

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	iv
<i>Correlation Guide</i>	xiv
<i>Topic Guide</i>	xv
<i>Internet References</i>	xviii



UNIT 1

Introduction: The Nature of Social Problems and Calls for Transforming Society

Unit Overview	xx
---------------	----

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 Atrophy of Social Life**, D. Stanley Eitzen, *Society*, September/October 2004

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.”

11

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 the United States 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.

15



UNIT 2

Problems of the Political Economy

Unit Overview	18
---------------	----

Part A. *The Polity*

4. **Who Rules America?: Power, Politics, and Social Change**, G. William Domhoff, *Who Rules America?*, 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.

20

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. 24

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. 28

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 interconnectedness, embedded sensors, and complex intelligence systems. 32

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. 34

9. 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. 42

Part C. Problems of Place

10. An Age of Transformation, *The Economist*, May 31, 2008
The transformation that *The Economist* assesses is the transformation of the United States 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. 47

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 the United States even though many immigrants come from cultures quite different from ours. Many voices fear that immigrants will change our culture and society for the worse, but history shows that the United States successfully assimilates immigrants from quite different backgrounds. 51

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. 54



UNIT 3

Problems of Poverty and Inequality

Unit Overview

58

Part A. *Inequality and the Poor*

- 13. How Stratification Works: The American Stratification System**, Douglas S. Massey, *Categorically Unequal: The American Stratification System*, 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.

60

- 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 the United States 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 the United States and now several European countries have more income mobility than the United States.

65

- 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.

69

- 16. 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.

73

Part B. *Welfare and Welfare Reform*

- 17. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families: An Overview**, Robert Ek and Larry Goolsby, *Policy and Practice*, February 2010
In 1996 the United States ended Aid to 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.

78

- 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.

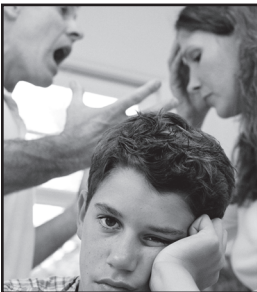
80

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*, edited by Maria Krysan and Amanda E. Lewis (Russell Sage Foundation 2004)
One way to understand the continuing **racism** in the United States 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.

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. **Islam in America**, Bobby Ghosh, *Time*, August 30, 2010
The United States prides itself in its diversity but that is changing with respect to **Muslims**. Bobby Ghosh 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. 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. They rarely, however, hold top management positions. Why? Several explanations are discussed. 95
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
The Human Rights Campaign is an advocacy organization for gay and lesbian rights, and this article is its 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. 109
26. **The End of Men**, Hanna Rosen, *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. Etc. 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? 113



UNIT 4 Institutional Problems

Unit Overview 122

Part A. The Family

27. **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. 124

28. **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. 128
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 *U.S. parent*, especially the mother. Yes, parents are under considerable stress, but appropriate *public policies* would greatly help them. 132
30. **Peer Marriage**, Pepper Schwartz, *The Communitarian Reader: Beyond the Essentials*, Rowman & 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. She argues that peer marriages generally result in *stronger families* and greater satisfaction. 136

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. 141
32. **Nine Powerful Practices: Nine Strategies Help Raise the Achievement of Students Living in Poverty**, Ruby Payne, *Educational Leadership*, April 2008
The greatest *educational challenge* is to raise the achievement level of students living in *poverty*. Ruby Payne offers nine strategies for doing just that. Some are technical and some are relational. 145

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. 148
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. 152



UNIT 5 Crime, Law Enforcement, and Terrorism

Unit Overview 158

Part A. Crime

35. **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. 160

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. 166

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). 170

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 their prevalence and suggests reforms that should greatly reduce them. 177

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. 181

40. **Too Many Laws, Too Many Prisoners**. *The Economist*, July 24, 2010
The lead-in sentence summarizes this article. "Never in the civilized world have so many been locked up for so little." Many lives are ruined by misguided criminal laws, misguided sentencing laws, and misguided prosecutors. The results are tragic, costly, and penalize our society. 184

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. 188

42. **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. 193



UNIT 6

Problems of Population, Environment, Technology, and the Future

Unit Overview 196

Part A. Population and Environment Issues

43. **Population and Sustainability**, Robert Engleman, *Scientific American*, Summer 2009

Consumption patterns have greater impact on the environment than population growth, but reversing the growth in population is essential to achieving a long-term balance between society and the environment. Is population control the answer? A better answer is to help women have control over their fertility.

198

44. **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 changes in conservation, productivity, and consumption to address the **food crisis**.

204

45. **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.

209

Part B. Technological Issues

46. **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?”

214

47. **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.

222

Part C. The World and the Future

48. **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.

228

49. A User's Guide to the Century , Jeffrey Sachs, <i>The National Interest</i> , 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.	232
50. Can America Fail? Kishore Mahbubani, <i>The Wilson Quarterly</i> , Spring 2009	
Kishore Mahbubani argues that the United States 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 overextension of American power makes us hated throughout the world, our self-righteousness closes our ears to the voices of others, and our acceptance of our political system guarantees its subordination to special interests. Unless we wake up, the United States will fail.	237
<i>Test-Your-Knowledge Form</i>	242
<i>Article Rating Form</i>	243