I. Introduction: Social Construction of America

A. Primary Questions

I. Why is there so little real resistance to the increasing concentration of wealth and power in the U.S. and its consequences?

2. Why are we not using our collective power to take power and transform the world before we destroy it- nuclear weapons and global climate catastrophe ?

3. What is the function of media technology in the social construction of America? And in relation to acquiescence?

B. text subtitles:

1. The Life and Death of American Resistance to Organized Wealth and Power.

2. The Rise of Corporate Power and the Disabling of Democracy

3. A Social History of Spin

4. Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster

a. How Eden Lost Its Garden

b. Shoot Everything In Sight

C. Answer the questions: using theoretical tools of social constructionism

1. constructing the world:

a. through interactions human beings create and recreate the social world in which they live,

b. humanly created world becomes institutionalized (objectified) and

c. people no longer recognize it as their creation (reification)

2. the reified social world then exercises power over human beings who fail to realize their power to create and shape alternative world(s)

3. “it is what it is”: inevitable, fated, destiny, natural

4. humans bow down before the world and try to adapt

5. they become a personalities that reproduce the social world

D. Course

1. goal: dereify our social world, America

a. analyze **how it was created and in whose interests**

b. demythologize

i. separate myth from reality

ii. “lying world”

c. discover possibilities for change

"Those who control the present control the past (the story of our society), and those who control the past control the present (our society and world now).

2. focus

a. social construction of a myth and ideology

i. American Exceptionalism

ii. exception and exceptional

iii. reality:

"We are an empire now, and when we act we create our own reality."

b. social construction of the American “capitalist” system

i. myth

creation

"government as problem"

ii. reality: state subsidized monopoly capitalism

c. social construction of American “democracy”

i. myth

ii. reality: democracy for the few

d. social construction of technological utopia

i. technology and the power to create reality

"The truth is not something to be discovered, but is to be created through artful word choices and images."

ii. reality: technology and social control

E. And, yes, I do know that there is a real world out there?

1. "reality" of land

a. English: "wild", "untamed" and "waste" until it had been transformed for the market

i. cutting down forests

ii. draining swamps and wetlands

iii. "carpeting the soil with manure"

iv. eradicating "wild" animals

b. Luther Standing Bear:

"We do not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, and the winding streams with tangle growth as ‘wild.’ Only to the white man was nature a ‘wilderness’ and only to him was the land ‘infested’ with ‘wild’ animals and ‘savage’ people. To us it was tame . . . . not until the hairy man from the East came and with brutal frenzy heaped injustices upon us and the families we loved was it ‘wild’ for us."

2. Black Hills

a. Lakota, the center of the earth, the place of creation and holy.

b. Gold mining, logging, carved mountains of celebration, recreation

<https://www.google.com/search?q=Black+Hills+Homestake+Mine&rlz=1C1GMIN_enUS697US697&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi0gYyXqqXnAhVaZc0KHcSnBUsQ_AUoAnoECBIQBA&biw=1366&bih=663#imgrc=kOeEK6YqiiQ5wM:>