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60-Day Developmental Readings

Review 100-day assignment, course essential elements, assigned readings, and recommended readings to identify selections of books and scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles to identify and select developmental reading sources and entries.

Each program and Core have specific grading criteria. Follow the FALL 2022 Developmental Reading Rubric for the required number of sources, comments, and quality criteria.

See the General Helps in AA-101 The Gathering Place in DIAL for the following resources:

* Refer to the “FALL 2022 Student Guide to Developmental Readings” for updated information on sample comments, grading rubrics, and key definitions related to developmental readings.
* Download the “FALL 2022 Developmental Reading Assignment Template” Word document to begin writing your developmental reading assignment.
* For grading criteria, go to the “FALL 2022 Developmental Reading Rubrics.”
* Document all sources in APA style, 7th edition (APA 7 Reference Example, APA 7 Quick Guide) for in-text citations and Works Cited. Include page numbers.
* Include a separate Works Cited page, formatted according to APA style, 7th edition.
* Submit through DIAL to the professor.

# Assignment

**Source One:** Ballano, V. (2019). Catholic Social Teaching, Theology, and Sociology: Exploring the Common Ground. *Religions*, *10*(10). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10100557>

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “I argue that the apparent lack of sociological perspectives and methodologies in the current CST literature and instructional materials, which are currently dominated by theologians and philosophers, is rooted in the Catholic Church’s distrust of sociology’s positivism and the alleged incompatibility of sociology and theology as academic disciplines. Although both fields of study consider themselves to be science, their basic assumptions and methodologies are said to be distinct and sometimes contradictory and thus have parallel developments.” (Ballano, 2019, p. 2)

**Essential Element:** This relates to the course essential element: applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is very helpful as it bridges the faith and science discussion. The author argues that the faith community distrusts the sociological research community, preventing widespread adoption.

**Contextualization:** It seems like “relationship” and “results” are two necessary components for successfully implementing sociological work. I live in the Bible belt, and while doctorates are respected, social sciences within faith communities mostly seem underappreciated. The exception would be the organizations that benefit from the evidence-based approaches that social sciences can provide. I think this is key to people finding value in sociological research.

 Relationally, there may be a similar problem to what I would call the “person with discernment” or even the “prophetic” in the Church. I see a parallel here. In the Church, people with discernment or prophetic giftings are often seen as the bearers of bad news. They go around and tell everyone what their problems are without love, tact, or encouragement. As such, these gifts are frequently disregarded because, quite frankly, they are used in an obnoxious way.  Sociologists may have the same issue. If we are strictly applied sociologists who identify poor social trends, we may be disliked because we bring bad news. Instead, we need to learn how to speak gracefully and use our natural and spiritual gifts to identify solutions to problems. In the IT world, I love making people’s lives easier. If we can help people and societies, we will be much better received.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Sociology is a necessary tool to reformulate CST’s Christian message to the constantly changing historical and social contexts and provide empirical illustrations to its moral teachings.” (Ballano, 2019, p. 1)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element number one and five, relating to the practice and application of sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and informative. I wasn’t aware of how Catholics utilize sociology in their social teaching or its limitations.

**Contextualization:** According to this article, Catholic social teaching (CST) has been used for the last century to help promote peace and social justice. More recently, the Church compiled them into a “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church. It addresses current social issues and trends. It aims to be a guide to people’s moral behaviors. Unfortunately, according to Ballano, it is underutilized and ineffective.

 In the Protestant arena, social issues are addressed from the pulpit, if addressed at all. I rarely hear topical talks in Sunday schools. Perhaps some small groups talk more openly about these things? Since COVID, the Church in America has become a frequent target of cancel culture. As such, political and other sensitive issues are less frequently discussed. Moral issues tend to fall into that category as well.

 How should the Church handle moral issues? On one side of the spectrum, we have “all-inclusive” churches that embrace homosexuality and every new form of “freedom.” On the other side of the spectrum, we have churches that remain conservative and avoidant of current social trends. In between, we have various perspectives on social justice. Should the local Church have a document on its stance related to modern trends, or do we focus on a leadership methodology: Mission, Vision, and Core Values, which help the individual make individual, Biblically-based moral decisions?  Personally, I think that is the way to go. We should encourage people to listen to the Holy Spirit and be led by Biblical “core values.”

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Auguste Comte, the father of positivism who was responsible for laying the foundation of sociology as a science, envisioned sociology as the new rational religion of humanity. This vision somehow caused jitters among Church authorities and Catholic intellectuals concerning sociology’s overall agenda. The rejection of positivism and indifference to sociological inquiries has also influenced American Catholic scholars. Thus, in the 1930s, for instance, a small group of Catholic sociologists began to strip sociology of its positivist bias and established a unique brand of sociology called “Catholic sociology”.” (Ballano, 2019, p. 2)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential elements one, five, and six: sociological practice, application, and ethics.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Obviously, Auguste Comte’s science of religion is variant to my beliefs, but it is helpful to understand the roots and founders of sociology.

**Contextualization:** It seems humanism is a core thread of sociology. As Christians, we must decide if we will completely throw out sociological practice or if something is redeemable in it. As the expression goes, “don’t throw out the baby with the bathwater,” I believe it has valuable components. We have similar issues within theology. Calvinism has been helpful historically in separating us from the abusive and unrighteous practices of the Catholics. I can affirm it in that, while not ascribing to Calvinism myself. Biblically I can see the same patterns. I want to be like King David, “A man after God’s own heart,” without being a murderous adulterer. Therefore I’m concluding we need to understand situations and people enough to embrace the good and throw away what isn’t valuable. Christians have often created their own version of something that exists rather than become change-agents within existing structures.

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “One underlying reason the perspectives and methodologies of sociology are underutilized in the Catholic Church is the fear of positivism. While the Catholic Church acknowledges its openness to the contribution of the social sciences for the enrichment of CST, it has not recognized the full potential of sociology as a potent tool for the application and dissemination of its social doctrines. Positivism can be defined as “the view that accepts a correspondence theory of truth, that there is a single reality independent of human beings, and that the methods of the natural sciences should be adopted in research on social questions” (Mackenzie 2011, p. 534).” (Ballano, 2019, p. 2)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is informative. I wasn’t aware that sociology grew out of positivism and post-modernity. The idea that all things can be known scientifically is variant to my perspective, but the way this author describes the connection between faith and science is additive.

**Contextualization:** It appears part of the problem is the long-standing war between the faith and scientific communities. Ironically, the Bible speaks of how the world speaks of the Glories of God. Is this not enough connection to realize they are not opposite views? Building relationship with both communities, learning their respective “languages,” and finding value for both is essential. Sociology has no ethical background without appealing to a higher power. God’s Kingdom comes with power, tangible and measurable signs that what Jesus declared is true. As Christian sociologists, we have our work cut out for us! We genuinely need to be multidisciplinary in every sense of the word!

**Source Two:** Bloom, S. L. (2014). Rebooting the Organizational Operating System in Group Care Settings. *R. F.*

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The children who arrive for placement in a residential program or group home are there because each one has problems that are exceedingly complex, that cannot be managed in a less restrictive level of care, and that pose significant difficulties for the adults in their lives.” (Bloom, 2014, p. 109)

**Essential Element:** This relates to sociological intervention.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Residential treatment centers provide ample case studies as they are a melting pot of social problems. I agree with this statement and believe most people in society would.

**Contextualization:** The word “complex” triggers my mind to think about complex trauma and how it is sometimes difficult to identify because of its covert (rather than overt) nature. Its easier to spot one large crisis in a person’s life rather than many small crises. For example, a child living in a home with little love or affection and a strong requirement for performance would be difficult to spot as traumatic and yet is understandably a toxic environment.

 My tension will fall between being a counselor and being a sociologist. One focuses on the individual, while the other focuses on the group. One believes in the personal identity of the individual, while the other recognizes that any real and lasting change will at least manifest in, if not be related to, group change. Lord, please help me to walk this line with excellence and faithfulness.

