SR 968-22

Sociological Methodology: Interpreting Changing Cultures

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Professor

Dr. Joshua Reichard, DPhil, PhD, EdS, CCS

Assignment #1 – Core Essential Elements

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the first

week of the term. Post this document in DIAL.

b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade

assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

Methods for Christian Social Change

To advance Christian sociological transformation, scripture should serve as the guiding light, leading researchers towards truth to foster goodness and beauty in their pursuits. The social perspective shapes one’s worldview. While sociological imagination provides a fresh lens to view the "ordinary," enabling individuals to place themselves within a broader social framework and encourage a deeper self-reflection (Benn Tweedle, 2016).

This method distinguishes Christian agents of change from secular counterparts who, though desiring to impact others positively, can veer off course into individualism or the pursuit of a particular culture or movement. As Newman (2022) emphasized, *social constructivism* allows individuals to promote a truth that aligns with their biases.

 Christian transformative methods consider the needs of the suffering individuals, not merely to draw attention to a cause or solution, but to bring glory to God. Through Christ's redemptive work in the hearts of sinners, Christian world changers engage in work that mirrors Christ's redemptive acts, recognizing that God created humanity in his image, instilling in all a desire to better the lives of others. The image of God signifies humanity's unique role in reflecting God's dominion over the Earth, rather than a physical resemblance due to God's non-physical nature (Amstrong, 2023). As a result, the purpose of change agents is to seek Tonnies, *Gemeinschaft* relationships because of their inherent affinity and compassion for people and to serve as stewards (McIntyre,2014).

The concept of *Evil in Individuals* stems from the fall of Adam (Genesis 3:1-24; Heddendorf & Vos, 2009). However, Christ's salvific work in believers heart spurs Christians to pursue the tasks God called them to undertake, as they strive to bring glory to his name through their ministries. Yet, the challenge remains in the face of numerous corrupt structures in politics, society, and legal systems *Evil structures* that hinder efforts to make a difference in the lives of those affected by societal ills. Benn Tweedell (2016) refers to this as social sin, emphasizing that sociology employs science to depict reality as it is, rather than how it should be.

Sociology of Culture examines creativity as a social phenomenon shaped by factors such as gender and social class. It sees creative practice as a mix of art and science, emphasizing that anyone can be creative (Muntanyola-Saura, 2021). Anything that exists rests on the divine power of God, the ultimate creator and the force behind all occurrences in the universe (Amstrong, 2023).This profound belief emphasizes the idea that God's power not only brought everything into existence but also continues to influence the unfolding of events and the interconnectedness of all things. Therefore, God's work lend significance to human work, serving the greater good and his divine purpose (Heddendorf & Vos, 2009).

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Amstrong. G (2023) God in Christianity: The God revealed in Biblical history. <https://www.iuscanada.com/static/articles/2023/j2501p77.pdf>

Benn Tweedell, C. (2016). *Sociology: A Christian approach for changing the world* . Triangle Publishing / IWU Press. [https://www.amazon.com/Sociology-Christian-Approach-Changing-World/dp/1931283338/ref=sr\_1\_1?c](https://www.amazon.com/Sociology-Christian-Approach-Changing-World/dp/1931283338/ref%3Dsr_1_1?c)

Heddendorf, R; Vos, M. (2009). *Hidden threads:* *A Christian critique of sociological theory .* UPA. [https://www.amazon.com/Hidden-Threads-Christian-Critique-Sociological-ebook/dp/B00BZAMWTG/ref=sr\_1\_1?crid](https://www.amazon.com/Hidden-Threads-Christian-Critique-Sociological-ebook/dp/B00BZAMWTG/ref%3Dsr_1_1?crid)

McIntyre, L. (2014). *The practical skeptic: Core concepts in sociology*, 6thed., New York: McGraw-Hill Education. [Seminal]

Muntanyola-Saura, D. (2021). Naturalist Methods in the Sociology of Creation: The Case Against Reductionism. *Debats. Revista de cultura, poder i societat*. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=8256403>

Newman, D. M. (2022). *Sociology: Exploring the architecture of everyday life* . SAGE Publications. [https://www.amazon.com/Sociology-Exploring-Architecture-Everyday-Life/dp/1071849557/ref=sr\_1\_2?crid](https://www.amazon.com/Sociology-Exploring-Architecture-Everyday-Life/dp/1071849557/ref%3Dsr_1_2?crid)