



*Healthcare in the United States*

Lecture

According to Dr. Morris, bureaucratic structure influences c-section rates.

- a) True
- b) False

According to Morris (2014), the reason so many women get C-sections in the United States in comparison to other nations is because of \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) its advanced healthcare system
- b) the political legal arrangements
- c) cultural differences

“Continuous fetal heartbeat monitors  
CORRECTLY identify fetal distress  
99.8% of the time.”

- a) True
- b) False

“Obamacare is a socialist policy.”

- a) True
- b) False

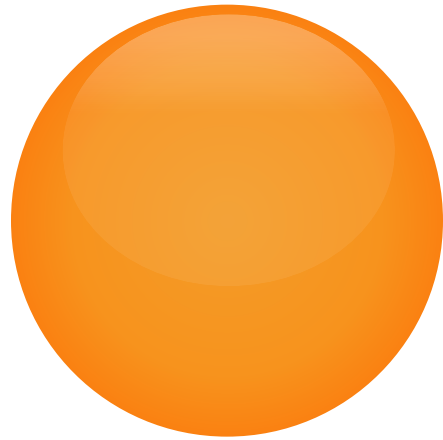
# Lecture Learning Outcomes



1 Explain how health is a social issue

2 Describe health problems in the U.S.

3 Apply social theory to critique healthcare policies



# **HOW IS HEALTH A SOCIAL PROBLEM (NOT JUST A BIOLOGICAL ONE)?**

Class Discussion 



# Health is Not Just About Biology

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- Illness has significant social components
  - Sickness and health can differ between groups
- Industrialization and Lifestyle



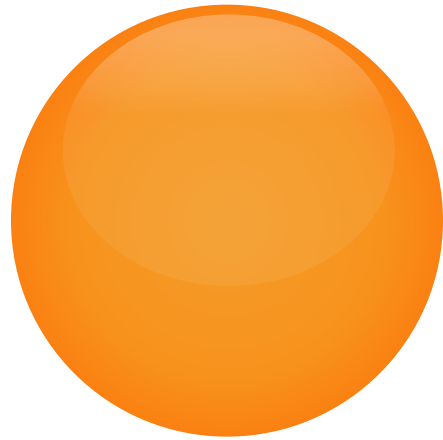


# Lifesytle

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- Culture contributes to illness and death
  - Eating habits
  - Exercise
  - Risk-taking behavior
  - Smoking
  - Alcohol abuse
  - STDs





**WHAT IS IT *TO BE SICK*? DOES IT MEAN DIFFERENT THINGS BASED ON YOUR SOCIAL GROUP? HOW HAS THE CONCEPTION OF SICKNESS CHANGED OVER TIME?**

Class Discussion 

# Functional Perspectives on Health and Medicine

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- The Sick Role
  - Excused from normal obligations
  - Not help responsible for illness
  - Must attempt to get better
  - Follow medical advice
- Functions and dysfunctions of the medical industry and illness



