INTRODUCTION: This course presents a sociological perspective on social problems in contemporary US society. Sociological approaches to such institutions as the economy, health, education, and the family are explored. Attention will be given to comparison with other industrialized countries as well.

- First, attention will be paid to rationalization, bureaucratization (Max Weber) and McDonaldization, particularly when it comes to the food industry: Industry/Agriculture/Big Business/Government.
- Second, health and the health care system will be explored in terms of how our health as a society is rationalized and trivialized, and the serious financial and physical consequences for people. We will use the symbolic interaction theory to discuss how individuals also rationalize their own health. This theory will address the “meaning of food” and eating as a part of this class and they will be provided. Other media includes Youtube clips.
- Sicko - Netflix dvd if you are member, Amazon On demand $2.99
- Food, Inc. - Netflix – streaming (play) for free if you are member; Amazon Videos on Demand $2.99
- **OR**, if you have seen Food, Inc. you can watch Peter Singer “The Ethics of What We Eat” as a substitute: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHzwqf_JkrA (1:13:00)
- clips of King Corn - Youtube links provided, also entire video on Netflix, streamed for free for members
- Maxed out - Amazon Videos on demand, $2.99. Also on Youtube in 9 parts. (** I am considering a different video that I need to preview that is due to be released in a few days)
- video on methamphetamine - free

The problem of hunger in America will be examined very briefly.

- Fourth, education will be discussed. We will examine research on inequities, including social class and race.
- Fifth, we will be exploring a video and having a discussion about consumer debt and the macro reasons (corporate and political), and effects of, this problem on our society and the individuals within it.
- In the latter part of the course, social problems affecting the family will be studied in terms of the effects of poverty, alcohol/drug abuse, child abuse, foster care/adoption. Factors contributing to institutional stability and change are identified. Turning Stones will provide a “real-life” understanding of the serious problems many families face, and their interactions with social health and welfare agencies. Lecture and discussion will include information on local programs and data. Videos, news stories and local hard data will add to the discussion of the problems of drugs for families.

Of great importance, we will be looking at solutions: to address the changing economy, labor market, smart money management (individual,) food and health concerns. We will explore what is working for people.
Learner Outcomes...

At the end of the term a student will be able to:

1) utilize a sociological perspective on social behavior to examine social inequality and social institutions;
2) examine specific social institutions from a macro level orientation and understand the functions of these institutions;
3) demonstrate an understanding of the theory of rationalization, and of McDonaldization, and explain how those principles, in particular, have affected U.S. food production and distribution;
4) describe the connection between macro forces and individuals, especially in terms of a person’s health and health care.
5) describe factors associated with family problems and child abuse and current national and local statistics.
6) describe empirical findings in the discipline;
7) use assignments and discussions to formulate applications of principles.

GRADING: The course grade is based on the following:

A. Annotations on articles and books-
   8 papers @ 10 points each (from each primary source and lectures, so save at least two annotations for Turning Stones towards the end of the course, and you MUST do annotation #10)------ 80 total
B. Three writing exercises (1@ 50 pts., 1 @20 pts.,1 @ 10 pts.) -----------80 total
C. Assignment on “Groups for Change”------------------------20 pts.
D. Discussions: 3 pts per week X 9 (out of 10 weeks)= 27 , plus 4 extra points for the Groups for Change comments discussion= 31 pts. You MUST skip one week of a discussion, NOT Groups for Change..

