Clinical and Applied Sociology

Jared Black

Omega Graduate School

Date (September 09, 2023)

Professor

Dr. Joshua E. Reichard

**Assignment**

***Developmental Readings***

Review Assignment #3, the course essential elements, assigned readings, and recommended readings to identify selections of books and scholarly articles to identify and select developmental reading sources and entries.

* Refer to the “[Student Guide to Developmental Readings](https://drive.google.com/file/d/161V_FaYR2BnNGCSFUlWPjUSIQzcH04Hq/view?usp=share_link)” for updated information on sample comments, rubrics, and key definitions related to developmental readings.

**Source One:**Felstead, A., Gallie, D., Green, F., & Inanc, H. (2015). Fits, misfits and interactions: Learning at work, job satisfaction and job-related well-being. *Human Resource Management Journal*, *25*(3), 294–310. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12071>

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:**The Hawthorne experiments of the 1920s suggest that allowing workers the scope to experiment at work, take time out to learn new things and think about different ways of doing the job is likely to make them feel special, and hence ceteris paribus to raise satisfaction levels and job-related well-being.

**Essential Element:** This comment is reflective of applied sociology and sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:**I have not previously known where this data came from.  Yet, this principle must have been widely used in the various business books I have read through the years, as it is very familiar to me and influential in the way I order my own work life, and allow in the workflow of my employees.  Diversification can be a key developer of keen focus.

**Contextualization:**  Depending on the employee, I have given permission for "non-related" tasks to be accomplished during the workday.  Building from the Hawthorne experiment, although previously unknown to me, our company is founded on the very principle of diversified approaches to life that congregate on unified tasks as a team.  The hope has always been that this lets people feel more fulfilled in life, in their job, and in their contributions. Interest in adult learning theory is ultimately why I have chosen this source, although it is narrowed to job performance and satisfaction, I find the general analysis of expansive learning of interest in my desire to educate adults.

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Some jobs expand employees’ horizons, widen exposure to new thinking and promote experimentation. In these circumstances, workers’ learning experiences are ‘expansive’. Other jobs emphasize the importance of following set procedures and keeping within prescribed boundaries, hence making learning more ‘restrictive’.

The resulting index correlates significantly (r=0.36, p<0.001) with the length of time it takes to learn to do the job well. It has a standard deviation of 0.73 and is negatively skewed (indicating that there is a very long tail of employees in Britain who work in jobs offering restrictive learning.)

**Essential Element:** This comment reflects applied sociology but could quickly more towards a clinical approach.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Understanding the learning demands of the job, be they expansive or restrictive, is an essential component for HR to rightly place people.  This study shows their to be a direct relationship between job satisfaction and an employee's learning horizons matched with the learning demands of the job.

**Contextualization:**Personally, I have a deep learning expression in that I thrive in expansive learning experiences.  In our company, I typically find what isn't being done, regardless of whether I know anything about that area, and then I forge ahead to learn it and build it.  So far this learning style has been a good mix with our entreprenuerial affiliate structure.  It has allowed us to expand into lucrative areas that otherwise would have remained dormant.

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** These results have several lessons for HR practitioners. The first is that jobs offering more expansive learning are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and job-related well-being. Even for employees who have a weaker learning disposition, exposure to jobs that offer more challenging learning opportunities is associated with higher levels of satisfaction and may stimulate interest in future learning because dispositions are not set and can change as careers progress.

**Essential Element:** This appears to be applied sociology as observations, without intervention, were taken.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This makes sense to me.  It speaks to capacities within people.  The deeper the capacity to learn (adapt to new challenges) correlates to the value they have to a company and hence are compensated more.  The movement created by learning and growing in this way, with the right personnel who thrives in deep learning experiences, also leads to deeper job satisfaction.

**Contextualization:** I, again, have experienced this personally with my inclusion in my working context.  Learning, building, and executing provides the necessary sense of forward movement and success that also generates satisfaction in a job well done.

**Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** It is widely recognised – not least by HR managers – that workplace learning arises in a variety of settings that includes, but go beyond, formal training. As expected, probability predictions show that when both learning demands and learning dispositions are well matched, satisfaction and enthusiasm levels are high.