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “If we are to address the complex needs of these children, our goals must be aimed at resolving the difficulties that exposure to toxic stress creates. To accomplish this in a group setting, much is demanded of managers, therapists, caregivers, and educators. We must teach, role-model, and support the development of

(1) safety skills and significant improvements in the capacity for interpersonal trust;

(2) emotional management skills, including self-control, self-discipline, and the exercise of willpower;

(3) cognitive skills, including identifying triggers and problematic patterns, while still being able to think in the presence of strong emotion;

(4) communication skills that include rehearsals in what to say and how to say it;

(5) participatory and leadership skills;

(6) judgment skills, including socially acceptable and fair behavioral schemas; and

(7) skills to manage grief and plan for the future.” (Bloom, 2014, p. 109))

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element number 1 and 5: Applied sociology and sociological practice and applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and agreeable to my experience. It will take more than a short training program to adequately support traumatized children and, even more so, to create safe environments for them.

**Contextualization:** If I summarize the seven points above, I note that most of these items deal with the soul (mind, will, emotions) of the individual, which directly connections with God’s intentions for man. Romans 12:2 talks about how our minds need to be renewed. There is a plethora of information about the relationship between how we think and feel. If we can help students understand these patterns and “take their thoughts captive,” we can help them better respond to their environments. This list doesn’t include identity, which I believe is an important part of our growing/healing journey. Secular humanism cannot adequately approach this subject. The best they can do is talk about “leadership” and “judgment” skills, but they can’t say “you’re valuable” in a Darwinistic mindset.

 I also note the importance of safety and trust. Both of these are quite large topics. I will need to do more research in these areas to see what other researchers have already learned about them. I must also study Scripture further to see what God says about trust.

**Source Three:** Clements, A. D., Haas, B., Cyphers, N. A., Hoots, V., & Barnet, J. (2020). Creating a Communitywide System of Trauma-Informed Care. *Progress in Community Health Partnerships*, *14*(4), 499–507.

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) recommends a TIC approach for educating communities about ACEs. TIC is defined as follows: A program, organization, or system that is trauma informed realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.5” (Clements et al., 2020, p. 499)

**Essential Element:** This relates to Applications for Social Research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** I’ve never heard of this organization or the TIC approach. This is additive to my knowledge base and helpful with my dissertation research.

**Contextualization:** When exploring the question, “Why are churches unable to support families and kids with trauma well,” an obvious answer comes to mind. Churches are not aware of the signs or recovery paths to trauma. How could we expect them to minister well in these areas? Furthermore, unless you know the social systems in which people become traumatized, you probably can’t clearly see who the victims and perpetrators are.

 From my pastoral counseling background, I’ve seen that different church groups tolerate different sins. As such, they tend not to be able to spot certain types of “foul play” within their congregations. For example, in conservative Christian churches, it is more difficult to spot husbands that are abusing or neglecting their wives because there is heavy teaching on submitting to the man as head of the household. The solution would be to bring an outsider in to talk about trauma, abuse, and neglect from a holistic standpoint because you need an outside perspective to spot the problem. This is where the sociologist working with various cultures and people groups has the upper hand, and they can see patterns across different people groups.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Some of the greatest challenges in many communities (e.g., overcrowded prisons, homelessness, gang violence, high rates of drug addiction) have roots in childhood adversity or childhood trauma.1–3 Childhood adversity, often called adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), include abuse, neglect, violence, loss, bullying, disaster, war, or other similarly threatening experiences.4” (Clements et al., 2020, p. 499)

**Essential Element:** This relates to Applications for Sociological Research, course essential element number 5.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is agreeable and additive to my experience working with troubled teenagers in a residential home. Frequently we are trying to solve behaviors without realizing the underlying sources of pain and trauma.

**Contextualization:** ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and Childhood trauma are significant causes of teenage and adult psychological issues. For many years psychologists and counselors have been attempting to modify external behavior without addressing the issues of the heart. It is only more recently, probably since the onset of research around PTSD, that secular psychology has been investing more time and effort in understanding how ACEs and trauma impact the child. The information above connects things like homelessness and over crowded prisons to childhood issues is fascinating. It makes sense that its easier to address problems when they are small and fluid than when there are long-established patterns of dysfunction. As such, working with younger children and their issues is preferable to catch problems before they become long ingrained.

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The word system was chosen to describe the collaborative effort as system is defined as “a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole,”5 The collaboration was interdependent in that many of the organizations involved served the same individuals, each providing a “piece of the puzzle,” and the group of organizations interacted regularly to ensure that trauma-informed interaction and messaging were consistent across members of the system.” (Clements et al., 2020, p. 500)

**Essential Element:** This relates to number 1, applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** While the idea of needing multi-faceted and interworking care isn’t new to me (coming from a residential background), its implementation specifically for trauma-informed care is new.  Just like families need support networks, traumatized individuals need more than one kind of care.

**Contextualization:** Systems are a helpful way to think about trauma solutions. When working in the anti-trafficking movement, I saw that there were various needs at various stages of recovery. Each stage required different support and trained individuals to care for the victim. Similarly, teens and adults experiencing trauma need a group of people around them.

 For my dissertation, I contemplate “how to create safe environments for people to grow and heal.” This is but one part of a victim’s recovery: community. Other components might include doctors or psychologists, father/mother figures, counselors, clergy, and nutritionists. I aim to activate the Church and turn them into a safe community. Then, from within the Church, find members with the specialties needed to help the individual.  Simultaneously, we also need to be open to our own growth journey. While I may not have been trafficked, I still have personal wounds to work through.

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Due to the nature of the existing partners to which the ideas were initially presented, there was a great deal of buy in from the social services sector, but almost no involvement of the business community and inconsistent involvement from school systems. Although the initial push came from inside a police department, almost 2 years elapsed before any training was allowed with police. It became apparent that an organizational champion could be at any level, but without buy in from upper administration, little systemic change would be possible.” (Clements et al., 2020, p. 506)

**Essential Element:** This relates to Applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to my understanding. Without buy-in, you will get little traction. I suspect getting the Church excited about sociological issues may be challenging.

**Contextualization:** It is helpful to understand that without upper administration buy-in, little cultural or organizational change could take place. This reminds me of Kotter’s change model. Here we see the “buy-in” principle applying to trauma-informed care. Unfortunately, the hardest part might be getting things started. On the positive side, however, the “organizational champion” could be at any level from within an organization. While somewhat surprising that it doesn’t have to be the leader, I believe I’ve read that in other leadership articles as true in various spheres of society.

**Source Four:** Chaudhri, S., Zweig, K. C., Hebbar, P., Angell, S., & Vasan, A. (2019). Trauma-Informed Care: A Strategy to Improve Primary Healthcare Engagement for Persons with Criminal Justice System Involvement. *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, *34*(6), 1048–1052. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-018-4783-1>

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Trauma is pervasive in the USA, but disproportionately present in individuals and communities burdened by poverty, violence, and exposure to the criminal justice system. Engagement in clinical care, especially community-based primary care, is particularly important in the immediate period following community reentry from incarceration, where opportunities to engage clients in services are essential for improved health and reduced recidivism.” (Chaudhri et al., 2019, p. 1048)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element number five, applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and agreeable to my experiences. “Its not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” Matt 9:12. I particularly take note of the need for community-based programs.

**Contextualization:** The Matthew 9 passage, similar to the parable of the sower in Matthew 13, indicates that some people will be more receptive to the Gospel. In my experience, those who are most deeply broken are ready for change. Those of use that are comfortable and have what we need seldom make painful, drastic changes.

 As sociologists, one way we can help the Church is to raise awareness about just how bad things are. I saw this work effectively in the anti-trafficking movement. When people understood what we were up against, they began to get engaged. Awareness is key. Secondly, we need a common language by which we talk about the problem. This builds unity and community when we can understand the problem and one another as we discuss the situation. Lastly, we need a plan to help those in need.

