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UNIT 1

Introduction: Clashing Values and Problematic Transformations of Social Life

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Part A. Social Life

1. **The American Narrative: Is There One & What Is It?**, William H. Chafe, *Daedalus*, Winter 2012

William H. Chafe shows that America has two major moral premises from the early Puritans until today: serving the public good and individual freedom. These more or less balance each other and over the long run serve us well. The current drive to undo the programs that assist the needy, including social security and medicare, may destroy that balance if unchecked and weaken the country.

2

2. **Still Bowling Alone? The Post-9/11 Split**, Thomas H. Sander and Robert D. Putnam, *Journal of Democracy*, January 2010

Robert D. Putnam documented the decline in group activities and the associated loss of social capital since the 1960s in his article and book "Bowling Alone." Since society needs lots of social capital to run well, his book was a frightening warning. The question in Sander and Putnam's title points to increased volunteerism and greater connectedness since 9/11. Crises can pull us together.

6

Part B. Transformation of Influences on People and Culture

3. **Relationships, Community, and Identity in the New Virtual Society**, Arnold Brown, *The Futurist*, March/April 2011

Arnold Brown argues against the declining community thesis. The explosion of communication technology has greatly increased connectedness. Contrary to most people's assumptions, Brown believes that virtual connections are becoming almost as strong as personal connections. These technologies will greatly impact society and individual psychologies.

11

4. **What Isn't for Sale?** Michael J. Sandel, *Atlantic*, April 2012

Michael J. Sandel documents the increasing commodification of modern life. Market values are becoming more dominant in area after area. The subordination of important morals like caring for others to market values is corrupting our thinking and behavior to the detriment of the functioning of society.

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UNIT 2

Problems of the Political Economy

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Part A. The Polity

5. **The Rule of the Rich**, Bill Moyers, *The Progressive*, February 2011

All sociologists to some extent accept the power elite theory that the economic elite

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

have inordinate influence over the political system. Bill Moyers presents a cogent version of this thesis and shows how this power structure adversely affects society and so many lower groups.

20

6. Follow the Dark Money, Andy Kroll, *Mother Jones*, July/August 2012

Andy Kroll reveals how powerful groups obtain their special benefits from the government. Most are well known like campaign financing, corruption, and influencing legislation in the drafting stage. He details many other methods and some of the resulting negative consequences for nonelites.

24

7. The End of Welfare as I Knew It, Diana Spatz, *The Nation*, January 2, 2012

The new welfare law in 1996 was praised for lowering welfare rolls and pushing many into the job market. It also had its negative side, which Diana Spatz presents. In many places it was administered badly and unjustly. Some of the people who were dropped should not have been.

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Part B. The Economy

8. The Withering of the Affluent Society, Robert J. Samuelson, *Wilson Quarterly*, Summer 2012

Robert J. Samuelson is pessimistic about the economic future of America. He believes that the country will recover from the recession but only to modest growth and no growth on average for the young. Massive transfers from the young to the elderly is their prospect for many decades. Many aspects of the economy are taken into account in his analysis.

35

9. Hard at Work in the Jobless Future, James H. Lee, *Futurist*, March/April 2012

James H. Lee is also pessimistic about America's economic future. Automation and new technologies will make many workers redundant, including white collar and professional workers. The jobless future in his title is exaggerated but a severe shortage of jobs is to be expected. The ramifications are worrisome.

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Part C. Problems of Place

10. Urban Legends, Joel Kotkin, *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2010

Joel Kotkin claims that the theory that megacities are the wave of the future is an urban legend. The truth is that vibrant smaller cities, suburbs, and towns are the wave of the future because at some point centralization is dysfunctional and small cities and suburbs operate at a more humane scale.

43

11. Immigration Benefits America, Steven J. Gold, *Society*, September 2009

As stated in his title, Steven J. Gold argues that immigration socially and economically benefits America even though many immigrants come from cultures quite different from ours. Many voice fears that immigrants will change our culture and society for the worse, but history shows that America successfully assimilates immigrants from quite different backgrounds.

47

12. The Invisible Ones, Rebecca Clarren, *Ms.*, Summer 2007

Rebecca Clarren reports on the *slavery* that currently exists in the United States. 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.

