Study Guide # 1

1. Identifying and Solving Social Problems.

a. Social problems: different interests/values: corporations, religious groups, mass media.

b. Common starting point: vital needs, trends, and patterns.

2. Inequality in America.

a. Concentration of individual wealth and income, include trend and comparison to other industrial countries.

b. Corporate ownership: concentration, size, mergers, shared monopolies, interlocking directorates, trend.

c. Interests of the capitalist class, individuals and corporations. What do they want?

d. Terms: wealth, income, real income, median income, financial wealth, mergers, shared monopolies, interlocking directorates.

3. Inequality and democracy.

a. Democratic institutions and the way they are undermined: campaign financing, lobbying, soft money, revolving door, deregulation, enforcement, funding.

b. Wealthfare and examples.

c. 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.

4. Mass Media as a Social Problem:

a. Ownership: concentration, size, shared monopoly, interlocking directorates, vertical and horizontal integration, trend

c. Function of press in a democracy/what would a democratic press cover.

d. Function of corporate press: cost reduction strategies and consequences for news stories

e. Corporate media dependency and content.

5. Corporate Media and War

a. Democracy and war: function of press.

b. Corporate coverage of Iraq War. Prewar, War (“That’s Militainment”), “good” war stories, and not so good war stories.

Terms: shared ownership, interlocking directorates, VNR, GNR, cluster bombs, depleted uranium, napalm, white phosphorous, Order 39, Blackwater, NEI.

6. Changing nature of work and downward mobility.

a. Economy and jobs: pre-Civil war, post-Civil War, 1950s-mid 70s, present.

b. Deindustrialization: causes.

c. McJobs: characteristics

d. Downward mobility and its consequences: workers, families, communities.

e. Terms: downsizing, offshoring, outsourcing, mergers, second shift, moonlighting, foreclosures, bankruptcy, child care

7. Poverty

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

b. Consequences of poverty: cycle of poverty.

c. Who benefits?

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