

SR 968-22 Sociology Methodology, Assignment #2

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Assignment #2

Developmental Reading

Create Developmental Readings from seminal sources and scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles. Review instructions for Assignment #3, the course essential elements, and course readings to identify selections of books and journals to create entries.

a. Refer to the "Student Guide to Developmental Readings" in the General

Helps folder for updated information on sample comments, the grading rubric,

and key definitions related to developmental readings.

Course Essential Elements

1. Sociological Framework for Cultural Analysis
2. Faith-Integrated Sociological Analysis
3. Interdisciplinary Approach to Social Analysis
4. Methods for Christian Social Change

Source One: Hartman, A. (2019). *A war for the soul of America: A history of the culture wars*. University of Chicago Press. <https://collegequarterly.ca/2015-vol18-num02-spring/doughty1.html>

Comment 1:

Quote/Paraphrase: “ Although some of the greatest achievements by Americans lie in the plastic and performing arts and in literature—anything from jazz and musical theatre to motion pictures and abstract expressionism, Herman Melville and Mark Twain—it seems to be an American habit to concentrate energy and imagination in the empirical sciences and applied arts. So, Americans excel in the fields of scientific and technological innovation and in the eminently practical domains of law and philosophy where they may embrace pragmatic solutions to what might otherwise seem to be abstract and ultimately intractable dilemmas.

In the alternative, however, the United States of America is also a land in which both fundamentalist and messianic religious traditions have great caché among a larger portion of the population than any other prosperous modern society. So, the same people who invented personal computers, email, chemotherapy, defibrillator paddles, crash test dummies, traffic lights, carbon dating, swivel chairs, post-it notes, zippers, chocolate chip cookies, dental floss, credit and debit cards and Ferris wheel also believe in angels, demons and the literal truth of the book of *Genesis* more fervently than do the populations of any other modern technological society” (Hartman., 2019).

Essential Element: The essential elements are faith-integrated sociological analysis and a sociological framework for cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is a variant of faith-integrated sociological analysis. The author ridicules the impact of religion in society failing to understand the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit to lead people into creating inventions in God's timing. The author also fails to understand the impact of Christianity and its influence in opening up people's minds to perceive and understand past the carnal world and traditions.

Contextualization: OGS is helping me to truly understand the importance of reviewing the literature. A lot of the articles that I have read are bold in stating their stance; however contrary it may be. It is also amazing to me how much of the literature is aimed directly at Christian beliefs. Is it any wonder, so many policies are anti-Christian or anti-Bible policies? Bible-believing Christians need to be just as bold in stating their stance. OGS is helping me to truly understand the importance of reviewing the literature, especially literature with opposing views. OGS is also helping me to understand why it is important to add to the body of literature. It is an act of service to the Lord in putting our voice out there to scholars and practitioners in all fields. The world so desperately needs Jesus as they rebel against Him, and what continues to amaze me is how God is so gracious to us (Matthew 5:45-47; NASB, 2020).

Source Two: Harris, S. R. (2003). Critiquing and expanding the sociology of inequality:

Comparing functionalist, conflict, and interactionist perspectives. *Quarterly Journal of Ideology*, 25, 1-21.

Comment 2:

Quote/Paraphrase: “Functionalism and conflict theory appear to be diametrically opposed. One’s guiding imagery assumes cooperative interdependence among society’s parts; the other’s metaphor assumes the parts are in a heated battle. The two perspectives make different fundamental assumptions and arrive at differing sets of conclusions. Despite their differences, though, some important commonalities can be found. Specifically, both functionalists and conflict theories take it for granted (1) that inequality exists as an objective entity “out there” in society and (2) that it is primarily their prerogative to define, identify, and explain it. An interactionist perspective, I argue, would contradict the other camps on both of these points. Interactionism gives priority to the diverse meanings that things (such as “inequality”) have for everyday people and assumes that people bring those objects into existence through their interpretive practices. As a result, this perspective tends to set aside many of the issues that concern functionalists and conflict theorists. Instead, attention is focused on more basic and (arguably) prior issues, such as how “equal” and “unequal” states of affairs come to be defined, explained, and acted toward as consequential features of various social worlds” (Harris, S. R., 2003).