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UNIT 3

Problems of Poverty and Inequality

Unit Overview

54

Part A. Inequality and the Poor

13. The Impact of Globalization on Income and Employment: The Downside of Integrating Markets, Michael Spence, *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2011

Everyone knows that the U.S. economy is in trouble from competition with developing countries. Michael Spence details past the impacts and explains the current trends. His conclusion is that the U.S. economy is in serious trouble for the foreseeable future.

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

14. The State of Poverty in America, Peter Edelman, *The American Prospect*, June 22, 2012
Peter Edelman says that poverty in the United States is a big problem because it rests on the shortage of work and the prevalence of low-wage work. These problems are likely to get worse not better. The poor number 103 million, and most of them are trying to work as much as they can. The poor have been helped by many policies but changes in the labor market will continue will keep the poor numerous for many years. 61

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. 63

Part B. Racial and Ethnic Inequality and Issues

16. Somewhere between Jim Crow & Post-Racialism: Reflections on the Racial Divide in America Today, Lawrence D. Bobo, *Daedalus*, Spring 2011
Lawrence Bobo explains that even with all of the progress that has been made in race relations over the years, we still “stand somewhere between a Jim Crow past and the aspirations of a post-racial future.” 67

17. A More Perfect Union, Barack Obama, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, May 2008
The anti-patriotic tirade of Reverend Wright forced Obama to address the issue of race. He began with the high ideals of the Constitution and how slavery mocked these ideals. Soon he is telling his own story and how his career was made possible by the many struggles that narrowed the gap between the ideals and the reality. Therefore, he could not agree with Reverend Wright’s condemnation of America. His speech was informative, patriotic, and inspiring. 79

18. Fear and Loathing of Islam, Moustafa Bayoumi, *The Nation*, July 2/9, 2012
Ever since 9/11 American Arabs and Muslims have become an outcast group even though they were very well integrated into U.S. society. Many untrue terrible stories about Muslims are spreading like wildfire through talk radio, the Internet, and other media that have little regard for the facts. Actually, Arab Americans have had an exemplary record as good, patriotic, and successful Americans. 84

Part C. Gender Inequalities and Issues

19. Why Women Still Can’t Have It All, Anne-Marie Slaughter, *Atlantic Monthly*, July/August 2012
Women cannot have it all (a good career and a good family life) because the system (mostly the work world) is not set up to allow women to have it all. The system must be changed and Anne-Marie Slaughter suggests the ways it should be modified. 87

20. Human Sex Trafficking, Amanda Walker-Rodriguez, JD and Rodney Hill, JD, *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, March 2011
The authors are assistant state’s attorneys who report how widespread sex slavery is in the United States. The public assume that most prostitution is voluntary. According to the authors, most are sex slaves either fully enslaved and controlled or ostensibly free but in fact controlled by manipulation and threats. If the mob is involved, resistance is very dangerous. 99

21. Free and Equal in Dignity and LGBT Rights, Address by Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State, United States, *Vital Speeches of the Day*, February 2012
Hillary Clinton gave this speech on the international Human Rights Day proclaiming, as did the United Nations in 1948, that all human beings are born free and equal in human rights regardless of whether governments recognize them. She reports on the wonderful advances minorities and women have on these rights and then supports the increasing demands of LGBT demands for them. She also attempts to deal with objections to LGBT rights. 105

22. The End of Men, Hanna Rosin, *The Atlantic*, July/August 2010

Hanna Rosen overstates her case in the title, but she does show that women are advantaged over men in many ways. More women are working than men. Over 50 percent of managers are women. Three-fifths of college degrees will be earned by women. The deeper question behind these facts is whether modern life that favors verbal skills over physical skills is loading the dice in favor of women.

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UNIT 4 Institutional Problems

Unit Overview

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Part A. The Family

23. All the Single Ladies, Kate Bolick, *The Atlantic*, November 2011

Kate Bolick shows that the institution of marriage is being battered by many forces of change, making successful marriages more difficult. These include work-family tensions, changing gender roles, declining pools of compatible partners, sexual and other freedoms, and major cultural changes. Further transformation of marriage patterns are to be expected.

