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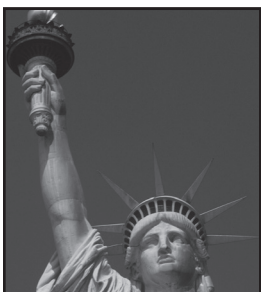
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UNIT 1 Introduction: The Nature of Social Problems and General Critiques of American Society

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- 1. Social Problems: Definitions, Theories, and Analysis**, Harold A. Widdison and H. Richard Delaney, *Social Problems: Definitions, Theories, and Analysis*, 1995
This essay, written specifically for this volume, explores the complexities associated with defining, studying, and attempting to resolve “social” problems. The three major theoretical approaches—*symbolic interactionism*, *functionalism*, and *conflict*—are summarized. **2**
- 2. The Fragmentation of Social Life: Some Critical Societal Concerns for the New Millennium**, D. Stanley Eitzen, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, July 1, 2000
Social interaction “is the basic building block of intimate relationships, small groups, formal organizations, communities, and societies.” Therefore, Stanley Eitzen is concerned about numerous social trends, which he reports “that hinder or even eliminate social interaction, and that indicate a growing isolation as individuals become increasingly separated from their neighbors, their co-workers, and even their family members.” **9**
- 3. Spent**, Amitai Etzioni, *New Republic*, June 17, 2009
Amitai Etzioni’s title “Spent” is short for “*consumerism*,” which is the value system that is undermining the moral life of the United States. The consequences are bad for America because laws and law enforcement by themselves are very limited in their ability to limit immoral behavior. The *moral system* and consciences of individuals are the first line of defense against immoral and illegal behavior. Morals must remain strong and Etzioni proposes ways that they can be strengthened. **13**



UNIT 2 Problems of the Political Economy

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Part A. *The Polity*

- 4. Who Rules America?: Power, Politics, and Social Change**, G. William Domhoff, *Who Rules America? Power and Politics, and Social Change*, 2006
G. William Domhoff is the leading proponent of the *power elite* view of U.S. politics, which is explained in this article as it applies to *political influence* in the United States today. **18**
- 5. Inside the Hidden World of Earmarks**, Eamon Javers, *BusinessWeek*, September 17, 2007
The main criticism of the U.S. government is that it is not fair. The rich and large corporations get much of what they want and the general public gets little of what it wants. One of the processes that achieve these results is *earmarks*. Eamon Javers explains this process and its impacts and calls for its reform. **22**

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.

6. **Foresight for Government**, David M. Walker, *The Futurist*, March/April 2007
 Today's governments must govern in terms of long-term challenges. They must prepare for the future. David M. Walker, the past comptroller general of the United States, is responsible for making the **Government Accountability Office** an anticipatory agency and discusses some of greatest future challenges that our government must face. 26

Part B. The Economy

7. **A Smarter Planet**, Samuel J. Palmisano, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, January 2009
Globalization involves the international integration of **economic activity**. Samuel J. Palmisano presents a new view of globalization because he identifies how it is rapidly changing the **corporate world**. The multinational corporation is being replaced by a new kind of corporation that is being redesigned around **technologies** of interconnect-edness, embedded sensors, and complex intelligence systems. 30

8. **Reversal of Fortune**, Bill McKibben, *Mother Jones*, March 2007
 Bill McKibben raises the age-old question "**Does money buy happiness?**" in a new way, i.e., "Is more better?" The data indicate that economic "growth no longer makes us happier." In fact, the things that contribute most to happiness are under stress in modern life. 32

9. **Born to Buy: Interview with Juliet Schor**, James Woolman, *Dollars & Sense*, September/October 2004
 The literature on the consumption side of the economy is quite dynamic today, and Juliet Schor discusses some of its major findings in this article, including the fact that the **materialism** that undergirds the consumer society "undermines well-being in lots of different ways. . . . People who are more materialistic are more depressed, they're more anxious, they have less vitality, they connect less-well with people, they have more stomachaches and headaches." 41

