Outline: Introduction to Social Problems

I. Introduction to Social problems

A. Social problems: different points of view

B. Mass media and social problems

C. Conflict perspective

1. Vital Needs as a common starting point

2. trend = patterns

3. large scale social structures

4. Inequality in economic sphere is main social problem leads

to institutionalized inequality

a. other institutions

b. political

c. mass media

d. health and education

e. family

II. Inequality

A. Wealth

1. concentration

2. pattern/trend

3. comparison

B. Income

1. concentration

2. pattern/trend

3. comparison

4. race and gender

C. Concentration of corporate ownership/power

1. concentration

2. social forces and public and private policies

2. how big?

E. What do these people want and how do they get it?

1. increasing economic power

2. leverage into political power

III. Wealth and Power: the Bias of the System

A. Brandies quote, Bush quote

C. Linking wealth to political power: campaign financing , lobbying, think

Tanks, pr firms

D. Wealthfare: what the wealthy want and get

E. Wealthfare as foreign policy

F. View: What Money Buys, Flying High, or Free Speech for Sale, Now on

The Conventions

IV. Wealth and power and the mass media

A. concentration of ownership

B. Trend

C. goals and interests

D. wealth power and the press

1. role of press in a democracy

2. news in the corporate media

3. news and the war on terror

4. news and global warming

E. view: Myth of the liberal media, power politics, Wag the Dog

V. Downward Mobility and Poverty

A. The Promise: upward mobility

1. work =success

2. social contract

B. Deindustrialization; causes

C. Deindustrialization: consequences and vital needs

D. Poverty: cycle, welfare reform, who benefits

E.View: Foreign Service, Nafta mike, Downward Mobility, Winners and

Losers, Bargain Shopping

VI. Education

A. Education

1. ideal

2. gatekeeper

B. equality of education, constituion, and funding

C. consequences

D. higher education

1. increasing costs

2. processing students

E. View: Houston Miracle, Children in America’s Schools, Buying Access

VII. Health and Health Care

A. health and avg American and Unhealthful factors

B. children’s health

C. Public health care

c. power and health:

a. health cure system; three tiers

d. View: fit or fat, Science for Sale, Supersize Me

VIII. Marriage and Family

a. myth of the nuclear family

b. transformations in the economy and the changing family structure

c. marriage as an institution

1. failing?