**Essential Element:** This could be a result of sociological intervention assuming the inputs of demands and dispositions were manipulated and measured.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** I believe this speaks to the well-roundedness of a person.  HR is uniquely positioned to assess the current task needs and qualifications of applicants.  Yet, additionally, HR, if properly equipped can benefit the personnel by amalgamating other "non-essential" training that might have immediate import to the organization.

**Contextualization:** Personally, I have noticed that my 15 years in pastoral ministries has become my most valuable asset in the business sector.  Those 15 years, although not formal training for business by any stretch, taught me invaluable people skills, negotiating abilities, enhanced my EQ, and provided me with the opportunity to have to perform in a variety of settings from meetings to living rooms, to large auditoriums.  In short, I learned how to harmonize people, which is the skillset I apply most frequently in business.

**Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Hypothesis 1: The more expansive the learning requirements of the job, the higher the level of job satisfaction and job-related well-being. In terms of this hypothesis, then, we find that jobs that have an in-built requirement to learn are ceteris paribus more favourably viewed by employees of an average learning disposition with significant coefficients in five of the six models.

**Essential Element:** This comment reflects an application for sociological research.

**Additive/Variant:** The accumulated data, which the authors state is unique to their study, bridges the gap by answering the correlation between learning capacities of employee, learning requirements of the job, and subsequent job satisfaction if paired correctly or incorrectly.  The findings suggest that a proper pairing of learning needs and capacities is related to job satisfaction.

**Contextualization:** I would never want to work for the DMV (or any non-learning type of office staff).  I suppose this is how I relate to this study.  I don't suspect I would thrive in a low learning level job.  My job satisfaction would be low.  As I have certain HR responsibilities within our company, I am typically surrounded by individuals like me, who thrive in learning rich environments.  However, we do have some personnel that I need to consider not expecting more of their learning capacities then I should.  They are wired up for more restricted learning requirements and might thrive more with clearer restrictions to structure them. As for the ongoing learning environments that I might facilitate for adults, this study is encouraging to not “dumb-down” the expansiveness of the learning field. Instead, adults thrive with increased satisfaction when learning is properly paired with expectations and capabilities.

**Source Two:** Longworth, N. (2003). *Lifelong Learning in Action: Transforming Education in the 21st Century*. Routledge.

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** "The watchword for today is 'community' in every meaning of that word, whether it is a geographical entity as in a learning city or a learning region, or a community of people with common sense of purpose or interest, as in a religious or a tribal community" [6]

**Essential Element:** This comment reflects applied sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This learning theory incorporating community at the heart of learning and accomplishment dovetails nicely with some of the buzz-theories in the business trends (i.e. Tribes) as well as in the communication and media theories being espoused and reformatted today by Hunt.  A Community or tribe has a synergy and power in context, whether it be geographic, ideological, situational, etc. that only a tribe expression can contain. For the learning theorists, the intent is the harness the community needs of individuals and yoke them together in the educational environment to produce results that simple one-on-one educational approaches cannot accommodate.

**Contextualization:** I see this educational understanding at the heart of the OGS experience.  There appears to be a very intentional endeavor to create a community space where learning is at once self-directed, but community informed amongst student to professor, but equally amongst student peer relationships.  The underpinning concept appears to be that learning in a community is superior to isolated attempts at self-education, although both can feed into the effectiveness of the other.

**Source Three:** Balswick, J. O., & Morland, J. K. (1994). *Social problems: A christian understanding and response*. Baker Books.

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** "Without the sound foundation that sociology can give, Christian interpretations of social conditions may well be erroneous. Conversely, without Christian interpretations, sound sociological understanding will be quite sterile.  That is, it will be sterile unless it is infused with a sense of values which can give guidance in determining, (1) which situation warrant  being defined as a social problem; (2) what the desired end is to be; and (3) which of the various means to reach that end are morally justifiable." [15]

**Essential Element:** This comment reflects applied sociology leading to clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This again points to the symbiotic relationship that can exist between theology and sociology.  The author is making the point that one without the other can leave large gaps of error as meaning is either over-layed without warrant, or ignored in favor of sterile environments.  Neither is all that useful as a standalone.

