely affect millions in our country. If your congregation chooses to embark on this path, you will start by forming a team and conducting a self-assessment of current practices and programs. Based on that assessment, you will plan congregational projects to address specific areas of interest or concern. Your congregation will then complete these projects over a period of one to two years, with the goal of becoming an Economically Just Congregation, a designation granted by the Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community, which oversees the program and grants accreditation.”

UUJEC is developing its own workshops separately from this curriculum.

A yet to be explored resource Lisa Keister (2011) *Faith and Money: How Religion Contributes to Wealth and Poverty*. NY: Oxford University Press. She has an article on Huffington Post with the same title. 11/02/11

Handout 1: Workshop Goals

People have diverse social class experiences and different worldviews about themselves and others.

This workshop aims to offer ways to think and talk about social class as it operates in our lives.

Workshop Goals:

- Increase your self-awareness of your own class experience
- Increase sensitivity to other's class experiences.
- Learn about forms of classism
- Examine the congregation's policies and culture for possible classism
- Prepare for action towards a congregation truer to UU values

Weekend afternoon **Module 1 : Class as Culture**

4.5 hours

1. Ground the workshop in UU principles
2. Increase self awareness of class influences
3. Explore cultural differences related to social class

Module 2: Classism

1. Learn about forms of classism
2. Learn about classist events in UU life
3. Learn about ideology that holds classism in place (meritocracy)

Module 3: Economic Inequality

Evening program

2 hours

1. Why it has happened
2. Why it matters
3. Stories of people struggling economically
4. What can reduce inequality

Module 4: Classism and Awareness Efforts in our Congregations

Evening program

2 hours

1. UU history and culture
2. Congregational Classism
3. Generating new solutions for our congregation

Module 5: Class Activism

Evening program

75 minutes





1. Class Culture Differences and being a Class Ally
2. Learn about one's own stage of class activism development
3. Review options for congregational further learning

Handout 2: Emotions and Class

Based on the work of Susan Fiske reported in *Monitor on Psychology*, American Psychological Association, October 2010.

When we meet someone for the first time, we automatically make two judgments: whether they're a friend, and whether they have power. Psychologist Susan Fiske calls the first impression "warmth" and the second one "competence". These two judgments then affect our emotions toward the other person. Fiske found that when you combine these thoughts and feelings into a two by two table, you generate how people respond to each other on the basis of social class. This reaction pattern has been found in multiple studies in different countries.

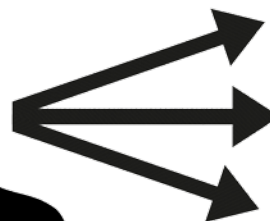
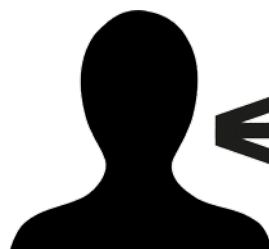
Dr. Fiske looked at where activation occurs in the brain when people look at images of identifiably poor, homeless people and her findings indicated that participants may not be seeing them as fellow human beings. She then found that if you ask people to think about what vegetable that person might like, then the scorned individual at least moves from the DISGUST to the PITY box, but not to a full recognition of any competence.

	 Low Competency	 High Competency
 High Warmth	Disabled people Elderly people PITY	People with similar backgrounds and economic status PRIDE
 Low Warmth	Poor people Homeless people DISGUST	Wealthy and powerful people ENVY

Other emotions that are elicited around social class issues are: ENTITLEMENT, SHAME, ANGER and GUILT. The most dangerous emotion in human relations is CONTEMPT – in fact, marriages that are high in expressed contempt don't make it. Contempt is some combination of anger and disgust. Robert C. Solomon places contempt on the same continuum as resentment and anger. He argues that the differences between the three is that resentment is directed toward a

higher status individual; anger is directed toward an equal status individual; and contempt is directed toward a lower status individual (Solomon R.C., 1993. *The Passions: Emotions and the Meaning of Life*. Hackett Publishing.). Nonetheless, a person of lower

socioeconomic status may still feel contempt for an upper class individual if they perceive them as being of a lower moral status due to their behaviors.



Higher Status = Resentment
 Equal Status = Anger
 Lower Status = Contempt

Person making judgement

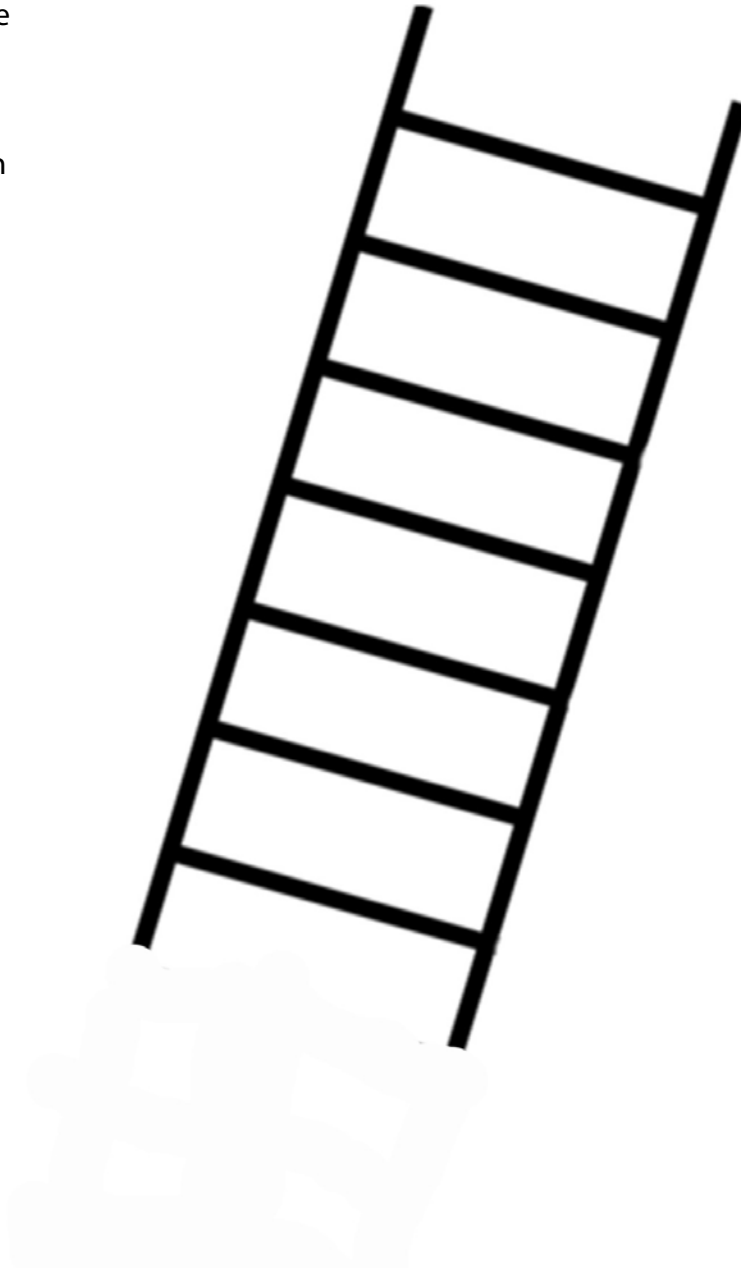
Handout 3: The Ladder Self Awareness Activity

Instructions

Make a P on the ladder for where you believe you and your family were on the social class ladder when you were growing up in the past.

Make an N on the ladder where you believe you are now.

Make an F on the ladder for where you would want to be in the future.



Handout 4: What is Class?

Social class: Class is more than income. It takes into account income, wealth, education, occupation, status, power, and worldview.

Wealth: What you own minus what you owe. There are large differences in wealth based on race and ethnicity due to intergenerational experiences of discrimination.

Class groups: People can struggle to create group labels. In this workshop, we acknowledge that class groups represent clusters of cultural values.

Class indicators: Things that determine an individual's class OR perceived class.

Culture: Culture is the learned and shared values, beliefs and behaviors of a group. Culture is the "rulebook of meaning" for adapting to the environment and survival. Cultural norms so completely surround people that few ever recognize the assumptions on which their lives and functioning rest. They are invisible.

Social mobility: Refers to the ability to change class positions. When people improve or diminish their economic status in a way that affects social class, they experience social mobility. Mobility is low in the US now compared with most industrialized countries.

Class straddler	Downwardly mobile	Upwardly mobile
Someone who grew up in one class and has moved into another class situation.	People from class positions who move into lower class positions due to divorce, job loss, disability, choice, lack of ability to get a job, or other means.	People who are moving or aspiring to move to a higher social class or to a position of increased status or power through a variety of means.

These definitions come from the work of Class Action, a national, non-profit organization based in Massachusetts, psychology professor William Lui, and psychologist Suzanne Zilber.

Handout 5: Social Class Self Exploration

Based on a form in Social Class and Classism in the Helping Professions by W. M. Liu

1. My first memory of social class in my life.

2. Things I learned about how to survive in life related to my social class background (values and expectations, such as: "My parents' or grandparents' motto about social class would be 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'").

Consider both strengths and limitations of your background. We will discuss your answers to this question in groups.

Optional: for later reflection

3. Social class is most relevant to my life in the following way:

4. The one thing I do that maintains my sense of social class:

Handout 6: Statistics Related to Social Class in the United States

The top 10 percent of earners last year collected more than half of the nation's total income, including market income and capital gains. That's the highest proportion since the government began recording income data more than a century ago. (The Week, 9-20-(2013) p 31)

Market income is one's total income before tax minus income from government sources.

In 2009, 14.3 percent of people in America lived in poverty with differences by geographic region. That is 44 million people.

Gender and Sexual Orientations and Class

The following information is based on the 2010 Census.

Race and Poverty

- Blacks were almost two times more likely to be living in poverty than Whites (25% v. 13%)
- For Hispanics, the poverty rate was 23% and for Asian and Pacific Islanders 12%

LGBT people are in every class and race. Individuals in same-sex couples have more college degrees and higher levels of employment than those in different-sex couples. Some studies that suggest that gay men earn less than similarly qualified heterosexual men, which strongly suggests the influence of workplace discrimination. Lesbian households often make much less than comparable gay male or heterosexual households. Transgender people experience much employment discrimination. (Census data and Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues)

Median Household Income by Race

		Percentage of families whose savings would run out in 3 months or less
For all races	\$50,046	
Asian	\$67,022	
Hawaiian & Pacific Island	\$52,776	
Whites	\$52,480	38%
Hispanics	\$40,165	79%
Blacks	\$33,578	73%
Amer Indian/Alaska Nat	\$35,062	

Median Weekly Earnings by Sex

Women	\$669	So women made 74.5 cents for every dollar that men made.
Men	\$824	

Source of median household data : American Community Survey 1 year estimates US Census.

