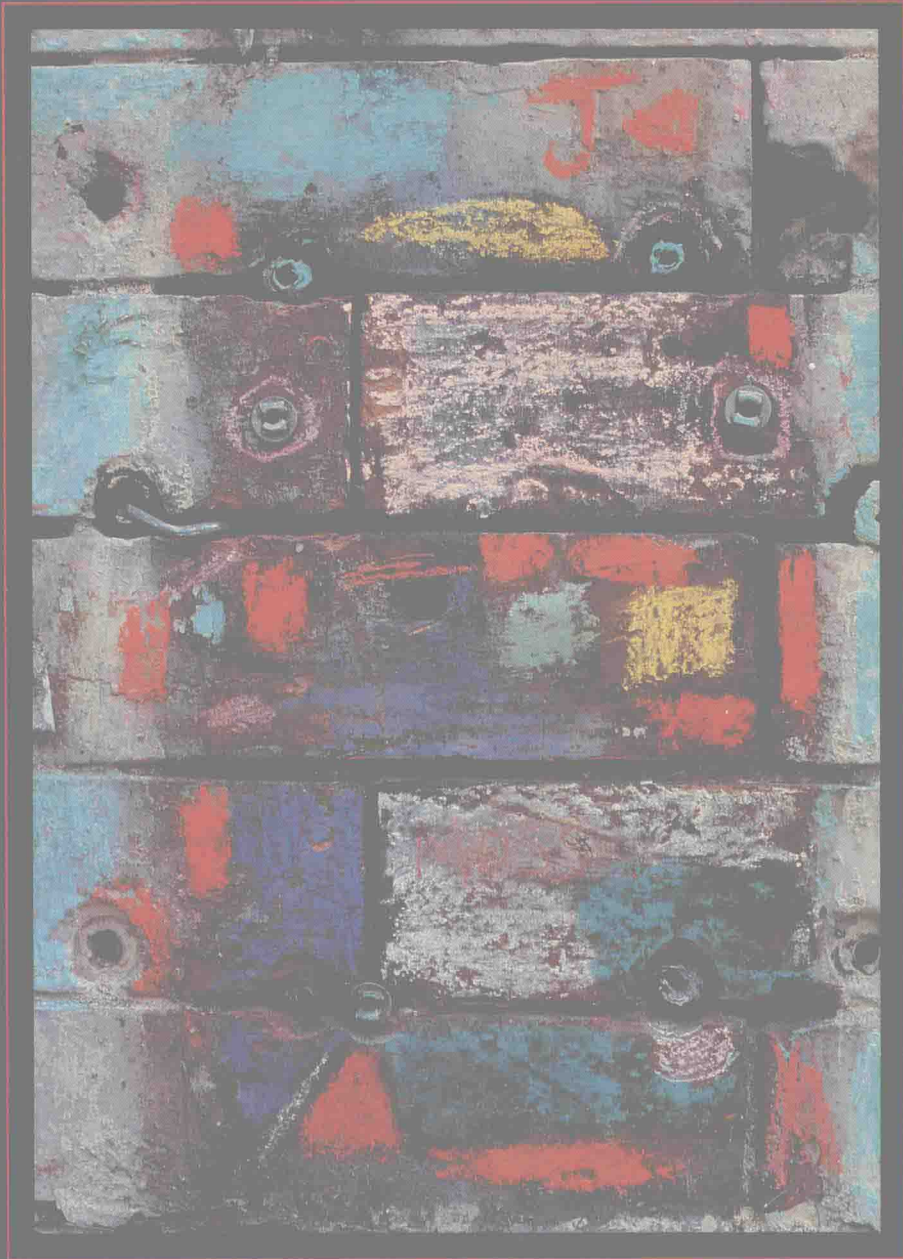


American Social Problems

An Institutional Analysis



John E. Farley

American Social Problems

An Institutional Analysis

John E. Farley

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

FARLEY, JOHN E.

American social problems.

Bibliography:

Includes index.

