

Sociology 173: Crises, Conflict, and Control

**Fall 2003
Wednesday and Friday
2:30-3:45**

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**Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-2:00
Thursday 2:00-3:00
And by appointment**

Crises, Conflict, and Control

Crises, Conflict, and Control is a social problems course with a global perspective. During the first half of class, we will study the international mechanisms of social control: governing bodies, militarism, crime, and the media. These are social control mechanisms which have the power to intervene and manipulate opinion within a society. They operate either within the institutional structure or outside of it. In the second half of class, we shift to an analysis of the crises of the world. There are many social crises to consider...here we focus on poverty, health, the environment, and cultural survival. These problems are complicated by conflict between groups within a society and conflict between societies.

This is a General Education course, which provides a history of sociology, teaches the empirical methodology employed by sociologists, addresses societal values associated with the discipline, utilizes primary texts, and emphasizes communication skills—spoken and written. In this course we will be critically interrogating our environment and our place within it so that we will be able to make informed and power sensitive choices. We will learn how to question and analyze our social reality and can become active participants in societal reproduction and change.

During this course you will:

- ? Become familiar with the sociological vocabulary and research methods.
- ? Achieve comprehension of the way sociologists view: social control mechanisms, crises of the world, and conflict between groups and societies.
- ? Discover ways that you can act to cause change.
- ? Improve your written and spoken communication skills.

Preparing for Class

Read all materials ahead of class on the day assigned. During class, we will often be learning and reviewing concepts and skills in small groups of four to six students. It is important that you are prepared to actively participate by: contributing ideas, listening to others, and being a constructive force in the learning process. Class time will also include lectures, discussions, exercises, structured debates, and film clips.

Rules of the Road

1. We will start and end class on time.
2. Cell phones and pagers must be turned off.
3. Some class business will be conducted via e-mail. Check your mail regularly.
4. Please remember common courtesy during class discussions.

Required Text

Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader. 2000. Edited by Frances V. Moulder. Stamford, CT: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Reserve Readings (available at McPháidín Library)

- “Chapter 1: Thinking about Social Problems.” 2002. Linda A. Mooney, David Knox, and Caroline Schacht. Pp. 1-21 in *Understanding Social Problems, 3rd Edition*.
- “The Heritage.” 2001. Immanuel Wallerstein. Pp. 222-229 in *The End of the World as We Know It*.
- “Chapter 2: Asking and Answering Sociological Questions.” 2003. Anthony Giddens, Mitchell Duneier, and Richard P. Appelbaum. Pp. 29-49 in *Introduction to Sociology, 4th Edition*.
- “Telling the Truth about Damned Lies and Statistics.” 2003. Joel Best. Pp. 32-38 in *Readings for Sociology: Fourth Edition*.
- “Chapter 2: Economic Development and Democracy.” 1981 [1959]. Seymour Martin Lipset. Pp. 27-45 in *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics*.
- “Chapter 5: Democracy.” 2000. Anthony Giddens. Pp.85-100 in *Runaway World*.
- “Who Fights for the U.S.?” 2000. Handout assembled from selected items on the website: <http://dod.mil/prhome/poprep2000/index.htm>
- “A World of Poverty.” 2001. John Isbister. Pp. 101-107 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition*.
- “Making Ends Meet on a Welfare Check.” 2001. Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein. Pp. 124-134 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition*.
- “Millions for Viagra, Pennies for Diseases of the Poor.” 2001. Ken Silverstein. Pp. 512-518 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition*.
- “Why We need a Sociology of Responsibility.” 2001. Carol A. Heimer and Lisa R. Staffen. Pp. 44-56 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition*.

Midterm Exam

The Midterm Exam will be held on **October 17th**. The exam will consist of multiple choice questions and short essay questions. We will have a review session in class before the Midterm Exam. During this time you can ask for review or clarification on any of the topics and readings that we have covered. We will also look at sample exam questions.

Homework

There are six homework assignments this term. Each homework assignment is worth five points. Homework assignments are due on the date noted in the syllabus. The homework assignments can be found online. See the Homework Handout for further information. Read closely so that you complete ONLY the required portions of each exercise.

Proposal

Your term paper assignment is to write a proposal to improve a community based organization. For this project, you will select an organization based upon your interest in a particular social problem. To write the proposal you will need to: study the sociological literature on the social problem; study social programs intended to minimize the effects of the social problem; visit and assess your chosen program; and make a plan to improve and/or expand its services. You should plan to visit the program at least twice over the course of the term. The proposal should be 12-15 pages in length, and is due on x. We will discuss the proposal assignment further in class on **September 19th**.

