Podcast Assignment

For this assignment, students will choose one podcasts from the list to listen to and respond to according to instructions below. Please be aware that, unless noted, all podcasts include a transcript on the linked webpage in accordance with ADA guidelines.

Podcast Options:

- [Afghanistan and American Styles of War](#)
- [It's Chinatown](#) (no transcript)
- [American Empire](#)
- [Rallying Behind Racism: The Women of White Supremacy](#)
- [Mexican Immigration in the 20th Century](#)
- [Burnt Corks & Cakewalks: The Toxic Legacy of Blackface in American History](#)

Assignment Instructions

For each podcast:

1. Students will identify three (3) specific things that they learned, thought was stupid (respectfully), found interesting, or that contradicted previously held knowledge/beliefs. These should be explained (specifically) in **no less than 3 sentences each**. This is NOT simply an account of what the podcast says - do not plagiarize the podcast.
2. Students will create/ask two (2) questions that they either thought while listening to the podcast, or wish they could ask the individual(s) recording the podcast. The purpose of these questions is to think like a social scientist; therefore, questions must be complex in nature. *Questions should be those that require a complex understanding of the topic at hand to answer.* Questions that could be answered by Google will not count!

See the following page for an example of the Podcast Assignment.

Name

You're Wrong About: Why Didn't Anyone Go to Prison for the Financial Crisis?

Observations:
1. If you want to have repercussions for actions, there needs to be a clear-cut and **widely used** vocabulary to describe the wrong being done. The terms Michael Hobbs uses like Elite Deviance, Learned Helplessness, and the Sporting Theory of Justice are used really only by social scientists and legal specialists. This makes it really hard to keep people and companies accountable to the general public, who are a lot less aware of the language of white-collar crime than they are of other crimes that you see on TV all the time.
2. Some government agencies seem to be stuck in a system (within the idea of Learned Helplessness) of cyclical arguments where the public (and other parts of the government) tell them they need to to a better job in order to get more money, but they need more money in order to do a better job. When it comes to a lot of the government, but especially regulating and law enforcement agencies, this doesn't really work. Agencies like the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission require massive funding to be effective at their jobs - and once they are effective at their jobs, that money will eventually be able to funnel back to the government in the form of an improved economy or taxes actually being paid (rather than sheltered, etc.).
3. The facts in white-collar cases are hardly ever in dispute. There are usually mile-long paper trails of facts that people are "guilty." The problem is that because of the way that the courts have chipped away at laws over time, prosecutors now have to prove that bankers, corporations, etc. *intended* to defraud or harm consumers. It is incredibly difficult to prove intent because people simply claim they didn't realize what they were doing. Stupidity makes a great defense.

Questions:
1. According to Michael Hobbs, prosecution for white collar crime is at its lowest level ever. If this is the case, why is that? If we have more technology and resources now than ever before, what social, economic, and political reasons are there for not harnessing those resources behind busting white-collar crime that truly hurts American consumers?
2. If so much of our broken justice system is based on the premise that wealthy people can cheat the system with their lawyers, why don't we at least *attempt* to even the playing field by offering or requiring rudimentary law classes or legal classes in high schools and colleges?