1. United States—Social conditions.

2. United States—Social policy. 3. Social problems. I. Title.

HN57.F37 1987 306'.0973 86-22676

ISBN 0-13-029489-6

Editorial/production supervision: Edith Riker

Interior and cover design: Anne T. Bonanno

Manufacturing buyer: John Hall

Photo research: Yvonne Gerin

Photo editor: Lorinda Morris-Nantz

Cover photo: COMSTOCK, Inc./Tom Grill

© 1987 by Prentice-Hall, Inc.

A Division of Simon & Schuster

Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, in any form or by any means, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 0-13-029489-6 01

Prentice-Hall International (UK) Limited, *London*

Prentice-Hall of Australia Pty. Limited, *Sydney*

Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., *Toronto*

Prentice-Hall Hispanoamericana, S.A., *Mexico*

Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, *New Delhi*

Prentice-Hall of Japan, Inc., *Tokyo*

Prentice-Hall of Southeast Asia Pte. Ltd., *Singapore*

Editora Prentice-Hall do Brasil, Ltda., *Rio de Janeiro*

To my parents, Joe and Florenda, for teaching me to care about problems like the ones discussed in this book; and to my children, Kelly and Megan, that they may come of age in a world with fewer such problems.

Preface

When I decided over three years ago to write this book, I had one overarching goal in mind—to help students to use their reasoning ability in a way that would help them to better understand the causes of our social problems, and by so doing, to be able to make decisions that will contribute to an improvement in the quality of life in American society. Throughout the process of writing this book, everything that I have done has been done with this goal in mind.

To achieve this goal, I believe that several things must be accomplished. Two of these are addressed in Part One. The first thing that must be accomplished is that students must have some awareness of the major substantive and methodological approaches that can be used in the analysis of social problems. This need is addressed in Chapter 1, which explains the general approach to social problems used by sociology, and distinguishes that approach from others. In addition, it introduces the student to two key perspectives within sociology, the functionalist perspective and the conflict perspective which, broadly defined, are especially useful in offering students insights about the causes of social problems. Several important points need to be made here. First, the sociological approach is in no way the only approach which offers useful insight about social problems, and it is not used exclusively in this book—wherever relevant, the methods and findings of other social sciences and indeed of some of the natural sciences are used. Second, within sociology there are far more perspectives than the two outlined above, and other perspectives are introduced and used wherever

they offer relevant insight into the causes of a social problem. However, many of the more specific theories of sociology are closely related to one or the other of these two approaches, and I believe that for people to understand a subject, they must see how one part of it relates to another. Hence, whenever a theory is used which is relevant to or arises from one of these two broad perspectives, it is identified with the appropriate perspective. The advantage of this approach is that, in the end, it is possible to utilize the thinking of each perspective, broadly defined, to gain a better understanding of nearly every problem covered in this book. This, in turn, makes it easier to see the myriad ways in which one problem is related to another—something that is easily missed given the necessarily long list of problems that must be covered in any book such as this one. I have strived extra hard to see that such links are not missed in this book, because I believe that an understanding of the interrelatedness of our problems may well be a key prerequisite to dealing effectively with those problems.

The second thing that must be accomplished in order for students to understand social problems is that they must know something about how to make judgements concerning cause and effect. If this capability is missing, students cannot make intelligent judgements about the causes of our social problems, and hence cannot contribute to their solution. Chapter 2 introduces students to the scientific method and how it enables them to make such cause-and-effect judgements. Specifically, students are shown how to use that

method to evaluate the competing claims of different perspectives about the causes of a social problem. Finally in this chapter, students are introduced to the key research methods that sociologists use in order to gain an understanding of social problems, including use of public data sources, survey research, experiments, and field observations.

