Social Problems 1020-010  
Tuesday & Thursday, 7:30 am – 8:50 am  
Behavioral Science Building, Rm. 115  
University of Utah / Summer 2009

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Class Objectives

The goal of this class is to give students a basic understanding of current social problems and to utilize a sociological perspective in understanding those problems. This course will entail studying some basic sociological concepts and research and applying them to a variety of social problems with an eye to illuminated the social aspects of these problems. Problems and issues discussed in the class will include social inequality, illiteracy, poverty, racism, sexism, child abuse, rape, crime, criminal justice, overpopulation, ecological degradation, war, and globalization. It is hoped that the material addressed in this class will be means of empowerment for students in that it will help them to make enlightened decisions regarding a variety of personal and public issues and problems.

Class Requirements

Work for this class will include a midterm, a final exam, and a paper. The exams will be true false, multiple choice, fill in the blank, and be worth 75 points each. The paper is worth 50 points. There will be 200 total points possible for the course. However each exam will contain 10 bonus questions that give students a potential of 20 extra credit points.

Each student must write one four to six page paper or turn in a journal that addresses social problems. There are four options for the paper. The first option (A) entails reading a book from the suggested readings list, and writing a five-page summary and evaluation. This paper should highlight the relevance and insight that this book brings to the understanding of a particular social problem. The second option (B) entails writing a paper about one of the movies on the suggested movies list. In this paper, the student is expected to analyze the movie in terms of a specific social problem and the sociological theories, concepts and research that pertain to that problem. Students choosing this option should remember to carefully define theories and concepts when they apply them. The third option (C) requires the student to write a formal research paper on a particular social problem. In this paper the student must address the severity and importance of this problem, identify and define the relevant sociological factors, concepts, theories, and research that can be used to explain and illuminate this problem, and evaluate possible solutions. The fourth option (D) requires the student to keep and
submit a journal wherein the student collects and summarizes articles on a particular social problem or on a variety of social problems. These articles can be taken from newspapers, magazines, association periodicals, and the Internet. However, no more than 20% of these articles can come from the Internet. The student should collect four articles per week, preferably from a variety of sources including alternative media. Each article must be summarized in a short paragraph. The journal should conclude with a one-page analysis of your articles that summarizes the information you have gathered and your general understanding of the problem or problems. The grade a student receives on any of the papers will reflect the degree to which the student can define, utilize and apply the relevant sociological concepts, theories and utilize relevant research.

**Students with Disabilities**

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you need academic accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. With prior notification to the Center for Disability Services, all written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format.

**Required Reading**

*Social Problems* (Eight Edition). James M. Henslin

**Readings on E-Reserve:** Various topics and authors listed in your course outline. E-Reserve readings can be accessed on line through the Student Portal. To do this, you should log on to My.Utah.edu with your UNID. Then click on Academics and a list of your current courses along with any course reserves will be listed. Click on the course reserve for this course and the E-reserve readings will appear. Click on a particular reading and you can read it on line or print it out. If you have problems, please call the Multi-media Center, 581-6494 or 581-4808. They will be happy to assist you.
Course Outline


Text: Chapter Two. Interpreting Social Problems: Aging

Week Two (May 28 & 28): Culture as a Social Problem / The Sociological Model

Text: Chapter Three. Prostitution, Homosexuality, and Pornography
Reading: The Last Curmudgeon: Paul Fussel
Reading: The Nursing Home Specter, Betty Friedan

Week Three (June 2 & 4): Deviance Theory, Drug Abuse

Text: Chapter Four. Alcohol and Other Drugs
Reading: Jonestown as Perverse Utopia, Rose Laub Coser and Lewis Coser
Reading: The Mountain People, Colin M. Turnbull

Week Four (June 9 & 11): Sex / Gender / Abortion / Birth Control / Family

Text: Chapter Eleven. The Changing Family
Reading: Roberta Victor. Hooker, from Working by Studs Terkel
Reading: A Day in the Life of a Nonrecovering Alcoholic: Lois A. Judson

