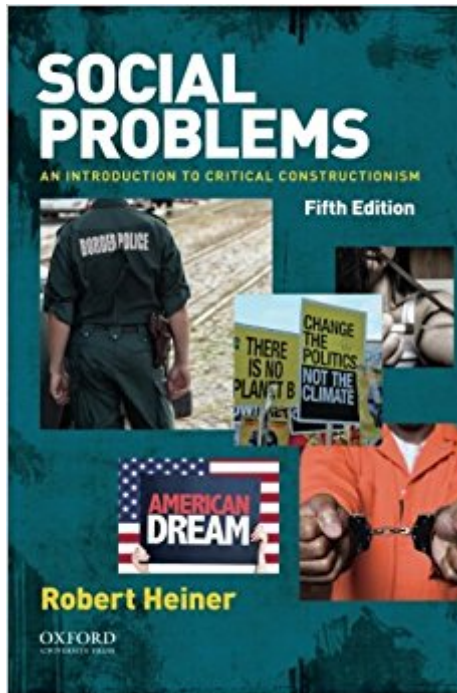


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Social Problems: An Introduction To Critical Constructionism



Synopsis

Social Problems: An Introduction to Critical Constructionism, Fifth Edition, synthesizes conflict theory and social constructionism to help students think critically about social problems. A concise, student-friendly alternative to all-encompassing standard textbooks, this book examines a single theoretical paradigm in depth, demonstrating how theory can be used to understand a range of critical social issues.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Social Problems is simple for students to understand; however, it is also a thorough introduction to social problems and to studying inequality. It includes great examples of social problems that students can relate to and provides both an interesting and informative read to anyone picking up the book."--Leslie-Dawn Quick, Old Dominion University "Instead of giving students the standard survey of various theories, Social Problems allows them to attain a firm grasp of critical constructionism and its application toward studying the social world."--Sean Currie, University of South Florida "From the opening words, I found the book to be exciting, vibrant, and engaging. As I was reading, I found that I could not put the book down. I have NEVER had that experience with any other textbook. I have previously used 'standard' social problems texts for the course, and would characterize Heiner's book as different from (and superior to) those so-called standard texts. He has managed to skillfully and successfully integrate a variety of material into the current configuration of chapters. I will absolutely adopt this new edition."--Kathy Zawicki, St. Bonaventure University

Robert Heiner is Professor of Sociology at Plymouth State University. He is the editor of *Deviance Across Cultures: Constructions of Difference*, Second Edition (OUP, 2013) and *Conflicting Interests: Readings in Social Problems and Inequality* (OUP, 2009).

Ask any of my former students what they remember about my Social Problems class and they will say without hesitation: "Heiner's Square!" An excellent introduction to Social Constructionism and critical thinking. I cannot recommend this book more highly.

I want to start off by saying that I am a very open-minded individual. By open-minded, I mean that I have strong beliefs, and if I am presented with logical and proper explanations and evidence that effectively refute my beliefs, I will reconsider and re-evaluate what I think I know. I am a scientist, and I am all for looking at things from alternate perspectives. Unfortunately, Heiner does not. In this book, there is the pretense of being an open-minded individual willing to look at social situations with a constructive attitude, considering multiple angles, and seeing most issues as multifaceted as opposed to one or two sided. Heiner fails to do so in many instances. As a specific example, Heiner points out the higher rate of crime in the United States as opposed to Japan. He immediately says that this is a direct result of gun control. Now, wherever you stand on that issue, I am sure you will have opinions. However, putting those opinions aside, consider the other facets of this complicated issue. First of all, the society in Japan is one of collectivism, rather than the United States being one of individualism. This means that in Japan, people generally inherently have a desire/thought pattern that relates to how their actions will affect everyone around them, as opposed to the United States where people generally think of how their actions will affect themselves. Another facet of this same issue would be the fact that Japanese police are highly trained in unarmed combat, US law enforcement is trained in hand to hand, but nowhere near to the same level as Japan's police force. Japan also has a higher emphasis on pride and honor than the United States does, which would in of itself be a major deterrent to a life of crime, where there is very little honor in committing crime. These potential reasons for differing crime levels are entirely ignored in this book, and this is just one example among many where the author failed to take a true constructionist view, and presented issues as one-sided: his.

A little too much unneeded information offered by author. Does not really cover the information that is important to know for understanding and addressing specific social problems.

Excellent text book!!! Very interesting!!!!

Excellent

I really like the way the author presented the problems in this book. I got the book for a class and ending liked. I did not always agreed with the Author opinikon, but the book is easy to read and understand.

I like it

I will always be grateful to Oxford University Press for publishing Robert Heiner's book. Since I already use an anthology, Race, Class, and Gender (Margaret L. Anderson and Patricia Hill Collins), as the primary text for the Social Problems course I teach, I was looking for a short book (no more than around 200 pages) to serve as an introduction to the field. Heiner's text, which combines an approach to social constructionism with critical theory, is precisely what I needed. There is, to the best of my knowledge, nothing else like it, and I have questioned just about every publisher's representative who has come by to visit my office. I have been using this book since its first edition and will be adopting the third edition for fall of 2009. I would recommend it to anyone who would prefer a short textbook for a Social Problems course.

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