Of course, the best analytical skills must be applied to sound information in order to be useful. Hence, it is also crucial to provide accurate and up-to-date information about the most important social problems facing America. This is the objective to Parts Two and Three of the book. Part Two concerns problems of inequality, including poverty and class (Chapter 3), racism (Chapter 4), and sexism (Chapter 5). Part Three concerns problems which affect the overall quality of life in America. These include crime (Chapter 6), substance abuse (Chapter 7), and problems relating to human sexuality (Chapter 8) and the family (Chapter 9). They also include several problems we have become aware of more recently—problems of efficiency and productivity (Chapter 10), of the environment and energy (Chapter 11), and problems relating to population change (Chapter 12). The latter include the “population explosion” on the world level and problems associated with an aging population on the domestic level. Part Three ends with an examination of what could be the most life-threatening problem of all in the nuclear age—war and peace (Chapter 13).

While some of the problems outlined are new, most of them are not. They are, in fact, problems which have been with us for a very long time and have defied attempts to be solved through a variety of social policies enacted by a series of elected officials and administrations with rather varied political orientations and agendas. In the concluding section of the book, Part Four, I turn my attention to the question of why such a variety of policies has, in many cases, failed to produce the desired ameliorations in our social problems. Part of the reason, I think, is that not all problems are amenable to solution through social policy. A limitation of social policy is that it fails to consider the possibility that part of the cause of some of our social problems may lie in the very nature of some of our social institutions.

Clearly the two sociological perspectives utilized in this book do not agree on the extent to which our institutions (a) meet basic needs in our society, and thereby generally act to minimize our problems or (b) operate in ways which, however useful to some individual interests, create problems for the larger society. In general, functionalists argue the former while conflict theorists argue the latter. I believe that it is equally clear, though, that our institutions can act in *either* way—and understanding *how* they act in any given instance can help us understand our problems better. Specifically, it can help us understand what can be done with social policy, versus what may require more basic institutional changes. Conversely, it can also help us to identify what ought *not* to be changed in our institutions. In short, I believe that to do something effective against our social problems, we simply must consider how our key institutions relate to those social problems. That is the objective of Part Four, which deals specifically with the American economy (Chapter 14), American education (Chapter 15), American government and law (Chapter 16), and the American health-care system (Chapter 17).

A number of learning aids have been added throughout the book. Each chapter opens with a set of questions to be addressed within the chapter and closes with a succinct summary of the chapter's key points. In addition, shorter summaries of key issues and debates are included within most chapters, so students know where they have been and where they are going as they proceed through the chapters. Key terms are highlighted where they first appear in the text and are included in the glossary. Throughout the book, I have tried to make sure that discussion of social problems is grounded in current and complete data relevant to the problem at hand. These data come from a wide variety of sources including the Census Bureau, National Center for Health Statistics, United Nations, World Bank, Environmental Protection Agency, and many others. In addition to the use of graphs, I have added vignettes in the form of boxed inserts and linked these to the discussion in the text, so students can readily see how these materials illustrate the key points being made concerning a social problem.

Acknowledgments

A project of the magnitude of writing a social problems book always involves the efforts and contributions of a number of people. I was originally approached with the idea of undertaking such a product by Susan Taylor, then sociology editor at Prentice-Hall; without her encouragement the project might never have gotten off the ground. Later, I had the pleasure of working with sociology editor Bill Webber, with whom I have always had a special relationship because he signed me up to write my first book eight years ago when he was the Prentice-Hall representative in Southern Illinois. As the project went forward, it benefitted considerably from the comments and suggestions of a number of reviewers. The manuscript was read and commented upon by Professors Anson Shupe of the University of Texas at Arlington, Morris A. Forslund of the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Sidney A. Forsythe of Wheaton College in Massachusetts, and Richard Muirhead of Milwaukee Area Technical College. Portions of the manuscript were also reviewed by Professors Eric Godfrey at Ripon College, Julia Hall at Drexel University, Jeanne G. Gobalet at San Jose City College, and by my colleagues at SIUE, Professors Hugh D. Barlow and Robert Blain. All of these people made comments and suggestions

which helped to improve the book; whatever shortcomings remain must be attributed to the author.