Proposal Presentation

You will give a five minute presentation on the topic of your proposal. For this presentation, you should imagine that your classmates are sitting on a board which is considering donating money to your organization. Your goal is to succinctly explain why this organization is good at what it does and why the board should fund your proposed improvement and/or expansion plans. The details of this presentation assignment will also be discussed in class on **September 19th**.

Computing Your Grade

Midterm Exam	30%
Homeworks	30%
Proposal	30%
Proposal Presentation	10%
Total	<hr/> 100%

Academic Honesty

The College's policy on Academic Honesty will be strictly enforced. You may view the Academic Honesty policy online <http://www.stonehill.edu/catalog/academic/policies.htm>. If you have any questions about the policy, please take advantage of my office hours.

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL PROBLEMS & RESEARCH METHODS...

September 3

An introduction to the course

September 5

The Study of Social Problems

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study of Global Social Problems,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 1-8 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Chapter 1: Thinking about Social Problems,” Linda A. Mooney, David Knox, and Caroline Schacht, pp. 1-21 in *Understanding Social Problems, 3rd Edition* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)

September 10

History of Social Theory

Readings:

- ? “The Heritage,” Immanuel Wallerstein, pp. 222-229 in *The End of the World as We Know It* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)
- ? “The Promise of Sociology,” C. Wright Mills, pp. 9-10 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

September 12

Research Methods

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 2: Asking and Answering Sociological Questions,” Anthony Giddens, Mitchell Duneier, and Richard P. Appelbaum, pp. 29-49 in *Introduction to Sociology, 4th Edition* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)
- ? “Telling the Truth about Damned Lies and Statistics” Joel Best, pp. 32-38 in *Readings for Sociology: Fourth Edition* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)

Chapter 2 Data Exercises Due Today:

- ✍ Goal: learn how to read frequency tables and cross-tabs
URL: http://www.wwnorton.com/giddens4/chapters/chapter2/data_1.htm
Questions: see Homework Handout page 1

INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS OF SOCIAL CONTROL

September 17

Human Rights and Globalization

Readings:

- ? “The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights,” pp. 56-58 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Jihad vs. McWorld,” Benjamin R. Barber, pp. 69-76 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

September 19

Governing Bodies

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 2: Economic Development and Democracy,” Seymour Martin Lipset, pp. 27-45 in *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)
- ? “Chapter 5: Democracy,” Anthony Giddens, pp.85-100 in *Runaway World* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)

Chapter 13 Data Exercises Due Today:

- ✍ Goal: applying what you have learned about cross-tabs, examine Lipset’s hypotheses on the correlates of a stable democracy.
URL: http://www.wwnorton.com/giddens4/chapters/chapter13/data_1.htm
Questions: see Homework Handout page 1

September 24

Culture of Militarism

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 7: War and Militarism,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 172-173 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Too Much Fun: Toys as Social Problems and Interpenetration of Culture,” Joel Best, pp. 191-199 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

September 26

War

Readings:

- ? “Bringing the Cost to Light,” Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz, pp. 190 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Bill Clinton’s America: Arms Merchant to the World,” Lora Lumpe, pp. 184-189 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Who Fights for the U.S.?” Handout assembled from selected items on the website: <http://dod.mil/prhome/poprep2000/index.htm> (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)

October 1

Crime as a Method of Control

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 11: Global Crime,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 290 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Who Benefits (and Who Doesn’t),” Clarence Lusane, pp. 297-301 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “A Year in Corporate Crime,” Robert Sherrill, pp. 302-309 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

October 3

Controlling Crime

Readings:

- ? “Pay Now, Pay Later: States Impose Prison Peonage,” Christian Parenti, pp. 309-313 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Japanese Say No to Crime: Tough Methods, at a Price,” Nicholas D. Kristof, pp. 313-318 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

Topic Approval Due Today

October 8

Power in the Global Media

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 8: The Global Media,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 200-202 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Balance Bias with Critical Questions,” Patricia Hynds, pp. 228-231 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

October 10

Media as a Mechanism of Control

Readings:

- ? “All Power Conglomerate: If Information is a Commodity, What Price Is International Understanding?” Stewart M. Hoover, pp. 217-221 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Out of Africa!: Western Media Stereotypes Shape World’s Portrait,” Ezekiel Makunike, pp. 215-217 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Northern Exposure: Canada Fights Cultural Dumping,” Carl Wilson, pp. 222-226 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

Current Events #1 is Due Today

- ✍ Goal: learn to flex your critical thinking muscles.
Assignment: Locate a newspaper article from a reputable source—online or in print—on a social problem. Write a summary, following instructions in handout.
Questions: see Homework Handout page 2