**Comment 12:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Individual trauma results from an event or series of events that are physically or emotionally harmful and have lasting adverse effects on mental, physical, social, and emotional well-being.1 In the USA, diagnosed and untreated trauma is a health and social epidemic; high prevalence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) has been reported in a number of populations and can range from 522 to 68.2%.3 Trauma is pervasive across income and demographic groups, but is disproportionately present, and has a disproportionate impact, in individuals and communities burdened by poverty, violence, social isolation, racism, and exposure to the criminal justice system (CJS).” (Chaudhri et al., 2019, p. 1048)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applications for sociologist research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and helpful in framing the problem. Unfortunately, I see a bias, not necessarily in the research, but in the application of the solution based on statements like this. I propose that safe communities are required everywhere, not just in impoverished areas.

**Contextualization:** It appears true that impoverished communities tend to have more problems; however, the typical solution of giving funds to help remove those same people from poverty, I believe, doesn’t solve the problem. I believe the financial issues, which are often presented as the problem, are just a symptom. Furthermore, this article adds racism and the criminal justice system to the mix. Racism is a hot topic and often overused as the reason for an individual being emotionally unhealthy. The criminal justice system may need reform, but I don’t believe that is the cause of societal problems, only that it adds to existing issues.

 I believe intimate, caring, and diverse communities are the solution. That is, the Church, in its fullness, with all of its diversity and standing in unity, has the answers for our social problems. I’d rather have a poor person in a close relationship with a wealthy person than have the government fund the poor person while they sit alone at home. If we can teach Biblical ethics and connect people, I believe the Holy Spirit, through close relationships, will provide the answers. I suppose the question is, can I support this theory through social research?

**Comment 13:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Barriers remain to implementing TIC in primary care, namely, the lack of a clear implementation model on which to design trauma-informed interventions. Specific challenges and roadblocks include transforming an organization’s established culture, policies, and practices; the limited evidence around trauma screening practices; and accessing behavioral health services for patients requiring referrals.” (Chaudhri et al., 2019, p. 1050)

**Essential Element:** This relates to the course essential element: applications for sociological research as well as clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive as it discusses barriers to implementing change. Like Kotter’s leadership model, which starts with “creating a sense of urgency,” I see a similar need in our communities and organizations. People won’t change if they don’t see the need for it. They won’t prioritize change in their busy schedules unless they have a good reason to.

**Contextualization:** Raising awareness of the problem without being fatalistic will be key. At the same time, I realize that our message, “God has answers to our social problems,” may not be wanted or received well by everyone. We just need to be ok with that. Like Biblical prophets who are not welcome in their home town, we need to present our message and look for those God opens doors to; whether within an organization, a community, or an entire cultural group. If we’re about doing God’s work, then we need only report to Him and not worry about the nay-sayers.

**Source Five:** Cipriani, R. (2021). The New Sociology of Religion. *Encyclopedia*, *1*(3), 822. <https://doi.org/10.3390/encyclopedia1030063>

**Comment 14:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “A significant development of the theses on secularisation is due to Ulrich Beck, who advanced a new interpretative proposal of the diffusion of religion in the form of the experience of a personal God. Whoever wants to escape hierarchies, dogmas, practices, official beliefs, ideological evaluations and the authoritarianism of structures stabilized over time, builds his own way of being religious (or not religious)—which nevertheless relates to the religiosity proposed by churches and by movements and groups, communities and organizations—and comes to terms with the truths claimed and propagated by the various religious denominations. The option that derives from this, that of a personal God, seems very functional to the individual needs of social actors grappling with multiple and complex, risky and unpredictable problems, which do not always find adequate answers in the recipes proposed by historical, traditional, consolidated religions.” (Cipriani, 2021, p. 825)

**Essential Element:** This relates to essential element number 1, applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The way that this author is using the term “personal God” is variant to the Biblical Christian perspective. It is actually more postmodern in its understanding, claiming that each person can define God the way they want.

**Contextualization:** What I can agree with is how this fluid definition of God and, therefore religion is “complex, risky and unpredictable.”  This article notes that sociology has typically used Christianity as a religious template for much of its work. However, more recently, that is changing. One of those changes is this new model of “personal God.”

 As Christian sociologists, we need to be more tied to what Scripture says and ready to defend our position. Having a made-up God is the same thing as being your own God. It is just another flavor of idolatry. Functionally the problem becomes how do we establish societal ethics if we are the standard setters? If there is no higher moral code to appeal to, we will likely end up with a Darwinistic “survival of the fittest” or a “whats best for the majority” type of thinking, which ultimately has the same flaws as communism.

 One advantage to this discussion is we can apply the Biblical idea of “you will know them by their fruit.” Sociologists are all about evidence and results. So research should be the vindicator of God’s wisdom.

**Comment 15:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The historical precipitating factor in all of this is the return to a sort of polytheism according to the interpretative key of a religious individualism that results in a dual orientation, favouring both the religious solution and its negation, without renouncing the search for transcendence.” (Cipriani, 2021, p. 825)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** While the author speaks of the contributions of Ulrich Beck to sociology (which is valuable), the idea that the sociological discipline is rooted in a polytheistic mindset is variant.

**Contextualization:** I can value the input from various sociologists with whom I disagree while simultaneously believing their worldview is inaccurate and ineffective at promoting world change. In this paragraph, I see how sociologists are trying to reconcile the need to find “ultimate meaning.” The reality is they will never find it in being their own god or inventing gods. I can respect the observation that the world is, in-fact, polytheistic while recognizing that it is part of its problem. As a Christian sociologist, I will likely have to defend my faith and position; however, I believe the results of my work will speak louder than my words. As another sociologist noted, the results of the work prove the sociological value.

**Source Six:** DeSanto, C., Lindblade, Z. G., & Poloma, M. M. (Eds.). (1992). *Christian perspectives on social problems*. Indianapolis, IN : Wesley Press, P.O. Box 50434. <http://archive.org/details/christianperspec0000unse_l1r4>

**Comment 16:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Although sociology seeks to be value neutral, a careful reading of different sociological works makes it clear that this desired neutrality is an illusive goal. Each writer, whether aware of it or not, is influenced by personal background factors, cultural milieu, as well as assumptions made in various sociological theories. The approach sociologists use to uncover some of the biases is known as the sociology of sociology, a branch of the sociology of knowledge which aims to demonstrate the effect various factors have on the kind of sociological knowledge produced.”  p. viii

**Essential Element:** Applied Sociology and Sociological Practice

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and insightful. While aware of worldview biases, I hadn’t considered our biases when it came to sociology.

**Contextualization:** This is a good reminder that we must consider our thinking and perspectives as we approach problems and research. I believe that sometimes our research looks contradictory, one article from another, because of this very thing. If we aren’t aware of our starting point, mental state, and what we bring to the table, we can subtly or overtly influence the outcomes. Even if the data is mapped correctly, our application can be wrong.

 I believe this principle can be applied to counseling and inner healing as well. It is easy to call someone else’s sins or troubles out, but how often are we asking ourselves, “What is their starting point?” “How different is my perspective from theirs?” While I may be able to see the “speck in my brother’s eye” better from the outside, perhaps I need to consider my motivations and lifestyle choices. I believe this is how we can learn to love our neighbors truly, by first making sure our own house is in order and receiving God’s love for ourselves, then we can share what we have received with others.

**Comment 17:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “For Christian sociologists, therefore, some things never change. The ideal remains the ideal, regardless of how behavior and values in secular society may change. The basic principles set forth in the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, that are applied in the prophetic writings of both the Old and New Testaments, remain constant.” p. 5

“There is only one kind of faith, a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord that acts to establish and maintain justice in the social order (Micah 6:8, James 2:18, Matthew 7:21). “ p. 6

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element number three: Sociological Intervention.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is agreeable to my Christian perspective and a good reminder of what our baseline should be.

**Contextualization:** Clearly, this comes from a Christian perspective, but I think its important to note that all ethics come from somewhere. If not the Bible, then where? As we work with other sociologists, we must know their starting point. Are they coming from a humanistic perspective?  If so, we will naturally run into disagreements because our ethical standards are not coming from the same place. Are they Agnostic?  Perhaps we will have some common ground. Are they religious? While they may not agree that the Bible is the source, chances are, many Biblical principles will apply.