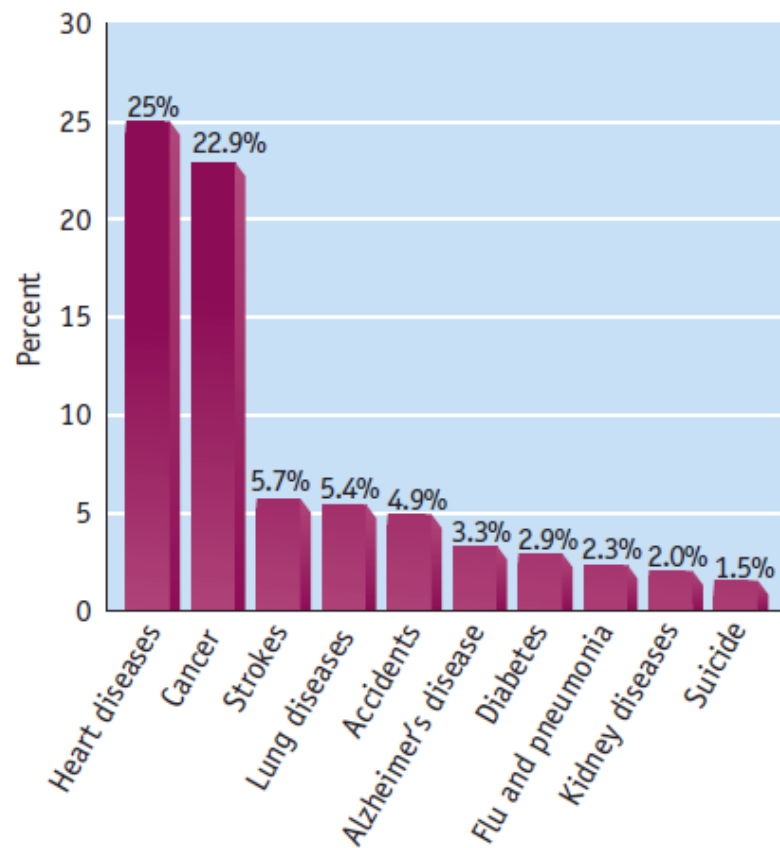
# Changing Ideas About Health and Illness

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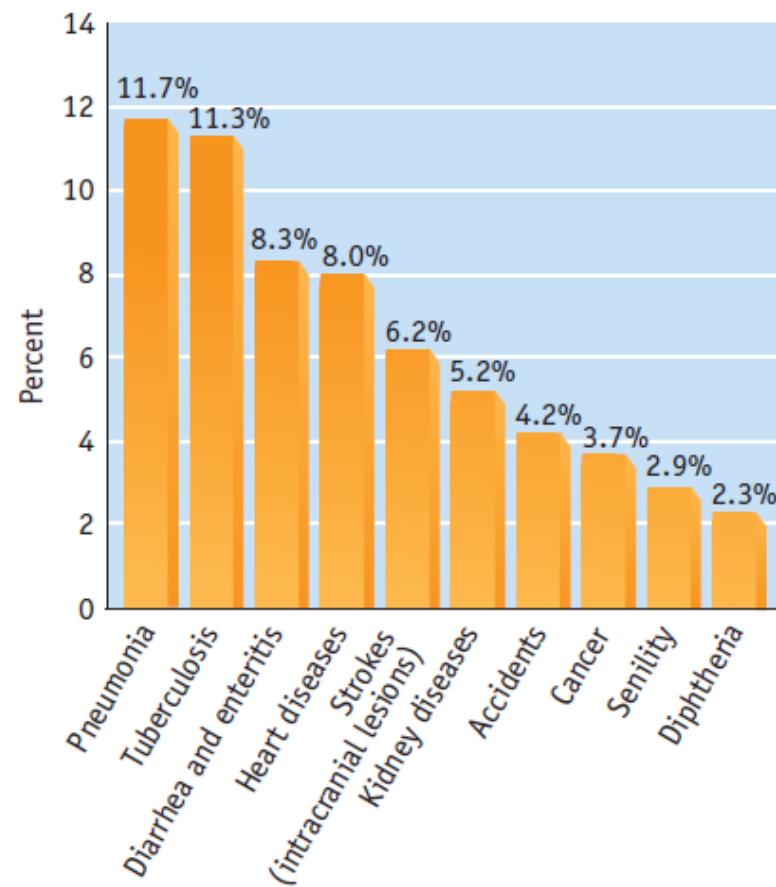
- Disease is defined by the medical community
- Some “symptoms” are not a disease but a way of life
- Risk for disease changes over time and is impacted by social organization



