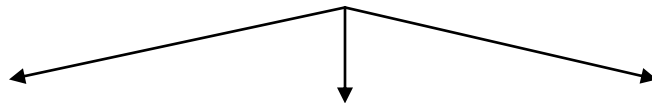


**SOCIO 2:  
AMERICAN SOCIETY: SOCIAL PROBLEMS & DEVIANCE  
SPRING 2010  
TTH 9:40 – 11:05A  
Sequoia 1  
Dr. Paula Clarke  
Office: 217 Tamarack Hall  
Email: clarkep@yosemite.edu**

**CENTRAL THEMES, CONCEPTS, AND PROCESSES**

**SOCIAL PROBLEMS RELATIVE TO**



<b>THEMES</b>	<b>CONCEPTS</b>	<b>PROCESSES</b>
Human Behavior and the Sociological Perspective	Theories, Methodologies, Perspectives	Scientific Method, Historical Contextualization
Changes in Human Conditions over Time	Traditional vs. Demographically Mature Societies	Micro- vs. Macro- Level Analyses / Unprecedented Challenges & Opportunities
Historical Contributions	Processes and Personalities	Construction of and Response to Historical and Contemporary Dilemmas
Economic Stages of Humanity	Supply, Distribution, Stratification	History of Humanity, Societal Development
Social Structure and Culture	Capitalism and Inequality, Political Institutions, Culture: Values, Beliefs, Behaviors	Historical Contextualization, International Comparative Analyses
Solutions to Social Problems	Cultural Assumptions, “Acceptable” and “Unacceptable” Solutions	Comparative Analyses, Social Decision-Making in Context

## GRAPHIC PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS

- **1<sup>st</sup> Presentation:** American Social Problems: 1877 – 1920, (50 Points)  
Due Thursday, February 11<sup>th</sup>
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Presentation:** American Social Problems: 1920 – 1960, (50 Points)  
Due Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>
- **Final Presentation:** American Social Problems: 1960 – Present, (100 Points)  
Due Thursday, April 29<sup>h</sup> by 10:00A

### *For each Graphic Presentation:*

Select three of the most significant social problems in the United States in each period. Provide a graphic presentation that demonstrates **a)** historical possibilities of the period; **b)** historical constraints of the period; **c)** how the problems were approached at the time; and **d)** the most influential cultural values, social conditions, and economic assumptions on approaches to the problem.

## FIRST EXAM (100 POINTS)

### American Social Problems: 1877 – 1920

1. List, describe, and critically evaluate the most significant myths that play a role in creating and/or maintaining American social problems. Be sure to address the function of the myth (usefulness), the accuracy of the myth, and the sources of expressions of the myth.
2. How does sociology explain the emergence of heroes and heroines? Using specific examples, list, describe, and critically evaluate the most significant ideas and concepts used by sociology to explain the rise and impact of such personalities.
3. Why and how is the study of deviance essential to the study of social problems? List and describe the most important characteristics of deviants and deviance and their relationship to specific social problems. Is a deviance-focus sufficient for describing, explaining and predicting social problems?
4. The social health of the nation and the economic health of the nation are not always the same. Using specific examples, examine the most significant reasons why and how this comes to be the case. What social and psychological mechanisms explain the acceptance/rejection of discrepancies when they arise?
5. The creation and resolution of social problems are always contingent on historical conditions and possibilities. List and describe the most significant social problems of this period. Critically evaluate the historically-specific barriers to and opportunities for addressing these problems. Be sure to include a minimum of three of the following themes in your analysis: a) cultural assumptions and values; b) economic organization; c) social conditions and opportunities; d) institutional organization; e) demographic characteristics; f) mobility; g) technological development.

#### Rules and Guidelines

- **In order to choose which essay question to write on for the exam, students must have readings, notes, and outlines approved (earned at least a 70% on each) by the instructor before the “DEADLINE FOR CHOICE.” Otherwise, the essay question will be assigned (see Syllabus).**
- Use the ‘Ten Criteria’ for grading essay exams.
- Graphics accompanying responses are strongly RECOMMENDED.
- Essay breakdown should approximate one-third of each of the following: readings, class dialogue, and original thinking (not opinion).