Disability and Class

In his book *No Pity: People with disabilities forging a new civil rights movement*, (1994) Joseph Shapiro shares that what people with disabilities want is access to being full participants in our communities such that we need to make employment possible for people with disabilities. Some people with disabilities can legally be paid less than minimum wage.

African-American woman, bell hooks, encourages to us stay focused on the class issue: "Class matters. Race and gender can be used as screens to deflect attention away from harsh realities class politics exposes. Clearly, just when we should all be paying attention to class, using race and gender to understand and explain its new dimensions, society, even our government, says let's talk about race and racial injustice." bell hooks, *Where We Stand: Class Matters*.

Handout 7: What is Classism?

Classism: Similar to other “isms” it comes down to prejudice plus power. It is a form of discrimination which is the outcome of prejudice being acted out with power resulting in devaluing, restricted opportunities, and/or violence toward members of another group

FORMS OF POWER

Class Capital: Sources of power that can contribute to class situations. (Pierre Bourdieu 1986)

ECONOMIC: control over monetary resources.	What you own.
SOCIAL: access to resources based on group membership, relationships, support, and interpersonal networks of influence.	Who you know.
CULTURAL: knowledge and skills (e.g. education, knowledge of social conventions and expectations) that confer advantages in a particular setting, group, or institution.	What you know.

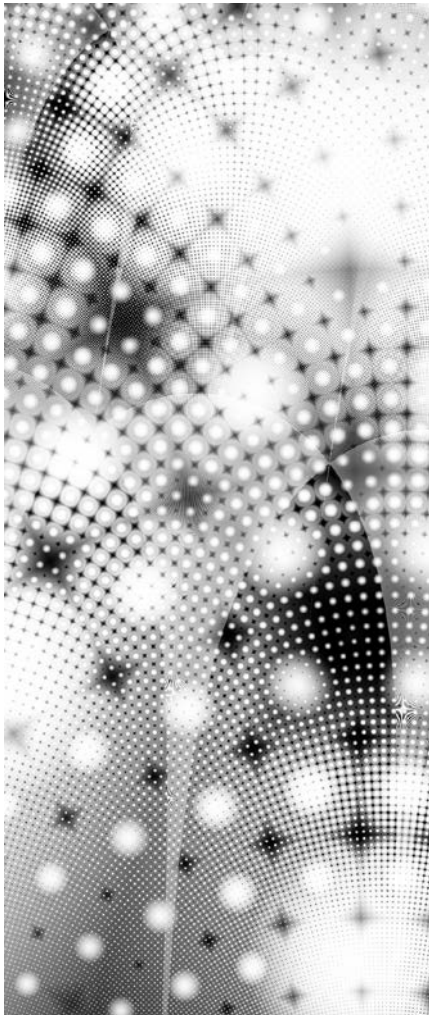
Forms of Social Power (John R. P. French and Bertram Raven 1959)

- REWARD POWER : controls rewards and resources
- COERCIVE POWER : controls punishments
- LEGITIMATE POWER : authority vested in a role or position
- EXPERT POWER : controls knowledge and information
- REFERENCE POWER : people like or find person attractive

Types of Classism Classism is the systematic assignment of worth or access to power based on social class.

At the institutional level, it is the policies and practices set up to benefit more class-privileged people at the expense of others. Activist Linda Stout defines this “as a system of oppression that gives one group power and privilege over another group based on income and access to resources.” (1996 xiii)

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life Handout 7



What is Classism? page 2

At the individual level, classism is negative behavior or attitudes related to class which can be conscious and intentional or unconscious and unintentional.

Chinese-American psychologist William Liu states that a person will engage in this type of classism when other's behaviors are not congruent with the values and expectations of that person's own economic culture. He suggests four types of classism based on the assumption that all individuals may have some form of power even if institutionally their group does not have power.

Downward classism is when individuals have negative stereotypes, attitudes and actions towards people with less resources and particularly people in poverty.

There is some controversy as to whether those in less power can engage in classism, so I have relabeled Liu's upward classism to upward class prejudice.

Upward class prejudice indicates when someone with less wealth-based power has a negative stereotypes, attitudes, and actions towards individuals with more wealth.

Within-Class classism, meaning negative feelings and actions towards those in the same class group that one is in.

Internalized classism, meaning feelings of frustration, anger, guilt, shame or depression resulting from social class expectations and pressures. Individuals use a combination of human, social and cultural capital to be congruent with others in their perceived social class group or groups above them, and when they cannot do so, they experience stress or "social class strain" (Liu, 2001).

At the cultural level Cultural Classism: the ways in which classism is manifested through our cultural norms and practices, often found in the ideology behind something. For example, what counts as "good art."

Cultural Reproduction: how existing advantages and disadvantages are passed down from one generation to the next, partly due to the education system and other institutions.

Sources:

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Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life Suzanne Zilber, Ph.D. Ames, Iowa classaware@gmail.com 515-232-5340 ©2016

Handout 8: Meritocracy

A summary by Suzanne Zilber Excerpt quotes from Christopher Hayes

Meritocracy is a system in which the talented are chosen and moved ahead on the basis of their achievements. It is a system of leadership based on educational and intellectual criteria.

Meritocracy is appealing on the surface. It makes sense for a community to invest resources in developing the talents of the people most likely to develop them at the highest level and to entrust leadership to those who have developed special knowledge and skills. It seems fair that people be rewarded for fulfilling roles that require uncommon skills, extra effort, sacrifice, or risk. It creates motivation for acquiring knowledge and putting in effort.

It assumes that if people work hard, that they will be rewarded, and if they don't, then they will experience natural consequences. Meritocracy also presumes that membership in a certain group should not influence whether someone gets rewarded – it should just be based on ability and effort.

Christopher Hayes wrote: "In order for it to live up to its ideals, a meritocracy must comply with two principles. 1) The Principle of Difference: people differ in ability and we need to match the hardest

working and most talented to the most difficult, important and best paid tasks.

2) The Principle of Mobility: Over time, there must be some continuous competitive selection process that ensures that performance is rewarded and failure punished. That is, the delegation of duties cannot be simply made once and then fixed in place over a career or between generations. People must be able to rise and fall along with their accomplishments and failures. ... But this ideal, as appealing as it may be, runs up against the reality of what I'll call The Iron Law of Meritocracy. The Iron Law of Meritocracy states that eventually the inequality produced by a meritocratic system will grow large enough to subvert the mechanisms of mobility." (56-57, Hayes 2012)

As the wealth gap increases, and with the ongoing presence of many "isms", meritocracy does not function as we might wish it would. This disconnect is due to the fact that attributes such as cognitive ability and self discipline are not fully in most people's control to develop. Those qualities are influenced by existing class membership - in terms of access to high quality education, actual job opportunities, non-polluted environments, safety, and perceived opportunity. As

Christopher Hayes noted, "The pyramid of merit has come to mirror the pyramid of wealth and cultural capital." (54)

Meritocracy eventually leads to less social mobility. Those who get to the top act in ways to preserve and pass down their existing advantages from one generation to the next, resulting in cultural reproduction. Those at the top are likely to believe that meritocracy works because it "worked" for them and continue to support structures based on meritocratic assumptions.

So why does this matter to America? It matters because decisions based on the assumption that we have a meritocracy are destroying democracy. People who get to the top become isolated from those at the bottom limiting the information they need to engage in good leadership of companies, educational institutions or governments. They may also act in self-serving ways, rather than for the common good. These institutions then have failures, cause harm, and lose the trust of their communities, consumers, or employees.

So why will it be hard to fix this? " Ultimately the meritocratic creed finds purchase on both

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the left and right because it draws from each. From the right it draws its embrace of inequality... and from the left it draws its ... disregard for inheritance and old established order, a commitment to diversity and openness and hostility to the faith, flag, family credo of traditional conservatism. ...The areas in which the left has made the most significant progress – gay rights, inclusion of women in higher education, the end of de jure racial discrimination – are battles it has fought or is fighting in favor of making the meritocracy more meritocratic. The areas in which it has suffered its worst defeats – collective action to provide universal public goods, mitigating rising income inequality – are those that fall outside the meritocracy's purview. The same goes for conservatives. Those who rail against unions and for reduced taxes on hedge fund bonuses have the logic of meritocracy on their side, yet those who want to keep gay men and women from serving openly in the military do not." (47-48)

Another challenge is that true democracy is hard to pull off. To survive over time, even radical organizations will begin to delegate to a smaller

group of more active workers/volunteers and they will inevitably lose touch or not be able to fully share information and decision making with the mainline folks. A cadre or elite is formed, creating organizational separation. You have probably observed that shift in some of your congregations. Theologian, H.Richard Niebuhr, noted this trend for denominations and congregations to become more formally structured and move up class levels over time in his book *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*. He documented this trend over many centuries of religious history but had hopes that it could somehow be overcome.

To resist the negative influences of meritocratic assumptions, we must look not just at equality of opportunity, but seek more equality of outcomes. Hayes cautions us against putting too much hope in the educational system as an "equal opportunity" solution to low wages and other forms of structural inequality. He suggests that we need a cross-class coalition to seek taxation and legislation to redistribute wealth more similarly to the 1970s in this country and similar to current systems in other developed nations.

"Equality is never a final state, democracy never a stable equilibrium: they are processes, they are struggles. Our task now is to recognize the struggle is ours." (240)

The Social Sources of Denominationalism by H.Richard Niebuhr (1929) Meridian Books

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Handout 9: Income Inequality

QUESTION: Why has income inequality increased since 1970?

ANSWER: A power shift led to rule changes.

Rule Changes since the 1970s

Unions Anti-union climate weakens the power and voice of workers.

Trade Global treaties benefit corporations, not workers or communities.

Taxes Taxes shifted from big investors and corporations to workers.

Budget Public services cut. Corporate subsidies expand.

Minimum Wage Not raised to keep up with inflation and increased cost of living.

Privatization Government outsourcing plus no-bid contracts hurts taxpayers, workers, and public safety.

Big \$ in Politics PACs and other major campaign contributors have undue influence on legislators and increasingly undermine democracy.

United for a Fair Economy www.faireconomy.org Growing Divide program.
Used with permission.

From Richard Wilkinson's TED talk: *How economic inequality harms societies*

In summary, bigger income gaps lead to increased problems in:

Social Relations	Human Capital	Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child conflict• Homicide• Imprisonment• Social Capital• Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child well being• High school drop outs• Math & literacy scores• Social Mobility• Teenage Births	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug abuse• Infant mortality• Mental illness• Obesity• Life expectancy

The USA is the worst or 2nd worst on these compared to other developed countries.

