

## Humanities I

Unit III The Humanities in New York (18)Chapter 17. The EconomyAffective Objectives:

- A. To become aware of the implications of the allocation of resources for living the good life.
- B. To begin deciding which of several ways of allocating resources should be preferred, as instrumental to the good life and the good society.

Knowledge Objectives:

- A. To know that economic statistics show how resources are allocated and thereby reveal some of the conceptions New Yorkers hold about the good life (for instance, that New Yorkers spend about twenty times more for alcoholic beverages than for books).
- B. To know that economic statistics of New York City reveal limitations on citizens' ability to lead the good life there (for example, that comparing a minimum budget to incomes in various occupations reveals that many people cannot afford even a minimum standard) while at the same time its concentration of resources promotes the good life (for example, that it can support forty-one classical music organizations).

Discussion Questions:

1. What can economic statistics reveal about the good life and the good society?
2. Isolate the facts to be found in Figures I-VII and determine what these statistics reveal about the good life and the good society in New York. First infer the values that determine the allocation of resources. Secondly, determine how the economy limits the ability to lead the good life. Thirdly, determine how the economy provides more opportunities for leading the good life.
3. In what ways might the allocation of resources be changed to promote the good life and the good society? What means would you use to change the allocation of resources? What do your ideas reveal about your own conception of the good life and the good society?

## Humanities I

### Unit III The Humanities in New York (19)

#### Chapter 18. Politics:

##### Affective Objectives:

- A. To become aware of the problems facing the government of New York City as it attempts to promote a good society.
- B. To begin deciding what measures should be preferred to make the political system of New York City better able to promote the good life for its citizens.
- C. To begin deciding whether or not additional federal and state money should be allocated to New York City.

##### Knowledge Objectives:

- A. To know that New York City's government has only limited resources to promote the good life for its citizens; that efforts to maintain minimum living standards in the metropolitan area (for instance, housing, social welfare, roads, sanitation) eat up much of the revenue that could be used to promote cultural activities (for instance, museums, free concerts); that education might be considered the only cultural activity on which the government expends great resources.
- B. To know that New Yorkers have difficulty obtaining access to decision-makers, and that consequently, decision-makers are unable to obtain adequate information, and many problems of citizens go unsolved.

##### Discussion Questions:

1. Do you think the government of New York City promotes the good life for all of its citizens? What evidence do you find in Figures I and II to support your position?
2. Why has the government failed to promote the good life in those areas where you noticed significant weaknesses?
3. How might the government be altered to promote the good life and the good society more effectively?
4. Would you support the idea that the rest of the people in the U.S. (through the Federal government) should be taxed to help solve New York City's problems?
5. Mayor Lindsay argued before Congress that Federal funds would be necessary to save New York. Do you think that additional Federal and state funds should be allocated to New York City?

In 1963, New Yorkers paid about \$4.5 billion in personal income taxes to the Federal government. New York City received \$43 million from Washington in grants as well as \$721 million from New York State. You should discuss possible sources of additional funds, either from increased taxes or from other programs which might be cut to provide more money for New York.

## HUMANITIES I

### Unit III The Humanities in New York (20)

#### Chapter 19. New York and the Good Society A Summary

##### Affective Objectives:

- A. To become aware of values promoted by and undermined by urban life.
- B. To develop reasoned preferences for living in an urban, suburban, or rural development.
- C. To develop a commitment to improving conditions of life in cities, regardless of where one chooses to live.

##### Knowledge Objectives:

- A. To know some of the opportunities available in New York City for living the good life.
- B. To know the contributions which New York City and other cities have made to enriching the lives of all Americans.
- C. To know the problems faced by New York City.

##### Discussion Questions:

1. Considering Reading No. 19 and previous readings in this unit, how do you think life in a large city like New York compares with life in other types of environments, such as suburban or rural areas? (There is much to discuss in this question if you seriously take into consideration the concentration of people; the variety of occupations; greater availability of a large variety of goods and services; greater proportion of land devoted to public use, and the smaller proportion of land devoted to private residence in the city.)
2. Do you think the opportunities for living a good life are greater in the city than in other types of environments? What are your criteria for making this decision? Which values do give priority?
3. What problems does New York City confront? What sorts of approaches have been and are being tried to solve them? Do you think these solutions are getting at the causes of the problems?
4. Shouldn't we just give up on New York City? Is it really worth the cost of solving its problems?

## Humanities I

### Unit III The Humanities in New York (21)

#### Chapter 20. The Good Society: How to Attain It

##### Affective Objectives:

- A. To decide whether or not reallocating resources to the public sector should be preferred as a means of promoting the good life for all men.
- B. To consider whether or not the values of a democratic nation are manifested in the government's use of public funds to provide a good life for all men.

##### Knowledge Objectives:

- A. To know the relative deficiency of resources allocated to the public sector as opposed to the private sector.
- B. To know the relationship between private consumption and the need for public expenditures (for instance, consumption of more automobiles requires more expenditures for roads and road maintenance.)
- C. To know that Galbraith believes that the United States should effect a better "social balance" between spending in the private sector and spending in the public sector.

Additional material: Recording of an "Excerpt from a speech by John W. Gardner".

##### Discussion Questions:

1. What is Galbraith's main argument about the allocation of resources in this country?
2. Why does Galbraith regard this allocation of resources as harmful?
3. What policies does Galbraith's argument imply? Do you agree that policies such as these should be encouraged?
4. After listening to the excerpt from Gardner's speech - what values does Gardner believe are shared by all Americans? Does Galbraith's argument respect these values? How might these values be applied to solving some of the problems mentioned by Gardner and others?

Your discussions should have included, justice, liberty, individual worth, equal opportunity, brotherhood, and individual responsibility as criteria for evaluating Galbraith's argument. You should also have suggested ways in which these values might lead to solutions to some of the urban problems described in the unit.