Besides my departmental colleagues, several others at SIUE are owed special gratitude. Graduate students Brian Sullivan and Ronald Duebert provided important assistance, and computer programmers Lynn Owens and Dierdre Gibbons provided critical help in converting the references from seventeen separate alphabetized files into one. I also owe gratitude to Alfred Kahn, Associate Director of Regional Research and Development Services (RRDS), who was more than generous in allowing me extra time at critical points in the process of writing the book, even when my projects there also involved time deadlines. As usual, the staff of Prentice-Hall have been a pleasure to work with. Particular gratitude is owed to production editors Barbara DeVries and Edie Riker. Finally, I am grateful to my wife Margi and my children Kelly and Megan (who was born at about the midpoint of the project), both for giving me the time I needed to work on the book and for reminding me that it was not the most important thing in my life. I am also grateful to Margi for reading and providing helpful comments upon several parts of the book. To all these people, as well as to all the scholars whose work has provided the information upon which this book is based, many thanks!

Contents

Preface xv

PART ONE: The Sociological Study of Social Problems

1

Sociology and Social Problems 1

WHAT IS A SOCIAL PROBLEM? 2

Public Perception of the Condition as Undesirable 2 • Social Problems versus Other Kinds of Problems 5

*Hurricanes and Heat Waves: The Social Side 6
Overview 7*

THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS 8

Is Human Behavior Predictable? 8 • The Scientific Method 8 • Sociology and Social Structure 8

TWO SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES: THE ORDER PERSPECTIVE AND THE CONFLICT PERSPECTIVE 10

*The Order (Functionalist) Perspective 10
Eskimo Wife Sharing: A Matter of Survival? 11
The Conflict Perspective 13*

THE SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS 15

*Conflicting Values: Order and Conflict
Definitions of Social Problems 15 •
Conflicting Explanations: Order
and Conflict Perspectives on the Causes
of Social Problems 17 • Conflicting
Recommendations: Order and Conflict
Perspectives on Resolving Social Problems 18*

ORDER AND CONFLICT PERSPECTIVES: IS SYNTHESIS POSSIBLE? 19

THE PLAN OF THIS BOOK 21

2

Analyzing Social Problems 23

THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD 24

Science and Skepticism 24

Who Says? Does It Matter to Science? 26

Theories about Social Problems 26

THE BASICS OF TESTING CAUSE AND EFFECT 27

Variables 27 • Co-variation and Cause-Effect Relationships 28 • Cause and Effect and Social Problems 30 • How Social Scientists Judge Cause and Effect 31

TESTING COMPETING PERSPECTIVES 35

Overview: How to Tell If There Is a Cause-Effect Relationship between A and B 36

The Functionalist (Order) Perspective 36 •

The Conflict Perspective 38

Testing Functionalist and Conflict Theories about Social Arrangements and Social Problems: Some Questions to Ask 40

HOW SOCIOLOGISTS DO THEIR OBSERVATIONS 41

Public Data and Documents 41 • Sample Surveys 43 • Field Observation 45

Let the Reader Beware 46

Experiments 48

PART TWO: Problems of Social Inequality

3

Poverty and Class Inequality 52

Mary's Morning: A Glimpse at the Experience of Poverty 54

HOW POVERTY IS DEFINED 54

POVERTY IN AMERICA 56

The Official Definition 56 • How Many People Are Poor in the United States? 56 • Is Poverty in America Increasing or Decreasing? 58

POVERTY IN AMERICA COMPARED WITH POVERTY IN OTHER INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES 62

WHO IS POOR IN AMERICA? 63

Age 63 • Race and Ethnicity 63 • Family Type 64 • Region 64 • Urban and Rural Residence 64 • Labor-Force Status 65

Why Won't They Work? American Beliefs versus Reality about Poverty 67

Overview 67

SEVERITY OF POVERTY 68

CONSEQUENCES OF POVERTY 68

Education 68 • Housing 69 • Homelessness 70 • Criminal Victimization and the Criminal-Justice System 70 • Psychological Correlates 71