**Contextualization:** These readings are opening my eyes to the structures that sociological research can take even within a theological aim.  My training and interests to date have been around biblical studies and theology.  It is the grid through which I have learned to process data, both old and new.  However, the OGS approach of interdisciplinary study is what attracted me to the school.  As such, I desire complimentary fields in which to practice what I have already learned in hopes of yielding further insight, correction, and ultimately enhanced understanding.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** "Formally defined, a social problem is any situation which the members of a group consider to be undesirable and which they think should be remedied by cooperative action." [16]

**Essential Element:** This quote addresses sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** I can see the division of society and culture amidst this definition of social problem solving.  The culture, which is made up of the cummulative, individual actions and consequences of individuals amidst the group, interact and interpret, as a group, the outlying societal factors influencing them as actors.  The cultured group may then, as free agents, decide to impact society in a variety of ways through problem/solution methodology and social action.

**Contextualization:** I feel I am beginning to see some helpful divisions in the sociological endeavor. Just the simple dissection of culture and society is helpful as I navigate my own thought patterns and seek to both identify problems that need solving, and solutions that need problems clearly defined.  This distinction of culture and society allows a first level grid for me to beginning processing observed information and thoughts.

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** "The relativity of what are considered to be problems in any given society should sensitize Christian community to its important task of critically examining existing conditions in light of the enduring truth of Scripture." [22]

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** Truth is applied contextually, and in that sense, there is a very relative application of truth within society.  That said, it should not be mistaken that truth as a whole is relative; as in, it changes or morphs from what it is in given situations.  On the contrary, the relativity of truth is in the application of the actor only.  Truth might be best understood like a diamond.  Although the diamond is a static whole unto itself, the perception of the diamond has everything to do with the orientation of the eye and the angle of the light glinting off of the diamonds facets.  Sociology attempts to find the orientation of the actors.  Theology seems to attempt to find the angle of the light. Together they can illuminate a reality that is directly illustrative of truth, both universal and culturally relative.

**Contextualization:** Christians are not at liberty, in the present culture in particular, to ignore the apparent conditions of our day.  Abstractly applying "truths" from its own context or inherited understanding does not guarrantee that those "truths" apply to the identified problems within a given culture.  I find this revealing.  Like many others, I have moved through my own battles with dogmatism and "truth for truth sake" thinking, and have found myself settling in favor of being in the culture but aware of the opportunity to not always be of it.  It is being able to not be of it that draws its orientation from theology with the hope of solution-based understanding and input into every epoch and season.

**Source Four:** 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 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**The relationship between academic discipline of sociology and political/social struggles for equality and social justice has been an issue since the establishment of sociology. 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… Almost all claims are described as ‘just’ to give them legitimacy. In that sense, there is plurality and an inherent ambiguity within the concept that makes it contested ab initio.”

**Essential Element:** This article represents an appeal for clinical sociology

**Additive/Variant:** I see an immediate “spin” occurring with the language of “sociology for social justice”. The inherent danger is akin to the very issue being disparaged in the article; namely, that sociology in the 20th century was done under the thumb of prevailing authorities and mindsets, resulting in the skewing of “proper” social solutions due to inherent biases. However, Sociology focused in order to “right the wrongs” as currently defined, as the author suggests, is inevitably chained to the same restraints of worldview if “new” values are inserted as “better-than-the-old” ways. This is the Achilles heel of sociology when it tries to define itself as a science of vision-casting for a brave new world. The subjective bias as to what constitutes marginalized and oppressed and exploited are essentially non-scientific terms.

**Contextualization:** My ongoing concern with sociology as pre-cursor to policy-making and law-setting is the inherent subjectivism in the assumption of “what is right.” The world is attempting to remake itself, all the while queering the very words that could otherwise be useful tools in bringing crisp definitions to social ills. Worldview seems invariably foundational to sociology even more so than other more material sciences. Although, I would maintain that a practitioner’s worldview will unintentionally color, illuminate, or eliminate what the scientific “observer” is actually capable of seeing in the application of subjective science approaches.