 As we begin to develop clinical solutions, we need to ensure we don’t lose sight of our Biblical and faith foundations. As believers, we understand that God’s design is the best we can get for our society. Even if other perspectives are more popular, we can’t deviate from who we are in Christ.

**Source Seven:** Esaki, N., Benamati, J., Yanosy, S., Middleton, J. S., Hopson, L. M., Hummer, V. L., & Bloom, S. L. (2013). The Sanctuary Model: Theoretical Framework. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services*, *94*(2), 87–95. <https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.4287>

**Comment 18:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Constructivist Self-Development Theory” (Esaki et al., 2013, p. 87)

“CSDT (McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Pearlman & saakvitne, 1995) is an integrative personality theory that provides a framework for understanding the impact of childhood maltreatment on the developing self (saakvitne, tennen, & aleck, 1998). With origins in psychoanalytic theory, self-psychology, social learning, and cognitive development, this theory describes the unique impact of traumatic events that arises from interactions among aspects of the person, the event, and the context (brock, Pearlman, & Varra, 2006); thus it is a constructivist theory of personality development.” (Esaki et al., 2013, p. 87)

**Essential Element:** Applications for Sociological Research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive. I’ve never heard of the Constructivist Self-Development Theory.  This article is loaded with great historical concepts I need to familiarize myself with.

**Contextualization:** This has also led me to another article: the “Self-Aware: Professional”, which I’m excited to read.  I believe identity is a key component to healthy communities, and I’m learning that identity is a loaded word. When I think of identity, I think of “I am who God says I am,” but from a sociological perspective, there are other layers and concepts of identity, like group identity and identity within a larger culture. Any work that helps clarify the term “identity” and bring about a healthier self or other perspective is worth my research time. In this case, the connection between trauma and how one’s identity is formed is very valuable. To the extent we understand how someone thinks and feels is the extend we can serve them well.

**Comment 19:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Its goal is to improve organizational culture by educating staff on the effects of trauma and stress on behavior, changing the mind-set of staff regarding behavior of clients from being pejorative (i.e., sick) to being the result of injury, and providing tools to change individual and group behavior.” (Esaki et al., 2013, p. 87)

**Essential Element:** This relates to clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** By increasing awareness utilizing research, we can help change values and cultures. Our tendency to look down on things we don’t understand can be overcome with knowledge and providing tools.

**Contextualization:** I’m finding this article on the sanctuary model to be very helpful in understanding the links between trauma-informed care and “grace-based, safe communities.” In fact, there might be so much overlap that I need to pick a different research topic!

 In this article, I’m reminded that information and diverse perspectives can help change people’s views. Whether it is due to temperament or ethnic culture, we all tend to see things from our own perspective. Furthermore, we subconsciously assume that everyone else sees things the same way we do. When we can help identify different viewpoints, we can help people see things from a broader lens. In the Trauma-informed care sense, we can help doctors, nurses, and adults working with people see that trauma has left a stain on these individuals. They aren’t necessarily bad in and of themselves, but their behaviors can be a result of their upbringing and woundedness. If we can address the “what’s wrong with you,” we can prime their heart for healing. Likewise, having that perspective should help us become more patient with their journey, as we hope others are patient with us in our journey.

**Source Eight:** Esaki, N., Reddy, M., & Bishop, C. T. (2022). Next Steps: Applying a Trauma-Informed Model to Create an Anti-Racist Organizational Culture. *Behavioral Sciences*, *12*(2), 41. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12020041>

**Comment 20:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Given the systemic roots of inequities, truly trauma-informed services require culturally responsive involvement across organizations, communities, and service sectors to reduce barriers, overcome stigma, address social adversities, and promote positive ethnic identities [23].” (Esaki et al., 2022, p. 2)

**Essential Element:** This relates to sociological intervention.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The idea that inequity is the root of our problems, while a popular theory, is not Biblical, nor does it fit my perspective of social problems. While I agree that we need communities to become more diverse and aware of cultural differences, I believe we also need to increase empathy and concern for others by helping them understand how God loves and values us.

**Contextualization:** Encouraging a group of people to feel guilty about something, especially something they haven’t done themselves (like white males being blamed for slavery a hundred years ago), doesn’t grow genuine concern for those struggling. We use terms like “under privileged” for certain social groups and “white privilege” for others. All I see this doing is making us more politically correct and legalistic. Now we begin looking for those who have extra privileges that we don’t think they should have (which is entirely subjective.) Who is to say that every person in America should have a degree and that a certain minority group (the top 10% earners in our society) should pay for it? It feels like another blend of communism to me.

 Biblical concern begins with God’s love for us and radiates outward. We forgive because we were forgiven. We give to others because He gives to us. We love others in the same way we love ourselves. This is superior in every way to the secular view of equity. When we live this way, we will have what they experienced in Acts “no one had lack.”

**Comment 21:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “An often overlooked but fundamental principle of a trauma-informed approach involves cultural humility [34]. Cultural humility through culturally competent practices (e.g., acknowledgement of diverse values, beliefs, and behaviors) supports the understanding of the multilayered intersection between trauma and aspects of culture including race, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, socio-political particularities, and language [35,36].” (Esaki et al., 2022, p. 3)

**Essential Element:** This relates to clinical sociology and sociological intervention.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and agreeable to my understanding. Much like Biblical love considers others, cultural humility “doesn’t think more highly of oneself then they ought.”  To do this, though, we need to understand there are diverse perspectives and values, and that is ok.

**Contextualization:** The Church could really benefit from this idea of cultural humility, only I’m using the word culture not as in nationality or upbringing, but in the sense of religious background. If we could become more aware of the diversity of beliefs within the body of Christ and truly understand what we might think of as “variant” theology and practice, we might find that we have more in common with our brothers and sisters in Christ then we initially thought.

 I grew up in a conservative background, and “charismatic” was a bad word. This led me to have prejudices against them and avoid anything charismatic at all costs. I didn’t realize much of what they believed; I came to believe and experience for myself. The people themselves were like me, with their own unique perspectives and values, which oftentimes aligned with mine. When I understood their stories, I realized why they believed what they believed, and it made it easier to accept them, even if I didn’t agree with them. Perhaps if we gave each other enough time to share our stories and beliefs with one another in the Church we would be more receptive and able to collaborate more.

**Source Nine:** Fritz, J. M. (Ed.). (2008). *International clinical sociology*. Springer.

**Comment 22:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Clinical sociology is a humanistic and creative specialization that seeks to improve the quality of people’s lives. Clinical sociologists bring contributions from two or more disciplines (frequently sociology and psychology) to their work and incorporate knowledge and experiences from the areas of practice (e.g., health, criminal processing system, community development, organizational analysis, human rights) in assisting with or undertaking an intervention process.” (“International clinical sociology”, 2008, p. 15)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element #2: clinical sociology

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to my understanding and helpful in that it clarifies how to describe clinical sociology and gives me a way to better communicate what I do with others.

**Contextualization:** As a pastoral counselor, I’m often involved in work and reading of psychological materials. On the other hand, sociology is new as it has a broader perspective than my typical daily work. That said, Sociology is not foreign to the scriptures or our calling as a Kingdom of Priests. When Jesus talks about his Kingdom coming here on earth as in Heaven, He talks and thinks sociologically. Entire societies are to be transformed by the presentation of the Gospel.

As a minister of that Gospel, there is a tension between ministering to the individual and looking at society more broadly. Most of the work we do is one person at a time; however, the message we teach applies to people groups. Consider how frequently the idea of “Jew or Gentile” is mentioned in Scripture. Also, consider how the Church is “a body of many members.” These are sociological ideas. In comparison, the parable of the prodigal son and the sower represent Jesus’ more individualized care. Christian sociologists have to hold this tension with intentionality, not neglecting one for the other.

