I. Identifying Social Problems

A. Study of social problems

1. person blame

2. system blame

3. structural analysis

a. how society is organized?

b. who benefits?

c. who has the power?

B. Different groups=interests/values =different social problems

1. Corporations

a. social problem (1): government

i. regulation

ii. public ownership

iii. taxes

b. social problem (2): legal system

i. consumers: “frivolous” lawsuits

ii. “runaway” juries

c. Solutions

i. deregulation

ii. lower taxes

iii. privatization

iv. tort reform

v. “bailouts”

2. Fundamentalist/Evangelical Christians

a. problems

i. indecency in the media

ii. violent video games

iii. abortions

iv. homosexual agenda

v. sex education

vi. evolution

d. Solutions

i. Education

a. Ten Commandments

b. school prayer

c. intelligent design (approx 50%)

d. abstinence-only

e. home shooling

ii. Constitutional Amendment

iii. Tradition

a. family

b. gender roles

c. sexual norms

iv. control political system

3. Mass Media and Social Problems

a. Who watches? How much?

b. problem(1): violent crime

i. “street crime”

ii. Missing and Murdered Children

iii. sexual predators

c. problem(2): celebrities

i. Michael Jackson dies

ii. Anna Nicole Smith “dies and on and on”

iii. Paris Hilton “goes to jail eats Taco Bell”

iii. Lindsey Lohan

d. disease(3): SARS, West Nile Virus, “the Flu,”

Swine flu.

e. toys from China

f. How real are media social problems?

i. crime

ii. children

iii. disease

iv. toys

g. Mass Media is a social problem

i. Weapon of mass distraction and stupification

ii. Annenberg study

iii. PIPA

C. Starting Point: Shared Social Problems (All of Us)

1. Vital needs to enjoy a decent life

a. Good job

i. decent wages

ii. reasonable hours

iii. security in job

iv. retirement

v. vacation/leisure time

b. housing

i. affordable

ii. quality

c. Food security

i. hunger

ii. safe

d. Accessible and quality education

e. Physical environment

i. clean air

ii. clean water

f. Health and health care

g. Safety and security of person and family

h. A voice in political system

2. Vital needs as social problems

a. Jobs

i. real wages

ii. hours

iii. unemployment/security in job

iv. retirement

v. benefits

vi. leisure time

b. Housing

i. debt

ii. foreclosures

c. Food security

i. 1 in 10 families food insecure

ii. food safety

d. Education

i. affordable

ii. quality

e. Environment

i. rollback or clarification of over 400

environmental regulations

ii. corporate polluters as regulators

f. Health and health care

i. poor health

ii. 47 million

iii. - 5.8 million since 2000

iv. costs =+14%, $800 month f/4

vi. profits/ CEOs

g. Safety and security of person

h. voice in political system

i. who runs?

ii. who finances?

D. Summary: Shared social problems

1. Jobs

2. Health care

3. Education

4. Environment

5. Housing

E. Why?

1. inequality: increasing concentration of wealth and income

2. increasing concentration of economic power: corporations

3. 1 + 2 = power over political system

4. 3 = power to shape public policy

5. = power to shape institutions: education, health care

6. =power over mass media=power to shape public

opinion