Part C. Problems of Place

10. **Why Aren't U.S. Cities Burning?**, Michael B. Katz, *Dissent Magazine*, Summer 2007
 Sociologists should be surprised that U.S. cities are peaceful. Most of the conditions that produced nearly 150 riots in 1967 have continued, and some, like **racial segregation**, have worsened. Michael B. Katz tries to solve this paradox. 44

11. **Who We Are Now**, Jon Meacham, *Newsweek*, January 26, 2009
 Since Johnson's Immigration Act of 1965, cumulative immigration flows along with brave civil rights activism have changed the United States and made the inauguration of America's first black president possible. Immigration has made our country better, which is encouraging, since by mid-century, the United States is expected to have a majority of minorities. 49

12. **The Invisible Ones**, Rebecca Clarren, *Ms.*, Summer 2007
 Rebecca Clarren reports on the **slavery** that currently exists in America. Many people, usually foreigners, are held against their will and forced to work in factories under terrible conditions. Many others are forced into sex slavery. The public does not know about these slavery operations. Hopefully, this will change and the evil will be stopped. 52



UNIT 3 Problems of Poverty and Inequality

Unit Overview 56

Part A. Inequality and the Poor

13. **How Stratification Works: The American Stratification System**, Douglas S. Massey, *Categorically Unequal*, 2007
 In this article Douglas S. Massey explains how **stratification** works and reviews its history. The two basic mechanisms that stratify societies are **exploitation** and **opportunity hoarding**. The latter involves a socially defined process of exclusion. All stratification systems are unfair, but some are much worse than others. 58

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.

14. **Goodbye, Horatio Alger: Moving up Economically Is Now Impossible for Many, If Not Most, Americans**, Jeff Madrick, *The Nation*, February 5, 2007
 One of the prized characteristics of America has been the opportunity to go from rags to riches. Unfortunately, moving up economically is now impossible for most Americans. **Income mobility** has declined dramatically in the last three decades in America, and now several European countries have more income mobility than the United States. 63
15. **The Myth of the “Culture of Poverty”**, Paul Gorski, *Educational Leadership*, April 2008
 The **culture of poverty myth** accuses the poor of having beliefs, values, and behaviors that prevent them from achieving. Thus their failure is their fault. This myth must be challenged. Most poor people do have the work ethic, value education, and other characteristics that contradict the culture of poverty myth. Opportunity structures play a big role in poverty. 67
16. **Can Extreme Poverty Be Eliminated?**, Jeffrey D. Sachs, *Scientific American*, September 2005
 Jeffrey D. Sachs argues that **world poverty** can be eliminated. The market and globalization have and will lift most people out of extreme poverty, but the elimination of extreme poverty would require the proper use of a \$160 billion-a-year donation by the rich nations (0.5% of their GNP). 71

Part B. Welfare and Welfare Reform

17. **A Work in Progress**, Ann Pomeroy, *HR Magazine*, February 2000
 The **welfare reform of 1996** moved many people from welfare to work. Ann Pomeroy tells the stories of several women who made this transition and identifies some of the difficulties and perverse incentives that remain to limit the benefits of the program. 76
18. **Brave New Welfare**, Stephanie Mencimer, *Mother Jones*, January/February 2009
 Stephanie Mencimer shows how many **welfare agencies** withhold a great deal of help that welfare recipients should receive. She tells some painful stories about welfare workers lying to or mistreating welfare applicants. Welfare is run by the states, and many states want to minimize their welfare expenses at the expense of their welfare clients. 80