**Comment 23:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The role of the clinical sociologist can involve one or more levels of focus from the individual to the global. Even though the clinical sociologist specializes in one or two levels of intervention (e.g., marriage counseling, community consulting), the practitioner will move among a number of levels (e.g., individual, organization, community) in order to analyze or intervene.” (“International clinical sociology”, 2008, p. 17)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element #2: clinical sociology, and #5, application for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is new and additive to my understanding. Like another author’s terminology, sociologists work on micro, mezzo, and macro levels. The challenge is not becoming isolated in any one area.

**Contextualization:** I’ve always felt I had a gift of pattern recognition, that is, seeing how things reoccur in different scenarios. When I was the Executive Director of a non-profit, this became helpful in our strategy planning and vision casting meetings. Coupled with my use of technology to automate data gathering and reports, I was able to identify common trends and offset potentially hazardous ones.

Apparently, I will be able to use these same gifts as a sociologist as well: Identifying common problems within societal groups and using research to develop strategies to help mitigate those problems. While I’m not sure how the Lord will use my new research and doctoral gifts after completing my coursework, I can see a great need for this kind of thinking. I’m also unsure how my technological skills will come into play, but I believe they will be highly valuable in social research.

**Comment 24:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Theory, then, is defined in different ways. It can be used to examine issues of all sizes, but also can be seen as a worldview—one’s lens on the world.” (“International clinical sociology”, 2008, p. 22)

“Theory gives a scientist or a practitioner a focus, defining what is interesting and relevant. In doing so, it excludes elements that are not seen as central. Theory allows us to understand and advance our understanding, but the cost of moving forward may be that certain considerations are diminished or left out completely.” (“International clinical sociology”, 2008, p. 22)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element #5, applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This author’s connection between theory and worldview is helpful. It seems like theory functions as a sub-perspective within one’s worldview to help focus our attention on solving a particular problem.

**Contextualization:** Much like bifocals allow both a broad and focused perspective, within our worldview, we seem to have the ability to filter out certain information to focus on a specific area. Much like bifocals have the ability to zoom in on the text to make it easier to read, theories can help us gain perspective on social problems.

There is a cost of “zooming in,” as some information is left out when applying theoretical constructs. Therefore it is essential for us to consider all available information before applying a theory. Some theories may not apply as well to every situation. I suspect all theories break down at some point like analogies do. Furthermore, new theories may be needed to best respond to new societal problems.

**Comment 25:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Clinical sociologists, in good part because of their multidisciplinary education and varied work experiences, use a wide range of theories. Some theories frequently used by clinical sociologists are as follows: grounded, standpoint, social constructionism, symbolic interaction, multicultural-liberationist, systems, conflict, critical, and social exchange. Theories, implicitly or explicitly, are a basis for the models that explain how practitioners should function. As Lang and Taylor (2000) have noted, “models represent appropriate, aspirational, or best practices; they include guidelines for implementing them.” Clinical sociologists use theories to formulate models that will be helpful in identifying and understanding problems and strategies to reduce or solve the problems. Clinical sociologists also have shown that practice can influence existing theories and help develop new ones” (“International clinical sociology”, 2008, p. 23)

**Essential Element:** This relates to multiple course essential elements, particularly applications for social research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The sociologists’ focus on a multidisciplinary approach is an important distinction to me. Fellow academians in the hard sciences are often unfamiliar with the multidisciplinary style of sociologists. While this makes it more difficult for them to understand our work, it uniquely positions us to solve problems others cannot.

**Contextualization:** As I’m reading Fritz’s work, I can’t help but think that sociologists are uniquely positioned to create new theories. If theories come from a combination of understanding a context along with its problems, then those who have the broadest understanding may have the best suited to develop new strategies to solve them. Furthermore, those who are familiar with various disciplines are more readily able to incorporate seemingly unrelated ideas into a new methodology.

For awhile now, America has focused on specialization, but in today’s day and age, we need people who have a multidisciplinary approach. People of the Word and familiar with the world will make the best world-changers for the Kingdom of God.

**Source Ten:** Kalekin-Fishman, D., & Denis, A. (Eds.). (2012). *The Shape of Sociology for the 21st Century: Tradition and Renewal* (1st edition). SAGE Publications Ltd.

**Comment 26:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Are there terms that can be identified as central and pivotal to the current needs of sociology? Should we build our work around concepts such as: agency, alienation, civilization, conflict, consensus, cooperation, culture, empire, gender, interaction, nation, performance, power, praxis, process, refection/reflexivity, social change, spheres of interest (public,private), structure, maybe simply society? Or-should concepts be allowed to grow any which way in the spirit of ‘let a thousand flowers bloom?’ p. 5

**Essential Element:** This relates to the course’s essential element: Applications for Sociological Research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** I haven’t previously thought about the central themes of sociology or who determines what those themes should be. This is additive.

**Contextualization:** In response to the authors’ question, I believe sociology will perpetually take on different themes and concepts as time progresses. For example, to make “gender” a sociological theme 100 years ago would probably not have the societal significance it does today. That term is relevant because of the social issues of today. That said, some themes would probably be applicable throughout history. It seems that the way sociological research works, by its very nature, requires the themes and concepts that need to change as society changes. That is part of the benefit of this type of “soft” science; it adapts to an adapting culture.

As ministers of the Gospel, I see some overlap here. One the one hand, the Gospel doesn’t change. Salvation by grace through faith is the consistent message. That said, the method that we use to share the Gospel can be contextualized to the people group we are working with. Awana is not the only way to teach children Scripture. Likewise, Evangelism Explosion may not be the most effective way to share the Gospel today.  Therefore, there is a similarity in the mindset of the sociologist and the Gospel presenter: we need to identify core themes while remaining relevant to the people group we are working with.

**Source Eleven:** Knoetze, J. J., & Black, T. J. (2023). ‘Sinawe’ [we are with you]: Local churches as change agents in the lives of traumatised youth. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, *44*(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v44i1.2694>

**Comment 27:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The Church has a key role to play in addressing the chronic levels of grief and trauma experienced by the youth in South Africa. It has a biblical mandate to bring hope and healing and has a unique station within South African society that positions it to bring about real transformation.” (Knoetze and Black, 2023, p. 1)

“Research indicates that although the Church is considered by local residents as an important community resource, it remains ineffectual in intentional community-based youth ministry that leverages significant opportunity. This research identifies the Church as an important community change agent and encourages church leaders to step into the open gap to reach local young people while providing the methodology with which to do so.” (Knoetze and Black, 2023, p. 1)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and in alignment with my prospective dissertation. I’ve never heard an authoritative source state so clearly what I’m thinking.

**Contextualization:** I’m looking forward to reading this article. It seems evident from Jesus’ teachings that the Church should be the catalyst that brings Heaven to Earth. This includes all of Heaven’s qualities which can be summed up as loving others as you love yourself. True love has to be part of the remedy for traumas and tragedies that people have faced. Biblically we see many examples of Jesus healing and restoring people in a moment, all within the context of love and knowing them. I have not seen a system or process by which I can help the Church navigate these waters. I have some key pillars, but I don’t have the road-map yet. Hopefully, this article will fill in some of my gaps.

I also believe it is important to note the phrase “change agent” in relation to the Church and community. I may be able to find more relevant research with those key words.

**Source Twelve:** Mahon, D. (2022). Implementing Trauma Informed Care in Human Services: An Ecological Scoping Review. *Behavioral Sciences*, *12*(11), 431. <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12110431>

**Comment 28:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “For example, the climate and culture within the organisation, practices, as well as lack of supportive supervision and leadership may compound these trauma experiences [19,20]. Bloom [21] describes the impact of organizational stress as permeating across the entire system of an organization impacting all stakeholders, and levels of service delivery, care, and outcomes. As such, healthcare systems and policy makers are increasingly recognizing the need to be more trauma responsive.” (Mahon, 2022, p. 2)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to my understanding and corroborates a few of my existing ideas: culture and leadership and their influence on trauma.

**Contextualization:** I’m encouraged that others are thinking along the same lines as myself. Based on my own experiences, which match the research findings, most young people have some level of trauma. Nearly everyone would have had some level of trauma or tragedy experience when adding COVID to the mix. Even if you weren’t afraid of dying, chances are you know someone who suddenly died during COVID. I focus on how we take advantage of this unique time in history. So many things are changing. The advantage to that is with movement there can be direction. If we can steer the moving parts of culture, we can aim them at Christ.