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**This article focuses on the type of sociology that promises transformation in the direction of social justice and equality. This is often organically connected to radical and critical perspectives connected to social struggles. There are a number of powerful critiques about how mainstream sociology had exercised censorship, silencing or ignoring radical strands of scholars, such as Marxist scholars, critical race, feminist and gender scholars, anti-colonial and other radical strands.”

**Essential Element:** This quote addresses the need for further clinical sociological approaches.

**Additive/Variant:** By comparing/contrasting mainstream (professional) sociology with public sociology, the author is hunting for a fresh infusion that will allow sociology in practice, as well as in the boots-on-ground practitioners (social workers), to establish solutions more effectively and equitably to social problems. The author argues that the disconnect is real and illuminates the fracture of what is theorized and what is actual. Hence, the author’s affinity to allow the radical fringe of sociology into the conversation in hopes that, perhaps, the Marxists, Feminists, Gender-ists, might shed some sociological insights that are otherwise missed within the “censored” arena of professional sociology.

**Contextualization:** As I consider bringing together a varied group of adults in hopes of marrying individual perspectives, bias, and influences, I am sympathetic to the author’s desire to let academia and public perception find common ground for discourse…and ultimately, solutions. In my area of study, “solutions” might be defined more aptly as “resolutions”; that is a recommitment to truth markers (worldview) that infuse the present social struggles with meaning and solutions which are theologically grounded but sociologically discernable.

**Comment 12:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**The content of the mobile commons is actually ‘defined’, changed and re-made by the praxis of the struggles and claims of rights, the modes of sharing, passing on, extended to others. Therefore it is ‘owned’ by all those who struggle, need it and rely on it. It is a ‘social template’ to be taken up in context: the real ‘authors’ of the mobile commons are those subjects involved in the praxis of the struggles – at best, *public sociologists* or sociologists for social justice are co-authors.”

**Essential Element:** This quote concerns applied sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** The author suggests the term “mobile commons” to articulate the in-the-trenches concerns, struggles, and activities of particular groups in a particular setting and era. The author argues that sociological “study from above” that does not take necessary stock in the public social dynamics, views, and concerns of those *actually* experiencing them is to miss the context. In short, I see the author flirting with the notion that objective sociological attempts need the subjectivity of the “mobile commons” to avoid the recurring misfires of sociology done which misses social justice outcomes.

**Contextualization**: Theologically, these same struggles are harmonized within Wesleyan Quadrilateral which gives equal footing to experience as a mode and means of proper orientation of God’s revelation. The “mobile commons” of humans before God can offer key insights into broader theological concerns and ultimately faithful praxis.

**Comment 13:**

**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… Moreover, specialisation and division of labour in academia, which was meant to allow for scientific advancement, is producing fragmented knowledge and inadequate solutions. We are called upon to halt the damage inflicted by ‘crippling the ability of the students to think as social scientists’ ([Wallerstein, 2000](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0020872818782324#bibr63-0020872818782324): 34). Social sciences must be reunited by providing students the analytical and empirical tools to make disciplinary connections to read the bigger picture and global processes.”

**Essential Element:** This quote suggests better sociological practice.

**Additive/Variant:** The author again appeals to the needs of a sociology that allows for the “measuring” of the subjective context of those experiencing the marginalization. Academia has tried to divide and conquer in hopes of offering divergent and deepened understanding of the component parts that make up any given social struggle. What too often results, however, is academic ghettos that don’t coordinate or communicate between themselves. Instead, the author desires a solution that allows the totality of the sociological order, including the “commons”, in a mutual conversation that better represents the whole picture in hopes of producing more just social solutions.

**Contextualization:** I am attracted to how and where the sociological apparatus assists in diagnosing and understanding the more pertinent “global” cultural issues. I look to invite adult learners into a specific forum that will, by design, ask the multifarious disciplines to interact in search of a theologically sound, God-centric, solutions-based, context sensitive, solutions which enhance, not further bifurcate, a community. Learning how to ask the various disciplines to inform and influence observed and experienced problems is a very real function of the ”thought architecture” I hope to enhance.

