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UNIT 1 Culture

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Part A. *American Culture and Cultural Change*

- 1. Understanding American Worldview**, J. LaVelle Ingram, PhD, *Life in the USA*, 2007
J. LaVelle Ingram created this article to explain to immigrants the peculiar worldview of the country they are adopting. It is contrasted with other worldviews and explains some important cultural differences between societies. **2**
- 2. 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. **6**
- 3. The Test of Time**, Brigid Schulte, *The Washington Post*, January 17, 2010
Many people feel like the author, that their lives are hurried, frantic, and super busy, but when carefully measured they have loads of free time (in her case around 30 hours a week). The time diary studies have revealed many very interesting things about our lives and culture. **10**
- 4. I Can’t Think!**, Sharon Begley, *Newsweek*, March 7, 2011
Research summarized here reveals that the mind is stimulated as the subjects it considers become more complex, but after a point it experiences overload and begins to make more errors and bad decisions. Sharon Begley reports on the ways that our increasing exposure to information is impacting us. **15**
- 5. Islam in America**, Bobby Ghosh, *Time*, August 30, 2010
America prides itself in its diversity but that is changing with respect to Muslims. Bobby Ghosh/Dearborn presents painful stories of intolerance and hatred against American Muslims, and reviews the arguments against Islam and some of the widely held erroneous beliefs that poison feelings toward them. The article also sketches the history of intolerance in America. **18**

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

Part B. Value Issues

- 6. Diversity within Unity: A New Approach to Immigrants and Minorities,** *The Communitarian Reader: Beyond the Essentials*, edited by Amitai Etzioni, Andrew Volmert, and Elanit Rothschild, Rowan & Littlefield, 2004
This statement signed by many communitarians seeks to assuage the increasing fear of impacts of immigration. It favors diversity of cultures within unity on shared core values. **22**
- 7. What Do We Deserve?,** Namit Arora, *Humanist*, May/June 2011
A major key to political, economic, and cultural issues is the question “What is just or right?” Namit Arora uses Michael Sandel’s book, *Justice*, to explore this question. People should be rewarded for their skill and effort but since chance and innate advantages play such a large role in outcomes, some adjustments are required for outcomes to be considered fair. How these adjustments are made shape political philosophies and differentiate societies. **29**



UNIT 2

Socialization and Social Control

Unit Overview **32**

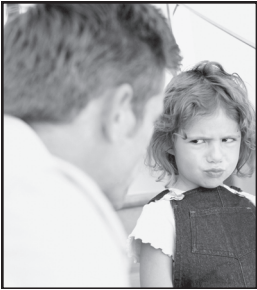
Part A. Influences on Personality and Behavior

- 8. The Social Construction of Gender,** Margaret L. Andersen and Dana Hysock, from *Thinking about Women*, 8/e (Allyn & Bacon, 2009)
Socialization by parents, teachers, peers, public figures and many others contributes greatly to what we are. The authors focus on the role of socialization in the formation of gender identity which helps explain why men and women are different. **34**
- 9. Worth Every Penny: Can Cash Incentives Create Model Citizens?,** Jim Giles, *New Scientist*, September 24, 2007
Jim Giles proposes a very sensible idea that many consider radical. He proposes that people be rewarded for doing what is beneficial to society. He would pay people for doing good. Believe it or not, this is a revolutionary idea. **38**
- 10. The New Sex Scorecard,** Hara Estroff Marano, *Psychology Today*, July/August 2003
As everyone knows, men and women are different. Recent research has greatly increased our understanding of these differences and Hara Estroff Marano reviews these differences including mental, sexual, health, emotional, and psychological. **41**

Part B. Crime, Law Enforcement, and Social Control

- 11. 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. **45**
- 12. Wrongful Convictions,** Radley Balko, *Reason*, July 2011
How many people are convicted of crimes that they did not commit? Radley Balko scans the research on this difficult topic and estimates that 3 to 5 percent of convictions convict innocent people. DNA has exonerated 268 convicted murderers over two decades but only a small number of cases are reviewed via DNA testing. The painful story of the suffering endured by the wrongfully convicted is told through the case of Paul House. **50**

- 13. Cruel and Unusual: The True Costs of Our Prison System**, Robert DeFina and Lance Hannon, *Commonweal*, January 28, 2011
 One of America's black eyes is its prison system and the laws that send so many people to jail for long terms. America leads the world by far on incarceration rates due largely to the politically popular tough on crime policy involving mandatory sentencing and the three-strikes-and-you're-out rule. Research indicates, however, that high incarceration rates contribute very little to lowering crime rates. **57**
- 14. How Wall Street Crooks Get Out of Jail Free**, William Greider, *The Nation*, April 11, 2011
 The one area where tough on crime is not applied is corporate crime. Despite the horrific impacts of the recent financial crisis on the economy and country not one financial executive has gone to jail. William Greider explains how the political system works to protect the cheaters and not the cheated. **62**
- 15. 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 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. **66**



