This week, you will be considering public reaction to the condition you are researching. You should try to find examples of legends, jokes, or other folklore surrounding your condition. If you do additional research, don’t forget to add your new sources to your developing bibliography! Save them for yourself *and* include them at the bottom of your response to question 3.

TIP: In general, rely heavily on the glossary and index in your text for looking up information to reference when answering questions.

1. Who (or what groups) have measured public opinion regarding your condition? What methods do they use to collect data? What kinds of samples are used?

*[12 points: 4 per question. About 2 sentences per question.]*A main focus of Chapter 6 focused on measuring public opinion, including the types of groups interested in measuring it. “Methods” refers to stuff like public opinion polls, focus groups, and other approaches these groups use to learn the public’s opinion, some of which are discussed in the text. Page 167 begins the discussion of samples, though different types of samples are discussed throughout the chapter (a sample is basically the group of people included in the study/research/survey/whatever).

1. Do you believe the measures of public opinion regarding this condition are accurate? Why or why not? If they are inaccurate, how could these measures be improved?
*[4 points. About 1 paragraph.]*

Answer this question based on the strengths and weaknesses of the methods and samples used to measure public opinion, as discussed in the text and lecture. For example, small sample sizes and obviously biased surveys should reduce your confidence in the accuracy.

1. In a full paragraph, explain the legends, jokes, or folklore you found about your condition. Then, in another paragraph, explain what these elements of popular culture tell us about public opinion on your condition. If you have any new sources, include the citations at the bottom of your response.

*[8 points: 4 for describing, 4 for analysis]*

OR

If you could not find *any* legends, jokes, or folklore about your condition, why do you think there are no legends, jokes, or folklore? In a paragraph, hypothesize on why this sort of public reaction about this social problem is “missing?”

*[8 points for a thoughtful analysis.]*

TIP: Find jokes by googling a keyword related to your social problem (e.g., “global warming”) plus “cartoon.” Refer to lecture and the text for examples of how to analyze these jokes. Don’t forget the citation.

1. When it comes to your condition, do you think public opinion “drives” the way the condition is constructed or does the construction of the problem by claimsmakers such as the media, experts, or activists “drive” public opinion? Why?
*[4 points, 3-4 sentences expected]*A key section of the chapter for answering this question is on page 170-172. It doesn’t matter whether you say the public or claimsmakers are driving the social problems process. What matters is that your answer reflects an understanding of the ways each MIGHT drive it. In fact, common responses in sociology include “it depends” and “It’s reciprocal.”