Study Guide # 1

1. Identifying and Solving Social Problems.

a. Social problems: different interests/values: corporations, religious groups, mass media.

b. Common starting point: vital needs, trends, and patterns.

2. Inequality in America.

a. Concentration of individual wealth and income, include trend and comparison to other industrial countries.

b. Corporate ownership: concentration, size, mergers, shared monopolies, interlocking directorates, trend.

c. Interests of the capitalist class, individuals and corporations. What do they want?

d. Terms: wealth, income, real income, median income, financial wealth, mergers, shared monopolies, interlocking directorates.

3. Inequality and democracy.

a. Democratic institutions and the way they are undermined: campaign financing, lobbying, soft money, revolving door, deregulation, enforcement, funding.

b. Wealthfare and examples.

c. Terms: deregulation, privatization, tort reform, Telecommunications Act of 1996, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, 527 Groups, town hall meetings, trade groups, front groups,

Buckley v Valeo.

4. Mass Media as a Social Problem:

a. Ownership: concentration, size, shared monopoly, interlocking directorates, vertical and horizontal integration, trend

c. Function of press in a democracy/what would a democratic press cover.

d. Function of corporate press: cost reduction strategies and consequences for news stories

e. Corporate media dependency and content.

5. Corporate Media and War

a. Democracy and war: function of press.

b. Corporate coverage of Iraq War. Prewar, War (“That’s Militainment”), “good” war stories, and not so good war stories.

Terms: shared ownership, interlocking directorates, VNR, GNR, cluster bombs, depleted uranium, napalm, white phosphorous, Order 39, Blackwater, NEI.

6. Changing nature of work and downward mobility.

a. Economy and jobs: pre-Civil war, post-Civil War, 1950s-mid 70s, present.

b. Deindustrialization: causes.

c. McJobs: characteristics

d. Downward mobility and its consequences: workers, families, communities.

e. Terms: downsizing, offshoring, outsourcing, mergers, second shift, moonlighting, foreclosures, bankruptcy, child care

7. Poverty

a. Poverty line, rate and trends in poverty, comparison to other countries.

b. Consequences of poverty: cycle of poverty.

c. Who benefits?

d. Terms: poverty line, working poor, severely poor, near poor, welfare reform, Thrifty Food Plan, poverty surcharge.

5. Race and social problems

a. Emergence and early function of the concept race: colonialism.

b. Terms: Dred Scott, Plessy vs Ferguson, manifest destiny, Nazism, terms: white man’ burden, craniometry, biological determinism, eugenics, colonialism

c. Personal racism vs institutional racism

d. Race matters: income/ wealth, occupation, residence, education, health, and health care, war.

e. Terms: residential segregation, white flight, black migration, property tax, environmental racism

f. Who benefits from racism?

6. Gender in America

a. gender in early American society: cult of true womanhood, separation of spheres, rule of thumb, conservation of energy.

b. gender today: gender socialization, gender and institutions segregation, political, economic, education

4.Criminal Justice: “street crimes”.

a. Crime as a significant social problem: media, politicians, average Americans, heavy tv viewers

b. Extent of crime: UCR, NCVS, comparison, trend, resources/cost, time.

c. Function: conflict theory, structural functionalism.

d. Capital punishment, DNA, and the criminal justice system.

e. The other side: public defenders, contract system, court appointed lawyer, plea bargaining.

f. Inequality race and gender in the criminal justice system.

5. Criminal Justice: corporate crime.

a. Definition, types, examples, and consequences.

b. Perception and treatment: media, politicians, civil trials and punishment, regulatory agencies.

c. Terms: tort reform, gag orders, cots-benefit analysis, “revolving door.”

6. Drug use and social problems.

a. Illegal drug use: definition, extent, hypocrisy, power and labeling

b. War on drugs: goals, means, consequences.

c. Decriminalizing drug use: goals, means, consequences.

d. Drugging our children: trend, reasons, consequences.

3. American Empire

a. American Empire: National Security Strategy, Nuclear Posture Review, Military Industrial Complex

b. War and social problems: death, casualties, disease, social chaos, political systems, blowback, new weapons, cost.

c. War on Terror and social problems.

d. War on Terror domestic: national security vs constitutional rights.

e. Terms: cluster bombs, depleted uranium, genocide, rogue nation, MAD, ABM Treaty, Outer Space Treaty, Espionage Act, Patriot Act I and II, Matrix, Tips.

6. Bushwhacked.

a. “Shrub II: The Empire Strikes Back”: International treaties and agreements that the US has not signed, unsigned, or will not ratify. Weapons of Mass Construction as another way to fight the war on terror?

b. “Green Rabbits and Yellow Streams”: Why are the rabbits green? Where is the site? What chemicals and who polluted it? Governments response?

c. “Kill the Messenger”: Where is the site? What chemicals and who polluted?

d. “Dick, Dubya, and Wyoming Methane”: What is being produced and to solve what problem? Environmental consequences? Regulatory agencies and conflicts

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