Handout 10: We need new rules to Reduce Wealth and Income Inequality

Used with permission from *United for a Fair Economy* and Chuck Collins (2012) *99 to 1: How wealth inequality is wrecking the world and what we can do about it.*

1) Lift the floor for Lower Income People

- Establish Living Wage standards
- Raise the Federal minimum wage
- Invest in job creation and training
- Increase the supply of affordable housing
- Enforce basic labor standards and protections

2) Level the Playing Field for Everyone

- Fair taxed that treat income from investments and work the same
- Medicare for All – provide universal health care
- Trade policies that benefit wage-earners, consumers & the environment
- Quality education as a constitutional right

3) Address the Concentration of Wealth and Power

- Progressive taxation of wealth and income.
- Reduced subsidies for excessive CEO pay
- Campaign finance reform to get big money out of politics
- Reclaim our financial system
 - Break up big banks
 - Provide rigorous oversight of the financial sector
- Accountability for corporations receiving public subsidies

Handout 11: Class and Unitarian Universalism

By Mark W. Harris, First Parish of Watertown

Written for this curriculum and UU Class Conversations

There is a pervasive stereotype about the class of people attending Unitarian Universalist congregations in America. This stereotype suggests that UUs are a wealthy, highly educated, urbane elite. It is often presumed that all Unitarians in 19th century Boston were an educated and wealthy elite who controlled the factories, the politics, the culture, and most especially Harvard College. These Unitarians created a rational and unemotional faith that emphasized salvation by education. Individual success and status became important signs of salvation. Furthermore, the belief is that Unitarianism expanded west through outposts where the movers and shakers in new communities could establish churches like the one in Boston.

But the picture both historically and now is much more diverse and complex than the mere replication of the Boston stereotype all over the country. Think of your own experience in our congregations today. In terms of income and class background we seem more diverse than the elite stereotype, and yet, compared to other religious groups, we ranked very highly in the 1990 National Survey of Religious Identification in terms of education levels, median

income, home ownership, and suburban lifestyles. Our profile was an exact match for an L.L. Bean mailing list. We have the social and environmental conscience, too.

My book *Elite: Uncovering Classism in Unitarian Universalist History* looks at different aspects of UU history from a class perspective. In England, class distinction was a result (not a cause) of religious belief. Unitarianism was against the law even after 1688, when most other dissenters were given the right to assemble for worship. Catholicism and Unitarianism remained illegal in Britain until 1813, and there were attempts to seize Unitarian property almost until the mid-19th century. Being illegal prevented them both from organizing as a religion, and from attending university. This meant that any profession that required a degree, such as law or medicine, was not a possibility for Unitarians. Shut out from the learned professions, they entered trades, became business people, and created a new kind of rising middle class.

Nevertheless, British Unitarianism was plagued by a desire to be accepted by the Anglican Church. Their most famous 19th century leader, James Martineau, wanted to

simply broaden the established church so that those who didn't believe in the divinity of Jesus would be accepted. He shunned the working classes, hoping to gain social status and be identified with the Anglicans. Other Unitarians were far more interested in ministering to everyone, such as William Gaskell whose wife Elizabeth used stories and novels to critique the stratification of society and highlight the plight of the very poor.

In America, early Unitarianism tended to emphasize the idea that God is pleased by material success if earned by right morality. Thus they valued order, harmony, and the freedom to be rich, not the freedom to be equal. One minister who advocated for a Unitarian faith that would appeal to all classes was Arthur Buckminster Fuller, whose sister Margaret used her newspaper columns to raise the consciousness of the American people about the social conditions of a broad range of people. Arthur tried to reach a broad audience by preaching in an evangelical extemporaneous style.

Meanwhile, Hosea Ballou promoted a classless heaven of Universalism. His theology is, I think, especially appealing to UUs today. He gave us

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grounding in the idea that God's love embraces the whole human race, regardless of who you are. This has widespread implications in terms of class differences, but also race, gender, and sexual orientation. In addition, it is a theology based on grace, and not merit. Worth is based on love, not whether you went to the best school or not, or make the most money.

The mid-20th century Fellowship Movement provided the most profound Unitarian growth in our history. However, the communities specifically targeted for growth were white, primarily wealthy neighborhoods, while cities with large concentrations of immigrants and African Americans were specifically avoided. This may be part of what led some congregations to abandon cities and move to the suburbs. However, other existing urban congregations continued to maintain a downtown presence.

The Rev. David Rankin objected to the trend to move to the suburbs and away from cities. In 1967 he was minister of my present church in Watertown, Massachusetts, a congregation that had declined precipitously as the city became more and more industrialized, urban, and full of immigrants.

Rankin responded to the UUA Committee on Goals report that year by noting that the denomination did not support "with any intensity the inner-city churches, nor did it recruit into the ministry those who understand or who are able to deal with the problems of the city." He claimed the UUA was biased towards the suburbs and showed "a strong class orientation that cannot be concealed by such phrases as 'emerging religious liberalism' and 'universal free faith.'" He said the report "reflected a profound class prejudice that has always characterized Unitarianism. A religious movement that represents only a small segment of a small percentage of one class in a total population cannot be expected to develop broad sympathies and understandings. A class church is a narrow church. Survival takes priority. The weak are eliminated." (David Rankin, "The Cry They Do Not Hear," *The Unitarian Christian*, Fall 1967).

I have often wondered how we could reconcile the rhetoric of a universal free faith with the reality of our present class-bound composition. In this era of widening gaps between rich and poor, scapegoating others, and looking out for ourselves, we need to make personal connections with all those who might find

meaning in our liberal faith regardless of class background, and promote a vision for the common good, a vision not for a perfect, successful individual, but for a world village where we take care of each other. Do we welcome everyone to our congregations? -- not just those who own their homes, but those who rent, those who suffer from mental illness, those who live in group homes, those who are lonely and need our caring friendship, those who have lost their jobs, have huge credit card debt, but also retired bank presidents, restaurant workers, and college professors, carpenters and cab drivers. I think will be more diverse than we have ever been before, as soon as we stop asking who belongs here or who is one of us.

Handout 12: Not my Father's Religion

If my working-class father started attending a UU church, I'm not sure who he'd talk to
By Doug Muder Fall 2007 8.18.07 *UU World Magazine*. Used with permission.

My hometown is in downstate Illinois, in farm country. We had one high school, so whether your dad was a millionaire or ran off when you were three never to be seen again, that's where you went. My father did something in between: He worked in a factory, the same factory for my entire childhood. You could do that in those days, if you showed up on time every day and did what they told you.

It was a good job. The factory made cattle feed, and cattle always need to eat, so the work was steady. If you were careful with your money, it paid well enough to support a family.

It was also a bad job. Dad came home stinking of fish oil. Over time the noise ruined his hearing. And the schedule fluctuated. He worked the day shift one week and the night shift the next—back and forth every other week until he retired. All the workers in that factory did that.

If the night shift was working overtime, I didn't see him all week. But otherwise I got off school about an hour before he had to leave for work. I'd race home on my bike, and we'd play baseball. He taught me to hit by throwing tennis balls in the front yard.

Dad had a method for teaching me not to be afraid of the ball. "Let it hit you," he said. Because that's how Dad thinks: If the worst has happened already and you survived, what's to be afraid of?

I'm a Unitarian Universalist, but my Dad isn't. My parents seem quite happy in the same conservative branch of Lutheranism in which they raised my sister and me. It teaches the literal truth of the Bible, and its God is real, personal, and powerful. The God I met at home was more liberal than the God of my Lutheran grade school, but not by much. He was, at the very least, secure enough to be amused rather than threatened by my human attempts to be clever. At home, my heretical theological speculations were always matters for discussion rather than reprimand. But nonetheless, God had spoken, and His word was law. If reason and conscience told me something different from what was written in the Bible, then I'd better think things through again.

That theology, as I said, works for my parents, which is one reason I've never tried to convert them. But there's another reason: If they did start going to a UU church, I'm not sure whom they'd talk to.

Unitarian Universalism has a class problem. We rarely discuss it, and when we do, we often focus on the very poor: the homeless, panhandlers, people on welfare. But we also have a problem with the working class, particularly the ones suffering from what Marx called alienation. If you're a skilled craftsman and like to work with your hands, you might be a UU.

But if you make a living by renting your muscles and selling your time—permanently, not just until your novel gets published—you probably aren't.

My UU church is in a Boston suburb, and like all the UU churches I've attended, it has a lot of professionals with advanced degrees—people like me. But most UU congregations don't have a lot of people like Dad. I think that's a problem.

This problem rarely even makes it onto an agenda. At my church Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday is an annual reminder to meditate on our race problem and the paucity of African Americans in UU congregations. Labor Day? We're closed. It's the last weekend of our summer break, time for one last trip to the vacation home on the Cape. But that's in the class-segregated suburbs of Boston.

What about my hometown in farm country? Growing up, I didn't know we had a UU church, but we do. I've preached there twice now, and I try to stop in whenever I'm in town on a Sunday. It's full of wonderful people, but as best as I can determine they are also more like me than like Dad. I've met the newspaper editor, the superintendent of schools, and a professor from the local university there, but nobody from the factory where Dad worked or any other local factory. No truck drivers. No waitresses. Nobody who works checkout or has calloused hands.

I hope one or two working-class people are there somewhere, but I haven't met them yet. Neither has Dad. He came to hear me preach the first time, but he hasn't been back.

Unitarian Universalism has a class problem.

Like our race problem, the class problem seems paradoxical to many UUs: We try to stand for all people, but when we look around, we're usually standing with people like ourselves. We promote equality, but perversely, the less privileged would rather join conservative churches, churches that seem to

us to serve the interests of the rich and to tell everyone else that it's their own damn fault their lives are such a struggle.

One reason this paradox is hard to talk about, I think, is that a lot of us believe an explanation that we don't want to say out loud: Working-class people are stupid. The powers-that-be have duped them into pining for Heaven instead of changing Earth.

It's a tempting explanation because it absolves us. When the working class doesn't listen to us, we don't have to ask if we're being stupid—if we're really talking only about our lives, not theirs.

To understand why people might choose not to be with us even though we're trying to be for them, let's go back to baseball for a minute. Consider batting helmets. The major leagues didn't make batting helmets mandatory until 1971. You know who fought that rule? Hitters. The league had to grandfather the active hitters in, so that they could keep facing Nolan Ryan's fastballs without helmets until they retired. The last batter who didn't wear a helmet was Bob Montgomery in 1979. The same thing happened in hockey, whose last helmetless player retired in 1997.