Essential Element: The essential element is the sociological framework for cultural Analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive analysis of my understanding of the three main sociological perspectives, functionalist, conflict, and interactionist. The author did an excellent job helping to explain the theories and how the interactionist theory is a better approach to examining inequality.

Contextualization: While this is an older article, I gained more of a perspective on how sociologists diagnose problems. This author had a deep understanding and could justify his preference for interactionism when analyzing inequality. As I think about how to have a greater impact on education, I need to continue to learn from authors such as this one.

Source Three: Rusu, M. S. (2020). Street names through sociological lenses. Part I: Functionalism and conflict theory. *Social Change Review*, 18(Winter), 144-176.

Comment 3:

Quote/Paraphrase: “Street names and the urban nomenclatures they are organized into have been largely neglected in sociological scholarship. The most important contributions to articulating an understanding of street names were made by human (political, cultural, and social) geographers, who have drawn on various strands of social theory to explore the multiple facets of urban nomenclature. Besides taking stock of the state-of-the-art place-names studies, the stake of this review article was to show how street names could be approached sociologically from the four main competing theoretical perspectives existing in

this discipline. In this paper, which is the first of the two-part series, I conceived of street names through sociological perspectives grounded in functionalism and conflict theory. Toponymic inscriptions through street naming construct linguistic landscapes endowed with dual functions: first, urban nomenclatures are nominal devices of organizing space for urban governance, policing the territory and exerting socio-spatial control, and efficient fiscalization (among other administrative purposes)” (Rusu, M. S., 2020).

Essential Element: The essential element is the sociological framework of cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to the discussion of sociology.

Rusu applies sociological theories in analyzing street names. Rusu enlightens the reader to different ways that street names can be used both in positive ways and in negative ones.

Contextualization: Names and words are powerful. Throughout the Bible, God renamed his servants. One of the trends in education allows students to rename themselves. Students can indicate their “preferred” name and reassign their gender to go along with this name without their parent’s permission. Harris's article examining street names through a sociological lens is a good model for how we can look at allowing students to change their names through a sociological lens. It is also relevant when considering the naming of schools and administration buildings.

Source Four: Contu, A. (2019). Conflict and organization studies. *Organization Studies*, 40(10), 1445-1462. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alessia-Contu/publication/324295936_Conflict_and_Organization_Studies/links/5acacdcf4585151e80a922cc/Conflict-and-Organization-Studies.pdf

Comment 4:

Quote/Paraphrase: “CEO Jeff Bezos believes that harmony is overvalued. Instead, Amazonians are instructed to disagree and commit (n.13 Amazon leadership principles) – to rip into colleagues’ ideas before lining up behind a decision. In the annual ‘rank and yank’ managers learn ‘to diplomatically throw people under the bus’ (New York Times, 2015) as part of normal managerial prerogative.

Business schools prepare managers and legitimize business values, practices and ways of life. This process happens also behind closed doors as exemplified in this following real-life anecdote: ‘The newly appointed Vice-Chancellor (VC) called me to our first meeting, as Business School Dean I attend: “Why all this teaching and research you are doing on climate change and sustainability? You need to concentrate on what is important. We need to go back to basics – the nuts and bolts of business.” I am taken aback: “Because we are a public university and we have a social mission; because businesses, governments, the UN, everyone today is grappling with these issues”.’ The two vignettes above give us a glimpse of conflict. As Follett (1925/2013) put it: ‘At the outset I would like to ask you to agree to think of conflict as neither good nor bad’. Conflict, she

says, is the appearance of difference in the world. Few organizations openly embrace conflict as a managerial tool in the way Amazon does. Yet, as Follett suggests, conflict is common, not only in the global political arena but also in the workplace. Conflict is rarely theorized as a key element of organization studies.¹ For example, an analysis of leading journals shows that ‘conflict’, unlike ‘performance’ or ‘strategy’, is not the subject of much new theorizing” (Contu, A., 2019, p. 2)

Essential Element: The essential element is a sociological framework for cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to my knowledge of how conflict can be used as an effective strategy to bring about innovative ideas and positive change. In the example given with the public university Vice Chancellor’s statement versus CEO Jeff Bezos's statement.