LONG-TERM VERSUS SHORT-TERM POVERTY 71

SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITY 72

Is Inequality a Social Problem? 72 • Or Is Inequality Not a Social Problem? 72 • Income and Wealth 73 • The Functionalist View of Economic Inequality 75 • The Conflict View of Economic Inequality 75 • Evidence Relevant to the Debate 76 • Overview: An Evaluation of the Functionalist and Conflict Theories of Stratification 78

4

Racism 81

THE MEANING OF RACISM 83

Attitudinal Racism 83 • Behavioral Racism 83

Bill's Bar: Discrimination without Prejudice 83
Institutional Racism: A Matter of Growing Importance 83

RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS 85

RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS IN AMERICA TODAY 85

Majority Groups and Minority Groups 87 • The Status of Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups in America Today 88
How "the Nation's Most Democratic City" Almost Elected a Republican Mayor 96

THE ROOTS OF RACISM 96

Psychological Roots 97 • Cultural Roots 97 • Social-Structural Roots 98

FUNCTIONALIST AND CONFLICT THEORIES ABOUT THE SOCIAL-STRUCTURAL ROOTS OF RACISM 101

Functionalist Theories 101 • Conflict

Theories 103 • Evaluating the Theories: The Origins of Black-White Inequality in the United States 104

CONTINUING INEQUALITY: TWO CONFLICT THEORIES 105

Split Labor Market Theory 105 • Marxist Theory 106

Why Segregation Increased after the Abolition of Slavery 107

Evaluation 107 • Unemployment: The New Inequality? 108

FORCES FOR CHANGE: MINORITY PROTEST IN THE MID TWENTIETH CENTURY AND BEYOND 109

Racism, Urbanization, and Protest 109 • The Civil Rights Movement: How It Changed American Race Relations 109 • Minority-Group Organization and the Future 110

5

Sexism 112

INCOME INEQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN 113

Causes of Income Inequality 114
Housework: Just How Much Is It Worth? 116

SEX-ROLE SOCIALIZATION 119

The Home 120 • Peers 120
The Looking-Glass Self: A Clue to How Sex Roles Are Taught and Learned 121
The School 121 • Modeling of Sexual Stereotypes 122 • Recent Changes: Is Sex-Role Channeling on the Decrease? 123

SEXISM AND FEMINISM IN AMERICA: A BRIEF HISTORY 123

The Origins of Contemporary Sex

Roles 123 • The Rise of Feminism in America 124 • The New Feminism: Separate Sex Roles Rejected 124

Contraception: A Federal Crime? 127

THE FEMINIZATION OF POVERTY: A NEW FORM OF SEXISM? 127

Causes of the Feminization of Poverty 128

FUNCTIONALIST AND CONFLICT PERSPECTIVES ON SEXISM 129

The Functionalist (Order) Perspective 129 • The Conflict Perspective 132

PART THREE: Social Problems Affecting the General Quality of Life

6

Crime 135

WHAT IS CRIME? 136

Criminal versus Civil Violations 137

TYPES OF CRIME 137

Street Crime 137 • *White-Collar Crime* 138

Mail Fraud: A Crime That Pays? 139

Organized Crime 141 • *Political*

Crime 142 • *Victimless Crime* 144

THE EXTENT OF CRIME 145

Data Sources 145 • *Street Crime* 146 • *Age*

Structure and Crime Statistics 148 • *Other*

Types of Crime 149

CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFENDERS 150

CAUSES OF CRIME 151

Psychological-Pathology Theory 152 •

Anomie Theory 153 • *Opportunity*

Theories 154 • *Subculture Theory* 156 •

Labeling Theory 157

CAN CRIME BE PREVENTED? 159

Punishment 159 • *Rehabilitation* 160

The Pathology of Imprisonment: An

Experiment 161

Reduction of Opportunities for Crime 162

Gun Control: Could It Work? 163

Changing the Social Conditions That Produce
Crime 162

7

Substance Abuse 166

DRUGS: USE AND ABUSE 167

Types of Dependence 168

SUBSTANCES COMMONLY ABUSED 169

Alcohol 169

The Body's Response to Various Blood-Alcohol
Levels 170

Marijuana 176 • *Cocaine* 179

The Great American Pastime: High on
Cocaine? 182

Hallucinogens 182 • *Opiate Drugs*

(Narcotics) 184 • *Prescription*

Drugs 186 • *Poly-Drug Abuse* 189

THEORIES ABOUT THE CAUSES OF DRUG ABUSE 189

Biological Theories 189 • *Psychological*
(Personality) Theories 189 • *Cultural-*