120

24. Matches Made on Earth: Why Family Values Are Human Values, Nancie L. Gonzalez, *Humanist*, January/February 2011

Nancie L. Gonzalez shows that there is a great variety in the norms governing marriage relations throughout the world. This should not make us change the marriage pattern that each couple follows, but it does undermine the demand by some that others should follow their norms.

131

25. Good Parents, Bad Results, Nancy Schute, *U.S. News & World Report*, June 23, 2008

Nancy Schute claims that research has determined what motivates children and exactly what discipline methods work and what don't: Parents must set limits; avoid micromanaging; not nag, lecture, or yell; and praise less and love more.

135

Part B. Education

26. Introduction: The Next Wave of School Reform, Paul Glasstris, *Washington Monthly*, May/June 2012

Paul Glasstris argues that No Child Left Behind needs a massive overhaul, which is already underway. It involves three stages. First, most states will institute "common core standards," which will define what students should know; second, the development of new high-stakes tests based on these new standards; third, the development and implementation of new computer-based learning software that will work wonders.

139

27. Is \$600 Billion Enough? Peter W. Cookson Jr., *Wilson Quarterly*, Autumn 2011

Peter W. Cookson Jr. envisions improving schools without increasing costs. Money is not the answer. National per pupil expenditures have doubled since 1970 without improving performance. The answer is new technology that cuts costs while improving learning. New technologies will customize students' learning so that each student will have an individualized program with frequent testing and revision to boost weak areas. The program will be designed to create interest and excitement.

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Part C. Health

28. A Thousand Years Young, Aubrey de Grey, *The Futurist*, May/June 2012

How would you like to live a thousand years? Aubrey de Grey says that advances in medical and biochemical treatments can overcome the aging process and keep us young for many centuries.

144

29. **From Hospital to “Healthspital”:** A Better Paradigm for Health Care, Frank W. Maletz, *Futurist*, March/April 2011
 Frank W. Maletz is convinced that the U.S. healthcare system must be reformed. The key plank in his program is to put the priority on preventive care instead of treatment. He advocates an integrated, holistic health delivery system based on a great deal of retrievable information.

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UNIT 5 Crime, Violence, and Law Enforcement

Unit Overview

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Part A. Crime

30. **Fighting Crime: An Economist’s View**, John J. Donohue, *Current*, June 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

31. **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 exceed \$1 trillion or over \$4000 per capita. Fraud and cheating on taxes costs Americans over twenty times the costs of theft, burglary, and robbery.

159

32. **Crime, Inequality & Social Justice**, Glenn C. Loury, *Daedalus*, Summer 2010

Glenn C. Loury writes an introduction to a *Daedalus* issue on crime and punishment and summarizes its contents. It covers the high imprisonment rates, the racial disparity in imprisonment, and the many impacts of the current judicial system. Although blacks and whites use and sell drugs at similar rates, blacks are imprisoned at much higher rates. Other issues are discussed but the bottom line is that there is much injustice in U.S. justice.

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Part B. Law Enforcement

33. **Wrongful Convictions**, Radley Balko, *Reason*, July 2011

Radley Balko shows that there are many wrongful convictions. DNA testing has cleared 268 convicted persons, but few cases can be tested by DNA. Balko makes a valiant effort to estimate the number of wrongful convictions and ends up with a 3-5 percent number for felony crimes, but in the end one can only guess. His careful explication of the criminal justice system shows the many ways that injustice can be done and demonstrates the need for reforms.

167

34. **License to Kill**, Adam Weinstein, *Mother Jones*, July/August 2012

This article is about the Stand your Ground law, which contributed to the shooting of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman. It reveals the pro gun forces that got the law passed in Florida and similar laws in 25 states. In states with these laws the justified homicides have doubled.

174

35. **Toward Fewer Prisoners and Less Crime**, Mark A. R. Kleiman, *Daedalus*, Summer 2010

Mark A. R. Kleinman analyzes the consequences for the United States of our high incarceration rate and concludes that they are negative. Incarceration has negligible effects on reducing crime. If we reduced incarceration, we would actually reduce crime and strengthen society in several ways.