**SOURCE FIVE:** Schonig, J. (2020). “Liking” as creating: On aesthetic category memes. *New Media & Society*, *22*(1), 26–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819855727>

**Comment 14:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “In fact, it is precisely because aesthetic category memes may not achieve artistic or political significance that their popularity so clearly indexes a collective desire within Internet culture: a need to feel connected online by sharing ways of seeing rather than sharing words and images, inside jokes, and subcultural knowledge.” [18]

**Essential Element:** This quote suggests an applied sociology approach.

**Additive/Variant:** The cultural communication medium of memes is of great interest regarding the transmission of integrated knowledge content in visual and textual form. These authors look at the effects of aesthetic memes, those arranged for their abstract, appealing quality, and the groups that respond to them. Because these memes are more “generic” and not pointedly cultural or intellectual, the subtlety of response suggests a deeper root connection of simply “enjoying together” an image or idea for its sake. But this group enjoyment creates a communal bond all its own, suggesting a base need for connecting even in our digital age.

**Contextualization:** Memetic learning theories are growing as the media of social communication grows in complexity, containing many and varied cultural units of knowledge in use in a given image or text. For many, memes are becoming a source of news and thus shape the thought life of the individual in powerful, you subversive ways. Memes provide cultural connection of thought and agreement. They also can express a great divide between politics, people groups, or ideas. I find this specific foray into aesthetic memes to build upon the notion that people connect through memes, and those very memes shape, enhance, or diminish a person’s thought life.

**Comment 15:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Wasting time on the Internet can engage our aesthetic faculties as much as our affective registers, and “feeling connected” can be as much a matter of sharing words, images, and “likes” as it is a matter of sharing judgments.” [19]

**Essential Element:** This quote is observational in application, thus applied sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** The idea of “sharing judgements” carries with it the notions of community value sets. A judgement is arrived at through the satisfaction of facts and circumstances validating a particular view or thinking upon a matter. I’m intrigued that the authors link the “like”, based on the sharing of ideas, images, or words as a builder of group judgements, thus being able to shape a culture for better or worse. The more connected to the larger group an individual feels based on shared images will have a lasting effect on that individuals openness to alternative, or new, ideas.

**Contextualization:** When the average, digital media using adult enters a conversation, what are the knowledge units coordinating their understanding of the given topic? How did those pins of fact lodge to become concreted thoughts or judgements? I am concerned with how quickly memes take the place of thoughtfulness by appearing the settle the matter by starkly illuminating its features through obtuse images, over exaggerations, or quippy sayings to drive home one side of an issue. As a shared cultural unit of knowledge, I believe the ubiquitous memetic “knowledge” that one is exposed to will need to be unpacked in order to verify or disregard certain assumptions that might otherwise deceive.

**Source Six:** Katz, Y., & Shifman, L. (2017). Making sense? The structure and meanings of digital memetic nonsense. *Information, Communication & Society*, *20*(6), 825–842. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2017.1291702>

**Comment 16:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**In each of these genres, we show how digital nonsense may potentially serve as a social glue that bonds members of phatic, image-ˇoriented, communities. Thus, for instance, silly languages cannot exist without a core of participants mastering the vernacular and pastiche is based on a shared acknowledgment of a text. If, in the past, nonsense was depicted in both intellectual terms, as defiant deconstruction of meaning, and in playful/social terms, its current memetic manifestations lean heavily toward the latter. This shift from an intellectual approach to a more communitive one turns digital nonsense from a reflection on “referential meaning” to a generative source of “affective meaning”, which marks the ongoing formation of social connections preceding cognitive understanding.” [2,3]

**Essential Element:** This quote examines social bonds, thus applied sociology

**Additive/Variant:** Examining “social glue” is necessary to continually access the thought architecture of the participants in each culture/community. The current digital environment is ripe with memes, varying in usage and meaning. The authors, in examining “nonsense” memes, arrive at an interesting theory of communal referential meaning which generate affective meaning. These distortions of thought, many times humorous, also must not be overlooked as to their ability to establish frames of thinking due to the social connections they foster.

