Sociological Methodology

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Professor

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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).

Critical theory, also known as conflict theory, an approach operative within the sociology and other disciplines suffers from internal inconsistencies that suggest it operates more as an emotional processing approach rather than as an objective reasonable approach raising doubt as to it value for sociological research. Critical theory has adopted the postmodern axiom that there is no truth and reality is primarily plastic. Applying this framework, critical theorists argue that all culture, systemic processes, and structures oppress some for the sake of others extending the logic of Marxism. Critical/conflict theories see value in the role of power to drive social changes for those who feel oppressed or interpret their experience as not being treated equally. Critical theorists are often critical of others perceived as using power to achieve influence but seeks to use power to achieve influence by those who the theorist identifies as the one justified to use power. Feser (2022) observes that critical theory is simply one more expression of the “will to power) not reflecting objective reality but the preferences of the writers and their tribe. (p. 60) Critical theory is one logical extension of the loss of metanarratives, the rise of tribalism, and the rejection of truth and reality as a unifying force in society. Critical theory adopts conflict, power, and tribal dynamics as the preferred way to create and recreate society. Critical theory leans heavily on pathos in their rhetorical approach rather than logos with its view that truth claims rooted in underlying universal reality is merely one more instrument of power. It is also difficult for critical theorists to rely upon ethos given they are critical of authority and authorities as also being expressions of oppressive instruments of power. This leaves critical theory as a reactive theory with interpretations largely driven by emotional interpretation of experience and using pathos to stimulate strong emotional reactions to drive and direct the writer’s preferred behaviors.

WORKS CITED

Feser, E. (2022). *All one in Christ: A Catholic critique of racism and critical race theory*. Ignatius Press.