Now, from the outside it sounds crazy that the players would fight against people who were trying to protect them, but it makes an odd kind of sense. You see, the players knew the lesson my Dad taught me in the front yard: If you're afraid of the ball, you can't hit it. They just took it one step further: If you're really not afraid, why do you want a helmet?

When you're doing something hard like hitting a baseball, sometimes the mind-set you need, the one that works, is not the objective, big-picture view. It's the one that tells you to be brave, not the one that tells you to wear a helmet.

Here's another sports example: I remember hearing Muhammad Ali say, "I am the greatest. Ain't never been another fighter like me. Ain't never been no nothing like me." If you ask whether those statements were objectively true, you miss the point. Ali was doing something hard. He needed to think that way to do what he did.

Working-class people are doing something hard. Sometimes that means they need to think differently and ask different questions from the ones that seem obvious to those of us who look at their situation from the outside.

Picture it like this: Imagine society as a giant maze, with success as a prize at the end. Some people are born right by the exit. Others start in more difficult places. They can't just wander out. They have to make all the right moves.

Now, if you imagine yourself standing in a high place overlooking the maze, compassion for the people deep inside might raise questions like these: Why does it have to be so hard to find the prize? Couldn't we knock out a few walls? Why can't the minimum wage be higher? Why can't the government hire the unemployed? Why can't college be free?

From a God's-eye view, those are great questions. But if you're inside the maze, that mind-set won't get you out. Why does this maze have to be so hard? Why does that wall have to be there? Why can't I have a clear path to the prize? It doesn't help. No matter how good those questions are objectively, if I'm so deep in the maze that I seriously doubt I'll ever get out, I don't need them in my head.

Ten or twelve years ago I was in Tennessee visiting my sister, who also got a college education and joined the professional class. That Saturday night I got her husband, Ed, talking. He was an engineer

researching clean ways to burn coal. It was a demanding job, but he believed in it and thought it was important. So he worked long hours and traveled a lot. He was also finance chair of their church, in the same Lutheran synod we grew up in. They were raising money for a new building, and that also seemed important. At the same time his sons, my nephews, were both in elementary school. Ed worried that he wasn't spending enough time with them.

Job, church, family—every part of his life wanted more from him. What to do?

The next morning I went to church with them. The sermon topic was "Resisting Temptation." In my mind I boiled the entire 20-minute sermon down to three words: Don't be bad.

I felt smug that morning because I knew that Ed would have been so much better off in my church. We talk about real life, his real life. He didn't need to be told not to be bad. His issue wasn't Good versus Evil; it was Good versus another Good versus a third kind of Good. And that's the issue in my life and in the lives of all my professional-class friends. The primary spiritual challenge of the professional class is discernment. There are so many good things we could do with

our lives. How do we choose?

That's the kind of issue a UU sermon talks about.

But I don't think discernment was Dad's issue. Because the factory was not a competing Good. It was a necessary Evil.

When he was pitching me tennis balls in the front yard, I don't believe that any part of him actually wanted to go off to that dirty, hot, noisy, dangerous factory. He went because if he didn't something bad would happen. He'd be punished. And in the long run, if he lost his job, I'd be punished, too.

Dad didn't need help discerning what to do. He just needed to make himself do it.

And that's working-class life in a nutshell. You're not following your bliss. You're not pursuing your calling. You're selling your time for money. The way out of the maze, and the way to get your kids out of the maze, is to get up every day and do something you'd rather not do.

Professionals have trouble understanding the depth of that chasm because we imagine that we also do things we don't want to do. We don't get that extra hour of sleep in the morning. We have meetings with people we don't like. We fill out forms that we know are pointless. But

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does that give us comradeship with people who are losing their hearing in 100-degree heat?

Here's what sums it up to me: When professionals retire, we keep dabbling. The retired newspaper editor in my hometown still writes. When the professor retires, he'll keep reading journals and going to talks. But in the thirty years since my Dad took early retirement, he has never brought home some fish oil and mixed up a batch of cattle feed in the garage. When you retire from Wal-Mart, you don't set up a bar-code scanner in the basement, just to stay busy. You do that stuff for money, and when they stop paying you, you never, ever do it again.

UU churches also help with the second major spiritual challenge of the professional class: inspiration. The whole point of discernment is to find a consistently inspiring path through life. The ideal profession is a calling, and inspiration is how you work those 12-hour days without burning out. Inspired people bounce out of bed in the morning with ideas and ambitions. They stay late because there's always one more thing they want to try. Those are the people who really make it in the professions. If you have to push yourself,

and you're competing with somebody who's inspired, you're at a huge disadvantage.

That's why professionals tell their children: Find something you love, so that you'll be brilliant and creative and energetic. You'll run rings around the guys who are just doing what they have to do.

In the professional class, inspiration is the road to success. It's the way out of the maze. Or at least it's one way out, the bright way. There's also a dark way out, for those professionals who are driven by fear and greed rather than pulled by love. They sell their time and energy for a lot more money than factory workers—and a lot more than many idealistic professionals—but they can get just as alienated. They also don't seem to respond well to the UU message. Or at least I don't run into many of them in my church.

In the working class, the road to success is self-control. That's what you want to teach your children: Resist temptation. Walk the narrow path. Do the hard thing you don't want to do, so that you and the people who are counting on you won't be punished.

That almost sounds like a theology. But not a UU theology.

Let's throw one more idea into the mix: Second chances. Rich kids, professionals' kids—they get them. If your parents have money, the door never completely closes on you. Don't worry if you flunk out of two or three colleges. It'll work out. Children of the very rich and powerful don't have to get serious until they're 40. The sky is still the limit.

In the working class it's not that way. Eminem's song "Lose Yourself" asks: What if you had one shot? To a professional-class kid, imagining that you get only one shot is a way to add drama to your life. But in the working class, the fantasy is that you get one shot. What if you had one shot? You wouldn't blow it, would you?

Let's put these pieces together: Imagine yourself deep in the maze, standing between two churches. One church tells you there's Good and there's Evil. And because somebody has done something incredibly generous, you get a chance to choose Good. One chance. You get it wrong, you go to hell forever. The other church tells you there are a lot of ways to be good. And if the good you pick doesn't turn out to be the best good, pick again. It'll work out. Which church is talking about the world you live in? Which

message do you want your kids to hear? Which one gives you the mind-set you need to get out?

We sometimes describe conservative churches as otherworldly because they talk about supernatural realms. Their harsh theology, we worry, can justify harshness in this world. But the connection between harsh theology and a harsh world goes both ways. If you live in a harsh world, a church with a harsh theology is talking about your life. The church with the easy theology is the otherworldly one.

Of course, if you're so close to the maze's exit that you can already picture yourself in the high place surveying the big view, then the whole good-and-evil, heaven-and-hell theology doesn't sound so impressive. It's crazy. It's stupid. Almost as stupid as batting against Nolan Ryan without a helmet.

So this is what the question comes down to for me: Does Unitarian Universalism say something about life or just about life in the professional class? Can we speak in words that make sense everywhere, from the high place to the darkest, trickiest passages of the maze? Can we teach both subtle discernment and making yourself do the obvious hard

thing? Inspiration and self-control?

I hope so. Because otherwise we're a boutique religion. Otherwise we've surrendered the working class to conservative religion. My hunch, my faith—or maybe just what I need to believe to do what I do—is that we can find such a message, that there can be a truth that encompasses all situations, a wisdom big enough for all people.

Handout 13: A Description of Class Divisions in the United States

Excerpt from *Six Points on Class* by Michael Zweig in
More Unequal: Aspects of Class in the United States. (2007) Michael D. Yates Editor
Used with Permission from Monthly Review Press

We need to change the understanding of class in the United States, going from the division of “rich and poor” to the division of “worker and capitalist.”

When we popularize this more accurate and useful terminology, we will convey a better grasp of class dynamics and make it easier to address the continuing operation of racism and sexism in American society. We will also contribute to the construction of political movements capable of reversing the decades-old trend toward ever more consolidated corporate power at the expense of working people, regardless of race and gender.

We should identify the class divisions as between the working class, 62 percent of the U.S. Labor Force- a substantial majority of the American people – and the corporate elite (or capitalist class), who make up only 2 percent. In between these classes is the middle class (36 percent of the U.S. Labor Force).

The “Two Americas” John Edwards identified in 2004 and the “Two New Yorks” Fernando Ferrer identified in his 2005 mayoral bid refer to crucial realities that should be front and center in our political conversations and social policy. But these divisions are not best understood as simply the difference between “rich and poor.”

“Class” must be understood in terms of power rather than income, wealth, or lifestyle, although these do vary by class. Using power as the starting point allows us to see class as a dynamic relationship rather than as a static set of characteristics. Investigating class as a question of power also makes it possible to find the organic links among class, race, and gender. Looking at class in terms of income, wealth, lifestyle, or education separates it from race and gender, which are best understood as power relationships rather than inherent characteristics individuals possess.

The working class are those people with relatively little power at work—white-collar bank tellers, call-center workers, and cashiers; blue collar machinists, construction workers, and assembly line workers; pink-collar secretaries, nurses, and home-health care workers – skilled and unskilled, men and women of all races, nationalities, and sexual preferences. The working class are those with little personal control over the pace or content of their work and without supervisory control over the work lives of others. There are nearly 90 million working-class people in the U.S. labor force today. The United States has a substantial working-class majority.

The capitalist class are the corporate elite, senior executives,

and directors of large corporations, whose job it is to give strategic direction to the company, who interact with government agencies and other corporate executives while leaving the day-to-day operation of their company to intermediate levels of management and the workforce. In this they are different from small business owners, who tend to work beside their relatively few employees and manage them directly. These small business owners while literally capitalists in that they employ wage labor, are better understood to be in the middle class, as will be discussed below.

The ruling class is considerably smaller than the full capitalist class and includes non-capitalists as well. If we think of the ruling class as those who give strategic direction to the country as a whole, extending their own business or institution we can identify those corporate directors who sit on multiple boards, thus having an opportunity to coordinate capitalist activity across enterprises, and add to them the political elites of the three branches of national government and cultural and educational leaders who contribute to the furtherance of corporate interests. The entire U.S. ruling class could fit into the seats at Yankee Stadium (capacity: 54,000)

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The middle class are professionals, small business owners, and managerial and supervisory employees. They are best understood not as the middle of an income distribution but as living in the middle of the two polar classes in capitalist society. Their experiences have some aspects shared with the working class and some associated with the corporate elite.

Small business owners, for example, share with capitalists an interest in private property in business assets, defeated unions, and weak labor regulations. But they share with workers the work itself, great vulnerability to the capitalist market and government power, and difficulty securing adequate health insurance and retirement security.