Contextualization: Everything we believe about biblical truth and Jesus Christ being the only way to salvation puts us in direct conflict with secular thinking and practices. Religious and moral freedom is jeopardized by the policies and laws that are being created. In the education realm, we are being coerced to comply. People are scared of losing their jobs and being forced into silence. I love this article because unless we learn how to be courageous and effectively disagree to find solutions, we will either have conflicts escalate into wars or total loss of freedom.

Comment 5:

Quote/Paraphrase: Assumptions and Consequences of the Interactionist

Perspective: The interactionist perspective suggests that there is an optimum for conflict, i.e. too little or too much conflict is destructive. Some intensity and types of conflict are functional to organizational success. This functionalist knowledge is managerialist as it aims to explain to managers how to exploit conflict, especially by reducing negative conflict and favoring task-oriented or other functional conflict. For example, based on recent management interactionist research (O'Neill, McLarnon, Hoffart, Woodley, & Allen, 2015), the Association for Psychological Science (APS, 2015) castigates Bezos for having misunderstood conflict and reminds him, and us all, that not all conflict is created equal and that high intensity is detrimental to effective performance” p.4

Essential Element: The essential element is the sociological framework of cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to my knowledge. The author explains how the interactionist perspective suggests that with the right understanding of conflict, its function can help organizations.

Contextualization: Gaining more knowledge about sociological theories, it gives me tools to craft viable training and solutions. My interest is in equipping myself and other Christians to do the work of the Kingdom, especially in my field, secular/public education. Many Christians are leaving their jobs because of moral conflicts. If Christians isolate themselves or leave, especially in our schools and

universities, who will take their place? Who will provide a balance with moral and Christian ideals?

Source Five: Barman, R. P. (2022). Religion from sociological perspectives: An overview. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Legal Studies*, 4(2), 24-31. <https://doi.org/10.34104/ajssls.022.024031>

Comment 6:

Quote/Paraphrase: In the conclusion of this study, the author asserts: “It is evidentially clear that religion as an institution deeply connected with people’s beliefs, spirituality and pattern of controlling the sins, bad deeds motivated usually by the religious priests. As a functionalist, Durkheim concludes that religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices that makes relation to sacred things among its followers. From the Weberian lens, religion is the kind of force that works for social change and he has taken an example from the development of European capitalism. The other proponent of conflict theory Marx critically views religion, defining a tool used by capitalist societies directly or indirectly to create and maintain social inequality. The interactionist Berger gives priority to the peace-building functions of religion highlighting the nomos, by which our society can control social chaos spontaneously. Thus, religion is a cultural universal in all sorts of societies though the settings we experience are different in nature. However, functionalism, conflict, and interactionism perspectives enrich the academicians and students of social studies as always sociologists do for the society to understand religion” (Barman, R. P., 2022, p. 29).

Essential Element: The essential elements are the sociological framework for cultural analysis and the interdisciplinary approach to social analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to the sociological body of work and to my understanding of applying sociological theories to religion. The author helps the reader to do just that, which seems to be out of a place of respect for religion's relevance and contribution to cultures and society.

Contextualization: As many of us have at OGS, I have done humanitarian and mission work around the world to help and share the good news for years. At one point, I started focusing on educators for the reasons stated and added reason, which was to help educators understand the students in their classrooms.

However, I have shifted all of my focus to home. While I was working in education, and serving in this way outside of working in public schools, what has taken place is the inclusion of other religions as an acceptable practice. In secular schools, especially public ones, there is an assumption that students know about Christianity, which gives impetus to the deliberate effort to celebrate the inclusion of other religions. The goal is to make them acceptable and embraced; thus, decreasing the relevance of Christianity. The separation of church and state is dwindling as other religions are allowed to come in. Showcases and bulletin boards are being uplifted about Middle Eastern and Asian religions, and the practices of these religions are celebrated and accepted as a way of accepting people. Many Christians feel the solution is to be silent, run and hide, or simply seclude their families from the world. This approach is not only against scripture