IX. Global Social problems

A. global social problem: inequality, poverty, hunger, disease

B. global ironies

C. causes: global power arrangements

D. consequences: Maldevelopment or continued inequality

E. “Why they hate us?” US foreign policy and corp power

F. Trading Democracy, Women’s Work, Broken Promises, Bowling for

Columbine

X. Threats to the Environment

A. Environmental Crises

B. Environmental Crises and social problems (war and terrorism)

C. Environmental problems: San Diego

D. View: Earth on Edge, Cadillac Desert

XI. War and social problems

A. War and social problems

B. War on terror and social problems

C. Terrorism: social causes

XII. American empire

A. C. Bush doctrine and the war on terrorism

1. Preemptive War

2. war on terrorism

B. Military industrial complex: war or democracy

1. Terrorism and rights

2. View: Inside the Pentagon, Cost of War, Unanswered Questions

XIII. Crime and the Criminal Justice System

A. Crime in America

1. extent

2. The cost of crime

B. Criminal justice system: problems

C. The other type of crime

D. View: Death Penalty, Off the Clock, Rewriting the Rules

XIV. Drugs and Sex

A. legal/illegal drugs; three problems

B. war of drugs

C. psychoactive drugs and children

D. Janet Jackson’s breast and the problem of sex in America

1. pornography and teen sex

2. decency

E. US sex policy: domestic and foreign

2. complexity

d. divorce

e. violence and the family

XV. Gender Inequality

a. Def: gender as a social construction

b. Patriarchy historically in America

1. characteristics

2. sources

c. “soft” patriarchy

1. gender socialization

2. gender inequality: work, home

d. rape and patriarchy

e. who benefits

XVI. Racial Inequality

a. Def: race and ethnicicity

b. Race and colonialism

c. Race: eugenics, social Darwinism

d. Personal racism vs institutional racism

e. who benefits

XV. Religion

a. Religion and political power: Christianity in the Middle Ages

b. American Theorcracy: rightwing politicians and religious extremism

c. view: God and power in politics

I. Identifying and Solving Social Problems

A. Different goals =different social problems

1. Corporations

a. Biggest problem: Government

i. regulation

ii. taxation

b. “frivolous” lawsuits

c. solutions

i. deregulation

ii. lower taxes

iii. privatization

iv. tort reform

2. Fundamentalist/Evangelical Christians

a. Biggest problem: liberal elite controls America

i. hate America

ii. secular: deny Christian heritage

b. Control:

i. liberal media

ii. activist judiciary

iii. education

c. consequences:

i. indecency in the media

ii. violent video games

iii. abortions

iv. homosexual agenda

v. sexual liberalism

vi. belief in evolution

vii. liberal professors

d. Solutions:

i. Education:

Ten Commandments

School prayer

intelligent design

abstinence-only sex education

ii. Constitutional Amendment

iii. FCC regulation: censorship, criminal prosecution

iv. affirm Christian heritage

traditional family

traditional gender

traditional sex

3. Mass Media and Social Problems

a. Who watches? How much?

b. Biggest problem: violent crime

i. “street crime”

ii. Scott Peterson>BTK killer

iii. Missing and Murdered Children

iv. Natalie Holloway

v. RCC and the missing groom

c. Michael Jackson

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

Bird flu.

e. Michael Jackson

4. How real are media social problems?

a. violence

i. trends in violent crime

ii. definition of violence

iii. violence and children

home

hunger

health care

b. corporate crime

c. disease: What will we die of?

5. Mass Media is a social problem

a. Entertainment: “If it bleeds it leads”

b. Weapon of mass distraction and stupification

i. Annenberg study

ii. John Hopkins

B. Sociology: traditionally social problems

1. person blame: individual deviance

2. individual behavior disrupts social order

3. Solutions: society is ok, correct behavior

C. Our Course: Common Starting Point

1. Vital needs to enjoy a decent live

a. good job with reasonable job security

i. decent wages

ii. reasonable hours

iii. security in job

iv. retirement

v. vacation/leisure time

b. affordable housing

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. institutions that make a thru g possible

i. public mass media

2. Social patterns

a. job

i. real wages

ii. hours

iii. security in job

iv. retirement

401Ks turned to 101 Ks

private pension funds

v. benefits

vi. paid vacation, personal days, sick days

declining

vii. leisure time

b. affordable housing

c. food security

i. 1 in 10 families food insecure

ii. food safety

d. good education

i. K-12

ii. college

iii. 60% avg student $17,000 debt

e. environment

i. rollback or clarification of over 400

environmental regulations

ii. corporate polluters as regulators

iii. corporate polluters as owners

f. health and health care

i. poor health

ii. 43 million without health care and rising

iii. losing health care: 3.8 million since 2000

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

vi. Kaiser 2004 $1 billion, F1/4 ’05 $500 million

g. safety and security of person?

3. Why?

inequality = control over political system =control over public policy

inequality = control over institutions(economic, media, health)

control = benefits for those in control

4. Big Picture

a. Inequality in American society?

b. Inequality and the Political System:

How?

c. Inequality and other institutions: How?

I. Social Problems

A. Different perspectives = different social problems

1. Fundamentalist Christians: secularized institutions

in American society

2. Business Week: "The Problem Now: What Do We Do

With All That Cash"

a. surging corporate profits

b. $679 billion in liquid assets

B. Historically perspective of sociologists

1. Definition: social problems are social behaviors of individuals that have a significant negative impact on the normal functioning of society.

a. deviant individuals cause social problems

b. they pose a threat to social order

i. “the criminal”

ii. “the lazy person”

iii. “immigrants and illegal immigrants”

2. Solution: controlling individual deviants

a. socialization through education

b. re-socialization through incarceration

c. deterrence

3. Theoretical basis

a. structural functionalism

b. social order and the normal functioning of

society is “good”