Professionals are also caught in the idle of the crossfire in the principal class conflict between labor and capital. If we look at the experience over the last thirty years of professionals whose lives are closely intertwined with the working class—community college teachers, lawyers in public defender offices or with small general practices, doctors working in working-class neighborhoods, and public school teachers – their economic and social standing have deteriorated, along with the class they serve. But if we look at those whose lives are more fully involved in serving the capitalist class – corporate lawyers, financial service professionals, Big Four CPAs, and doctors who practice beyond the reach of HMOs' and insurance

companies' oversight—these professionals have risen in fortune with the class they serve, albeit to a lesser extent, absolutely and proportionately.

Professionals in most part of the academic community (especially colleges closely linked to working-class constituencies) are experiencing the pain of corporate pressure as working-class people do. In the process, many academic jobs have been degraded. They are no longer relatively secure tenure-track middle-class positions, but adjunct and visitor positions staffed by a growing second tier of people working at will with virtually no professional standing, a new academic working class.

"Working class" is best understood differently from the Department of Labor (DOL) category "production and non-supervisory" employee. This DOL category includes every employee who is not a supervisor, like most professors and other middle-class professionals working for a salary. However, lumping all employees who have no supervisory power over others into the working class masks the real differences in social position that professional people enjoy, beleaguered as they may be. Appreciating the contradictory class location of professional and other middle-class employees helps to understand the political vicissitudes characteristic of this section of the population and suggests ways of approaching them as allies to working-class politics.

The usual talk of a mass middle class with some rich and poor at the fringes is deeply misleading and contributes to two central problems in American politics.

We get trapped in confusions about race and lose sight of class. In the popular imagination and in political campaign speeches "the poor" usually stand for "black and Hispanic" or "minority." But in the United States two-thirds of all poor people are white and three-quarters if all black people are not poor. Racism continues to operate and accounts for the fact that poverty is experienced disproportionately among blacks and Hispanics (and among women because of sexism). But we should not allow their comparatively heavy burden to blind us to the full realities of poverty in America.

Poverty is something that happens to the working class. Most poor people in the United States are in families where the adults experience periodic spells of unemployment or work only part-time or at low wages. A family with two wage earners, one year-round full-time and one year-round half-time, each earning minimum wage, does not make enough to bring a family of three out of poverty. To address and reverse poverty we need to improve the conditions working-class people experience. The "underclass"—people entirely marginalized from the legal economy—is only a small fraction of the poor and does not characterize most poor people. The "underclass" has special needs which must

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be understood and addressed, but a majority of the poor are not in this "underclass"—they are working-class people experiencing hard times.

Michael Zweig is white and teaches economics and is director of the Center for Study of Working Class Life at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He is the author of *The Working Class Majority: America's Best Kept Secret* (2000) and the editor of *What's Class got to do with it? American Society in the Twenty-first Century* (2004).

SUMMARY NOTES

by Lee Molgaard

This article differs in describing class from some of the other readings, with "worker" and "capitalist" (rather than "rich" and "poor") being the focus.

The 4 Classes in America, listed below from most powerful to least powerful, are:

Corporate Elite
Less than 54,000 persons, .01674%;
U.S. Population=322,583,006

Capitalist Class
2% (including Corporate Elite)

Middle Class
36% of Labor Force

Working Class
62% of Labor Force

"Class must be understood in terms of POWER rather than income, wealth, or lifestyle, although these do vary by class."

Capitalist Class (2%) include the Corporate Elite (.01674%); senior executives, directors of large corporations. They are the ones that give strategic direction to their companies and interact with governmental agencies, leaving day-to-day operations to lower management. Small business owners are middle class in that the owners work side-by-side with workers daily.

This class gives strategic direction to the country as a whole. Members sit on multiple boards; Add to them the political elites, cultural and educational elites who all further corporate interests and you have the 54,000 elite.

Middle Class 36% are professionals, small business owners, managerial and supervisory employees. They are not middle income but caught in the middle between the capitalist and working classes. These would include university faculty, medical professionals who may enjoy economic strength but suffer with the working class especially if they are located in "working class" communities.

Working Class, 62%, are those with relatively little POWER at work: white-collar, blue-collar, assemble line, skilled and unskilled workers of all races, nationalities and sexual preferences. They have little control over the pace or content and no

supervisory control over their work lives or that of others.

There are 90 million Working Class people today. U.S. has a substantial Working Class majority.

Poverty is something that happens to the Working Class. Losing a job is a major cause of poverty. Whites make up the largest group in poverty. 2/3 of impoverished are white; 3/4 of blacks are NOT impoverished. 13% of the U.S. population is black.

To address and reverse poverty we need to improve the conditions Working Class people experience.

Underclass is the group we often clearly see as impoverished. They are people entirely marginalized and fortunately are only a small fraction of the population that are poor. They have special needs which must be understood and addressed in ways often different from the impoverished Working Class. The majority of the poor are not in this class, they are Working Class hit by hard times.

Handout 14: Domains for Possible Congregational Classism

Every organization is likely to have practices and policies that reflect classism in society. Each domain of congregational life can be examined in terms of whether it could have a classist impact. Changes can be made to reduce classism and move toward greater inclusiveness of people from all class backgrounds. The questions below are not necessarily to imply that one way is the best, but to get you thinking about possible impacts.

Welcoming New People

- What brings new people to your congregation? How do they find out about you?
- How are people greeted when they come?
 - What types of questions are asked?
 - What types of information is shared?
- Is the congregation accessible by public transportation and is parking adequate?
- What do people see on the walls? What type of art, photographs or written messages are present? What family structures are visually represented?
- What types of clothing and styles might people see?
- What level of language is in brochures, newsletters, emails.
- Are new people asked to contribute financially right away, soon, or not at all?
- How do people join the congregation?
- Can children be in the service with parents on the first visit? Are parents welcome to stay in the nursery or Religious Education on the first visit?

The Communal Observance (worship)

- What type of music is favored? Is music professional, amateur, participatory?
- Who leads or participates in the service?
- Does the sermon assume prior knowledge of certain things? Use acronyms? What level of language is used?
- How is the offertory handled?

Social Space Before and After communal events

- What types of refreshments are offered? Are they free or is a donation asked for?
- What types of humor and voice volume are acceptable?
- Who gets asked to do social things afterward or outside of congregation events?
- What eateries or coffee shops do members tend to gather at outside the congregation?
- Are there potlucks offered, communal meals, are there fees for meals or concerts?
- If there are fees, are certain members always volunteering in order to have fees waived and what impact does that have?

Domains for Possible Congregational Classism page 2

Children and Youth

- Is there a fee for participation in religious education or childcare?
- What are the behavioral rules? For example, are children allowed to run around?
- Is clothing available so all children can participate in activities outside?
- Is there funding for leadership and oversight of youth activities?
- Are there costs or fundraising demands on youth to participate in activities?
- Is childcare for events, meetings or adult religious education funded by the congregation or charged?

Leadership and Decision making

- How are leaders chosen?
- Who serves on the board? Who serves as committee chairs?
- How are times and dates set for volunteer work?
- Who does most of the volunteering?
- How are meetings structured to ensure all voices are heard?
- Whose voices seem to be heard more or less than others?
- How are decisions made? How are decisions communicated?
- Who gets thanked and praised, and who does not?

Social Justice Work

- What is the philosophy or attitude underlying the social justice work?
- Are you providing services or funds to people or organizing with people?
- Is social justice work funded in your budget?

Stewardship/Fundraising and Finances

- Who controls whether a fundraiser can occur at the building or in the congregation?
- How many fundraisers are occurring in your communal space?
- How are expectations for giving set and communicated?
- Is there a required financial contribution to maintain voting membership?
- Are some members recognized more than others for financial giving?
- Where is money spent in the budget?

Connections to regional and national Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA)

- Who gets to participate at regional and national levels?
- Is funding provided for people to attend distant events?
- Is money from the budget given to regional and national UUA organizations?

Handout 15: Congregational Classism Worksheet

Based on work by Class Action www.classism.org

The Domain you are studying	Areas for Concern	Possible Action Steps

Handout 16: Cross Class Organizing

Notes from from *Class Matters :Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle-Class Activists*. 2nd Edition. By Betsy Leondar-Wright (2014) Class Action, www.classism.org Used with permission.

The First Principle of Movement Building

Anyone who steps out of political passivity to give time to any progressive effort deserves to be honored, appreciated, and treated with complete respect. Disagreements, mistakes, and oppressive behavior call for supportive feedback; they are not justification for abandoning a respectful stance. Solidarity is our only strength. Betsy Leondar-Wright

As it relates to activists working together: "I put the following class culture generalizations forward humbly, generalizing primarily about activists and expecting contradictory evidence from others' experience to enrich them. My goal in risking generalizations is to make visible some class-culture-based coalition behaviors and dynamics that are often invisible." (17)

Class culture differences emerge from life experiences such as whether steady work is not attainable, inevitable, or optional, whether one has access to, the expectation of and the experience of getting a four year college degree, and whether people stay in the same community or move a lot.

Ways members of class groups may approach working in social change organizations.

Low Income	Working & Lower Middle Class	Professional Middle Class	Owning Class
Thinking outside the box, less convention bound, discouraged by hardship or motivated by anger	Rooted, pragmatic steady workers	Unrooted, competitive steady workers	Thinking outside the box, less convention-bound, unrooted, entitled

Table Terms Defined

Rooted – living where you grew up and strong ethnic and/or religious identities

Pragmatic – dealing with things realistically based on practical rather than theoretical considerations. Using experience as a base of information

Competitive – fostered by competing for and in colleges - self worth may depend on feeling smarter than other people – "a major obstacle to cross-class alliance building!" (23)

Entitled – a sense of empowerment to create change, sometimes self funded, which can lead to less feedback and less constraints. This sense can also include arrogance. "Low income activists' goods ideas too often go nowhere; owning class activists' bad ideas too often don't flop." 21

Steady work versus not steady work "fosters pride in our pragmatism and in our disciplined work habits"... "Lacking the expectation and experience of steady work (low income and owning class) leads people to be unconventional and to think outside the box (i.e. creative)

Combining the gifts of all class cultures

"To be able to organize successfully, low-income and working-class activists need more of the resources they are short on: money, decision-making power, skills, and information. Middle-class and owning-class activists need to share their resources and learn to follow the leadership of those without class privilege. And we need to realize that our motivation to be allies is not some kind of nice political correctness, but rather to increase the size and effectiveness of the movements we care about." (23)

Handout 17: On being a middle-class Ally

Notes from from *Class Matters :Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle-Class Activists*. 2nd Edition. By Betsy Leondar-Wright (2014) Class Action, www.classism.org

Tips for middle-class activists working with other class groups

In this workshop we do not assume that all participants are from the middle class. However, the book this material comes from was written for middle class activists.