211 points available

Scale: 198+ (A), 189-197 (A-), 183-188 (B+), 177-182 (B), 168-176 (B-), 162-167 (C+), 156-161 (C), 147-155 (C-), 141-146 (D+), 135-140 (D), 126-134 (D-)

EXTRA CREDIT: You may view a current movie or video, which you can relate to this course. Write a 2-page paper explaining how this relates to this course and use at least 3 concepts from the course that you can explain via the movie/video. 5 points

Annotations: These are explanatory notes on content that I often direct in the instructions. You should be explaining: things/facts that you learned from the reading of the books, videos, articles AND the weekly notes that coincide with it.; themes; ideas, etc. The more you can synthesize your ideas, the better…that’s what I’m looking for. While I often include questions on videos, if there is a video assigned, you MUST write at least two points on the video showing that you did watch it. For Turning Stones, you can write about the story/events and your personal reactions, in addition to any facts that are raised in the book or in the readings or in online materials. Each paper will cover the assignment for that week, and turned in at the end of the week, Sunday night, and should include 8 important points- total, minimum of 2 typed, double-spaced pages. These papers should be considered like a participation grade…if you do a decent job and turn them in on time, you should receive 8 to10 points. Please put the assignment # in the heading of your paper and place in the appropriate dropbox. There is a rubric (or grading feedback) on the course home page on the right side, and there is a sample paper was that was "excellent" there also. I am not able to provide written feedback to every paper every time, so the grading feedback that coordinates with your numerical score is important.

For the most part, the deadline for work is Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. Exceptions will be noted on D2L.

Late work:

Discussions- you can skip one week, so NO late discussions allowed.
Writing exercises- 4 points deducted after Sunday night deadline for the first week, another 2 points deducted after that. Writing exercise #1 is particularly time-consuming, so please allow for that.
Groups for Change- It is important to get this in on time, so your group members can read and post about it. So, a deduction of 5 points will be given after the deadline.
Annotations – 1 point deducted after Sunday night deadline for the next week, then 2 points deducted after the second full week. Keep in mind, you only have to write 8 weekly papers over an 11-week period.