**Contextualization:** My interest in memes pertains to how thinking is being shaped in present culture. My concern is that memes, because of their social network inclusion, are quite powerful in establishing the thought architecture of a person and community. However, because memes are purposefully truncated and terse, they cannot possibly contain the necessary depth to fully understand and apply truth within culture. As I work with the public in learning environments, it is essential to understand how and where knowledge and understanding is being transmitted to better serve.

**Source Seven:** Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

**Comment 17:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** In this book, Daniel Kahneman challenges the notion that people make decisions based on the logical processing of facts and information. Instead, he suggests two systems of thinking present in people. The first he calls Fast thinking which is linked to emotion. The second he calls Slow thinking which is linked to rational reasoning. These two systems do not always work together, thus creating divergent outcomes in decision making even within the same person depending on the thinking system in operation at the time of the decision.

**Essential Element:** This paraphrase relates to applied sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** Kahneman’s work and analysis might be considered the underpinnings of algorhythmic social media development due to his work on the actual decision-making processes at work in people. Up until his work, the dominant sociological understanding was that people decide on rational facts and information. Kahneman produced a series of experiments that disproved this notion. Instead, depending on how the scenario was presented, determined whether a person would access their fast or slow thinking process, thus drastically altering their decisions. People decide differently when they are emotionally charged than when they are logically rational.

**Contextualization:** As I work with groups of people fostering discussions around the hot topics of our culture, the observations of Kahneman are in full view. When a room of people is charged with emotion and people are “thinking fast”, very different outcomes result then if the room is systematic, rational, and logical. As I study how people arrive at the architecture of their thoughts about any given subject, I am cognizant that judgements arising for emotions offer a different array of “facts” supporting those judgements than judgements/thoughts arrived at through a logical gathering of information before conclusions are reached.

**Source Eight:** Grutterink, H., & Meister, A. (2022). Thinking of you thinking of me: An integrative review of meta-perception in the workplace. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *43*(2), 327–341. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2516>

**Comment 18:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Extensive research shows that individuals' meta-perceptions can have implications for their affect, cognition, behavior, and relationships.”

**Essential Element:** This quote asserts applied sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** Fundamental to humans as a “thinking machine” are the meta-perceptions that everyone is exposed to, which undeniably influence the formulations of thoughts, decisions, and actions.

**Contextualization:** My hope is to influence the thought life of people within my community. In order to do so, it is imperative to understand the already existing structures that form thoughts, opinions, and ultimately, social behavior. Theologically, the “fear of man” is decried as an impediment to walking righteously with the Lord. Meta-perceptions can most certainly contribute to a fear of man mentality, impairing Biblical worldview thinking and acting.

**Comment 19:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**In summary, a meta-perception is a given person's (perceiver's) belief regarding the view that another person or group of people (target) holds of him or her, regarding a specific type of content. Implicit in this definition is the relationship between the target and the perceiver.”

**Essential Element:** This quote appears to be derived from practiced sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** The various “cultural conversations” being had in our society are undoubtably subject to the meta-perceptions contained in the individuals or the groups they represent. Thus, the human tendency to base thought and action upon some level of meta-perception demands a seat at the table as a contributing unit for the thought architecture of an individual or group. Furthermore, knowing and/or acknowledging one’s meta-perceptions would go a long way in assisting the individual/group to more open dialog as it pertains to ideologies or social ideas that might otherwise threaten the sensibilities of the thinker.

**Contextualization:** Theologically, the category of humility comes to mind in addressing meta-perceptions. One would have to decide to tread humbly in order to access one’s potential meta-perceptions in hopes of utilizing those perceptions toward constructive ends. Otherwise, it seems the danger of unacknowledged perceptions that are clearly influencing the thought-world of an individual would create mental static, not allowing a clear-headed addressing of information that is useful for structuring complex social/communal solutions.

**Comment 20:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Meta-perceptions are primarily studied in three categories: identity perceptions, competence perceptions, and relation perceptions. Although these categories are existent within all meta-perception formulation, one may present more dominantly dependent on the arena of a participant’s context.

**Essential Element:** This paraphrase asserts applied sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** People formulate thoughts, opinions, and behaviors, in part, on the contributing meta-perceptions of the individual/group in relation to their perception of their own context. Feeling liked or unliked, victimized or appreciated, loved or hated, colors, at best, or impairs the limits one has when first thinking through social, business, community, or personal issues.