- Put relationships first – allow time for story telling
- Talk less, listen more
- Don't let guilt make you foolish –use your judgment
- Hang in and keep going back
- Support working class issues and be knowledgeable about class issues
- Watch your language – use accessible language and don't correct other's spoken grammar
- Use your privilege strategically
- Have a little humility
- Don't "call people out" publically on their isms, approach them educationally
- Let go of control. A trend is the group with the most resources takes control
- Recognize poverty and working-class people's constraints
- Read Howard Zinn's *The People's History of the United States* and other books about low-income revolts, labor struggles, and life stories.
- Join Jobs with Justice (www.jwj.org) and read their alerts about local labor struggles that need support. Act on them when you can.
- Join the email list for Class Action (www.classism.org) (from SZ)
- Join 9to5 – for Working Women's issues (www.9to5.org) (from SZ)

To learn more detail about these items, see *Class Matters* pp. 132-138, 145.

On the Ally's Balancing Act:

People recognize that it is a balancing act to be an effective ally

Here is a helpful summary from Dorian Warren.

Dorian Warren is an African American from a working class background. He was a graduate student in Political Science at Yale University when quoted for this book. He is currently an Associate Professor of Political Science and International and Public Affairs at Columbia University in New York.

He wrote: " It's a tricky balance. I don't think middle-class people should be silent, because if we do have some skills or insights of strategies, I think we should put them on the table. That doesn't mean that our way is what will happen. But we should be able to contribute, and say 'what about this, what about that?' I do think it is a hard balance to use our skills in a way that is ethical and that is not exercising power by virtue of our class status. It is a balancing act to believe that people can decide for themselves, to critically interrogate your power relations, and not to lose your critical faculties." (p 145)

Handout 18: NEXT STEPS!!!

Joint Statement on Raising the Minimum Wage - A Moral Imperative

On July 18, 2013, The Rev. Peter Morales, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA), and the Rev. Bill Schulz, president and CEO of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), have issued this joint statement in support of legislation to raise minimum wages in the United States:

We've been told we're in the middle of an economic recovery. But the truth is that while the stock market is closing at unprecedented highs, workers who make minimum wage are not recovering — they're barely putting food on the table. Millions of low-wage workers in our country work hard day in and day out and still can't afford life's basic necessities. They are the restaurant servers feeding us, the people caring for our elderly or sick loved ones, and the workers keeping our buildings clean. They are our brothers, mothers, friends, congregants, and community members — and they are suffering silently, choosing between buying food, getting to work, and paying the rent.

This is an outrage that our moral values insist be remedied. And there is a simple common-sense solution: we must raise the federal minimum wage to a living wage.

How can we expect hardworking people to support themselves and their families on \$7.25 an hour? That's just \$15,080 a year for a full-time worker, which is \$3,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. While minimum wage has stagnated and left workers

further and further behind, income inequality is now at an all-time high. The CEOs of the 500 largest U.S. companies make an average salary of \$10.5 million.

It is time to ask that everyone share in corporate success, not just a handful of executives. As people of faith, we believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and raising the minimum wage is vital in ensuring that dignity.

We believe in models in which employers treat their workers as human beings rather than as just another cost of doing business. We believe in putting purchasing power back into the hands of workers, who will spend those dollars in their local communities. We believe in an economy that is strong because workers have enough to live on and create demand for business. Better wages mean a real recovery: sustainable jobs, thriving families, and flourishing economies.

Legislation that raises the minimum wage is an important part of creating this vision. We will hold our legislators to the highest standard in pressing for laws that do the following:

- Raise the minimum wage closer to a living wage, ensuring working families can meet their basic needs with dignity
- Index the minimum wage to inflation, so that worker purchasing power is no longer eroded as a result of Congressional inaction
- Significantly increase the minimum wage for tipped employees, which currently is an abominable \$2.13 an hour, and anchor it to at least 70 percent of the regular minimum wage

This is more than a political issue — it is a moral imperative. And legislation is just the starting point. We must act as our faith dictates; we must be true to the values that we hold dear.

We stand in solidarity with people throughout the country struggling to survive on minimum wage. We call upon all people of faith to join us. And we come together to urge this: stop making workers pay the price for corporate greed — raise the minimum wage!

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Additional notes from S. Zilber

The federal minimum wage is \$7.25. Some state minimum wages are going up in 2015. 2014: Lowest state wage is Wyoming \$5.15 and highest is \$9.32 in Washington state. Some are exempt from the minimum wage. These include workers for tips and those with disabilities. You can go to this website and print off the living wage charts for your county as handouts for your future work on living wages. <http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

Writings on or by UUs about Class

Conversations on Race, Class and Theology Advance Congregational Dialogues on Urban Issues:
www.uua.org/multiculturalism/history/urbanministries/20522.shtml

Unafraid of the Dark: A Memoir by Rosemary L. Bray
Book by UU minister who grew up in poverty and on welfare

Elite: Uncovering Classism in Unitarian and Universalist History by Mark W. Harris
Available for \$10 at the UUA Bookstore www.uuabookstore.org

Elite: Uncovering Classism in Unitarian and Universalist History Discussion Guide
by Gail Forsyth-Vail and Susan Dana Lawrence
www.uua.org/documents/skinner/elite_discussion.pdf

From *UU World*: www.uuworld.org

Faith of the Few? (2011) by Mark W. Harris
Not My Father's Religion (Fall 2007) by Doug Muder

Documentaries and online videos recommended by S. Zilber

- *Inequality for All* (free)
- *The End of Poverty?* (free: about global issues)
- *People Like Us*
- *A Place at the Table*
- *Poor Kids*
- *Unnatural Causes*
- *Waging a Living*
- *Tavis Talks panel*
www.tavistalks.com/remakingamerica/
- *Siebel Scholars: Class in America*
www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEdY2OZXVd4

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Review the **UUA Social Justice Empowerment Program Handbook**
www.uua.org/documents/aw/sje_handbook.pdf

Get Involved with UU Class Conversations!

www.uuclassconversations.org

Share your class story and stories about class in your UU experiences. UU Class Conversations is available for ongoing consultation with your congregation or organization.

Bring in a workshop from UU Class Conversations. Descriptions follow Class Action materials.

Join the Unitarian Universalists for Class Awareness facebook group.

www.facebook.com/groups/uusforclassawareness/

Join UU's for a Just Economic Community www.uujec.com

Classism materials available from Class Action

www.classism.org/store

Class Action is available to provide workshops for non-UU audiences.

New! *Class Lives: Stories from Across Our Economic Divide*

Missing Class: Strengthening Social Movement Groups by Seeing Class Cultures

New book by Betsy Leondar-Wright describes activist class culture differences. Learn how to solve common group problems by tapping the gifts of all classes.

Reading Classes: On Culture and Classism in America

by Barbara Jensen

Created Equal - High school/middle school curriculum on class and classism

Cross-Class Dialogue Manual

Class Action's founders guide others to replicate their transformative experience

99 to 1: How Wealth Inequality is Wrecking the World and What We Can Do About It
by Chuck Collins

The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide

Book by Meizhu Lui, Barbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer, and Rebecca Adamson



NEXT STEPS!!! page 4 of 4

UU Class Conversations currently offers three workshops *www.uuclassconversations.org*

Our facilitators come to your congregation or organization in order to ensure the maximum number of participants. We have seen that the work to build an institution free of classism is more robust when more congregation or organization members are involved.

Organizing for Change: Addressing Classism in Your Faith Community

Six-Hour Workshop

This full-day workshop provides an opportunity explore the implications of class and classism and begin the process of becoming less classist and more class inclusive, and learning to organize more effectively across class lines.

Part 1 - The first part of the workshop will help participants become familiar with the concepts of class and classism and better understand their own class backgrounds. Strengths and challenges of each class background will be identified and participants will develop language, concepts, and strategies to bridge class differences. We will discover the intersection between class, race and other issues of diversity and explore the role of classism in escalating inequality.

Part 2 - The workshop will also help participants develop skills needed to begin to shift their faith community toward greater awareness of class and classism by examining how classism affects their group's written and unwritten policies and practices. Strategies for change will help groups begin the process of organizing for change both internally and in their social justice work in the wider community.

Facing Class and Classism

Three-hour Workshop

The first half-day (or evening) workshop will help participants become familiar with the concepts of class and classism and better understand their own class backgrounds. Strengths and challenges of each class background will be identified and participants helped to develop language, concepts, and strategies to bridge class differences. We will illuminate the intersection between class and race and other issues of diversity and explore the role of classism in escalating inequality.

Tools for Change

Three-Hour Workshop

The second half-day (or evening) workshop will help participants develop skills needed to begin to shift their faith community toward greater awareness of class and classism by examining how classism shows up in their group's written and unwritten policies and practices. Strategies for change will be presented and an opportunity provided to begin the process of organizing for change both within the group and in their social justice work in the wider community.

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Examples of Social Class Socialization Messages Cut into strips.

From William Liu 2011 *Social Class and Classism in the Helping Professions* pgs 212-213

Be an independent person and don't rely on anyone

You have to work with others to succeed

Spend your money while you have it

You have to spend or invest to succeed

Saving is important

Don't be gaudy (flashy is trashy)

Flaunt it if you got it

You should always strive for upward mobility

You should be happy with what you've got

If you fail, it's because you are lazy, but if I fail, it's because the system is unfair

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Classism examples: cut apart and put on cards

You may give these sheets out if participants ask for them after the workshop.

Downward Classism Example #1 “Our church was raising funds for new chairs for the sanctuary. Each chair cost \$110. Many of us could not afford that much especially at Christmas. A board member who is independently wealthy stuck a chair in the lobby with a bow and her name on it to show that she had bought a chair. We eventually figured out how to contribute, but the chair sat in the lobby for weeks as a reminder of the class divide in our church.”

Downward Classism Example #2 A friend of mine could not attend my church due to transportation issues in my large city. She instead went to the UU church downtown and attended for several months with her three children. In the spring, she was registering the kids for fall Religious Education and it was only then that she learned there would be fees totaling \$150. She said that was a lot of money for her and was told there may be scholarships. She felt very embarrassed, and sad. I encouraged her to hang in there as she liked the church and I made a call on her behalf and it has worked out for her family to go there. (original text modified for length)

Downward Classism Example #3 “I have dealt with mental illness for many years and as a result have not been able to establish a real career. I’ve been taking classes at my local university for the past 6 years, and have worked on-and-off part time for the past 10 years. My latest position ended very recently. At camp I feel a little bit uncomfortable when people ask what I do. When I respond I talk as though my part-time work is ongoing, and I say that I am a university student without mentioning that I am taking a minimum number of credits.” Curriculum note: UU members should be trained to not ask about occupation or job as a first thing when meeting visitors to reduce classist impact.