Transmission Theories 190 • *Anomie*
Theories 191

CAN SUBSTANCE ABUSE BE PREVENTED? 192

Rehabilitation 194 • *Prevention* 194 •
Social Control: More or Less? 194

Reefer Madness: Can Persuasion Reduce Drug
Use and Abuse? 195

8

Human Sexuality: Issues and Problems 198

HUMAN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR: BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL INFLUENCES 200
Sexuality in America 201 • American Norms about Sexual Behavior 201 • Current Sexual Behavior Patterns 203

CHANGING SEXUAL BEHAVIOR AS A SOCIAL ISSUE 204
The Functional Origins of Traditional Norms 204 • Are Traditional Rules Still Functional? 205 • Religion and the Regulation of Sexual Behavior 206

SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES RELATED TO HUMAN SEXUALITY 207
Sexual Violence 207

Rape Victims: Who's on Trial? 211
Unwanted Pregnancy: A Special Problem for Teenagers 212
Sexual Pietism Leads to Pregnant Teens: William Raspberry Comments 216
The Abortion Debate 216 • Sexually Transmitted Diseases 219
AIDS Hysteria: Is the Fear Even Worse Than the Disease? 222
Prostitution 223 • Pornography 224 • The Rights of Homosexuals 227

9

Problems of the Family 229

HOW IS THE AMERICAN FAMILY CHANGING? 230
Higher Divorce Rate; More Stepparents and Single Parents 231 • More Equal Husband-Wife Relations; More Women Employed 234 • Later Family Formation and Childbearing; More Unmarried Couples 235 • Fewer People Currently Married; More but Smaller Households 236

FAMILY CHANGE: OVERVIEW, PROBLEMS, AND PROSPECTS 237
The Conflict View 237 • The Functionalist (Order) View 238

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN? 238
Short-Term and Long-Term Effects of Divorce 239 • Effects of One-Parent Families 240 • Effects of Low Income versus Effects of Single Parenthood 240 • Overview 241

Factors in Children's Adjustment to Their Parents' Divorce 242

IS THE AMERICAN FAMILY A DECAYING INSTITUTION? 241
Attitude Studies 241
Marriage and Nonmarriage 243 • High Remarriage Rates 243 • Extended-Family Contact 243

CAN THE NUMBER OF UNHAPPY MARRIAGES BE REDUCED? 243
Dealing with Conflict in Marriage 244 • Factors in Marital Success 245

IS BEING UNMARRIED BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH? 246

VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY 247
Extent 248 • Correlates and Causes 248
Predicting Child Abuse in the Hospital Nursery 250
Verbal and Psychological Abuse 250 • What to Do When Family Violence Occurs 250 • The Conflict and Functionalist Perspectives 252

10

Problems of Efficiency and Productivity 254

INTRODUCTION AND BASIC CONCEPTS 255

AMERICAN PRODUCTIVITY: HOW ARE WE DOING? 256

Consequences of Lagging Productivity 257

WHY IS UNITED STATES PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH LAGGING? 258

Baby Bust: Middle Class Caught in Squeeze, Study Says 259

The Functionalist View 260

Is Congress For Sale? 268

The Conflict Perspective 272

Did Office Computerization Make a TV Network More Efficient? 275

Other Factors in Lagging Productivity 277 • Dealing with America's Productivity Problems 281

WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT PRODUCTIVITY FROM OUR COMPETITORS? 281