C. Another perspective: the Mass Media

1. study: 75% of Americans get most info from TV

a. 7+ hours a day in the American home

b. 6 24 hour "news" channels

2. study: 20% of Americans get "news" from talk radio

3. Neil Postman "Amusing Ourselves to Death"

a. Americans have access to more media than

people in any other society, but know less about

the world

b. survey: democracy, Gulf War I and II

D. Social Problems according to media

1. Violence: “the Stranger” who kills, assaults, robs,

and/or rapes

a. Murder/Home Invasions

b. Child Sexual Predators

i. sexual perverts roaming America stealing

children from their homes, sexually assaulting

and murdering them

ii.. media: "Summer of missing and murdered children"

iii. guests: experts on sexual perverts, lawyers, profilers, CSI

iv. survey: 3/4 of parents worried

c. Sicko Celebrities

i. Kobe

ii. Michael Jackson

iii. Robert Blake

2. Fatal Disease

a. West Nile Virus

b. SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)

c. THE FLU!!! Ahh!!!

3. Terrorists: religious fundamentalists that just hate

America: Jihad, or holy war

a. threat to the everyone's safety and security

b. ORANGE ALERT

c. “need to give up some of our freedoms”

d. Patriot Act

4. Rogue nations aka axis of evil

a. Iran, Iraq, and North Korea

b. psychotic leaders aka Saddam Hussein

c. Operation Iraqi Freedom

d. Support Our Troops

e. We Got Him!

C. Are these social problems?

1. Violent Crime

a. murder rate

b. television coverage

2. Not covered: broader definition of violence

a. knowingly selling dangerous and defective

products (11/2x those murdered)

b. knowingly polluting the environment with

toxic chemicals

c. knowingly exposing workers

d. stealing retirement funds (Enron alone 15x robbery,

burglary)

3. Not covered: Safety and Security of Children

a. where are children most threatened by violence

i. 5000 killed by parents

ii. 30,000 permanently disabled from

abuse by parents

b. other threats to well-being of children

i. hunger

ii. lack of health care

iii. obesity

iv. parent induced drug use

4. Disease

a. SARS: over 2000+ stories as of 2003 813 deaths

b. West Nile Virus 1 in 1,000,000

c. The Flu

i. 10% to 20% get it 30 and 60 million

ii. 114,000 hospitalized, 36,000 die

iii. CDC: no scientific evidence that it is

worse or more virulent

iv. CDC: “more interest”!!!

a. what diseases are really a threat? Why?

b. health care in America?

5. Not covered: Terrorists

a. solutions other than the Panopticon and

a 50 year War on Terror

b. Causes: other faces of global terrorism?

c. If they do hate America are there reasons?

6. Not covered: Rogue Nation

a. Who is the biggest threat to security of the world?

b. weapons of mass destruction, weapons sales

support of dictators

c. any safer?

d. CNN

7. Not covered: Support Our Troops

a. R&R pay their own way from Baltimore

b. Wounded waiting treatment were having to pay $8.10 per day for their food

c. Bush budget: cut $15 billion from Veterans

benefits

d. Rumsfeld: no to both retirement and disability

benefits

e. Where are the dead? And wounded? Are the

wounded being adequately care for.

E. Mass Media and social problems

1. Narrowly defined

2. Sensational

3. Distorted

4. Diversion

5. Ahistorical and decontextualized

F. Conflict Perspective

1. Vital needs to enjoy a decent live

a. good job with reasonable job security

i. decent wages

ii. reasonable hours

iii. security in job

iv. retirement

v. vacation/leisure time

b. affordable housing

c. food security

i. hunger

ii. safe

d. good education

e. environment

i. clean natural environment

ii. cultural environment

open society

f. health and health care

g. safety and security of person and family

2. social problem from conflict perspective

a. institutionalized inequality and powerlessness

b. keep millions from access to social resources that would enable them to attain their vital needs

