Study Guide # 1 (Fall ‘10)

You are responsible for:

All assigned readings, in-class lectures, videos and documentaries through Monday Sept 27.

1. Social Problems.

a. Identifying social problems, examples, corporations, religious groups, mass media.

b.Vital needs: what are they? What are the trends?

c. Vital Needs and Power: Who has the power in American and how is it used?

Terms: regulation, deregulation, tort reform, “frivolous” law suits, privatization, “homosexual agenda”, intelligent design, real income, foreclosure, bankruptcy, abstinence only sex education, secular humanists, “if it bleeds, it leads,” Annenberg study, plutocracy, corporatism, plutonomy

2. Inequality in America.

a. Wealth and income: definitions, concentration, trend and causes, reasons for increased wealth in top 1%.

b. Corporate America: definition, changing nature of corporation, concentration, size, mergers, shared monopolies, interlocking directorates, trend, consequences for society.

c. Middle class and wealth and income.

d. Race and gender inequality in wealth and income, reasons and consequences.

Terms: wealth, net worth, income, real income, median income, financial wealth, mergers, shared monopolies, interlocking directorates, downward mobility, investment income, labor income, estate tax, death tax, capital gains tax, IPO, deregulation, Gini Index

3. Changing nature of work and downward mobility.

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

b. Deindustrialization: causes and consequences.

c. Downward mobility and its consequences: workers, families, communities, education.

d. Terms: downsizing, off shoring, outsourcing, mergers, second shift, moonlighting, foreclosures, bankruptcy, child care, blue collar jobs, white collar jobs, service economy,

McJob, American Dream, social contract, automation, suburbanization, white flight, redlining.

4. Poverty

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

b. Bill Clinton and the end of welfare: how good was American welfare? Where did the children go?. Cycle of poverty and who benefits from poverty?

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

5. Wealth, power and democracy.

a. Democratic institutions and function within democracy.

b. Wealth and power and undermining democratic institutions.

b. “Wealthfare” and examples.

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, lobbyists, “revolving door”, wealth primary, “town hall meetings,” bailouts, photo ops, media consultants.