Downward Classism Example #4 Community Activist Linda Stout, a white woman, wrote the book *Bridging the Class Divide*, which was published by the UU press- Beacon Press. She grew up in poverty to later develop her own very successful community organization. She had to drop out of college because the college raised room and board and would not offer her additional financial aid. She is angry at the school.

“I was so angry with them, and I still am. For years, I thought it was somehow my fault that I didn’t stay in school. When I tell middle-class folks this story, they ask “Why didn’t you do this?...But at that time I did not know what other options were. I believed I had no other options available to me.” “I often define poverty as a lack of options”. Middle-class people “don’t understand that it is a privilege to have options, and that a lot of people don’t have that privilege”. “They also cannot understand the intense pain and shame of not having those options available to you, and as a result, the sense of being a failure that it instills in you”. 25

Classism examples page 2 of 4

Upward Class Prejudice Example #5 “A former student of mine went to work at a prison as a psychologist. He was outnumbered by other workers who called him an “egghead” and socially excluded him.”

Upward Class Prejudice Example #6 “The staff at the Bus Riders Union is mostly college-educated people of color, though most of them grew up working-class. Sometimes there’s resentment of them by certain Latinos on the buses, particularly of Chicanos whose Spanish isn’t as good. “Who are you to come here educated and not speaking my language?” is the attitude. ...Class tension comes out as ethnic tension. Manuel Criollo (p 32 Class Matters)

Upward Class Prejudice Example #7 “I was concerned when a member of my congregation stewardship committee said that if someone could pledge \$10,000 to our operating fund, it should be no big deal for her to give another \$2000 to make up for a shortfall in our campaign. I felt this assumed that this member had not made any sacrifices to make this pledge, and that this person had unlimited resources.”

Within-Class Classism Example #8 “Gettin’ above your raisin’” is a phrase I’ve heard all my life. The notion is you want to change social classes. You try to change social classes, there’s this feeling that you’re forsaking the family, you’re forsaking place, you’re forgetting where you came from...and here’s this real fear that if you leave, that you’ll become ashamed of where you came from. — Michael Birdwell, a white man, history professor, Tennessee Technological University.

[quotation from an interview Louis Alvarez of New American Media conducted with Michael Birdwell for the PBS documentary "People Like Us".]

(The movie *People Like Us* has a segment your group could view in the future called "Don't Get Above Your Raisin," in which Dana Felty, a rural Kentuckian who moved to Washington D.C., talks about being a rural girl in living in Washington D.C. and her family member’s reactions and her difficulty fitting in either place.)

Within-Class Classism Example #9 “Our bridging ceremony for students graduating from high school included the students sharing what they would be doing after high school, and for many it has meant sharing where they are going to college.” A better approach is shared by Sarah Gibb Millspaugh on the Unitarian Universalists for Class Awareness Facebook page : “I was serving a congregation where it was not customary to say anything about where the students were going to college if they were. The senior reflections in the service were about their faith, who they were, and the values they were carrying with them.”

Classism examples page 3 of 4

Internalized Classism Example #10 Jim Bonilla grew up as a working class legally blind Puerto Rican and became a college professor. He wrote: "My internalized classism can be triggered by the fear that my writing or research will be criticized as "not scholarly enough." The ever-present dread that someday I'll be found out and judged as an impostor in the court of higher education is just below the surface. Even after twenty plus years in the ivory tower, the sense that someday I'll be found out and judged as not worthy lingers." (120 Class Lives) Used with permission.

Internalized Classism Example #11 Michael Yates, a white man, was born in 1946 in a mining town. He states: "It is difficult to overstate the power of fear and poverty in shaping how working men and women think and act. Fear of losing a job. Fear of not finding a job. Fear of being late with bill payments. Fear of the boss's wrath. Fear your house might burn down. Fear your kids will get hurt. I inherited these emotions. I have a PhD and have always had a job that brings forth instant respect from others. Yet I have a deep-seated lack of confidence and anxiety in the face of authority. I can confront the powerful in a group, even if I am a leader of it, but as an individual, I hate any kind of confrontation with authority and always wonder if I have the right to confront. I prefer to remain in the background, to be invisible."

Internalized Classism Example #12 Arab-American Joe Kadi, in *Thinking Class: Sketches from a Cultural Worker* (1996), has dedicated a whole chapter to "Stupidity" Deconstructed". He writes: "Many mechanisms have been created in this rigidly defined class-structured society to keep poor people in our place... One such message is the constant cross-racial image of the worker as stupid. ... force fed images and words from TV shows, newspapers, magazines and movies... I grew up believing we're thick-skinned, slow witted, impervious to pain, boring. ... It is painful to acknowledge the fact that some of our brains have been fried. Not stupid from birth, but fried from decades of the most boring, idiotic, repetitive work imaginable. I've done it. I fought every minute to keep my mind away from the hovering void.

Stupid. They marked my family as stupid, and this confused me. My aunt went from grade school education to neighborhood CPA; she knew all the deductions, could add numbers ridiculously quickly and did everyone's taxes for free. My grandfather, literate in three languages, poor, steered Lebanese immigrants through the morass of landlords, bosses, lawyers. My fathers and uncles, with their tenth grade educations, filled out daily crossword puzzles with pens and painstakingly planned, calculated, measured, added rooms on small houses with wiring, plumbing, support beams, ceilings, floor tiles, never a 16th of an inch out." pp.49-50 (Joe published his book under the name Joanna Kadi in 1996)

Classism examples page 4 of 4

Internalized Classism Example #13 Barbara Jensen shared how she moved out of internal classism by observing her college educated peers and concluding “It wasn’t that they were smarter, or better, it was that they had had privileges I had not. I moved away from a sense of individual shame, and blame, to seeing class as cultural, not just economic injustice.” P22 She adds “I also suggest that class has parceled out different aspects of humanity to different groups; everyone loses and gains something important as a result.” P26

Internalized Classism Example #14 At the cultural level, it is the ways in which classism is manifested through our cultural norms and practices, often found in the ideology behind something. For example, what counts as “good art”?

Joe Kadi has something to say about that: “Those in power in society have always asserted that art available to everyone isn’t much good.” P21. She described how her Aunt Rose taught others a dance called the debke, an Arab folk dance, and contrasts that to ballet. She stated. “In a sense, differences between debke and ballet generally capture differences between art/culture created and engaged in by rich people and poor people. Poor people are looking for group participation; rich people often chase performance and star status. Ballet dancers train for years in hopes of performing in high-priced venues; debke dances and two- steppers are usually happy dancing once a week with friends.” P24

SZ: The movie Billy Elliot presents ballet as a route into a higher social class in Britain.

Workshop Materials for Facilitators
Module 4 - Congregational Classism Activity

Welcoming New People

Workshop Materials for Facilitators
Module 4 - Congregational Classism Activity

Communal Observance/ Worship

Workshop Materials for Facilitators
Module 4 - Congregational Classism Activity

Social Space

Workshop Materials for Facilitators
Module 4 - Congregational Classism Activity

Children and Youth

Leadership and Decision Making

Workshop Materials for Facilitators
Module 4 - Congregational Classism Activity

Social Justice Work

Workshop Materials for Facilitators
Module 4 - Congregational Classism Activity

Stewardship, Fundraising and Finances

Workshop Materials for Facilitators
Module 4 - Congregational Classism Activity

Connections to the Regional and National UUA

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 1

“ Social class is not a big deal to me. I don't pay attention to it much. People get what they deserve. There is some unfairness in the system, but that is unavoidable. The people on top have earned what they have and the poor need to work harder or manage their money better.”
(Unawareness)

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 2

“ I can see that there are social class differences and am not sure what to make of it. It bothers me. How did I get into this social class status? All my friends are the same class status as me. It seems that some classes are “in” and some are “out”.
(Questioning)

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 3 (from position of privilege)

"It is too much trouble to figure all the social class stuff out. I seek out materials and friends that will support my right to be in my social class position but am also unsure what information I can trust. I am going to ignore these issues and focus on my day to day life." (Exploration and Justification)

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 4

Representing low income

“There are powerful forces, much greater than me, that have created unfairness in my life. I cannot escape this poverty. People should not try to get “above their raisin” and get uppity. There are rich and poor and society is made to make the rich richer and the poor poorer”. (Despair)

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 4

Representing high income

" I have earned what I have and deserve any privileges I have. Because this world can't be changed, I have to look out for myself and my family. Our society is just and inequality is a natural product of how people behave."

(The World is Just)

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 5

“ I can't believe the level of inequality in this nation and world! Why won't others wake up?! I have joined “radical group” to address these issues but have not had a chance to read or think about these issues much but I want to be active now and learn as I go. I do not believe I have contributed to inequality- it is all other's fault- society's fault. We need to fight the oppressors on behalf of the oppressed. We need to take revolutionary action and change the whole system.” (Anger and Frustration)

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 6

“ I have learned a lot now about class and classism and have felt humbled to learn that my own actions have had negative impacts on others, sometimes from another “ism”. I will try to put myself in situations that expose me to people from different classes. I need to learn more about my own social class experience to prepare to do sensitive community action and unlearn my “isms”. I am going to try to make a difference in my local community to learn more about how change can happen from others already doing this work and develop my skills. Society will probably be changed by people working in smaller contexts. “
(Reinvestment)

Workshop Materials for Facilitators

Reader's Theater: Stages of Social Class and Classism Awareness

Stage 7

“ I have been working with a group that does grass roots community activism for a while now and have learned a lot. I keep up my awareness by seeking out readings and other experiences that keep me up to date on class issues. I pay attention to how I negotiate power and privilege in my life. I have made new friends from other social classes and have learned what we all uniquely bring to the cause. Sometimes I still say or do “ist” things and I get anxious about my negative impact on others and that I will be told I shouldn't be doing this work. I have learned about some cultural differences and to be more flexible so I can be with different groups. I believe that society is largely unjust, classist, and marginalizing of people from poverty and the poor. The whole of society cannot be changed immediately, but it is important to be part of or start a process of change.” (Engagement)

FLIPCHART 1

**Class Conscious: Congregations:
Class and Classism in UU Life**

Presenter Name(s)

TIME:

FLIPCHART 2

- **affirm the inherent worth of every person**
- **value compassion, justice and equity in human relations, and**
- **support the use of democratic processes in our congregations and society**