3. Vital needs to enjoy a decent life

a. good job with reasonable job security

i. decent wages: real wages are stagnant

or declining for 80% of workers

ii. reasonable hours: hours are increasing

200+ compared to 1970s

iii. security in job: 1.3 million

iv. retirement

401Ks turned to 201 Ks

private pension funds LA Times 1/14/03

v. benefits

losing health care

costs =14%, $800 month f/4

vi. vacation: only industrial country with no

minimal paid leave law

3 years avg 10.5 hours

Europe 4 to 5 weeks

Japan 2 weeks

China 3 weeks

vi. leisure time

b. affordable housing

c. food security

i. 1 in 10 families food insecure

ii. Department of Agriculture and food

safety

d. good education

i. less funding

ii. more testing

iii. 80% of federal money for higher education

goes to private elite universities

e. environment

f. health and health care

i. poor health

ii. 43 million without health care and rising

I. Main social problem: Inequality in wealth and income equals

inequality in power

A. large corporations and capitalist class

1. small segment of society: top 1%

a. 40% to 50% of wealth

b. over 60% of business assets

2. 500 largest corporations

a. 70% of assets, sales, and profits

b. 40 largest financial institutions

3. own the means of production

4. goals: create a social environment which is conducive to maximum profit taking

a. maintain and enhance control

i.economic institutions

ii. political institutions

iii. ideological institutions

b. costs to people/profit to themselves

i. government subsidies

ii. social costs

iii. environmental costs

B. goals of powerful diametrically opposed to

our vital interests

1. worker to the capitalist

a. is a cost

b. low wages, fewer benefits, less vacation,

more hours

c. job security: paraphrase Greenspan, head

of Federal Reserve: job insecurity is good for

the economy

2. health care to the capitalist

i. a cost to the employer

ii. a source of profit to big Pharma, insurance,

for-profit hospitals and HMOs

i. prescription drugs iii. benefits

ii. aids drugs iv. exclusion

3. Environment to the capitalist

i. potential profit

ii. sink for waste

C. Economic institutions

1. goal: control economic sector

i. profit

ii. power over institutions

iii. power over labor

2. means

a. concentration of ownership

i. mergers

ii. acquisitions

iii. interlocking directorates Clayton Act 1914

iv. 500 largest corporations

v. shared monopolies Sherman Anti-Trust

b. “strategic alliances”

i. fast foods

ii. telecommunications

iii. pharmaceuticals

c. globalization and jobs

i. manufacturing

ii. hi-tech

C. political instituions

1. goal: control of the political institutions

2. methods

a. campaign financing

i. running is expensive from mayors

to President, esp TVads

ii. 90% of time person who spends the most

wins

iii. last presidential election $3.5 billion

iv. "soft money" (2002 elections record)

b. lobbying

i. $2 billion

ii. methods (connected, research/experts,

lecture fees, seminar/vacations, easy-term

loans, jobs after retirement, use of private

jets)

c. government positions

i. cabinet and secondary appointments

(top 1% or lawyers and lobbyists for them)

ii. regulatory agencies: regulate areas of

economy in public interest

d. judicial appointments

3. consequences

a. wealthfare

i. tax laws: dividends, estate taxes, social security,

tax credit (McCredit: Work Opportunity Tax Credit), loopholes

ii. R and D $72 Billion

iii. public resources to private

corps

iv. bailouts

v. social costs to people

b. deregulation

i. meat packing

ii. auto

iii. accounting- AA

iv. Enron

v. extractive industies

c. issue advocacy

i. supreme court 1978

ii. corporations are "persons" with regard to

First Amendment

D. ideological institutions

1. goal: control of ideological institutions

a. shape our perceptions, thoughts, behaviors,

and identity

b. consumerism without consequences

i. main social role

ii. social norm

iii. god-given right

2. means: mass media

a. corporate owned and shared monopolies

TV, Films, Magazines, publishing (incl

textbooks), books-retails sales, internet

b. corporate owned increasing concentrations

newspapers, cable TV

c. advertising sponsored

TV is 100% and 25% of time

newspapers

magazines

radio

film

consumerism without

consequences

3. means-think tanks

a. knowledge producing organizations

b. funded by large corporations

c. American Enterprise Institute, Cato Institute

Brookings Institute

d. goals shape thought on behalf of funders,

books, articles, op-ed, letters to editors, experts

for TV and Congress

4. means- public relations firms

a. emerged in 1920s, Edward Bernays was the

founder, wrote The Engineering of Consent and

Propaganda

b. from Propaganda: "The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized opinions and habitsof the masses is an important element in a democratic society."