Part C. Racial and Ethnic Inequality and Issues

19. **Inequalities That Endure?: Racial Ideology, American Politics, and the Peculiar Role of the Social Sciences**, Lawrence D. Bobo, from *The Changing Terrain of Race and Ethnicity*, 2004
 One way to understand the continuing **racism** in the U.S. is to see that the past attitudes, behaviors, and institutions recreate themselves in the present. Change occurs, but change is also resisted by those who fail to perceive the workings of the persisting **inequalities** in the United States. 84
20. **Why We Hate**, Margo Monteith and Jeffrey Winters, *Psychology Today*, May/June 2002
 The authors demonstrate the prevalence of **prejudice and hatred** in the United States and explain this in terms of **social identity theory**. Whenever people are divided into groups, negative attitudes develop toward the out-group. 88
21. **American Dreamers**, Lisa Miller, *Newsweek*, July 30, 2007
 A major cultural issue today is the place of **Muslim Americans** in the United States. They have been good citizens relative to other groups and think strongly of themselves as Americans. Now their situation is changing. Other Americans are becoming more suspicious of them, and, according to a government study, radicalism is growing among Muslims in the West. 91

Part D. Gender Inequalities and Issues

22. **Great Expectations**, Judith M. Havemann, *The Wilson Quarterly*, Summer 2007
Women have taken tremendous strides toward **equality in the corporate world** and now hold half of all management and professional jobs. Their leadership style is superior to that of men. However, they rarely hold top management positions. Why? Several explanations are discussed. 95

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.

- 23. Human Rights, Sex Trafficking, and Prostitution**, Alice Leuchtag, *The Humanist*, January/February 2003
One of the evil plagues haunting the world today is **sex slavery**, and it is getting worse. It is the product of extreme poverty and the considerable profits it generates. The exploitation involved is horrendous. Human rights groups are trying to stop the practice. Alice Leuchtag covers many aspects of this issue. **100**
- 24. Answers to Questions about Marriage Equality**, Human Rights Campaign, 2009, *Washington Monthly*, March/April 2009
The **Human Rights Campaign** is an advocacy organization for gay and lesbian rights, and this article is their current statement advocating **same-sex marriage**. Although this is a totally biased statement, it is important to understand this viewpoint. **105**
- 25. (Rethinking) Gender**, Debra Rosenberg, *Newsweek*, May 21, 2007
Debra Rosenberg opens the window on **people who are born one gender but feel that they are the other gender**. Some use surgery and/or hormones to bring their bodies into compliance with their identity. Their stories are riveting, and their lives raise questions about what gender really is. **108**



UNIT 4 Institutional Problems

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Part A. The Family

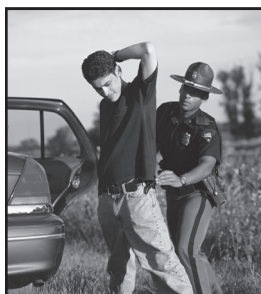
- 26. The Frayed Knot**, *The Economist*, May 26, 2007
The thesis that marriage is in trouble is a half truth. It is true for the lower class and not for college educated class. Thus there is a **marriage gap**, and it contributes to the income gap. **114**
- 27. The Opt-Out Myth**, E. J. Graff, *Columbia Journalism Review*, March/April 2007
E. J. Graff explains why media reports of **upper-class women opting out of the labor market to raise children** in substantial numbers is a myth. The proportion of women, even mothers, in the labor force is increasing, not decreasing. The consequences and policy implications of the truth are immense. **118**
- 28. Good Parents, Bad Results**, Nancy Shute, *U.S. News & World Report*, June 23, 2008
Nancy Shute claims that research has determined what motivates children and exactly what **discipline methods** work and what don't: Parents must set limits; avoid micro-managing; not nag, lecture, or yell; and praise less and love more. **122**
- 29. Overworked, Time Poor, and Abandoned by Uncle Sam: Why Don't American Parents Protest?**, Janet C. Gornick, *Dissent Magazine*, Summer 2005
According to Janet C. Gornick the above title describes the **American parent**, especially the mother. Yes, parents are under considerable stress, but appropriate **public policies** would greatly help them. **126**
- 30. Peer Marriage**, Pepper Schwartz, *The Communitarian Reader: Beyond the Essentials*, 2004
Pepper Schwartz celebrates the widespread diffusion of **peer marriages** in which spouses regard each other as full **social equals**, both have careers, share family decision making, and more equally share child-rearing responsibilities. She argues that peer marriages generally result in **stronger families** and greater satisfaction. **129**

