Study Guide #1

1. Modernity and Social Theory

a. Great Transformation: revolutions that changed western society.

b. New world: institutions, ideas, science.

c. Science and the human world: theory as knowledge and practice, the possibility of utopia.

d. Free Market Theory: assumptions about human beings, the market place, economics as a science,

Laws of the Market Place, function of government.

Terms: capitalism, free market, individual, progress, utopia, positivism, laws of nature, laissez faire, free labor, law of supply and demand, financial infrastructure, physical infrastructure, competition, greed, self-interest, pursuit of profit.

2. Social Darwinism

a. Thesis, ideas and beliefs, consequences..

b. Social Darwinism and evolutionary theory: competition, struggle for existence, survival of the fittest, guarantees.

c. Social Darwinism and the theory of biological determinism: race science and scientists, empirical studies, “discoveries,” and conclusions.

d. Eugenics: argument, goal, means, influence in legal system, policies, Nazi Germany.

Terms: feeble minded, morons, craniometry, Calvinism, miscegenation, Immigration Act of 1924, robber barons, gilded age.

3. Friedman’s Free Market Theory:

a. Assumptions about the free market, problems with modern economies, distortions, free market and democracy.

b. Solutions: deregulation, privatization, cut backs in social services, shock therapy.

Terms: deregulation, privatization, social services, intervention, tariffs, price controls, subsidies, tort reform.

4. Structural Functionalism

a. 1950s America as a utopia and “the end of history.”

b. Structural Functionalism “made easy”: theory of society.

c. Structure and function: family, education, economy, politics, religion, criminal justice, inequality.

Terms: Terms: utopia, social contract, “what is good for GM, is good for America,” nuclear family, Leave It to Beaver, the “end of history”, two party system, pluralism, classes society, white collar, blue collar, nuclear family, meritocracy, Davis Moore theory, determined action, complex, latency function.

5. Theory of the Power Elite

a. Realities of the 1950s that contradicted the conventional wisdom that America of the 1950s was a utopia?

b. According to the “theory of the power elite” who makes up the power elite and how do they rule? And what are the consequences for the individual?

Terms: rationalization, bureaucracy, bureaucratization, division of labor, specialization, alienation, triangle of power, command positions, trunk decisions, moral insensibility, emotional labor, coercion, authority, manipulation, Cold War, military industrial complex, permanent war economy; permanent war economy, Beat Generation, rock and roll, military-industrial complex, alienation.