UNIT 3

Groups and Roles in Transition

Unit Overview **70**

Part A. Marriage and the Family

- 16. 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. **72**
- 17. How to Land Your Kid in Therapy**, Lori Gottlieb, *The Atlantic*, July/August 2011
 Lori Gottlieb develops an interesting thesis about parenting: the good is better than the very good. The very good in raising children she criticizes is the "too good" parenting. For example, parents believe that they should try to make their children as happy as possible, but that can make them less adaptive and less happy in later life. **76**
- 18. Peer Marriage**, Pepper Schwartz, *The Communitarian Reader: Beyond the Essentials*, edited by Amitai Etzioni, Andrew Volmert, and Elanit Rothschild, Rowan & Littlefield, 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. He argues that peer marriages generally result in stronger families and greater satisfaction. **84**

Part B. Gender and Gender Roles

19. **Death by Gender**, Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, *Dissent*, Spring 2010
One of the greatest inequalities in the world is gender inequality in patriarchal societies. Women and girls are often killed by their fathers, brothers, or male cousins for the “honor” of the family when they have been raped or molested or perceived as contaminated for behaviors that would be normal in other societies. Gender inequality has many other facets including the trafficking of women as sex slaves and their forced recruitment as suicide bombers. 90
20. **The Conservative Case for Gay Marriage: Why Same-Sex Marriage Is an American Value**, Theodore B. Olson, *Newsweek*, January 18, 2010
Gay marriage is hotly debated today and probably will be for a considerable time into the future. The arguments are based on values and cost benefit analyses of its impacts. Now the arguments have moved into the courts to determine whether constitutional rights were violated when California Proposition 8 overturned legislation which legalized gay marriages. Currently Proposition 8 has been overturned but the legal battle is continuing. This article covers all of the issues that lie behind this debate. 93

Part C. City and Community

21. **An Age of Transformation**, *The Economist*, May 31, 2008
The transformation that *The Economist* assesses is the transformation of America from urban and rural life to suburban life. More people live in the suburbs than cities and rural areas together. In the past cities excelled in jobs and heterogeneity. Now these characterize the suburbs. 98
22. **Relationships, Community, and Identity in the New Virtual Society**, Arnold Brown, *The Futurist*, March/April 2011
How have online relationships and communication impacted us and how might they impact us in the future? Arnold Brown explores a wide range of changes wrought by online relationships and activities and how they affect individuals and organizations. They are increasingly impacting identity formation and reformation. 102



UNIT 4

Stratification and Social Inequalities

Unit Overview 106

Part A. Poverty and Income Inequalities

23. **A World Enslaved**, E. Benjamin Skinner, *Foreign Policy*, March/April 2008
Did you know that there are more slaves living today than at any time in human history? E. Benjamin Skinner claims that you could buy a child slave for sex and work for \$50 in Haiti and fly home with her in one day. He claims that there are 300,000 slaves in Haiti. This is how he begins his exposé of worldwide slavery. 108
24. **The Rule of the Rich**, Bill Moyers, *The Progressive*, February 2011
It is common knowledge that large corporations and the rich have massive influence over the American political system and its policies, but Bill Moyers sheds considerable light on the methods and processes whereby the rich rule this country. He uses stories and history to stir us to the point where we want to fight the corruption of the system. 111
25. **Antipoverty Policy for the Excluded Poor**, Herbert J. Gans, *Challenge*, November/December 2009
Herbert J. Gans describes how the poor are more resented and victimized in America compared to other industrial nations and are minimally helped by social programs. Our policies and the functioning of our economy favor upper groups and give little opportunities for the poor.

26. Connecting the Dots, David K. Shipler, from John Edwards et al., *Ending Poverty in America*, The New Press, 2007

Poverty is a complicated subject. The obvious aspects are the lack of good jobs, lack of skills, and lack of opportunity. Less obvious are the reasons why the steps to eliminate poverty are not taken. David K. Shipler explains how multiple problems intersect and make it nearly impossible for many of the poor to get out and stay out of poverty.

122

Part B. Welfare and Welfare Reform

27. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families: An Overview, Robert Ek and Larry Goolsby, *Policy and Practice*, February 2010

In 1996 America ended Aid for Families with Dependent Children and replaced it with a new welfare program called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families with a strong emphasis on temporary and encouraging mothers to work. TANF was a success because it caused welfare rolls to shrink, but some problems remain.