**FIGURE 10.9** ▶ The 10 Leading Causes of Death in the United States

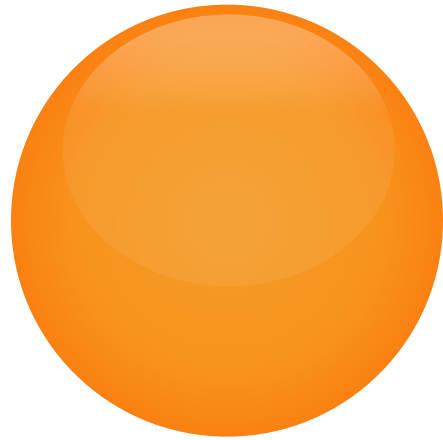


**NOW**



**1900**

Sources: By the author. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2006c (for year 1900); Heron 2012:Table C.



# **HOW DOES SOCIAL ORGANIZATION EFFECT HEALTH?**

Class Discussion 



# Infection Diseases

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- A Decline in Infection Diseases
  - Stronger immunities
  - Clean Water
  - Better food
- The Resurgence of Infection Diseases
  - They fight back and develop new strains

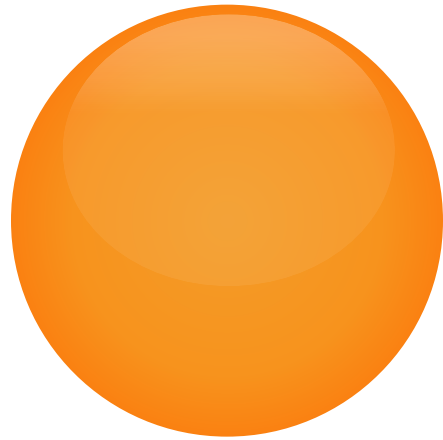


# Morris (2014) Summary

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- Research Question: What are the context of medical routines and practices that shape the decisions of pregnant women and their physicians that contribute to higher rates of C-sections?
- Key Concepts: C-sections, malpractice insurance, continuous fetal monitors
- Methods: Qualitative Interviews
- Findings: Organizational structures embedded within political legal arrangements contribute to the rise of C-sections