The question, “What would Jesus do?” comes to mind. How would he be involved in the culture in such a way as to bring about positive change?  How would he develop his disciples today so that they can be effective “kingdom builders?” These are questions I have. I haven’t found the answer yet, but research like this reminds me that the problem is real and that the current state of our leadership and sociological structures is not helping the situation.

**Source Thirteen:** Osowski, Thomas. (2005). Sociological Perspectives. *South Dakota State University*.

**Comment 29:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “What is the unit of analysis in sociology? The unit of analysis in sociology can range from the individual person to a large group of persons” (Osowski, Thomas, 2005, p. 1)

(Micro, Mezzo, Macro)

Micro - person to person

Mezzo - Organization to organization

Macro - Society to Society

**Essential Element:** This relates to applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive. I’m unfamiliar with the term mezzo and its relationship to sociology. Furthermore, it is helpful to see the wide spectrum of work that sociologists get involved in.

**Contextualization:** I’m now curious, is there a typical order in which sociologists do their research?  Do they start on the micro level and work up, or on the macro level and work down? Does their research order change based on context and subject matter?

Personally, I see myself in various aspects of life, flipping between the micro and macro levels. At times I’m working one-on-one with individuals, trying to help them dissect their struggles and take them to God. On the other hand, after working with many people from different backgrounds, I begin to see patterns in society and have gotten curious about how to solve bigger problems, problems that might play into the individual’s issues.  I’m excited to learn more about these levels of sociology.

**Source Fourteen:** Papa, A., & Robinson, K. (2023). Leadership and Trauma-Informed Care: Working to Support Staff and Teams. *Journal of Emergency Nursing: JEN*, *49*(2), 172–174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jen.2022.11.001>

**Comment 30:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** ““Four R’s” or key assumptions in a TIC approach” (Papa and Robinson, 2023, p. 173)

“1. Realization—understanding the widespread impact of trauma and potential paths for healing. 2. Recognize—identifying signs and symptoms of trauma in patients, families, staff, and others involved with the system. 3. Respond—fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices. 4. Resist retraumatization—avoiding the problems and pitfalls that lead to strong emotional reactions.” (Papa and Robinson, 2023, p. 173)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and aligns with Kotter’s change model. First, we need to recognize and communicate the problem to stir awareness and desire for change. Then we can begin responding to societal issues.

**Contextualization:** Part of the Church’s problem is our focus on evangelism rather than true discipleship. We have also been focused on numbers and programs rather than members who love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Unsurprisingly, we have a religious church instead of the bride of Christ church shown in Acts.

TIC deals with heart issues and looks under the surface to reach people’s true needs. By asking the question, “What happened to you?” we make space for grace and compassion. By introducing the Church to TIC, I believe we can course-correct some of our religious mindsets.

Consider the work in the anti-trafficking movement. People realize its wrong and are stirred to give or be a part of the solution. What would happen if we described the heart situation of many believers (calloused and bruised) and helped them to see that Jesus has an answer for this as well?  Salvation starts in the house of the Lord and radiates outward from there.

**Comment 31:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) identifies 6 key principles of a trauma-informed approach in a framework entitled “SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach7”:

1. Safety 2. Trustworthiness and transparency 3. Peer support 4. Collaboration and mutuality 5. Empowerment, voice, and choice 6. Cultural, historical, and gender issues” (Papa and Robinson, 2023, p. 173)

**Essential Element:** This relates to clinical sociology and sociotherapy.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** While this article is written specifically about doctors and nurses in the medical field, I believe it is applicable in many other settings. SAMHSA training is used to identify and healthily respond to trauma in the workplace. This is very helpful and additive to my understanding.

**Contextualization:** Trauma is a big topic, so it is worth noting anytime we can narrow some of its main talking points down into a few items. Here SAMHSA offers 6 points to their trauma-informed approach. What is interesting to me is I believe these points match what I’m expecting to see in a safe, loving, Christian environment.  As I study for my doctorate and consider how we create “cultures that heal,” I’m seeing a strong overlap with the Trauma-informed world. Perhaps they are one in the same set of variables. Its also interesting to me that God has kept me connected with the brokenhearted to help me understand what we’re dealing with. Now I’m beginning to see that TIC mentalities seem to answer the question, “How do we love people well?”

**Source Fifteen:** Rebach, H. M., & Bruhn, J. G. (Eds.). (2012). *Handbook of Clinical Sociology* (2nd ed. 2001. Softcover reprint of the original 2nd ed. 2001 edition). Springer.

**Comment 32:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “One stimulus for the interest in the application of sociology has been developing evidence of the inadequacy of the “individual bias” in solving problems that have their origin in, and are maintained, because of social arrangements. The term individual bias refers to a perspective, deeply rooted in U.S. culture, that approaches the solution to social problems by trying to change individuals’ behaviors on a case-by-case basis. The individual is seen as deviant, or unmotivated, or inadequate and needing to be “fixed” in order to solve the social problem. What we call clinical sociology involves sociologists in direct intervention activities operating from a sociological perspective that views behaviors-both normative and deviant-as cultural expressions and views social problems as outgrowths of social arrangements.” p. 1

**Essential Element:** This relates to clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is helpful in developing my “elevator pitch” regarding sociology. I’ve often told people about my work and received blank stares. People don’t understand social research. Furthermore, my Ph.D. friends in the hard sciences feel it is too “soft” to be useful. This book highlights some of the reasons why clinical sociology can be so valuable.

**Contextualization:** There is value in studying not only the microcosm of the individual but the macrocosm of people groups. Sociology is just that. It paints a clearer picture of society and its ills and gives us a better understanding of how those problems came to be. Counseling and Psychiatry are too focused to see these details. Sociology is uniquely positioned to capture these patterns.

Another advantage of sociological research is the implementation of societal solutions. Where the counselor can only address the individual or those immediately connected to the individual, the sociologist can take the problem patterns, trace them back to their source, and develop remedial and preventative solutions. That said, “a prophet is not welcome in their home town.” If a sociologist is to be successful, we need people to recognize the value in what we have and co-labor with us to apply it.

**Comment 33:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The notion of “clinical” sociology is not exactly a household phrase. But the idea of joining the perspectives, knowledge, theory, and methods of sociology with active intervention and problem solving dates back to the roots of sociology as a discipline and social science. “ p. 1

**Essential Element:** This relates to clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive. It provides a short and clear description of what clinical sociology is.

**Contextualization:** Entering this subject, I’ve found the terms “applied” and “clinical” to be challenging. One reason is that “clinical” already holds meaning to me (unrelated to sociology). Secondly, clinical sociology is actually being “applied.” Thirdly because not all authors use the terms consistently. That said, I believe I now grasp what these terms mean.  Applied sociology is gathering information, normally for distillation within academic settings while Clinical sociology is applying sociological theories in practical settings. In that way, I see myself as more of a clinically minded guy because I believe application to any knowledge is essential.

**Source Sixteen:** Rocha, Z. L. (2022). Clinical Sociology and Mixedness: Towards Applying Critical Mixed Race Theory in Everyday Life. *Genealogy*, *6*(2), 32. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy6020032>

**Comment 34:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “However, regardless of whether it is known as “clinical”, the practical impacts of sociological theory and sociological practitioners can be far-reaching. As Rebach and Bruhn (2001, p. 8) describe: “Clinical sociologists do the same things that other sociologists do—they theorize, conceptualize, observe, test, evaluate, teach, do research, and become involved in professional and community service. What clinical sociologists do that other sociologists do not we call intervention, active involvement in various social systems with the goal of positive social change.”” (Rocha, 2022, p. 3)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element number two: clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The terms applied, and clinical sociology are somewhat confusing to me. This article is helping clear up the confusion. Applied sociology is more research-based, while clinical sociology is both research and action. This is additive.