127

Part C. Racial and Ethnic Issues and Inequalities

28. 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*, edited by Maria Krysan and Amanda E. Lewis (Russell Sage Foundation 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 America.

129

29. Whites Swim in Racial Preference, Tim Wise, from *Poverty and Race in America*, edited by Chester Hartman, 2006

According to Tim Wise, America has had a strong affirmative action program from its founding. It was a white affirmative action program and though it has been cut back some it is still in existence. Whites, however, are ignorant of its presence because they have come to assume that they have earned all that they have.

133

30. Understanding Unconscious Bias and Unintentional Racism, Jean Moule, *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 2009

Jean Moule identifies unconscious bias that leads to unintentional racism of which the perpetrators are usually unaware. These biases are based on stereotypes and are hard to correct at both the conscious and especially the subconscious levels. Moule points out the many very negative impacts that unconscious biases cause.

135

Part D. Sex Inequalities and Issues

31. Female Power, *The Economist*, January 2, 2010

Do you agree with *The Economist* that “The economic empowerment of women across the rich world is one of the most remarkable revolutions of the past 50 years. It is remarkable because of the extent of the change . . . [and] because it has produced so little friction.” This article documents and explains this revolution.

140

32. 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 5

Social Institutions: Issues, Crises, and Changes

Unit Overview 152

Part A. The Political Sphere: Power, Politics, and Administration

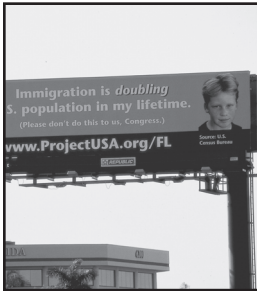
- 33. Who Rules America? Power, Politics, and Social Change,** G. William Domhoff, *McGraw-Hill*, 2006
 G. William Domhoff is the leading proponent of the power elite view of American politics, which is explained in this article as it applies to political influence in America today. 154
- 34. Neutralized: Can American Democracy Survive the Demise of Impartial Institutions?,** John B. Judis, *The New Republic*, April 28, 2011
 According to John B. Judis, democracy is threatened because so many institutions are losing their impartiality and are becoming highly politicalized or ideologically narrow. The judicial system and public academic institutions must be impartial in their judicial decisions, teaching and research. Also, countries are better off when their news media and sources of information are largely professional and unbiased. 158
- 35. 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 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. 161

Part B. The Economic Sphere: Changing Consumption, Workplaces, Workforce

- 36. The Capitalist Manifesto: Greed Is Good (To a Point),** Fareed Zakaria, *Newsweek*, June 22, 2009
 Fareed Zakaria describes how American capitalism works. It “means growth, but also instability.” It is both good and bad, but mostly good. It is driven by self-interest (greed) to produce good products at low cost for high sales and good profits, but self-interest can go astray when institutions fail to turn self-interest into socially beneficial actions. 165
- 37. Reversal of Fortune,** Bill McKibben, *Mother Jones*, March 2007
 Bill McKibben raises the age-old question “Does money buy happiness?” in a new way, that is, “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. 170
- 38. Getting Higher Ed in Shape,** Daniel deVise, *The Washington Post Magazine*, February 20, 2011
 Daniel deVise criticizes the U.S. higher educational system. The top research universities and liberal arts colleges may be the best in the world but the rest should be improved in eight ways: 1) measure how much students learn in college, 2) end merit aid which largely funds the children of upper-income families, 3) make the bachelor degree a three-year degree, 4) revive the core curriculum (it is out of date), 5) bring back homework (a half century ago it was 25 hours a week, now 15), 6) tie public funds to finishing college, 7) cap athletic subsidies, and 8) stop re-teaching high school in community college. These proposals should provoke debates. 179

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

- 39. Medical Guesswork**, John Carey, *BusinessWeek*, May 29, 2006
John Cary reports that most doctors' medical decisions are based on very little empirical evidence. His report features medical crusader Dr. David Eddy who is championing evidence-based medicine. **185**
- 40. Pandemic Pandemonium**, Josh N. Ruxin, *The National Review*, July/August 2008
Josh N. Ruxin warns that the worst health problem today is the eminent danger of a pandemic. Pandemic threats include AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, and influenza. Developed countries are not too concerned about these diseases but their vitality in poor countries allows for the development of very dangerous strands of these diseases that can threaten a large part of the world. **192**
- 41. In Search of the Spiritual**, Jerry Adler, *Newsweek*, August 29–September 5, 2005
Jerry Adler presents a full and rich report on spirituality and religion in America which covers both statistics and practices. **196**