Lifetime Employment: A System of Mutual Responsibilities 282 • Quality-Control Circles 282 • Cooperative Work Agreements 283 • Can These Innovations Work in the United States? 283

11

Problems of the Environment and Energy 286

THE ECOSYSTEM, THE WORLD ECOLOGICAL BALANCE, AND THE ROLE OF HUMANS 288

POLLUTION: THE CONTAMINATION OF OUR ENVIRONMENT 288

Air Pollution 289

Case History: The Donora Smog Episode 292

Water Pollution 294

Fish Eating Advisory 298

Acid Rain 300 • Hazardous Substances 302

THE DEPLETION OF RESOURCES 305

Fossil Fuels 306

The Energy Crisis of the 1970s: Two Views 307

Nonrenewable Energy Alternatives 310

Disaster at Chernobyl 313

Renewable Energy Sources 314 •

Conservation 317

12

Population Problems: A Growing World, a Changing and Aging America 323

WORLD POPULATION PROBLEMS 324

Population Growth in Various Parts of the World 325

Is the World Running Out of Food? 327 •

Maldistribution: Do the Developed Countries Overconsume? 328 • Population Control and Economic Development in the Third

World 328 • Current World Growth Trends:

Cause for Hope? 333

Exponential Growth: How a Constant Rate

of Population Growth Produces Greater Growth in Numbers Every Year 334

UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION PROBLEMS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES 334

Extent of Legal and Illegal

Immigration 334 • Is Rising Immigration a Problem? 337 • Approaches to

Regulation 339

THE AGING U.S. POPULATION 340

How and Why the Population Is Getting Older 340 • Some Possible Problems 341 • Social Security: Implications of an Aging Population 342 • Increasing Social Security Revenue 345 • Ways of Reducing Social Security Expenses 347 • A Combination of

Benefit Reductions and Funding Increases? 348

AGEISM 349

*The Norm of Disengagement 349
Aging and Human Sexuality 352
Aging and Changes in Family Roles 353*

13**Problems of War and Peace 356****THE ROLE OF WAR IN WORLD HISTORY 357****THE ROLE OF WAR IN AMERICAN HISTORY 358****THE COSTS OF WAR 359**

*Costs in Human Lives 359 • Economic Costs 360 • Psychological Impacts 361
To What Extremes Will People Go When Told to Do So by an Authority? 363
Environmental Costs 365 • Effects of War on Society 366 • Nuclear War: The Greatest Threat of All 367*

Nuclear War: What Would Happen If an Average-Size Nuclear Bomb Were Detonated over a Major American City? 370

THE CAUSES OF WAR 369

War and "Human Nature" 369 • Precipitating Incidents 369 • Underlying Social Conditions 372 •

Absence of Formal Structures of Conflict Resolution 377 • The Functionalist and Conflict Perspectives 378

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PREVENT NUCLEAR WAR? 379

Keeping Open Lines of Communication 379 • Controlling Mutually Hostile Ideologies 379 • Preventing Crises 380 • Halting Nuclear Proliferation 381 • The Arms-Control Debate: Peace Through Strength or Peace Through Stopping the Arms Race? 382

THIRD WORLD POWER STRUGGLES: SUPERPOWER COMPETITION OR LOCAL STRUGGLE? 385

Some Lessons from Iran 386 • Nicaragua and El Salvador 387 • United States Policy Alternatives 387 • Changing Alignments with Superpowers 388

PART FOUR: American Institutions and Social Problems**14****The American Economy and Social Problems 390****ECONOMIC SYSTEMS 391**

*Public versus Private Ownership 391 • Concentration versus Deconcentration 395
Communism and Socialism: What Is the Difference? 398
Overview: Where the American Economy Fits In 397*

THE ORDER AND CONFLICT PERSPECTIVES 397**THE AMERICAN ECONOMY AND PROBLEMS OF INEQUALITY 399**

Private Ownership and the Norm of Maximization 399 • The Norm of

Maximization and Social Inequality in Capitalist Economies 400 • *Social Inequality and the Economic Cycle* 402 • *The Economics of Racial Inequality* 404 • *Economic Inequality in Capitalist, Mixed, and Socialist Economies* 405 • *Overview* 406

