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**Diana Hernández**  
**Mailman School of**  
**Public Health**  
**Columbia University**  
**USA**

***Editor***  
***of***  
***Journal of Community Medicine & Health***  
***Education***

# Biography

Diana Hernandez (PhD) focuses her work on issues of social inequality with particular emphasis on racial and socioeconomic stratification and structural causes of disadvantage. She is especially interested in the social determinants of health and understanding the role of race, class and the built environment (housing and neighborhoods) in health disparities. Dr. Hernandez's current research includes a pilot project sponsored by a Columbia University Provost Grant which advances the concept of Energy Insecurity using an innovative mixed-method approach to examine the impact of energy efficiency interventions on health and finances of low-income householders. She is the principal investigator of an NICHD-funded community-based participatory research project aimed at improving the infrastructure and access to parks to promote health and address violence and obesity in inner-city communities.

She is also a co-Investigator and lead ethnographer on a large-scale intervention study funded by NIDA to examine a community-level, structured approach to enhance HIV care access and retention for injection drug users in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Professor Hernandez's work has been published in leading journals including the American Journal of Public Health, Energy Policy and the Journal of Poverty and Public Policy. She teaches graduate and under-graduate level courses in Qualitative Research Methods and Health Disparities and Cultural Competence. In addition, she is a member of the Mass Incarceration and Public Health Working Group and actively engages in a variety translational research activities through consulting, board service and social entrepreneurship in real estate.

# Research Interests

- ✓ Poverty and social inequality;
- ✓ Race, Ethnicity and Immigration;
- ✓ Health, Law and Public policy and
- ✓ Qualitative methods and Evaluation.

# Honors and Awards

- Law and Social Science Dissertation Fellowship- National Science Foundation, American Bar Foundation and Law and Society Association, 2008-09

## **Affiliations :**

### Mailman School Affiliations:

- Center for the Study of Social Inequalities and Health
- American Sociological Association
- Eastern Sociological Society
- Law and Society Association

# Introduction

## *Social Inequality*

### **Definition :**

Social inequality is the existence of unequal opportunities and rewards for different social positions or statuses within a group or society. Although the United States differs from most European nations that have a titled nobility, the U.S. is still highly stratified. Social inequality has several important dimensions. Income is the earnings from work or investments, while wealth is the total value of money and other assets minus debts. Other important dimensions include power, occupational prestige, schooling, ancestry, and race and ethnicity.



# Social Inequality



# Causes

There is little question that people in the U.S. are better off than most other people in the world. That being said, poverty also impacts millions of people in the U.S. Why do such social inequalities exist? Let's examine the two prevailing explanations of poverty: blaming the poor and blaming society. One approach to explain poverty is to blame the poor - that the poor are responsible for their own poverty. There is some evidence to support this theory, because the main reason people are poor is the lack of employment. According to this view, society has plenty of opportunities for people to realize the American dream, and people are poor because they lack the motivation, skills, or schooling to find work. Another approach to explain poverty is to blame society - that society is responsible for poverty. While it is true that unemployment is a main contributor to poverty, the reasons people don't work are more in line with this approach. Loss of jobs in the inner city is a major contributor to poverty. There simply isn't enough work to support families.

# Causes



# Effects

Social inequality affects nearly every dimension of our lives. For example, did you know that children from poor families are three times more likely to die from disease, accidents, neglect, or violence during the first year of life than those children born to wealthy families? In addition, on average, wealthy people live five years longer than those less fortunate.

# Related Journals

- ❑ Health Care : Current Reviews
- ❑ Occupational Medicine & Health Affairs
- ❑ Journal of General Practice
- ❑ Internal Medicine: Open Access



# Related Conferences

3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on **Surgery and Anesthesia** -2014  
November 17-19, 2014 Chicago, USA

2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on **Predictive, Preventive, Personalized Medicine & Molecular Diagnostics** -2014  
November 03-05, 2014 Las Vegas, USA



4<sup>th</sup> International Conference and Exhibition on **Occupational Health & Safety** -2015  
Canada April 13-14, 2015

**Approved By :**

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