UNIT 6 Social Change and the Future

Unit Overview **202**

Part A. Population and Environmental Issues

- 42. The New Population Bomb: The Four Megatrends That Will Change the World**, Jack A. Goldstone, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2010
The four world-changing trends are 1) shift of population growth from developed countries to the developing countries, 2) The aging of the labor force in developed countries and increasing numbers of young people in developing countries, 3) rapid growth of Muslim countries, and 4) most of the world's population will become urbanized, with the largest cities being in the poorest countries, where critical services are scarce. These are very challenging trends that will collapse many governing structures unless major adaptive changes are made. "The strategic and economic policies of the twentieth century are obsolete, and it is time to find new ones." **204**
- 43. How to Feed 8 Billion People**, Lester R. Brown, *The Futurist*, January/February 2010
The demand for food is growing faster than the supply of food because of "population growth, the growing consumption of grain-based animal protein, and, most recently, the massive use of grain to fuel cars." Meanwhile soils are eroding, water shortages are increasing, and the improvements that made the green revolution are near their limits so expanding production is difficult and per capita grain production is declining. Lester R. Brown proposes conservation, productivity, and consumption changes to address the food crisis. **209**
- 44. 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. **214**
- 45. A Safe Operating Space for Humanity**, Johan Rockström et al., *Nature*, September 24, 2009
The authors identify nine Earth-system processes and associated thresholds that could generate unacceptable environmental change if crossed: climate change; rate of biodiversity loss; interference with the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles; stratospheric ozone depletion; ocean acidification; global freshwater use; change in land use; chemical pollution; and atmospheric aerosol loading. Three thresholds have already been crossed and three are close to being crossed. The authors conclude that the planet is in bad shape and threatening human civilization unless adaptive actions are taken immediately. **217**

- 46. Conquering Climate Change**, Dennis M. Bushnell, *The Futurist*, May/June 2010
There is enough uncertainty about many aspects of global warming to keep the debate alive even though most relevant scientists support the human caused global warming thesis. But how much certainty is required before ameliorative actions are taken? Dennis M. Bushnell explores this issue and recommends serious actions immediately to avoid or minimize many potential devastating consequences. **223**

Part B. Technology for Better or for Worse

- 47. Who's Afraid of Human Enhancement? A Reason Debate on the Promise, Perils, and Ethics of Human Biotechnology**, Nick Gillespie et al., *Reason*, January 2006
A major cultural debate of this century is how society will deal with biotechnology. The potential for reducing diseases, disabilities, and abnormalities on the one hand and to enhance performance on the other hand is great. Eventually children can be "designed." This article debates "What should biotechnology be allowed to do?" **226**

- 48. Biotech on the Farm: Realizing the Promise**, Clifton E. Anderson, *The Futurist*, September/October 2005
The fact that new technology can produce both good and bad outcomes is at the heart of the debate about genetic engineering. Clifton E. Anderson explains how it can help farmers feed future populations with better diets but also entails high risks. He recommends a Genetic Science Commission to guide the development of genetic research to maximize the benefits and minimize the harms. **234**

Part C. Terrorism and War

- 49. Defeating Terrorism: Is It Possible? Is It Probable?**, Marvin J. Cetron, *The Futurist*, May/June 2007
One of the leading futurists, Marvin J. Cetron, directed the most extensive project forecasting the future of terrorism and reports its findings here. It is scary! **238**

- 50. War in the Fifth Domain: Are the Mouse and Keyboard the New Weapons of Conflict?**, *The Economist*, July 3, 2010
The possibilities of cyber warfare are frightening. Cyber terrorists 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. **244**

Part D. Macro Changes for the World and the United States

- 51. A New End, a New Beginning: Prepare for Life as We Don't Know It**, John L. Petersen, *The Futurist* September/October 2009
John L. Petersen, a noted futurist, forecasts that major changes or a transformation lie ahead, because multiple trends are converging, problems are much larger than government, the problems are systemic, we are not taking appropriate steps now, the issues are too complex to adequately understand, and the issues are global. We must plan for the transition now. **247**

- 52. A User's Guide to the Century**, Jeffrey D. 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 governance structures and increasing conflicts. **251**
- 53. Can America Fail?**, Kishore Mahbubani, *The Wilson Quarterly*, Spring 2009
Kishore Mahbubani argues that America is guilty of groupthink which prevented us from anticipating the meltdown of the housing and financial markets. Now our worship of individual responsibility and freedom makes us irresponsible, our hatred of taxes leads to crippling debt, our over extension of American power makes us hated throughout the world, our self-righteousness closes our ears to the voices of others, and our unquestioning acceptance of our political system guarantees its subordination to special interests. Unless we wake up America will fail. **255**
- Test-Your-Knowledge Form*** **260**