THE AMERICAN ECONOMY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS RELATING TO THE GENERAL QUALITY OF LIFE 407
Productivity 407

The Breakup of the Telephone Monopoly: A Case Where Deconcentration Didn't Work? 411
Unemployment: A Problem of Inequality or a Problem of Efficiency? 411 • *Problems of the Environment* 415 • *Capitalism, Socialism, Social Control, and Personal Freedom* 418 • *Overview* 422

Some Practices within our Economic System That Contribute to Racial and Ethnic Inequality 423
Social Policy versus Structural Change 424

15

American Education and Social Problems 425

INTRODUCTION 426

EDUCATION AND PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY 427

The Order Perspective 427 • *The Conflict Perspective* 427 • *How Does Socioeconomic Status Relate to Educational Success?* 428 • *Why Does Social Class Affect Educational Attainment?* 430 • *Class Materials: Do They Teach Racism and Sexism?* 439 • *The Hidden Curriculum* 440 • *How Can Schools Promote Equality of Opportunity?* 444 • *Compensating for Unequal Educational Opportunity: The Affirmative Action Debate* 445

What Makes a Fair Footrace? 448

PROBLEMS RELATING TO THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF AMERICAN SCHOOLS 450

Is the Quality of American Education on the Decline? 450 • *Have Educational Changes Reduced Achievement?* 452

The Changing Content of a University Education: A Personal Example from the Author 455

IMPROVING AMERICAN EDUCATION: PROPOSALS AND PROSPECTS 457

16

The American Governmental and Legal Systems and Social Problems 459

THE POWER STRUCTURE IN AMERICA 461

Two Theories on the Distribution of Political Power 461 • *Research on the Distribution of Power* 464

Where Did Presidents Kennedy, Carter, and Reagan Seek Their Advisers? 470
Overview 469

THE AMERICAN TAX SYSTEM 471

The Tax System and Social Inequality 471 • *Tax Incentives and the Quality of Life* 474

Tax Incentives and Productivity: A Prominent Economist's Conclusions 480

Tax Reform: What Will it Mean? 479 • *The Principle* 481

THE AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM: EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW? 481

The Reality 481 • *Type of Court* 483
The Civil Courts: Inequality before the Law? 486
Overview 488

17**Health, Illness, and the American Health-Care System 490****HOW HEALTHY ARE AMERICANS? 491**

Historical and International Comparisons 492 • Health and Mortality Differentials in the United States 493

MENTAL DISORDERS 495

Types 495 • Causes 497
Drapetomania: A Threat to Public Health? 502

PROBLEMS OF PHYSICAL HEALTH 501

Factors Affecting Overall Health in the United States 502 • Factors Affecting Variation of Health Within the United States 504

THE HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM AND PROBLEMS OF UNEQUAL HEALTH STATUS 506

Health Care Based on Ability to Pay 506 • People with No Medical Insurance 508 • Areas with Doctor Shortages 508 • Frequency of Seeking

Medical Care 509 • Where Primary Care Is Obtained: Socioeconomic Differences 510 • Hospital Care: More Socioeconomic Differences 511

PROBLEMS OF EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY IN THE AMERICAN HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM 513

Why Is American Health Care So Expensive? 514 • Unrestricted Third-Party Payment: A Conflict Analysis of Medical Power 519 • Seeds of Change: Power and Health Care in the 1980s 520
Hasty Release: A Fatal Decision? 524

NATIONAL HEALTH COVERAGE: TWO SYSTEMS 525

National Health Insurance 525 • Public Health-Care System 527 • Conclusion 528

Epilogue: Whither the Future of Social Problems in America? 531**Glossary 535****References 547****Name Index 573****Subject Index 581****About the Author 589**

1

Education and Social Problems