(Matthew 28:18-19), but is why we have gotten to this place today. It is a direct failure of the Christian church, which once dominated American society as the number one religion to speak out collectively against non-acceptance and to model the multicultural body of God's Kingdom and inclusiveness. On the world stage today, Christians can't even show unity amongst themselves (John 17, Acts 17). Now, like never before, it is time for true Christ-Followers to come together, and break down the racial, political, and socio-economic barriers to do the work of our Lord. Until we take the lead in unity and morality in practice, not just lip service, the world will continue to discredit Christianity and its moral principles with a vengeance (NASB, 2020).

Source Six: Mills, B. R., & Mene, C. T. (2020). Conflict and its management in an organisation: A theoretical review. *Int. J. Sci. Res. Publ*, 10, 540-545. CC BY. <http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.10.05.2020.p10162>

Comment 7:

Quote/Paraphrase: “Dysfunctional/Destructive Conflict: Conflicts that are not effectively managed are capable of destroying the goals of an organization. When conflict hinders the expected performance of a group, individuals, or parties, it is termed destructive or dysfunctional (Kinicki and Kreithner, 2008). This type of conflict may interfere with ideas exchange and then ruin relationships. Hence, dysfunctional conflict does not allow organizational goals to be achieved, thereby leading to underutilization of resources and reduced productivity. This conflict type is reflected in situations such as (a) when individuals who are competing

allow their interests to override the goals of the business, (b) when managers withhold information from one another (c) employees sabotaging others' work, either intentionally or subtly (Kinicki and Kreitner, 2008)" (Mills, B. R., & Mene, C. T., 2020, pp. 541-542).

Essential Element: The essential elements are an interdisciplinary approach to social analysis and a sociological framework for cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to my knowledge in assessing conflict as dysfunctional, and if it is, determining the source(s). This article provided a method to assess conflict and identify its source to better address it and turn it around to function or stop the behaviors associated with it.

Contextualization: What is happening overall is that conflicts are not being managed but are being controlled by those in authority or those with the most influence. For a multiplicity of reasons, people have been brainwashed to believe that all things bad, sexism, homophobia, racism, greediness, materialism, and oppression are related to Christianity. This thinking provides fuel to anti-Christian sentiments and persuades even Christians to think they are doing a good thing by being silent and complying rather than disagreeing. People are also fearful of possibly facing the repercussions. Jesus warned us already that they hated him and would hate us for our love and obedience to Him. (John 15:18-25). This is another reason why building a strong Christian community is so important (John 17) (NASB, 2020).

Comment 8:

Quote/Paraphrase: “Functional or Constructive Conflict: Kinicki and Kreithner (2008) buttresses that the interactionist view does not suppose that all conflicts are bad. Rather, some conflicts may be necessary because they improve performance and also support the goals of organizations. This supports Robbin's (2001) definition of functional conflict as one that enhances goal congruence and ameliorates the performance of a group. Their point is that conflict that encourages healthy competition within groups results in better performance of work and higher productivity is beneficial to the organization. One of the main advantages of this type of conflict is that it enables its members to identify the problems and see opportunities. Also, it can inspire the creation of new ideas, learning, and growth among individuals (Kinicki and Kreitner, 2008). Thus, it is pertinent to understand that a functional conflict endorses the goals of the organization and improves performance. A functional conflict brings about innovation, it enables the group to look inward which could help new ideas to be birthed” (Mills, B. R., & Mene, C. T., 2020, pp. 541).

Essential Element: The essential elements are an interdisciplinary approach to social analysis and a sociological framework for cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to my knowledge in understanding functional conflict and how it can be used to benefit an organization. This will help me as a leader to diffuse fear of conflict and give people the knowledge to appreciate conflict to produce highly effective outcomes.