Example: If a paper is due Sunday April 3 at 11:59 p.m., anything turned in after that, and until the next Sunday, April 10 at 11:59 p.m. is 1 week late. After that, it becomes 2 weeks late.
<table>
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<th>Week</th>
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<td>1- March 28</td>
<td>Introduction. Thinking about social problems. Sociological theoretical perspectives Fast Food nation (FFN)- the beginnings of fast food, history. Overview of health care and effects on individuals.</td>
<td>Read Week 1 notes Watch the video &quot;Sicko&quot; after reading instructions for annotation 1. FFN-begin... intro,ch,1,2,5 hopefully read by Apr 6. Review the instructions for Writing Assignment #1 in module &quot;Materials for Course&quot; (not due for a few weeks)</td>
<td>1) Discussion board: Post two points per instructions for Week 1 and reply per instructions. Due by Sunday 4/3 @ 11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 1 due in dropbox 4/3 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>2- April 4</td>
<td>Max Weber. Rationalization. McDonaldization: definition, 4 dimensions, irrationality of rationality. Fast Food nation discussion. Food production and Food Politics. Sociology of Food and Eating.</td>
<td>Read week 2 notes View video: “ Food Inc.” OR the video Peter Singer &quot;The Ethics of What We Eat&quot; (link provided) if you have seen Food Inc. Watch early in week if possible. Skim articles by mid week if possible. Begin to read FFN 3 &amp;4 to complete by Apr 13, suggested deadline.</td>
<td>1) Discussion board: Post and reply per instructions. Due by Sunday 4/10 @ 11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 2 due in dropbox 4/10 @ 11:59 p.m. 3) Choose your organization for &quot;Groups for Change&quot; project by now and post in proper board.</td>
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<td>3- April 11</td>
<td>The relationship between large corporations and our food. Rationalization and our personal health.</td>
<td>FFN Ch. 6 - suggested by end of week) Read week 3 notes Video: parts of King Corn on Youtube (links included).</td>
<td>1) Discussion board: Post and reply per instructions. Due by Sunday 4/17 @ 11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 3 due Sun 4/17 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>4 - April 18</td>
<td>Food Justice. Food security. Fast Food Nation: Ranching as a changed industry. Factory Towns and Big Business. Dangerous Jobs. Rationalization and Health care. Companies profiting from obesity: pharmaceuticals and others. Organizations and small groups working towards positive change regarding health, fitness, nutrition, food, and more.</td>
<td>FFN Ch. 7,8,9 (for annotation #5) Read Week 4 notes View clips of &quot;Unnatural Causes&quot; on Youtube- links included</td>
<td>1) Discussion board: Post and reply per instructions. Due by Sunday 4/24 @ 11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 4 due Sun 4/24 @ 11:59 p.m. 3) If you can, by April 22, post your &quot;Groups for Change&quot; paper by cutting/pasting it into proper discussion board (links in week 5 course content) by putting the name of your organization in the subject line and also submitting the paper in dropbox to me.</td>
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<td>5 - April 25</td>
<td>Life chances: through the lens of class, race and gender. Wrap up FFN: Global</td>
<td>FFN: Ch. 10, epilogue, afterword Read week 5 notes</td>
<td>1) Monday April 25 is final deadline to post your Groups for Change paper in discussion board</td>
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<td>6- May 2</td>
<td>Problems of work and unemployment, The economy and jobs, Oregon labor trends and national trends.</td>
<td>Read week 6 notes and check out links. Read “Revenge of the Baristas” early in week (for annotation 6). Read articles and data in this week's content, needed for annotation #6. 1) Writing Assignment #1 due Mon May 2 11:59 p.m. 2) Discussion board: Post per instructions. Due by Sunday 5/8 @ 11:59 p.m. 3) Annotation #5 due Sun 5/8.</td>
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<td>7- May 9</td>
<td>Discussion on charts and graphs on the economy and poverty, The effects of poverty education, Cultural capital, Habitus School funding introduction.</td>
<td>Read week 7 notes and check out links. Watch the two video clips on poverty and education. Watch trailer for documentary &quot;Race to Nowhere.&quot; Read article &quot;Indifferent to Inequality&quot; (for annotation 7.) Begin working on Writing Assignment #2 due Mon May 16. 1) Discussion board: Post per instructions. Due by Sunday 5/15 @ 11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation #7 due Sun 5/15 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>8- May 16</td>
<td>A close look at research on school funding and national and local stats on schools, Charter schools, magnet schools.</td>
<td>Read week 8 notes Try to begin reading Turning Stones (TS) early this week, suggested to read: Foreword, prologue, chs. 1,2. (for annotation 8) 1) Writing Assignment #2 due Mon May 16 11:59 p.m. in dropbox. 2) Annotation 8 due Sun May 22 11:59 p.m. 3) Discussion board: Post per instructions. Due by Sunday 5/22 @ 11:59 p.m.</td>
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<td>9- May 23</td>
<td>The Credit Crisis. Sub-prime lending, Predatory Lending, National debt and personal debt. College debt crisis. Macro-micro connections.</td>
<td>Read TS 3,4,5, early this week (for annotation 9) Read week 9 notes Watch video &quot;Maxed Out&quot; or replacement-- check Course News! 1) Discussion board: Post per instructions. Due by Sunday 5/29 @ 11:59 p.m. 2) Annotation 9 due Sunday 5/29.</td>
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<td>10- May 30- this content is for 2 weeks!</td>
<td>Child Abuse. Foster care. Adoption. Organizations and programs working to help families and children.</td>
<td>TS chs. 6,7,8, epilogue, afterword. (I scanned and posted the afterword as some editions don't have it.) Read week 10 notes Watch video on methamphetamine</td>
<td>Reminder: all students must complete Annotation 10.</td>
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<td>11- Jun 6- finals week</td>
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<td>Discussion for Week 10 - post due by Monday June 6 @ 11:59 p.m.. - replies by Sat Jun 11 @ 11:59 p.m. Due Sat Jun 11 @11:59 p.m.: 1) Writing Exercise #3 2) Annotation #10</td>
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