October 15

Review

October 17

MIDTERM EXAM

SELECTED CRISES OF THE WORLD

October 22

Poverty

Readings:

- ? “A World of Poverty,” John Isbister, pp. 101-107 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)
- ? “Making Ends Meet on a Welfare Check,” Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein, pp. 124-134 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)

October 24

The Function of Poverty

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 2: The World Economy and World Poverty,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 24-29 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Tortilla Curtain,” Luis Urrea, pp. 30-33 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “The Uses of Poverty: The Poor Pay All,” Herbert J. Gans, pp. 34-38 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

Chapter 9 Data Exercises Due Today:

- ✍ Goal: applying what you have learned about cross-tabs, examine correlates of national wealth.
URL: http://www.wwnorton.com/giddens4/chapters/chapter9/data_1.htm
Questions: see Homework Handout page 3

October 29

World Health and Poverty

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 12: World Health,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 319-320 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Death Without Weeping: Has Poverty Ravaged Mother Love in the Shantytowns of Brazil?” Nancy Scheper-Hughes, pp. 323-329 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

October 31

Disease and the Global Populace

Readings:

- ? “The Resurgence of Infectious Diseases,” Anne Platt, pp. 339-345 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Sense and Sanitation,” Sheela Patel, pp. 345-347 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Millions for Viagra, Pennies for Diseases of the Poor,” Ken Silverstein, pp. 512-518 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)

Chapter 19 Data Exercises Due Today:

- ✍ Goal: be able to form an answer the question: how much of a correlation do you find between life expectancy and income level?
URL: http://www.wwnorton.com/giddens4/chapters/chapter19/data_2.htm
Questions: see Homework Handout page 3

November 5

Environmental Degradation

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 6: Environmental Destruction,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 140-141 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Easter’s End,” Jared Diamond, pp. 144-150 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “The Limits of the Earth,” David C. Korten, pp. 150-153 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

November 7

Sick Environment, Sick People

Readings:

- ? “Childhood Cancer,” Charles W. Schmidt, pp. 154-157 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “A Pipeline Killing Field: Exploitation of Burma’s Natural Gas,” Pamela Wellner, pp. 158-164 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

Current Events #2 is Due Today

- ✍ Goal: learn to flex your critical thinking muscles.
Assignment: Locate a newspaper article from a reputable source—online or in print—on a social problem. Write a summary, following instructions in handout.
Questions: see Homework Handout page 4

November 12

Cultural Survival of Indigenous Peoples in a Modern World

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 9: The Cultural Survival of Indigenous Peoples,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 232-233 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Looking for Indians,” Cheryl Savageau, pp. 249-250 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Like Tributaries to a River,” Winona LaDuke, pp. 250-254 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “How to Succeed in Business: Follow the Choctaws’ Lead,” Fergus M. Bordewich, pp. 255-261 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

November 14

Risks to Cultural Survival

Readings:

- ? “Our Homes are not Dumps: Creating Nuclear-Free Zones,” Grace Thorpe, pp. 236-241 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Death of a People: Logging in the Penan Homeland,” Wade Davis, pp. 241-247 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Indians in Brazil Wither in an Epidemic of Suicide,” Diana Jean Schemo, pp. 247-249 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

November 19

Population Growth

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 5: Population Growth,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 109-110 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “How Many People Can the Earth Support? The answers depend as much on social, cultural, economic, and political choices as they do on constraints imposed by nature,” Joel E. Cohen, pp. 113-119 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Too Many Mouths to Feed,” Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins, pp. 119-125 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

Bring Rough Draft or Outline of Proposal to Class Today

November 21

Change Within the System

Readings:

- ? “Chapter 13: Prospects for the Future,” Frances V. Moulder, pp. 348-349 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Fair Trade: Buying and Selling for Justice,” Medea Benjamin and Andrea Freeman, pp. 45-50 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*
- ? “Places to Intervene in a System: In Increasing order of Effectiveness,” Donella H. Meadows, pp. 363-373 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

THANKSGIVING RECESS

December 3

Local Organizations Tackling Social Problems
Presentation Day

December 5

Local Organizations Tackling Social Problems
Presentation Day

December 10

Individuals Acting for Change

Reading:

- ? “Why We need a Sociology of Responsibility,” Carol A. Heimer and Lisa R. Staffen, pp. 44-56 in *Reading Between the Lines, 2nd Edition* (on Reserve at McPháidín Library)
- ? “Strategies for Changing Society,” Marvin E. Olsen, pp. 15-23 in *Social Problems of the Modern World: A Reader*

December (date to be announced)

Final Exam Session

Proposal is Due: Bring your proposal to my office by 5:00 pm today