I. Power and Vital Needs

A. Vital needs as social problems

1. Jobs/Work

a. jobs vs job seekers

b. lost and gained

c. real wages

d. hours

e. job insecurity

f. economic security

bankruptcies 1.35 million

retirement vs 401Ks

social security

g. health benefits

h. leisure time/vacation

2. Housing

a. foreclosures 2010 2.9 2011 2.6 2012 2.3 million

b. homelessness

2 to 3.5 million per year

35% families, 13% veterans

3. Food “Insecurity”

a. households w/children 21%

b. since 2007: +50% food stamps

4. Education

a. unsafe (1/3, $200 billion)

b. K-12:unequal

c. college: increased cost increased debt: $25,000

5. Environment

a. air pollution

b. chemical pollution

6. Health and health care

a. 48.6 million w/o health care

b. costs =+14% (130%), $12,000 a year f/4 (+87%)

c. bankruptcies

d. Medicaid, Medicare

e. Safety and security of person

street crime

corporate crime

7. Infrastructure

a. sewage

b. bridges

c. power grids

d. roads, rail system

8. Political culture

1. who controls access to information and ideas
2. who decides what organizations are okay, what constitutes legal protest

II. Vital Needs as a Social Problem

A. Why are these vital needs problematic for millions?

B. Power

1. definition

2. conventional wisdom: pluralism

3. concentration

C. Power in America

1. upper class + large multinational corporations

2. plutocracy (aka plutonomy)

Citigroup’s Equity Strategy

“Revisiting Plutonomy: The Rich Get Richer”

“These economies (U.S, UK, Canada and Australia) have seen the rich take an increasing share of income and wealth over the last 20 years, to the extent that the rich now dominate income, wealth and spending in these countries . . . favorable treatment by market friendly governments have allowed the rich to prosper and become a greater share of the economy in the plutonomy countries . . .[much of this increase] at the expense of labor.”

Warren Buffet, multibillionaire:

“There is a class war in America, and it is being waged by my class, and we are winning.”

D. What are goals:

1. rich (increase wealth) + corporations (increase profit and return on investment for shareholders)

2. maintain and further power

3. Success: increasing inequality

1. wealth

top 1%

trend. Since 1970: +2x

historically

comparatively

2001 to 2008 ($186 billion to $816 billion)

1. income

median

Geni index .466+

During “economic recovery” 2009-2010 top 1% 93% of all income growth

Types of income

c. corporations

size

concentration

profit

E. How do they rule?

1. make system of power invisible through the organization of its institutionalization

a. economic system

b. political system

c. education

d. health care

e. criminal justice

2. control ideas, beliefs, norms, conventional wisdoms through mass media and education

F. We are going to examine the structure of the following institutions.

1. Economy

2. Political system

1. Education
2. Health and Health Care

5. Mass media

Costco since 1990

Sales +13%

Profits +15% ($537 million)

Stock price +200%

Avg wage $20.00 (85% w/ benefits) $40,000

Wal-Mart since 1990

Sales +4/5%

Profits 7%

Stock price +70%

Avg wage $13.00 ? Sam’s Club $17,486