Contextualization: As I think about major changes and shifts in society, schools included, it usually involves major conflict. The goal for functional conflicts must start with first setting norms centered around respecting the voices of those on both sides of an issue. While the Christian voice is heard today, it may not be in a positive and respected light. Having mutual respect takes keeping emotions in check. It also takes maturity. As I think about how to best address the anti-Christian trends and patterns hijacking our schools, I am hoping that God will allow me to be a respected and prominent Christian voice. I am hoping to write articles that my colleagues will refer to in addressing issues. One of my primary goals is to get the Christian voice back at the table as a respected voice of grace, reason, and love representing the fruits of the Holy Spirit instead of the judgment and prejudice of the Pharisees.

Comment 9:

Quote/Paraphrase: “Organization’s goals and objectives may not be achieved whenever conflict arises. Mutual understanding as well as the commitment of employees to complete their tasks may be hindered if conflict is not properly managed. Employees may become resentful and short-tempered which could result in negative outcomes on the individual, group, and the organization, hence causing truancy, skipping of work, and an increase in people leaving the job or organization. Conflict must be properly managed to attain the goals and objectives of the organization as well as the individual. An important aspect of overcoming dysfunctional conflict is seeking support and cooperation among team members.

Ayoko (2007) posits that parties that are involved in mutual relationships can resolve conflicts that occur in an organization while maintaining their emotional balance. Thus, conflicts, properly managed, birth innovation, creativity, and an opportunity to explore. In a nutshell, not all conflicts are bad. This is because it enables individual and group members to form a cordial relationship and instills confidence amongst them” (Mills, B. R., & Mene, C. T., 2020, p.543).

Essential Element: The essential elements are an interdisciplinary approach to social analysis and a sociological framework for cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to my knowledge in understanding that to have a functional conflict, there must be a mutual understanding. As I stated in my previous contextualization, clear norms have to be established. The authors’s strategies for various types of conflicts will help with creating more functional conflicts, bringing different voices to the table to create peaceful and respectful outcomes.

Contextualization: Did not Jesus tell us to live peacefully with all people (Romans 12:18)? I appreciate this article so much. For the Christian voice to gain respect, we are going to have to show respect for other people and get off our high horses. Outside of the Native Americans, every other race is an immigrant, whether or not we came by force or volunteered, we came after the original inhabitants. The polarization and political mockery in our country is a dishonor to the American Constitution. The Bible warns of the happenings that we see occurring before our very eyes. However, God has us here and on assignment to

do the work of the Kingdom. Christians need to not only be courageous in facing conflict, but we need to lead our country out of dysfunctional conflicts and back to a way of functional conflicts that lead to respect, freedom, and peaceful outcomes.

Source Seven: Meltzer, B., Petras, J., & Reynolds, L. (2020). *Symbolic interactionism (RLE Social Theory): Genesis, varieties, and criticism*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003074311>

Comment 10:

Quote/Paraphrase: In writing about symbolic interactionism, the authors connote, “Regardless of the varying ways in which symbolic interactionism has been interpreted, most of those identifying with the perspective trace its principal origins to the works of G. H. Mead (especially, 1934). Mead's ideas have been expounded by several sociologists throughout the years, and the acquaintance of most contemporary sociologists with his works has come through the teaching and writings of his best-known student, H. Blumer. As interpreted by Blumer, interactionism consists of three basic premises (1969: 2-6). First, human beings act towards things based on the meanings that the things have for them. Secondly, these meanings are a product of social interaction in human society. Thirdly, these meanings are modified and handled through an interpretive process that is used by each individual in dealing with the signs he/she encounters. The historical underpinnings of these three premises are found not only in the works of Mead, but also in C. H. Cooley's theory of society, J. Dewey's formulation of the concept

of habit, and W. I. Thomas' notion of 'the definition of the situation' (Cooley, 1902; Dewey, 1922; Thomas, 1923)" Meltzer, B. et al., 2020, p. 1).

Essential Element: The essential element is a sociological framework for cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to my knowledge of symbolic interactionism and how this sociological theory provides insight in understanding the meaning that individuals give to the world around them. The article explains how that meaning can be altered based on their social interactions with other people.