**Contextualization:** In preparing topical discussions for a small group to discuss, it is important to address the meta-perceptions resident in the participants. Failing to do so might seriously impair the groups ability to properly think through all pertinent aspects of a given social issue or concern, thus hindering any serious solutions for consideration.

**Source Nine:** Carter, P. L., & Nicolaides, A. (2023). Transformative learning: An emotional (r)evolution. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *2023*(177), 25–36. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.20476>

**Comment 21:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** Transformative Learning theory is a process of moving a participant through certain phases reflection to arrive at critical reflection, the most non-biased of each phase. The authors specifically enhance the knowledge of “edge-emotions” toward a “comfort zone”, whereby new stages of reflection come more easily. The authors state, “Ultimately, this (r)evolution places a spotlight on the criticism leveled against Mezirow’s theory, opening new lines of inquiry that enhance the emotional dimension of the theory and that acknowledge a “shift from a cognitive-individual to a whole-person social way to interpret transformative learning” (Neal, 2018, p. 202).

**Essential Element:** This paraphrase is clinical sociology in practice.

**Additive/Variant:** Taking the emotions into account in learning theory is essential. Emotions are likely the longest antennae which help construct the meta-perceptions in a person. Thus, dealing appropriately with emotions and how those emotions impact the ability to engage social ideas, policies, and practices becomes an essential component in transforming the thought life and world view of an individual. The authors narrow their focus to suggest the need for a complete grief processing of emotions assisting the transport of a person to a non-conflict safe, or comfort, zone. Once emotions are acknowledged and given proper place, as with meta-perceptions, the work of transformative learning can be advanced.

**Contextualization:** I have had the privilege of working with individuals and groups, both pastorally as well as more standardized education settings. It is undeniable that emotions, and in particular unhealed emotions, create a tremendous undercurrent within a person as they attempt to think critically about certain issues or social needs. I have found that it is necessary to work through the emotions, allowing for their full contribution as appropriate, as well as “settling” some of the emotion’s peaks and valleys that hinder critical analysis. Once settled, I agree with the author’s assertions that critical thinking and reflection can progress to the next stages of transformative learning.

**Source 10:** Bou Zeineddine, F., & Leach, C. W. (2021). Feeling and thought in collective action on social issues: Toward a systems perspective. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *15*(7), e12622. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12622>

**Comment 22:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**We argue that such problems could be partly alleviated with increased engagement with a meta‐theoretical perspective that has long been advocated for in psychology—the systems approach. In this view, thought, feeling, motivation, action, and context can be viewed as co‐evolving, inextricably linked, systems of systems. We illustrate the need for and benefit of this approach in the domain of collective action on social issues… In other words, systems meta‐theory allows us to view our key concepts not as static, discrete, unitary variables, but as situated and synchronized assemblies of a host of lower‐order components (Nowak etal.,2017).”

**Essential Element:** The article applies sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** The authors assert that the systems of systems that ultimately contribute to thought and action are multifarious, not static categories, neatly arranged and accounted for. There is much to consider in the individual context, experience, reasonings, education, etc. of every participant who might seek to critically reflect on key issues or solutions needed with in a given community. Meta-theory makes room for the more malleable components of thoughts and resultant behaviors.

**Contextualization:** As I gather groups of adults to intentionally process key issues of our society, it most certainly seems to be a complex soup of personality, emotion, rationality, fears, and unknown drivers. Attempting to unpack a social issue, for example, takes patience and time, allowing each participant to locate themselves “within” the issue based on a think, feel, know scale of “knowledge”. Determining each individual’s starting point allows for a more constructive group conversation in hopes at arriving at group-level critical reflection with the goal of ultimate social engagement.

**Source 11:** Doorley, J., Goodman, F., Kelso, K., & Kashdan, T. (2020). Psychological flexibility: What we know, what we do not know, and what we think we know. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *14*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12566>

**Comment 23:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Effective responses to life's challenges vary depending on fluctuating situational contingencies, including our goals, and can be easily thwarted by distress. Recently, theorists have attempted to synthesize existing literature on optimal stress responses to build contextual models of emotion regulation. Instead of identifying a single optimal regulatory strategy across space and time, these new frameworks—primarily rooted in social psychological research on emotion regulation and clinical psychological research on acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)—outline optimal responses to distress in the context of meaningful goal pursuit.”

