Study Guide #1

You are responsible for all lectures, in class videos, and the assigned readings.

*Social Problems*: Chapters 1, 2, 7 and 14.

1. Introduction to Social Problems

a. Sociology: definition, social structure, culture, social change, sociological imagination.

b. Society and the individual: socialization, institutions, social change, culture.

c. Vital needs. What are they? Vital needs as social problems? Unemployment, real wages, job insecurity, bankruptcies, foreclosures, health care reform, infrastructure, weapons sales.

Terms: institutions, stratification, non-material culture, material culture, conventional wisdom (examples), Annenberg study, real wages, bankruptcy, foreclosure, value neutrality, sociological imagination, socialization, fracking, revolving door, military industrial complex, criminal justice industrial complex

2. Solving Social Problems

a. Who Rules America? What are their goals? How do they rule? Wish list?

b. What is the Allegory of the Cave and how does it relate to American society?

Terms: oligarchy, plutocracy, class conflict, deregulation, tort reform, subsidies, bailouts, privatization, power, elite, lobbying, campaign financing, media, corporations as “legal persons.”

3. Economy and Work

a. Capitalism and its characteristics.

b. American economy: monopoly capitalism, corporate profit, “wealthfare,” service sector.

c. Denindustrialization and its causes.

d. Increasing inequality: net worth, financial wealth, income, poverty line, poverty rate.

e. Poverty: welfare reform, levels of aid, and who benefits from poverty?

Terms: capitalism, socialism, concentration of ownership, shared monopoly, interlocking directorates, producer networks, wealthfare, R and D, automation, job flight, off-shoring, downsizing, outsourcing, mergers, acquisitions, net worth, financial wealth, severely poor, near poor, working poor, Fordism, scientific management.

4. Wealth, power and democracy.

a. Democratic institutions and function within democratic society.

b. Ways in which wealth undermines democratic institutions: campaign financing, lobbying (who and what methods?, regulatory agencies, campaigning on television.

c. “Wealthfare” and examples.

Terms: deregulation, privatization, tort reform, Telecommunications Act of 1996, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, town hall meetings, PACs, trade groups, front groups, lobbyists, “revolving door”, wealth primary, “town hall meetings,” bailouts, photo ops, media consultants, Citizens United, subsidies, hedge fund, TARP