Week Five (June 23 & 25): Rape / Child Abuse / Sexual Abuse / Spouse Abuse, Midterm Review

Text: Chapter Five. Violence in Society: Rape and Murder
Reading: Riding the Bull at Gilley’s: Convicted Rapists Describe the Rewards of Rape, Diana Scully & Joseph Marolla

Week Six (June 30, July 2): Research and Theory on Violence / Midterm

Midterm:
Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11
Assigned Readings through week Five
Lectures

Reading: Crimes Unseen: Profit and Promises in Industrial Meat Production, Dena Jones
Reading: Relocation Illness and the Plight of the Navaho. Cisco Lassiter
Week Seven (July 7 & 9):  Correlates of Crime / Criminal Justice System / Racism, Sexism, Speciesism

Text:  Chapter Eight.  Race and Ethnic Relations
Text:  Chapter Nine.  Sex Discrimination

Week Eight (July 14 & 16):  Stratification / Class / Inequality / Poverty

Text:  Chapter Seven.  Problems of Social Inequality.
Reading:  Globalization and the Race to the Bottom, Jeremy Brecher and Tim Costello
Reading:  Why We Love War, Lawrence Leshann,

Week Nine (July 21 & 23):  Population & Food / The Environmental Crisis

Text:  Chapter Thirteen.  Population and Food
Text:  Chapter Fourteen.  The Environmental Crisis

Week Ten (July 28 & 30):  War and Terrorism, Globalization.

Text:  Chapter Fifteen:  War, Terrorism, and the Balance of Power.
Reading:  Global Fear and Loathing:  How the World Sees the American Empire, Dr. David Michael Smith

Week Eleven:  (August 4 & 6):  Review for Final

Turn in papers
Review for final

Week Twelve (August 11):  #2 Midterm and Final

Final Exam:

Lectures
Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15
Assigned readings week six through ten
Dark Ages Ahead, Jane Jacobs (coming decline of western civilization)
A People's History of the United States, Howard Zinn
Deep Ecology: As if Nature Mattered, Bill Devall & George Sessions
Never Cry Wolf, Farley Mowat (naturalist, deep ecology)
People of the Deer, Farley Mowat (speciesism, ecology)
Silent Spring, Rachel Carson (ecology)
For Those I loved, Martin Grey (holocaust autobiography, alienation, survival)
The Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad (imperialism, society, truth)
The Sane Society or Escape From Freedom, Erich Fromm (alienation, capitalism)
Ol Wolves and Men, Barry Lopez (speciesism, wolf society)
Culture Against Man, Jules Henry (culture as vehicle and obstacle)
One Dimensional Man, Herbert Marcuse (alienation, technology)
The Unsettling of America, Wendel Berry, (ecology, economics, business)
What Are People For, W. Berry (culture, economy, ecology)
Small is Beautiful, Economics as if People Mattered, Schumacher (ecology & survival)
Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee, Dee Brown (racism, imperialism)
Gorillas in the Mist, Diane Fossey (speciesism)
The Culture of Narcissism, Christopher Lasch (anomie, alienation in America)
The Minimal Self, Christopher Lasch (alienation and anomie in America)
On Being Human, Ashley Montagu (social interdependence and meaning)
Native Son, Richard Wright (racism)
Black Boy, Richard Wright (racism)
All Quiet on The Western Front, Erich Maria Remarque (the reality of War)
There Are No Children Here, (documentary on life in the ghetto)
The Jungle, Upton Sinclair (industrialization, exploitation, alienation)
Johnny Get Your Gun, Dalton Trumbel (the reality of war)
The Clansman, Dixon (turn of the century racist novel, telling artifact)
Cry of the Calihari, (overpopulation, ecology, animal rights)
Animal Rights, Peter Singer
The Acorn People, Ron Jones, (Life with disabled and terminally ill kids, stigma)
The Sword and the Dollar, M. J Paranti (imperialism)
The Conditions of the Working Class, Frederick Engels
The Other Side, Howard S. Becker (deviance)
There Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neal Thurston (sexism, racism)
The Hidden Injuries of Class, Sennet & Cobb (real people talk on stratification)
Body Politics, Nancy M. Henley (Social control under the skin)
Asylums, Erving Goffman (total institutions)
The Abyss, Jack London (powerful ethnography of poverty in England, 1900.)
Democracy for the Few, Michael Parenti (radical view on elitism, class wars)
The Revolution Within, Gloria Steinem (sexism)
The Death of Common Sense, Philip K. Howard (too many laws and lawyers)
The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir (feminism, sexism)
Savage Inequalities, Johanthan Kozol (school inequalities)
Civilization and It's Discontents, Sigmund Freud (Society, control, human nature)
The Future of an Illusion, Sigmund Freud (social function of religion)
The McDonalization of Society, George F. Ritzer
The Pursuit of Attention, Charles Derber
Go Ask Alice (teenage drug abuse, spoiled identity, labeling theory), anonymous
Race Matters, Cornel West (racism)
Man's Search For Meaning, Viktor E. Frankl (holocaust, racism)
Black Elk Speaks, John G. Neihardt (American Indian biography, racism)
The Lonely Crowd, David Reisman (modern alienation)
The Devil, Peter Standford (social construction of God, the devil, and good and evil)
The Axemaker’s Gift, (evolution of consciousness) James Burke and Robert Orstein
Wherever You go there You are, Jon Kabat Zinn (Zen and the modern world)
Cannery Row, John Steinbeck (human nature, social criticism)  
Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck (human nature, stratification, social order, poverty)  
East of Eden, John Steinbeck (human nature, family, child development)  
Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck (stratification, human nature, social criticism)  
The Sociological Imagination, C. Wright Mills (sociology, meaning, and morality)  
The Power Elite, C. Wright Mills (Elites)  
White Collar, C. Wright Mills (stratification, power, morality)  
Power, Politics, and People, C. Wright Mills (collected essays)  
The Causes of World War Three, C. Wright Mills (social criticism)  
The Marxists, C. Wright Mills (critical survey of Marxist thought)  
The Social Order, Charles Cooley, (Timeless classic on human nature)  
Human Nature and the Social Order, Charles Cooley.  