Part B. Education

31. **Against School: How Public Education Cripples Our Kids, and Why**, John Taylor Gatto, *Harper's Magazine*, September 2003
John Taylor Gatto attacks the **U.S. school system** for being boring and preventing children from growing up. He suspects that this result is exactly what those who control the school system want schools to be. In arguing his radical thesis he presents a very provocative history of the evolution of the U.S. school system. 134
32. **Can the Center Find a Solution That Will Hold?: The High School Experience: Proposals for Improvement**, Chester E. Finn, Jr., *Education Next*, Winter 2006
American high schools are failing, and Washington is not going to fix them. Chester E. Finn, Jr. describes six major problems and proposes six solutions. 138

Part C. Health

33. **Fixing Hospitals**, Robert Langreth, *Forbes Magazine*, June 20, 2005
Robert Langreth accepts the report that **medical errors** kill 100,000 Americans every year and then proposes reforms that will dramatically reduce this number. 142
34. **The Medical Mafia**, Katherine Eban, *Fortune*, August 31, 2009
Katherine Eban tells the story of a **medical scam** and reveals a great deal about the medical system, the legal system, and the **reforms** or regulations that are needed to make these systems work as they should. 146



UNIT 5

Crime, Violence, and Law Enforcement

Unit Overview 152

Part A. Crime

35. **Fighting Crime: An Economist's View**, John J. Donohue, *Milken Institute Review*, First Quarter, 2005
It is amazing what conclusions we would come to about **crime and punishment** if we used **economic logic**, as John J. Donohue shows in this article. We would stop building prisons, abolish the death penalty, expand the police force, adopt sensible gun controls, and legalize drugs, among other things. 154
36. **The Aggregate Burden of Crime**, David A. Anderson, *Journal of Law and Economics*, October 1999
David A. Anderson makes a valiant effort to compute the **annual costs of major types of crime** and the net annual total costs of all crime, which he claims annually exceeds \$1 trillion or over \$4000 per capita. Fraud and cheating on taxes costs Americans over 20 times the costs of theft, burglary, and robbery. 159
37. **The Globalization of Crime**, Stephen Aguilar-Millan et al., *The Futurist*, November/December 2008
The authors examine the ways in which crime has become globalized and reorganized. In just 20 years globalization has restructured crime from vertical and horizontal industrialized forms to a large number of loosely connected networks spanning the globe. Their major activities include **drugs, counterfeiting, the modern slave trade, and white collar crime** (intellectual property crime, cybercrime, payment card fraud, computer virus attacks, identity theft, and cyberterrorism). 163

Part B. Law Enforcement

38. **Causes and Consequences of Wrongful Convictions**, Hugo Adam Bedau, *Current*, March/April 2003
Recently much light has been shed on the **injustices of the criminal justice system**. Hugo Adam Bedau has spent several decades researching **wrongful convictions** and lays out the evidence for its prevalence and suggests reforms that should greatly reduce them. 170

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide.

39. **Reforming Juvenile Justice**, Barry Krisberg, *The American Prospect*, September 2005
Juvenile justice needs to be reformed. Barry Krisberg reviews the history of the oscillation between punitive and rehabilitation phases in juvenile justice. Science supports the **rehabilitation model**, and public fears support the punitive model, which is in force today. But rehabilitation of children often occurs, and society gains from it. 174
40. **America Incarcerated: Crime, Punishment, and the Question of Race**, Glenn C. Loury, *Utne Reader*, November/December 2007
 Glenn C. Loury reports that **the United States** houses 25% of the world's inmates while having only 5% of the world's population. We have the **highest incarceration rate** in the world. This is related to a widespread public attitude of punitiveness and underlying racial attitudes. Other countries have much better records of rehabilitation. 177

Part C. Terrorism

41. **Defeating Terrorism: Is It Possible? Is It Probable?**, Marvin J. Cetron, *The Futurist*, May/June 2007
 One of the leading futurists, Marvin Cetron, directed the most extensive projects forecasting the **future of terrorism** and reports its findings here. 182
42. **Nightmare in Manhattan**, Bruce Goldman, *New Scientist Magazine*, March 2006
 America's biggest fear is **nuclear terrorism**. Bruce Goldman describes the impact on Manhattan of a terrorist nuclear bomb. 187