**Contextualization:** More than just being involved in various service organizations for research purposes, clinical sociologists help set trends and implement solutions that help create positive change.  My dissertation, as of right now, is geared toward creating safe communities that have a healing atmosphere. I feel called to build up the body of Christ into maturity: Spirit-led, faithful sons and daughters of God. While the Church seems like the ideal place to do this, I’ve rarely seen the structure and format of American churches be receptive to this. It seems ironic to me. The Church has focused so much on evangelism that we’ve missed out on discipleship. The tutorial method and apprenticeship methodology used to be the primary ways of education and learning. Today we’ve become focused on head-knowledge without having practice living it out.

**Comment 35:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** ““Clinical sociology” refers to the application of a sociological perspective in making practical, positive change (Glass 1991). Emerging in the United States in the 1930s, this applied branch of sociology focuses on intervention and action, seeing the clinical sociologist as an agent for change (see Wirth 1931; Glass 1979; Freedman 1982; Rebach and Bruhn 2001). Clinical sociology is humanistic and multidisciplinary, a form of sociological practice which aims to improve people’s lives through clinical analysis, critical theorizing and differing forms of intervention (Fritz 2021). Contemporary clinical sociology draws on a number of theoretical influences, from phenomenology to symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology and social constructionism, highlighting the complex relationships between agency, structure and what constitutes “reality” (Rhéaume 2021).” (Rocha, 2022, p. 2)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element number two: clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Before coming to this class, I knew very little about clinical sociology. Resources like this one have helped me understand the boundaries and implications of the various forms of sociology.

**Contextualization:** I can see more clearly how OGS has built its framework on sociological research and how significant it is for Christian scholar-practitioners to be social influencers today. “Intervention and action” are desperately needed! Sociology’s multidisciplinary approach is critical to reintegrating society and helping us have a healthy outlook. But this feels like such a big job! I’m reminded that all my school-work, finances, time, and ultimately my divine destiny have been designed by and led by God. While it feels so uncomfortable to walk in this level of blindness to my destination, I can trust the one who guides me. Lord, help me to be faithful to the calling and help me to make sense of these different societal problems. Please help me to see what you’re up to and be bold in stepping into your Kingdom work!

**Source Seventeen:** Simmons, J. A. (2021). Religious, but Not Spiritual: A Constructive Proposal. *Religions*, *12*(6), 433. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12060433>

**Comment 36:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “If both the religious and the SBNR are largely still committed to belief in “God” (of some sort) as indicated by the data, and both the religious and SBNR are engaged in some practices traditionally labeled as “religious”, then the distinction between the two groups may have less to do with such beliefs and practices and more to do with the way that being “religious”, at least within some particular historic/cultural frameworks, has come to indicate a very particular set of sociopolitical commitments, rather than theological ones.” (Simmons, 2021, p. 4)

**Essential Element:** This relates to number five: applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to my understanding. This article discusses those who are of the Spiritual But Not Religious group and suggests we clarify or redefine terms.

**Contextualization:** While I’m opposed to how postmodernism attempts to redefine and restructure everything for “newness” sake, it seems very relevant to consider how terms are currently being used. In this case, the researcher finds that there is an overlap in belief systems and terminology while simultaneously rejecting the traditional use of these words. This makes talking about such things challenging!

I have two take-aways from this line of thought. Firstly, there is strong sociological research indicating humans are innately spiritual. This gives us room for discussion and collaboration, even with those who think differently. Secondly, I see the need to slow down and clarify terms and ideas from the onset. In today’s cancel culture, we often deny, resist, or shut down people because of an offensive word. I wonder how often we have more in common but don’t build enough relationships or give enough communication space to see this obvious face.

**Comment 37:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** ““Because over 92 percent of religiously-affiliated Americans currently identify as Christian”, Caroline Kitchener writes, “most ‘spiritual-but-not-religious’ people come from that tradition” (Kitchener 2018). Given this predominance of Christian backgrounds, and considering the context of recent U.S. social history, then, I want to offer something of a case study of just one form in which “religion” might be prominently understood by the SBNR: white Evangelicalism.” (Simmons, 2021, p. 6)

**Essential Element:** This relates to number five: applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** I was unaware of how SBNR frequently comes out of the Christian tradition. This adds to my understanding.

**Contextualization:** This article enforces my theory that the Christian Church needs more discipleship, not evangelism. I’m not proposing we cut evangelism, but if a growing number of people reject “white evangelicalism,” we have to ask ourselves why. The “Sunday school” answer is people are rejecting Christ, and that’s what people do.  I disagree. I believe the problem is Christians aren’t representing Christ and what He stands for well. Therefore people are rejecting religious beliefs that have no actual impact or power. “Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” (2 Tim 3:5. )

In this age, we have more power being displayed by the enemy through various occult and witchcraft practices. And they work! People gain power when partnering with the demonic. If Christians don’t embrace and demonstrate the power of God, we look like the weaker team. It’s no wonder people are turning to the dark side. The Church has lost much of its saltiness.

**Source Eighteen:** Stephens, D. W. (2020). Trauma-Informed Pedagogy for the Religious and Theological Higher Education Classroom. *Religions*, *11*(9), 449. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11090449>

**Comment 38:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Trauma is not confined to individual experiences of single horrifying events—trauma can be collective (community-wide, e.g., COVID-19), epigenetic (inherited or intergenerational), social-cultural (e.g., racism), or vicarious.” (Stephens, 2020, p. 1)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is insightful. Sometimes it is difficult to see how widespread a problem is when we live in it. This is additive.

**Contextualization:** Similarly, when churches have a culture of strict Holiness, we can sometimes miss our pharasitical responses to the church members. We can over-emphasize one principal at the cost of others. I’ve seen this in various ways this occurs within the Church, but two are this: Honoring men as head of the household while dishonoring the wife and recognizing the inerrancy of Scripture while disavowing anything related to the Spirit. Both are grievous with poor outcomes.

COVID has changed the shape of the modern world. As sociologists, we can’t lose sight of this. In this last decade, multiple major, earth-shattering events have impacted our younger generation. We need to find ways to understand those impacts and how best to communicate with this generation.  Jesus has answers, but we will need to seek His face.

**Comment 39:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “What is wrong with you?” (p.1)

“Over the past thirty years, our societal understanding of trauma has opened up a different way to address these presenting issues. Instead of confrontation, I focus on care. Now, I know to ask instead, “What has happened to you?” (Salasin 2011, p. 18).” (Stephens, 2020, p. 1)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is agreeable and additive to my understanding. Here the author presents a simple change in the underlying question, which can dramatically change the tone of the situation.

**Contextualization:** While I don’t want to make everyone and all of society out to be victims, the reality is much of our society has experienced some form of trauma. Trauma is loosely defined as situations and circumstances beyond our ability to cope. Our children have been greatly affected by COVID, and in America, our culture has become perverted by diverse sexual practices, even for small children.

Part of the way sociologists can help churches and believers respond is to clarify what trauma is and provide better ways to handle these students. The Baby Boomer’s “spare the rod” solution is likely very ineffectual and more likely to cause more significant damage. Consider what would have happened if Jesus had responded to the woman caught in adultery with the same approach that He did the money lenders in the temple.  I doubt her life would have changed for the better. We need to get a firm grasp on grace and how it applies to this generation.

**Source Ninteen:** Trimikliniotis, N. (2020). Public sociology, social justice and struggles in the era of austerity-and-crises. *International Social Work*, *63*(1), 5–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872818782324>

**Comment 40:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Sociologists and social workers are products of their times. They cannot but make choices about what they ought to do about a world riddled with contradictions. There is no ‘law of the motion of history’ propelling the world to march forward, nor is modernity necessarily a world of rationality, social justice, equality and progress. As Wallerstein (2000) aptly illustrated, the old problems of ‘deviance, poverty, crime, and all the other “maladies” attributed to the transition from premodernity to modernity’, which were bread and butter for sociologists, criminologists and social workers, are not being fixed with the old recipes.” (Trimikliniotis, 2020, p. 14)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applied and clinical sociology, as well as applications for sociological research. (1,2,5)

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an important point: the problems of the past are still here today. In the words of another sociologist, “Sociology hasn’t solved the world’s problems.” This is additive to my understanding.