Theory of the Leisure Class, Thorstein Veblen  
Billy Budd, Herman Melville (authority)  

On Psychology, William James (foundations of western psychology, classic)  
Varieties of Religious Experience, William James (psychology of religion, classic)  
The Human Zoo, Desmond Morris (human nature, naturalistic)  
On the Division of Labor, Emile Durkheim (classic in sociology)  
Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Erving Goffman (classic on social interaction)  
The Virtues of Aging, Jimmy Carter  

Mutant Message from Forever, Marlo Morgan (Aboriginal assimilation, persecution)  

Obedience, Stanley Milgram (authority)  
Flow, The Psychology of Optimal Experience, Michaly Csikzentmihalyi (happiness)  

Working, Studs Terkel (work in America)  

Walden and Civil Disobedience, Henry David Thoreau (classic on individual & society)  

Uncle Tom's Cabin, H. B. Stowe (racism)  

Geronimo, Penn Muller (imperialism, racism, war, exploitation)  

Crazy Horse, Larry McMurtry (imperialism, racism, war, exploitation)  

Colors of the Mountain, Da Chen (modern Chinese cultural experience)  
The Nature of Prejudice, Gordon Allport (prejudice)  

Gulliver's Travels, Jonathan Swift (Early Social Criticism)  

On Civil Disobedience, Thoreau (dissent, morality and society)  

Tuesdays with Morrie, Mitch Albom (social commentary)  

Four Sociological Traditions, Randall Collins, (overview of classical theory)  

The Accidental Century, Michael Harrington (critical analysis of U.S. culture)  
The Social Construction of Reality, Peter & Luckmann (sociology of knowledge)  

On Death and Dying, Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (psychology of death)  

Technopoly, Neil Postman, (critical analysis of technology and progress)  

On Violence, Hannah Arendt (social psychology of violence)  

Who Rules America, G. William Domhoff (power elite)  

Life is A Miracle, Wendell Berry (science, art, knowledge, morality)  

In the Presence of Fear, Wendell Berry (globalization)  