Contextualization: In thinking about my action research project and the work that I do in running schools and ministry work, the symbolic interactionist theory helps me to understand why people are acting in a certain way. To push forward their agendas, one of the primary goals of a lot of agencies, sports, businesses, the entertainment industry, and education is to retrain its employees and students to accept modern trends through symbolic interactionist approaches. Now that the LGBTQIA+ community has gained leverage, the goal has been to increase its base, convincing straight people to be bisexual or simply side with their agenda. Thus, we see rainbow flags, rainbow nights in schools, and rainbow laws and policies. Employees throughout the country, school staff, and students are receiving training and instruction on accepting this lifestyle as an acceptable practice. This would be well and good, but for Bible-believing Christians this is in direct conflict with the Bible's teachings, starting in the Book of Genesis (NASB,

2020). By suppressing functional conflict, which would allow multiple voices to have choices or make decisions, freedom is lost. Through symbolic interactions with daily notices from emails and peers to support and celebrate this lifestyle as a viable part of inclusion and diversity, the number of supporters and advocates is growing. Christians are even conflicted and are caught up in this as an acceptable lifestyle. The LGBTQIA+ agenda is now surpassing all other human rights issues. In the meantime, people of color, women, and girls are still overrepresented in human trafficking, and every other type of evil oppression on earth.

Source Eight: Heddendorf, R. & Vos, M. (2010). *Hidden threads: A Christian critique of sociological theory*, 2nd ed., Lanham, MD: University of America Press. [Seminal] [Amazon-Preview]

Comment 11:

Quote/Paraphrase: *Max Weber (1864-1920)*: Weber enjoys the reputation of being the most complete sociologist who ever lived. He organized social thought and laid the foundation for much of modern sociology. Weber's work was directed toward understanding the part played by ideas in the development of Western history. He leap-frogged over Durkheim and Spencer by suggesting that social phenomena were primarily subjective and not purely natural or social. The way to study phenomena was to understand them rather than to attempt to predict them.

Science cannot make any final statements or predict with any assurance.

The best it can hope to do is to understand the meaning and value attributed to any

particular social action and then to develop casual relations. Weber tried to show that Western civilization had a unique development with a religious basis. He reversed the Marxist thesis by arguing that spiritual causes could have material consequences. He felt that Puritans pursued wealth as a religious duty. Sociology's main purpose was first to interpret social action in terms of its subjective meaning and patterns and then to move to a causal explanation of its occurrences. Weber never moved beyond the social and psychosocial meaning of religion; he did recognize the revolutionary effect of Christianity on history. Weber died in 1920 after great efforts in the reorganization of Germany.

Heddendorf, R. & Vos, M. (2010).

Essential Element: The essential elements are faith-integrated sociological analysis and an interdisciplinary approach to social analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive to my knowledge and understanding of Max Weber's work and the contributions he made to modern thought. Weber's work models how to implement faith-learning integration into our workplace and lives.

Contextualization: My days are filled with running a school. There is very little time to think about theories. What I am learning at OGS goes beyond the professional development we receive as principals and leaders at work. It also goes beyond other graduate work. The analysis and contextualization of the literature and being allowed to truly integrate it with my faith is a blessing and an act of worship to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Source Thirteen: Organization Communication Channel. (2016, October 18). *Max Weber Bureaucracy*. [Video]. Youtube.

Comment 12:

Quote/Paraphrase: The bureaucracy theory developed by Max Weber has significantly advanced our knowledge of organizational dynamics. The goal of this legal-rational strategy for organizing was to protect Weber from the "particularism" he observed in his surroundings. Its rationalization of organizations has earned it the moniker "bureaucratic management theory." The basics of bureaucracy theory are covered in this video (Organization Communication Channel, 2016, October 18).

Essential Element: The essential elements are an interdisciplinary approach to social analysis and a sociological framework for cultural analysis.

Additive/Variant Analysis: This is an additive analysis in understanding Weber's contributions to bureaucracy, as seen in my workplace. I am gaining more understanding of the interdisciplinary approach to sociological theories and how they can provide solutions that are applicable across multiple disciplines.

Contextualization: As I continue to study and learn about the various contributions of sociologists, it is helping me to look at my work because I work for a bureaucracy, which is why I appreciate this video. Growing to better understand the foundation of so many organizations' policies sheds even more light on how far we have strayed away from the original intent.

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