Looking Inward

Looking Outward

Inclusivity in our Congregations

Social justice Actions

FLIPCHART 3

Covenant

- **Share from life experience, use I statements**
- **Listen deeply and assume good intentions**
- **Participate and ensure other's participation**
- **It's OK to say "pass" to reading out loud or sharing**
- **All questions are welcome**
- **Put away cell phones and laptops**
- **Confidentiality**
- **Anything else?**

FLIPCHART 4

Workshop Goals

- 1. Increase your self-awareness of your own class experience**
- 2. Increase sensitivity to other's class experiences.**
- 3. Learn about forms of classism**
- 4. Examine the congregation's policies and culture for possible classism**
- 5. Prepare for action towards a congregation truer to UU values**

FLIPCHART 5

EMOTIONS CLASS ELICITS

PITY

PRIDE

DISGUST

ENVY

SHAME

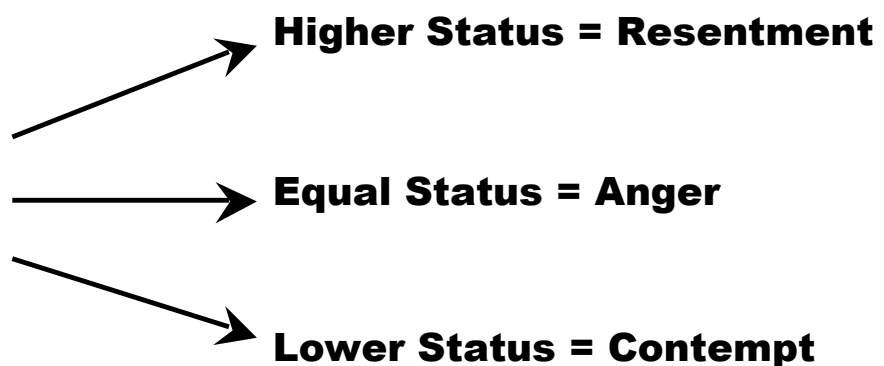
GUILT

ENTITLEMENT

ANGER/RESENTMENT

CONTEMPT

**Person Making
Judgment**



FLIPCHART 6

Membership in UUA is flat

High numbers religiously unaffiliated/spiritual but not religious

They value some aspects of religious communities

They are not actively looking for one

They share some UU values

Class Conscious Evaluation Form Module 1

Name (optional): _____

What I learned from this workshop module was...

A meaningful moment for me in this session was...

Comment on the balance and blend of formats:

Please describe any changes you feel would improve future versions:

If you were going to recommend this program to someone else, what would you say?

Any feedback for the facilitator(s)?

I give permission to use my comments in Class Conscious promotional materials: ___ Yes ___ No

**Thank you for taking the time to share your ideas.
Your facilitators and the curriculum developer may make changes based on your input.
Facilitator: Mail forms to Suzanne Zilber, 600 5th St., Ste 302, Ames, IA 50010**

Class Conscious Evaluation Form Module 2

Name (optional): _____

What I learned from this workshop module was...

A meaningful moment for me in this session was...

Comment on the balance and blend of formats:

Please describe any changes you feel would improve future versions:

If you were going to recommend this program to someone else, what would you say?

Any feedback for the facilitator(s)?

I give permission to use my comments in Class Conscious promotional materials: ___ Yes ___ No

**Thank you for taking the time to share your ideas.
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Class Conscious Evaluation Form Module 3

Name (optional): _____

What I learned from this workshop module was...

A meaningful moment for me in this session was...

Comment on the balance and blend of formats:

Please describe any changes you feel would improve future versions:

If you were going to recommend this program to someone else, what would you say?

Any feedback for the facilitator(s)?

I give permission to use my comments in Class Conscious promotional materials: ___ Yes ___ No

**Thank you for taking the time to share your ideas.
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Facilitator: Mail forms to Suzanne Zilber, 600 5th St., Ste 302, Ames, IA 50010**

Class Conscious Evaluation Form Module 4

Name (optional): _____

What I learned from this workshop module was...

A meaningful moment for me in this session was...

Comment on the balance and blend of formats:

Please describe any changes you feel would improve future versions:

If you were going to recommend this program to someone else, what would you say?

Any feedback for the facilitator(s)?

I give permission to use my comments in Class Conscious promotional materials: ___ Yes ___ No

**Thank you for taking the time to share your ideas.
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Facilitator: Mail forms to Suzanne Zilber, 600 5th St., Ste 302, Ames, IA 50010**

Class Conscious Evaluation Form Module 5

Name (optional): _____

What I learned from this workshop module was...

A meaningful moment for me in this session was...

Comment on the balance and blend of formats:

Please describe any changes you feel would improve future versions:

If you were going to recommend this program to someone else, what would you say?

Any feedback for the facilitator(s)?

I give permission to use my comments in Class Conscious promotional materials: ___ Yes ___ No

**Thank you for taking the time to share your ideas.
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Facilitator: Mail forms to Suzanne Zilber, 600 5th St., Ste 302, Ames, IA 50010**

Sample Flyer

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life

Saturday, October 4
12:45 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Thursday October 9
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Thursday October 16
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

**Channing Hall, First
Unitarian Church of Des
Moines**

**Facilitator: Linda Barnes,
Intern Minister**

Suzanne Zilber, the author of the workshop materials, is a psychologist and 25 years a UU. The UUA has recommended this workshop in the Study guide for the Escalating Inequality Congregational Study Action Issue. Suzanne is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ames.

We need at least 10 people to attend to make this most effective, so please pre-register and encourage someone to attend with you.

Drinks and cookies will be provided.

Join congregation members to explore how socio-economic class influences our values, coping styles, and expectations about others. A combination of self reflection, small group sharing, large group discussion and videos will be provided. We will review more specifically how we can make our congregation an even more welcoming place for people of all social class backgrounds.

Comments about social class issues in congregational life made at a workshop at the UU Fellowship in Ames:

- I liked it when people greeted me with the question of why I came to the congregation to visit and did not ask what I did for a living.
- I am uncomfortable with the water communion because it emphasizes that some people have resources to travel that not everyone has.
- Our silent auction offers dinners that are too expensive for many, so socializing at those events is limited to one social class. Rather than eliminating them, we added in less expensive events so more can participate.
- A lot of the membership goes regularly after services to this one restaurant that sells expensive "yuppy" food that I am not interested in. I wish that there was more flexibility to meet at other places.

Register online at <http://ucdsm.org/workshops>

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life Suzanne Zilber, Ph.D. Ames, Iowa classaware@gmail.com 515-232-5340 ©2015

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life High School Youth Program

Activities for Youth related to Social Class and Privilege

Baby Egg

by Faye Reimers (market supplies modified by Suzanne)

Divide group into 3 groups of 3-5 kids each. You can expand this for larger groups.

Distribute index card voucher with amount hidden that each group will have to work with: High SES=\$300, middle SES=\$150 low SES= \$75
(do not tell them what group they are assigned to)

Tell students their goal is to purchase what they need to assure that their embryo or baby will have the best life has to offer in regard to safety and well being.

The amounts below were originally for 9 groups (45 youth) so you may want less.

Create market :

5 padded mailers	\$100 each
6 newborn size disposable diapers	\$75 each
6 pieces bubble wrap	\$75
12 Newspaper sections	\$25
20 Pieces of String	\$5

Before purchasing begins, have all economic groups preview merchandise for sale. Then give each economic group one raw egg to represent the “baby” they are attempting to shield from harm. Have them name the baby. Allow the students from the highest income groups to make all of their purchases first. Next, the middle income, and last the lower income group can purchase from whatever merchandise is left and/or they can afford.

You may want to play music during the time that some groups are just sitting and waiting their turn.

Instruct all groups to protect their raw egg with their supplies from the market. After they have had time to wrap their eggs to shield them from harm, ask a representative from each group to stand on a balcony and drop their egg to the ground where the rest of you will be standing. Have a facilitator on the ground to unwrap the eggs.

Discuss thoughts or emotions that this exercise brought up. Point out truths about difficulties living in poverty represented and how social resources or other noncapital resources helped some “babies” survive. You can also point out that careless or neglectful high income parents can sometimes have “babies” that break, which is what happened with the Midwest UU Summer Assembly group.

Class Conscious:
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515-232-5340
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Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life High School Youth Program

Activities for Youth related to Social Class and Privilege

Class Privilege Exercise

(adapted by Jumea Shorter-Gooden) and also items from working and middle class women in Sonoma County and Suzanne Zilber.

Exercise works best with 8-35 participants

Put a pile/bowl of some small item (like plastic beads) in the middle of the group (Will need approximately 15 items per participant).

Say to the group:

1. I will read a list of privileges one at a time.
2. If the privilege applies to you, you may take a bead (item) from the bowl.
3. Please be mindful of your thoughts and your feelings as you decide whether to take a bead.
4. You are not required to take a bead.

(Note: Some facts that go along with the privileges are in Handout 6 in the adult curriculum. You may also want to look up facts about access to health care, the cost of orthodontia, and other items on the list.)

Proceed with reading the list of privileges (found on next page) at a pace that allows participation.

When finished, have participants count how many they have.

Optional: Have participants organize themselves in a circle from most to least.

Discussion Questions

- What feelings did you have when you heard a privilege read?
- How did it feel to decide whether to pick up a bead?
- When you counted your beads, how did that feel?
- What did it feel like to share the number of beads you had with others?
- What feelings did you experience when the group lined up based on number of privileges?
- Was there discomfort? Hesitancy? Shame? Pride?
- What do they think is behind those feelings?
- What surprised you?
- What did they learn from this?

Class Conscious: Class and Classism in UU Life High School Youth Program

Activities for Youth related to Social Class and Privilege

List of privileges

- As a child, I never shared a bedroom
- My family has always had health insurance to cover my medical needs.
- Neither of my parents ever collected unemployment benefits
- If something breaks in my house, we can afford to repair it right away
- I have traveled to a country outside the U.S. where I have no relatives
- My family has never shopped with food stamps
- I have never lived in a neighborhood that I considered unsafe
- No one in my immediate family has ever been on welfare.
- I have a college fund or stocks and bonds in my name.
- My family owns a summer home or second home.
- I will have a choice about which college or job I do after high school.
- I have been offered a good job or training opportunity because my parent had an association or connection.
- I have not had to rely primarily on walking or public transportation.
- I have always felt there would be enough money to meet my needs
- My family can afford to get me fashionable name brand clothing and shoes.
- My family could afford orthodontia.
- I have been able to participate in sports or arts activities that required some costs.
- I have been able to participate in activities that require frequent travel costs.
- My family provides fresh fruits and vegetables.
- My family can afford to purchase organic and fair trade foods.
- I attend a private school.
- If I work, I can spend my earnings on fun things, rather than essentials.

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