c. services: advertising, pr, lobbying, research,

polling, direct-mail canvassing, focus groups,

front groups

d. pr methods

i. news releases through PR Newsire: one study 40% in newspapers, usually verbatim, another study

50%

ii. VNR: fully developed stories, drug cos use

to get by FDA regulations on advertising

iii. focus groups

iv. front groups

v. astroturf groups: Citizens for Sound Economy

(corporate friendly judges, Wal-mart)

5. means: education

a. underfund, or disproportionately fund

b. corporations supply

i. educational material

ii. Channel One

c. universities and corp sponsored research

i.Georgetown University Credit Research

Center

ii. control of history

E. Technology

1. goal: control of technology and technological development

a. technology for profit

b. control of worker

c. consumer

d. citizen

2. means: communication

a. every new means of communication carries

with it a new means of deception

b. TV, satellites, computer-generation

3. weapons: military-industrial complex

a. Star Wars

b. MDS

c. bunker busters

d. big cannons

4. computers

a. internet: marketing

b. surveillance

5. autos

6. technologies to automate the workplace

F. global power

1. goals: establish global power arrangements and control

a. large multi-nationals, of the 100 largest

economies 66 are corporations (used to be 50)

b. Exxon-Mobile, Ford, GM each larger than all

countries except top 7

2. means: global organizations and agreements

a. WTO

b. NAFTA

G. Military

1. support interest of powerful

2. . goal: control militarily

3. method

a. weapons

b. training

c. violence

a. police

b. military

4. military-industrial complex

II. Social problems

A. Economically

1. increasing profit and wealth and power for

capitalist class and large corporations

2. worker

a. job insecurity

b. stagnant and declining wages

c. changing nature of jobs

d. declining benefits

e. leisure time

f. retirment

3. labor movement

B. Politically

1. increasing control over democracy: two

factions of the business party

2. disenfranchisement

3. decreasing regulation

a. food

b. environment

c. labor conditions

C. ideological institutions

1. increasing control of information

2. increasing saturation of advertising

a. cultural space

b. children

3. uninformed population

4. more and more media, less and less space

D. technology

1. technologies of production

a. job insecurity

b. job loss

2. technologies of surveillance

3. technologies for profit

4. ignore low tech, unprofitable technologies

E. global power

1. increasing power of US corporations

2. decreasing power of international civil community

3. maldevelopment: increasing inequality

4. loss of rights: health, environmental

F. Military

1. increasing unilateral use of force

2. abandonment of international law

3. arms races

4. terrorism

5. refugees, violence, social problems of war

poverty: housing and food security

iii. marriage and

I. Interests: the wealthy individuals want to increase income, wealth, and power. Specifically.

A. Lower personal taxes

1. Two major tax breaks over 40% of benefits going

to top 1%, include estate tax, tax on unearned income

dividends, capital gains

2. Bush on second tax break: all tax paying Americans

will benefit

a. Wealthiest 400 +$8,000,000

b. Half of all tax payers avg $100

c. 31% of tax payers got 0

2. Limit Internal Revenue Service audits of wealthy

a. audits of wealthy decline

b. audits of working poor up almost 50%

3. Consequences:

a. after tax income for top 1% doubled between 1970s

and 1999 (before two major tax breaks)

b. % of wealth doubled from approx 20% to 40%

c. biggest inequality gap in wealth and income

since the Depression

d. 13, 630 people making over $200,000 a year

filed taxes claiming they owned nothing

e. loss of hundreds of billions in tax revenue

B. Use of money to influence policy:

1. Buckley vs Valeo: money =s free speech

2. “wealth or money Primary”