Feminist Thought, A Comprehensive Introduction, Rosemarie Tong (feminism)  


On the Future of the Planet, Edward O. Wilson (deep ecology)  

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Max Weber  

The Organizational Man, William F. White (classic in sociology on conformity)  

Mountains and More Mountains, Tracy Kidder (radical Catholicism and epidemiology)  

The Great Unraveling, Paul Krugman (economics, elite deviance)  

Manufactured Consent, Noam Chomsky (media, communication, politics)  

Hegemony or Survival, Noam Chomsky (media, left criticism)  

Betrayal of Trust : The Collapse of the Global Public Health, Laurie Garrett (epidemiology, public health, government)  

In Cold Blood, Truman Capote, (deviance, Murder)  

The Sea of Cortez, John Steinbeck, (science, art, evolution, human nature)  

The Lemming Condition, Alan Arkin (family, deviance, labeling)
Under The Banner of Heaven: A story of Violent Faith, John Krakauer
(faith based crime, deviance, authority)
The Gift of Fear, Gavin De Becker, (crime prevention, detection, profiling)
The European Dream, Jeremy Rifkin (comparative analysis of the U.S and Europe)
Is Religion Killing Us, Jack Nelson Pallmeyer
Genome, Matt Ridley, (Genetics, Deep Sociobiology)
Mind Hunter, Paul Douglas (F.B. I. Profiler, crime and deviance)
The True Believer, Eric Hoffer (Social psychology of reactionary movements)
The Ultimate Punishment, Scott Turow (Capital Punishment)
Ishmael, Daniel Quinn, (social change, deep ecology, morality)
Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community, Wendell Berry,
Marx's Concept of Man, Eric Fromm
Selected writings of George Herbert Mead, Edited by Andrew J. Reck
On Suicide, Emile Durkheim
Freedom and Culture, John Dewey
The End of Faith, Sam Harris (critique of modern religion)
Beyond the Chains of Illusion, Eric Fromm
The Robbers Cave Experiment, Muzafar Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, Sherif
Collapse, Jerad Diamond, (ecological basis of society)
Boys and Girls Learn Differently, Michael Gurian
Freakonomics, Steven D. Levitt. (creative data analysis of social problems)
Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change, Stephen Kinzer
The Sacred Canopy, Peter Burger (sociology of religion)
An Inconvenient Truth, Al Gore (Global Warming)
A History of God, Karen Armstrong
Anatomy of Peace, Arbinger Institute
Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism, Andrew Bacevich

