Are poor people less intelligent than rich people?

The point of view of two French sociologists
The education system in France:

-> free for all

“Grandes Écoles” = top schools in Science and Business
Med school, law school also elitist
Demographic information survey

How intelligent do you consider yourself? *

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Stupid  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  Genius

Level of education of your father / first parent? *

☐ Hasn’t finished highschool
☐ highschool
☐ Professional degree (2-3 years)
☐ Bachelor (3-4 years)
☐ Grad (5+)

Was your father a stay-at-home father? *

☐ yes
☐ no

Level of education of your mother / second parent? *

☐ Hasn’t finished highschool
☐ highschool
☐ Professional degree (2-3 years)
☐ Bachelor (3-4 years)
☐ Grad (5+)

Was your mother a stay-at-home mother? *

☐ yes
☐ no

How rich do you think your parents are? *

(relatively to the country where they live)

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Very poor  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  ☐  Very rich
### Results

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5.3          | 3.7                                           | 3                    | 3.8                                               | 2                    | 4.9          |
Pierre Bourdieu
(1930-2002)
• Social fields

• Capital: Economic, Cultural, Social, Symbolic

• Domination relations

• Unfair because dominating and dominated stay the same
La reproduction
(1970)
• Efficient social reproduction mechanisms

• Efficient because hidden

• e.g., the education system

  -> rich kids get better diplomas, which give them better jobs

  -> ranking of individuals legitimizied by the idea that some are “gifted”
- seen as unbiased: everyone has to learn the same things

- The codes of the dominant class:
  - Behaviour, speaking
  - Reading, writing
  - Culture
  - All completely arbitrary!

- If you fail, it is your fault: you are just a stupid kid
• There is no such thing as “intelligence”

• Only particular skills are measurable

• “Intelligent” is just a way to naturalize a social difference
Raymond Boudon
(1934-2013)
• Rational choices: costs vs benefits
• Costs are higher for the poor
• Expectation of benefits higher for the rich
⇒ Rich kids invest more in education
Bonus
- IQ?
- Geniuses?
- Education strategies
- IQ is increasing