II. Interests: large corporations

A. Lower corporate taxes

1. tax loopholes, tax credits, tax havens

a. McDonalds Work Opportunity Tax Credit

b. PO Box in Bermuda = loss of $60 billion

in tax revenue

2. no taxes

a. Enron paid no taxes in four of the last five

years but got several hundred million back

from the first tax cut

b. 1996-98 Goodyear, Texaco, Colgate-Palmolive, and

MCI WorlCom + 8 made $12.5 billion paid no

Income tax but received $535 million

c. Pfizer $3 billion 3%, GE $25 billion 8%

B. Government subsidies $400 billion

1. McNuggets

2. Pillsbury Doughboy

3. Airline industry

4. US AID

C. Government contracts $200 billion

D. Bailouts: Long Term Capital Management

E. Privatization of everything: education, police, fire,

Social security, water, utilities

F. Deregulation: elimination, defunding, revolving door

1. Let the pigs at the trough regulate themselves

2. Regulatory Agencies: government oversees certain

areas and industries

a. FCC (Federal Communication Commission)

b. SEC (Security and Exchange Commission)

c. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)

3. Departments in Executive Branch , Dept of the

Interior

4. Examples

a. $30 million in lobbying WSJ “good for everyone

except the people”

i. Telecommunications Act of 1996

ii.GAIN: $70 billion

b. pharmaceutical industry (625 lobbyists $100

million):

i. longer patents,

ii. no generics in third world,

iii. no medicare coverage of prescription drugs

c. energy and extractive industries ($18 million

in campaign financing, $50 million

i. more nuclear plants

ii. more coal plants

iii. oil drilling on coast and in Artic

iv. limit OSHA

G. Social and Environmental costs to the people

1. Nuclear industry

2. Chemical industry: Superfund cites

H. Support global interests: cheap labor, markets,

Resources, property rights

SOC 150: Study Guide Exam #1

1. Identifying and defining social problems:

a. Historically sociology has identified and defined social problems in what way?

b. Th problem of different perspectives.

c. Mass media and social problems: Does the mass media identify real social problems? What examples were given? Why doesn't the mass media focus on real social problems?

2. The Bias of the System.

a. Trends in the accumulation of wealth and income for individuals and the trends regarding concentration of corporate ownership.

b. The reasons for these trends and the consequences for workers.

3. The Bias of the System.

a. Means by which the wealthy and powerful control the the political system, e.g., campaign financing, lobbying.

b. What do they get? Wealthfare and examples.

4. Government Secrecy. How is the Bush administration trying to keep its activities a secret from the American people?

4. Mass media as a social problem.

a. Ownership in media: trend, function, synergy, horizontal and vertical integration,

b. Function of news in corporate owned advertising supported media, consequences.

c. Examples: Campaign coverage, Iraq War.

5. Downward mobility.

a. The promise

b. Transformation of the economy from industrial to deindustrial; causes and consequences for working people.

6. Poverty.

a. Trend in poverty:

b. Terms: poverty line, working poor, poor-poor, near poor, welfare reform

c. What are the consequences of poverty in America?

d. Who benefits?

7. Education.

a. How is education funded?

b. According to the documentary Children in America's Schools, what are the consequences of the differential funding.

c. No Child Left Behind: goals, means, contradictions. (Ivins Ch 5)

8. Bushwhacked: connecting public policy to the daily lives of working people.

a. “State of the Union”

i. Constitutional rights vs Patriot Acts I and II.

ii. Bush policies: stated goals vs reality (Who really benefits and who is hurt?)

b. “Class War”

i. Trends in downward mobility: wealth, income, health care.

ii. Social services for the poor

c. “The Blues in Belzoni”:

i. Who benefits and who is hurt by the regulations discussed in this chapter.

ii. Administration rationale.

8. Global Inequality. Know the general patterns and trends of global inequality. What are the causes of poverty, hunger, disease? Will the World Bank, the IMF, WTO, and NAFTA create a better world for the poor through "free trade." Understand NAFTA CH 11, examples.

9. Sweatshops. How do they function in the global economy?