SUGGESTED MOVIES

“Never Cry Wolf” (speciesism, ecology)
"Straight Time” Dustin Hoffman (deviance, crime, stigma)
"Elmer Gantry” (ideology) Burt Lancaster
"Gabbi” (stigma, life among the physically disadvantaged)
"Night Mother “ Sissy Spachek (suicide)
"The Heart is a Lonely Hunter” (discrimination against the hearing impaired)
"Lonely are the Brave” Kirk Douglas (soc. change, post modernism)
"Lord of the Flies” modern version, (social disorganization)
"Metropolis" 1920's classic film (industrialization, class warfare)
"Modern Times" 1920's classic film (Chaplin on industrialization, modernization)
"Black Like Me” (racism)
"The Pawn Broker” Rod Steiger (alienation)
"Blade Runner” (simulacrum, alienation, technology, mass society)
"Gorillas in the Mist” (speciesism)
"The Mission” Robert Dinero (racism, imperialism)
"Swimming to Cambodia” Spalding Grey (alienation, post modernism)
"The Arrangement” Kirk Douglas Faye Dunaway (alienation)
"One Flew Over the Kuckoo's Nest" (total institutions, deviance)
"Tucker, A Man and his Dream” Jeff Bridges (bureaucracy, power, elitism)
"Native Son" (racism)
"Of Mice & Men” (sentiments, class, deviance)
"Matewan” (racism, class warfare)
"King of Hearts” (society as an insane asylum run by the inmates)
"Elephant Man" (deviance, labeling)
"Lady Chatterly's Lover" (sexism, industrialization)
"The Bear" (speciesism)
"Roger and Me" (capitalism / exploitation)
"Apocalypse Now," Marlon Brando, (war, alienation)
"Paths of Glory" Kirk Douglas, (war, authority, Injustice)
"Boys in the Hood" (class/race/poverty)
"El Norte" (stratification, ethnocentrism, exploitation)
"Seize the Day" Robin Williams (capitalism, alienation)
"A Thousand Clowns" Jason Robart, (bureaucracy, alienation, coping)
"The Last of His Tribe" (imperialism, scientific exploitation)
"Taxi Driver" Robert Dinero, (anomie, powerlessness)
"A Light in the Jungle" (bio of Albert Schweitzer, globalization)
"The Black Robe" (religious/cultural imperialism)
"Network" Faye Dunaway, Peter Finch (globalization, alienation)
"The Insider," Al Pacino (Elite deviance)
"Gulliver's Travels," Jonathan Swift (Early Social Criticism)
"Tuesdays with Morrie," jack Lemmon
"Falling Down" (alienation, anomie)
"Malcom X" (racism, social movements)
"Frances" Jessica Lange (sexism)
"Mississippi Burning" (racism)
"The Razors Edge," (social change, ideology, class)
"Bicentennial Man," (sentiment, happiness, death)
"Everyman for Himself, and God Against All," (socialization, deviance)
"The Straight Story," (family)
"Me Familia," (Latino family)
"Lust for Life," Kirk Douglas (symbolic interaction in art and life)
"The Remains of the Day," Anthony Hopkins & Emma thompson (authority)
"The Gods Must be Crazy," (progrese, globalization)
"The Doll Maker," Jane Fonda (family)
"Uncle Tom’s Cabin," (racism, racist ideology)
"Shawshank Redemption, Tim Robbins, Morgan Freeman, (institutionalized behavior)
"Birdman of Alcatraz" (institutionalized behavior, penology)
"Shadrack," (sociology of death, racism, class)
"Native Son," (race, racism, black experience)
"Grapes of Wrath," Henry Fonda, (class conflict)
"Bound for Glory," (class conflict, labor movement, depression)
"Born on the Forth of July," Tom Cruise (war, ideology, socialization)
"Bojangles" (racism) Gregory Hines
"The Office" (modern white collar alienation)
"Who's Life is This, Anyway, Richard Dryfeus (suicide)
"All Quiet on the Western Front, (realities and seduction of war)
"In Cold Blood," Robert Blake (deviance, murder)
"Dead Man walking," Sean Pean (deviance, capital punishment)
"Paradise Lost," (deviance, crime, rape, murder, criminal justice system)
"The Selling of a Murderer," (deviance, criminal justice system)
"City of God," (Poverty and crime in South American, drugs, culture of poverty)
"Bowling for Columbine," Michael Moore, (guns, gun control, violence)
"Amistad" Morgan Freeman, Anthony Hopkins (Racism)
"Monster" (Crime, Criminal Justice System, Deviance)
"Winged Migration," (Deep Ecology, family)
"The Accused," Jodi Foster (Rape)
"Mind Walk," Liv Ulman (understanding modern times)
"The Corporation," (social organization, alienation, imperialism)
"Inherit the Wind," George C. Scott & jack Lemon (evolution vs. creationism)
"Save the Tiger,' (alienation) Jack lemon
"Hotel Rwanda” Racism, Genocide
" March of the Penguins," (sociobiology family)
"Nine angry Men," (witness testimony, prejudice)
" Thirteen Days," Kevin Costner (decision making processes)
"Maria Full of Grace" (drugs and the drug war)
" An Inconvenient Truth,” (Global Warming0
"The Cult of the Suicide Bomber” (terrorism, ideology)
"Galileo's Daughter," (Knowledge and the conflict between religion and science)
"Crash," (alienation, racism, class)
"Sicko,” Michael Moore (health care in America)
"What the Blib Do I Know?,” (human nature and epistemology)
"End of Suburbia” Social Change in the U.S.
“Religulous” Critique of religion, Bill Mahr