**Contextualization:** From my counseling training, it has been said that a good goal is something you can control; therefore, your goals need to be about yourself and within your reach. Therefore, as sociologists, our goal can’t be solving all world problems because we can’t control people. Our goal should be to reveal problems and promote solutions. Ultimately, a Biblically-based society will have fewer problems than an idolatrous one. Humanism is nothing more than “you can be your own God” (Gen 3).  Jesus even said, “You will always have the poor.” So while we should care for these people groups, we have to realize that as long as the prince of the power of the air has any influence, they will exist. Therefore, post-modernism isn’t the problem (nor the solution) any more than modernity was. The world’s problems aren’t coming from traditional values but from humankind ourselves.  I think this is an important distinction when having these conversations with non-traditionalists and those with a post-modern perspective.

**Comment 41:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Sociology for social justice and equality was born in opposition to official academic studies which were subservient to the established conservative order: it sought to engage with, connect to and articulate struggles of marginalised, oppressed or exploited communities.” (Trimikliniotis, 2020, p. 5)

**Essential Element:** This relates to course essential element number one: applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is informative and helps me understand the big picture of sociology. It also gives me clues into why it is not always well received.

**Contextualization:** At its roots, sociology is catalytic, making it disagreeable with the status quo and those happy with the way things are. When it comes to those in power with all the money, sociology would seem distasteful as it would seek to bring balance to those who are marginalized. Obviously, the marginalized would be grateful for this, but the societal structures that enforce the dominance of one class over another would not be. I have to remember this as I talk about what I do and where I am coming from.

I see something else going on here as well. I can see a lens of communism here. It wouldn’t take much to take on a humanistic/communist view when talking about the marginalized. Like an hourglass getting turned over, communism seeks to unseat one set of leaders for another set. Also, like an hourglass, there is no end to the rotations. We can bring our Christian worldview to this discussion and “stop the cycle.” This isn’t about overthrowing one people group or identifying the “white supremacists.” I believe the real issue here is a lack of Biblical love. When we don’t know how to communicate or prossess these problems, we fall back on the cheap alternative, “fairness,” which is completely subjective and has to villanize someone to exonerate another.

We have our work cut out for us!

**Source Twenty:** Wan, P. M., & Wan, A. H. (2020). *Clinical Sociology: Moving from Theory to Practice* (1st ed. 2020 edition). Springer.

**Comment 42:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “It is possible that use of the different terms by different sociologist does not necessarily reflect distinctly different approaches or models. Nevertheless, one can still attempt to locate the various approaches along a hypothetical basic-applied continuum in order to make some sense of them. “ p. 11

Basic end: theoretical, basic researcher, social critic

Applied end: social analyst, policy sociologist, social engineer, clinical sociologist, social therapist

**Essential Element:** Applied Sociology and Sociological Practice

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive to my understanding. I didn’t realize the broad spectrum of uses of sociology nor the varying terms used for similar applications.

**Contextualization:** As I think about pastoral counseling and working alongside or inside the Church, these terms and ideas can cause confusion. They aren’t intuitive, so we can’t expect church members unfamiliar with sociology to understand without explanation. That said, the more I understand sociological applications, the more meaningful they become.

Like my IT background, people can’t be expected to understand the complexities without dialog. Also similar to technology; however, people don’t have to understand the science behind it to benefit from it. This implies that I will need to develop language that can be shared with your average church attender if I want to help them buy in to the value of my research.

**Comment 43:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Applied Sociology

“At this end is found the first and most dominant role the sociologists had chosen for themselves for over a century. This is where the sociologists assume the role of theoreticians or theoretical sociologists. Some critics may derogatorily refer to them as armchair sociologists. They usually develop their ideas based on some research that others had performed together with other secondary sources and personal reflections based on years of academic work and experience. Their role is to disseminate concepts and ideas with the objective of explaining the dynamics of the social phenomena to students.” p. 11

**Essential Element:** Applied Sociology and Sociological Practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is additive and informative to my perspective. It is helpful to know a potential pitfall of sociology. I can see where this would be the go-to format for sociologists.

**Contextualization:** It is much easier to be a church attender than the embodiment of what the Church is supposed to be, a living testimony. Likewise, it’s easier to be an academic sociologist working from your office and teaching available students than it is to transfer your theories to societal solutions. For this reason, I’m glad I’m in the DSL program rather than the Ph.D. I could easily see myself falling into the “armchair sociologist” position instead of clinically using what I’m learning.

When it comes to safe communities that promote healing, my dissertation idea, I will need to think about how to apply my learning with group dynamics to create healthy small groups. For community change, I will need to add leadership principles like Mission, Vision, and Core Values. This sounds exciting!

**Source Twenty-One:** Yip, A. K.-T. (2018). QUEERING THE SOCIOLOGY CURRICULUM: The Case of Belief, Spirituality, and Religion. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, *34*(1), 111–116. <https://doi.org/10.2979/jfemistudreli.34.1.17>

**Comment 44:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “What we habitually conceive as sociology of religion in the United Kingdom is, in essence, sociology of British (Western) Christianity. From a historical and sociocultural point of view, this focus is understandable indeed. However, this taken-for-granted and powerful underpinning often leads to the unhelpful academic habit of using Christianity as the template for the study of religions in general.” (Yip, 2018, p. 112)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** In this article, Yip identifies the underpinnings of Christianity through history and culture and then seeks to cause his students to reconsider its weight. He notes it has a weighty role but introduces doubt that it should. This quote is informative, but the article is variant.

**Contextualization:** Yip suggests that our Christian underpinnings should not be taken for granted or assumed applicable in every culture. He begins by noting that the Christian template for studying religions is not universally applicable. Instead, he suggests that different religious templates should be considered in other parts of the world. I’m not opposed to this, and I believe sociology should consider alternative perspectives. At the same time, denying the mostly positive influence of Christianity for some new idea is not good research. It comes from a bias against traditional Christianity at the cost of seeing the true reality.

This article is helpful. His ideas about religion and sexuality are well thought out and consider multiple angles. His views on the secular and sacred are actually similar to mine as he notes that people daily navigate both the “religious” and “secular,” which sounds a lot like “all things are sacred” to me.

I can see the need to understand alternative perspectives in order effectively discuss these topics with others.

**Comment 45:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “By linking sexuality/gender (generally perceived as personal and private) to religion (generally perceived as institutional, collective, and public), this exploration also enables students to deconstruct the private-public dichotomy and to appreciate the power structures in religious spaces that regulate and police sexuality/gender—and the resistance to such power relations. This mainstreaming of sexuality/gender into the curriculum also challenges the implicit but powerful secularist bias in academic and popular discourses of sexuality/gender and religion: that religion is inherently sexuality/gender-negative and secularism is intrinsically sexuality/gender-liberating.” (Yip, 2018, p. 114)

**Essential Element:** This relates to applications for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This author is using sociological studies in a post-modern way, encouraging students to think differently about religion and sexuality. Specifically, he is encouraging students to think negatively about historical Christianity, suggesting modern secularism is more “liberating.” This is variant to my beliefs.

**Contextualization:** I can learn a couple of things from this article. Firstly, some people are intentionally trying to deconstruct and dismantle Christianity from society and our academic institutions. They see it as a crusade of sorts to overthrow their religious enemy.  As such, we need more Biblically-minded scholars to battle this trend.

Secondly, some scholars see sexual guidelines, like those defined in Scripture, as bad limitations to the ultimate freedom of “do whatever you want.” From this position, the goal isn’t to equalize masculinity and femininity or roles in the workplace or bedroom but to make us the captain of our own ship. This is no different than Genesis 3, where Satan tempted Adam and Eve. Essentially we were told we could be our own gods if we ate from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. We think the same way today, believing we know better than God and do whatever we want. Unfortunately, the natural laws of creation will cause them to reap what they sow.

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