UNIT 6 Problems of Population, Environment, Technology, and the Future

Unit Overview 190

Part A. Population and Environment Issues

43. **Enough Already**, Paul Ehrlich and Anne Ehrlich, *New Scientist Magazine*, September 30, 2006
 Paul and Anne Ehrlich counter those who fear negative consequences of **stable or declining population**. The worriers fail to notice the benefits of stable population, and the population decline thesis is overblown. The population of developed countries with healthy economies is likely to grow through immigration. Stable or declining population countries will have to change some of their retirement policies and make other adaptations, but adjustments need not be very severe. 192
44. **The World's New Numbers**, Martin Walker, *Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 2009
 The world's **birthrates** are changing in unexpected ways. In general, birthrates are falling in the developing countries and increasing in Europe and North America. The major exception is Africa, where birthrates remain high. Martin Walker also analyzes **world immigration trends**. 196
45. **Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization**, Lester R. Brown, From *Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilization*, 2008
 Lester R. Brown has been reporting on **environmental problems** for four decades and provides a synopsis of all the major environmental problems in this article. These problems must be addressed immediately because some of them might cross **ecosystem** thresholds and overcome equilibrating mechanisms with devastating results. 200
46. **The Science of Climate Change**, Anna da Costa, *The Ecologist*, January 2007
Climate change may be the major long-term trend affecting humanity. Anna da Costa explains what generates our climate, what is causing climate change, what are the expected impacts, and what can be done to prevent much of the predicted climate change and negative impacts. 204

Part B. Technological Issues

47. **Who's Afraid of Human Enhancement?: A Reason Debate on the Promise, Perils, and Ethics of Human Biotechnology**, Nick Gillespie et al., *Reason Magazine*, January 2006

A major cultural debate of this century is how society will deal with **biotechnology**. The potential for reducing diseases, disabilities, and abnormalities, and enhancing performance is great. Eventually, children can be "designed." The **ethics** of human biotechnology is debated by four involved thinkers from different perspectives who ask, "What should biotechnology be allowed to do?"

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48. **The Secret Nuclear War**, Eduardo Goncalves, *The Ecologist*, April 2001

An extremely consequential technology is nuclear. The energy it produces has greatly benefited mankind, but at what price? Eduardo Goncalves reports on all the **nuclear accidents, testings, experiments, leaks, production, cover-ups, and storage and reuse of nuclear materials** that he can find out about. The death toll could be as high as 175 million, and the shameful behavior of countless agencies that he reports on is shocking.

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Part C. The World and the Future

49. **Update on the State of the Future**, Jerome C. Glenn and Theodore J. Gordon, *The Futurist*, January/February 2006

In this article two leading **futurists** provide a wide range of trends and predictions on the future. Jerome C. Glenn's and Theodore J. Gordon's **environmental predictions** are particularly frightening, but they do point to an increasing awareness of the problems and support for measures that favor **sustainability**.

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50. **A User's Guide to the Century**, Jeffrey Sachs, *The National Interest*, July/August 2008

Jeffrey Sachs attempts to identify, briefly describe, and assess the consequences of the major developments of the twenty-first century. The world is converging technologically and economically, **economic and population growth** are threatening the **environment**, and vast inequalities in income and power between and within nations are destabilizing and increasing **conflicts**.

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51. **The Rise of the Rest**, Fareed Zakaria, *Newsweek*, May 12, 2008

Fareed Zakaria argues that a great **power shift** is now occurring. For the last two decades America's superpower status in every realm has been largely unchallenged. Globalization and rapid economic growth in Asia have changed the world. America is still the unipolar power militarily but not in industrial, financial, social, cultural dimensions where the distribution of power is shifting, moving away from U.S. dominance to a situation defined and directed from many places and by many peoples.

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