*Practice ‘Learned Resourcefulness.’ Avoid procrastination, develop appropriate help-seeking behaviors, ask questions, learn to recognize & utilize resources (e.g. the library, fellow students, the instructor, tutoring, and study groups), and embrace realistic goals & priorities.*

## SECOND EXAM (100 POINTS)

### American Social Problems: 1920 - 1960

1. Eitzen & Zinn suggest that American cities have been victimized and abandoned since W.W. II. List, describe and critically evaluate the most significant causes and consequences of this victimization and abandonment. With American becoming a majority urban society only in 1925, why did this happen so suddenly to the world's richest society?
2. Trace the evolution and devolution of work in America between 1920 and 1960. Be sure to interpret the changing forms of alienation, dangerous working conditions, the rise and fall of unions, and the inequalities found in American work. Who/what has been responsible for these conditions?
3. Why have great myths surrounded the "American family"? Assess the most significant myths about the family in light of the historical developments between 1920 and 1960. Be sure to assess the crucial role of economic change and its impact on the family.
4. List, describe and critically evaluate the most significant transformations and challenges faced by education by 1960. Has education adequately served its intended function?
5. World War II, the Cold War, and the perception of threats to national security reached dangerous levels between 1920 and 1960. Describe and demonstrate how these conditions transformed American society from a largely non-militarized and isolated nation into the world's 'pistol-packing preacher.' What have been the costs of this change in terms of the role of the American people?

#### Rules and Guidelines

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- Use the 'Ten Criteria' for grading essay exams.
- Graphics accompanying responses are strongly RECOMMENDED.
- Essay breakdown should approximate one-third of each of the following: readings, class dialogue, and original thinking (not opinion).

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## FINAL EXAM (200 POINTS)

### American Social Problems: 1960 - Present

1. Many experts argue that American institutions are in crisis, that prior approaches to social problems were ill informed at best, and that current problems require an entirely new approach. List, describe, and critically evaluate the most significant evidence supporting and/or refuting this point of view.
2. Although many problems from the past persist in contemporary American culture, there have been gains and improvements. List, describe, and critically evaluate the most significant ‘successes’ of recent decades. Your responses should include the following: what groups have benefited, where, when, and how these changes came about.
3. Some experts have argued that a revolution in values will be necessary to address some of the most intractable problems in American culture. List, describe, and critically evaluate the most significant of the intractable problems, the value transformation that would be necessary for addressing them, and the factors (+/–) influencing this turn of events.
4. Much of what took place in the 1960’s and immediately thereafter has been called a ‘stalled revolution.’ What is meant by the term ‘stalled revolution?’ Who and/or where are the most significant indications of this ‘stall.’
5. Some believe that most cultures are, for different reasons, equally unprepared to address the challenges of the future because the future demands a new kind of American and a new kind of human being. List, describe, and critically evaluate the most significant reasons for making this assertion and the kind of characteristics that this new kind of human being would need to embrace and represent.
6. American society is characterized by both unprecedented and enduring social problems. List, describe, and critically evaluate the most significant novel *and* enduring social problems in American society. Be sure to address a) the most significant barriers to the resolution of these problems and b) ways in which other societies have *successfully* addressed similar problems.

#### Rules and Guidelines

- In order for the Final Exam to be a take-home exam, students must have readings, notes, and outlines approved (earned at least a 70% on each) by the instructor before the “DEADLINE FOR CHOICE.” If the student does not get choice, they will write the exam in class during the final exam week. The only sources allowed for the in-class Final Exam are approved outlines and the graphic presentation.
- Use the ‘Ten Criteria’ for grading essay exams.
- Graphics accompanying responses are strongly RECOMMENDED.
- Essay breakdown should approximate one-third of each of the following: readings, class dialogue, and original thinking (not opinion).

*Practice ‘Learned Resourcefulness.’ Avoid procrastination, develop appropriate help-seeking behaviors, ask questions, learn to recognize & utilize resources (e.g. the library, fellow students, the instructor, tutoring, and study groups), and embrace realistic goals & priorities.*