**Essential Element:** This quote emphasizes applied sociology with a nod to clinical sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** This is another research endeavor attempting to isolate the emotions as contributors to the formulated responses of individuals and groups. This approach utilizes the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (AAQ) in attempts to discover the psychological flexibility of participants relative to the amount of distress the participant reports. This is, likewise, a sociological endeavor upon data collection. What does emerge, however, is a correlation of psychological flexibility related to meaningful goal pursuit. In short, establishing a proper goal may be crucial for properly focusing the emotions naturally present in distressing situations and contexts.

**Contextualization:** Facilitating group conversations about hot topics in culture can be a land mine of emotions. Most everyone comes to the table with some level of knowledge, some existing feelings, and some perception of what is “known.” Very quickly, the emotions about the issues, many of those based on meta-perceptions run the risk of destroying the ability for constructive conversation and solution-making. Psychological flexibility is necessary for participants to remain open to variant facts, feelings, and knowns that can, if allowed, point toward group solutions. A common goal-set, pre-established prior to discussion can be a very useful tool in coordinating the think, feel, know of a group.

**Source Twelve:** Dongqiang, X., Serio, L. D., Malakhov, A., & Matys, O. (2020). Memes and education: Opportunities, approaches and perspectives. *Geopolitical, Social Security and Freedom Journal*, *3*(2), 14–25. <https://doi.org/10.2478/gssfj-2020-0009>

**Comment 24:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Memes are increasingly becoming a "favorite" of the era of communication and communication between people and are gradually becoming an important part of people's daily lives. The production and use of memes have gradually made relevant meme research a hot topic in the academy's circle. To increase the attractiveness and credibility of student learning, it must be inseparable from fully understanding and using the "new favorites" of the time and applying them to education and learning.”

**Essential Element:** This quote deals with practical sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** Memes are cultural, social carriages of complex information often in one image, phrase, or symbol. Due to digital media, memes have become powerful agents for dispersing knowledge, feelings, and thoughts. This article looks at the possible educational benefits of incorporating memes into the education process. Because of their potential for rich imagery, complexity of interacting ideas, there is reason to believe they can be useful transmitters of ideas and facts. One such educational outcome could be the creation of original memes to showcase the depth of concept development throughout a given curriculum.

**Contextualization:** My interest in memes stems from the unavoidable reality that they are cultural idea transmission units. In leading discussions with adults, inevitably a current circulating meme is brought into the conversation to assist in driving home a viewpoint or idea. Thus, these memetic devices are dynamically influence not only what people know and are exposed to, but also how they are exposed. AS McClure says, “the medium is the message.” Staccato communication units, such as memes, are integral for understanding current cultural issues.

**Comment 25:**

**Quote/Paraphrase: “**Memes are a product of the needs of interpersonal social networks on the Internet in the context of the development of mobile Internet technologies and are a language tool for the general public, especially for students, to reach consensus on social networks on the Internet.”

**Essential Element:** This quote illustrates applied sociology.

**Additive/Variant:** The idea of “reaching consensus” socially is a very fascinating sociological endeavor. The use of memes to galvanize ideas in like-minded, or divisive, social groups is clearly a dominant trend in our digital society. Identifying memes as a “language tool” allows researchers to probe the current uses, outcomes, and impact of memes as social transmission. Memes should be considered as a necessary component to understand in how individuals are exposed to information both directly and indirectly, influencing the facts that are accentuated, the feelings that are kindled, and the thoughts that are generated after the meme is digested.

**Contextualization:** Memes are a part of the thought-making fabric in our society. As such, a grouping of individuals will have a variety of recent exposure to current memes from the daily interface with social media. When it comes to discussing topics of interest with groups of people, current memes that have invariably influenced what is known, how it is understood, and the “emotions” undergirding ideas are essential to unpack when assisting transformational learning processes.

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