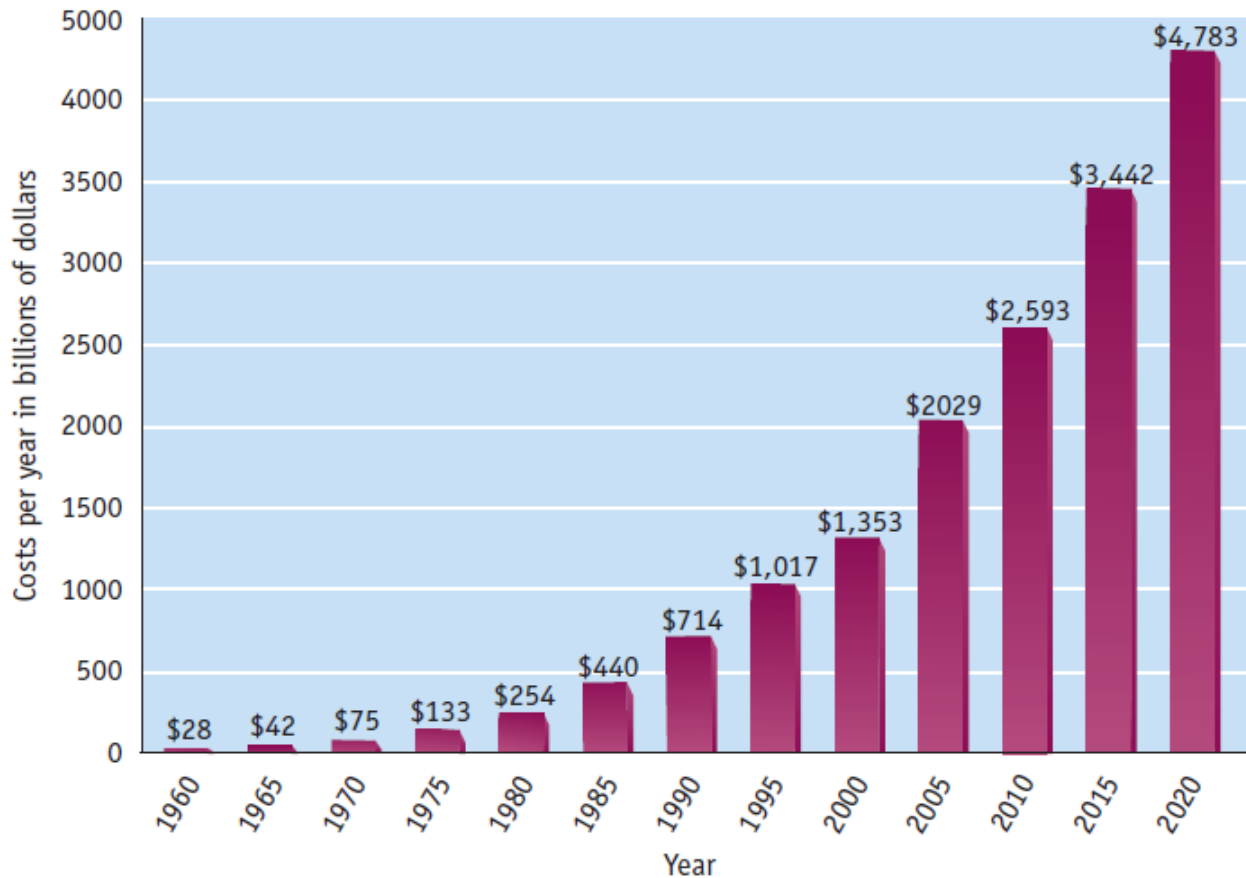


**WHAT ARE THE ECONOMIC COSTS  
OF ILLNESS IN THE UNITED STATES?  
HOW DO YOU THINK WE COMPARE  
GLOBALLY?**

Class Discussion 



**FIGURE 10.2** ▶ The Nation's Medical Bill: Soaring Costs



Note: The 2011 source projects costs to year 2019. Because the 2012 *Statistical Abstract* dropped the table, I added the additional year's projection.

Source: By the author. Based on *Statistical Abstract of the United States 2011*:Table 130.

# The Social Organization of Medicine

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- An Explosion in Medical Costs
- Reasons:
  - More elderly in our population
  - New, expensive technology
  - Medicine is a commodity to be sold for profit



# A Two-Tier System of Medical Care

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- Fee-for-service medical system
  - One system for those with insurance or those who can afford to pay
  - One system for those who cannot pay
- Need for Preventative Medicine
  - Primary prevention
  - Secondary prevention
  - Tertiary prevention

# A Two-Tier System of Mental Health Delivery

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- Deinstitutionalization left many on the streets
- Wealthy can afford mental healthcare, but the poor cannot



# Heroic and Preventative Medicine

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- We live with chronic illness in system to treat acute illnesses
- Heroic medicine is intervening after a disease has advanced.
  - Expensive
- Preventative medicine is not dramatic but it saves lives.



# History of Health Care Reform

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- 1965- Medicaid and Medicare
- 1985- COBRA Act
- 1996- HIPPA
- 1997- SCHIP
- 2010- Affordable Care Act/ Obamacare





Watch video-

“Obamacare for Idiots”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dqabs9xysYA>







# Small Group Discussion-

## Evaluate Obamacare

- List changes in the healthcare system caused by Obamacare
- Apply social theory to explain the benefits of these changes
- Apply social theory to explain the disadvantages of these changes
- How would functionalists explain the emergence of Obamacare?
- What types of questions would symbolic interactionists ask about Obamacare?
- How would conflict theorists explain the emergence of Obamacare?
- How is ideology related to your understanding of Obamacare?



# Questions...

**“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” -Nelson Mandela**