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Part C. Terrorism

- 36. The Year in Hate & Extremism, 2010**, Mark Potok, *Intelligence Report*, Southern Poverty Law Center, Spring 2011
This article demonstrates the recent substantial increase in hate groups and extremist ideas. **183**
- 37. War in the Fifth Domain**, *Economist*, July 3, 2010
The possibilities of cyber warfare are frightening. Cyberterrorists could cause financial chaos costing trillions, screw up electrical grids, or widely infect military hardware. Worst-case scenarios include oil refineries and pipelines exploding; air-traffic-control systems collapsing; orbiting satellites spinning out of control, major corporations being hacked to death, and the Internet being crippled. Society could soon break down as food becomes scarce and money runs out. Protection from these attacks is extremely difficult. **186**
- 38. The New Virology**, David E. Hoffman, *Foreign Policy*, March/April 2011
David E. Hoffman raises several frightful concerns: terrorist attacks by biological, chemical, or cyber methods. Technological advances have greatly increased the dangers from these threats and an industry is developing to try to counter future attacks. Cyber attacks are already widespread. This article is a horror story. **189**



UNIT 6

Problems of Population, Environment, Resources, and the Future

Unit Overview **192**

Part A. Population and Environment Issues

- 39. The New Population Bomb: The Four Megatrends That Will Change the World**, Jack A. Goldstone, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2010
Jack A. Goldstone reports future population trends and their likely impacts. Developed countries will age and decline while the poorest countries will grow the most but lack education, capital, and employment opportunities. These and other trends will pose strains on governance structures and foster instability, violence, terrorism, and revolutions. **195**
- 40. The New Geopolitics of Food**, Lester R. Brown, *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2011
According to Lester R. Brown, the world is in a long-term worsening food crisis that will have troubling economic, social, and political impacts. Falling water tables are a serious problem in countries containing more than half the world's population. Soils are severely depleting. Deserts are expanding. Croplands are being diverted to ethanol production. Global warming harms food production. Societal troubles are approaching. **200**
- 41. The World Will Be More Crowded—With Old People**, Phillip Longman, *Foreign Policy*, September/October 2011
Phillip Longman's message to young readers is that one of your major problems is the burden of the elderly that you must bear. Once retired, they no longer contribute to society but only take from it and burden the young. In the developed nations there are too many old people and too few young people. This threatens world prosperity. **205**
- 42. Climate Change**, Bill McKibben, *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2009
Bill McKibben argues that anthropomorphic global warming (AGW) could ruin the planet and set back human societies hundreds of years. The science is settled. Deniers speak loudly but are few. He details many present and future impacts and reviews possible solutions. We cannot afford further delay. **207**

Part B. Technological Issues

- 43. 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?"

210

- 44. Engineering the Future of Food,** Josh Schonwald, *Futurist*, May/June 2012

Josh Schonwald points to fabulous possibilities for genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Fears stand in the way of real progress in developing GMOs, which would greatly improve and extend life. We already eat a lot of GMOs because GMO soybeans and canola dominate the market, so there is no reason to hold back GMOs if proper testing is done.

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Part C. The World and the Future

- 45. The Broken Contract: Inequality and American Decline,** George Packer, *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2011

George Packer analyzes the decline of the American institutional structure, which he attributes to the broken American contract. The United States functioned adequately when the social contract between labor, business, and government governed the political economy. That contract is broken and American effectiveness has dramatically declined.

222

- 46. The Democratic Malaise: Globalization and the Threat to the West,** Charles A. Kupchan, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2012

Charles A. Kupchan makes a similar argument about developed societies generally. They are ungovernable and experiencing political breakdown. They cannot meet voters' demands and have lost legitimacy and effectiveness. New conditions hinder old policy tools in many ways.

227

- 47. The Future of History: Can Liberal Democracy Survive the Decline of the Middle Class?** Francis Fukuyama, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2012

Political scientists have long wondered whether liberal democracy can last if the middle class declines. Today increasing inequality and the withering of the middle class are threatening liberal democracy. Several factors are involved in these ominous trends, according to Francis Fukuyama, including increasing inequality, new technologies, new ideologies, globalization, and various policies.

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Test-Your-Knowledge Form

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