

**PHI 923-32: Contextualization for Social Change (Spring 2024)**

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## **Assignment #2**

### **Developmental Reading**

Assignment #2 – Developmental Readings 1. 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. History of Contextualization
2. Approaches to Contextualization
3. Culture & Contextualization
4. Contextualization for Constructive Social Change

**Source One:** Doughty, H. A., 2015, A war for the soul of America: A history of the culture wars. [Review of the book *A war for the soul of America: a history of the culture wars* by A. Hartman], *College Quarterly*, 18(2). Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1-7. <https://collegequarterly.ca/2015-vol18-num02-spring/doughty1.html>

**Comment 1:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “The United States is a paradox in many ways, so much so that it fits nicely within the model used by Gregory Bateson (1956, 1972) to describe schizophrenia. Its popular culture and its power centers alike suffer from a “double bind.” Its thinkers and doers frequently try to maintain two contradictory ideas at the same time. The US purports to be the “land of the free,” yet it clung to the “peculiar institution” of slavery and fought a hideous civil war over the matter so recently that I vividly recall a news broadcast on the radio announcing the death (of natural causes) of the last registered civil war soldier.

Many Americans once famously welcomed the poor, tired, homeless masses, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore”; and now cheer Donald Trump, a bizarre billionaire politician who wants to build a 2,000-mile wall along its southern border from the Pacific Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico to keep out Latino migrants and Scott Walker, a favorite of the multi-billionaire Koch Brothers who has publicly contemplated building another one along the northern 4,000-mile

border with Canada as well. With such ideas in the minds of allegedly credible national leaders, the prospects for “cognitive dissonance disorder” are immense” (Doughty, H. A., 2015).

**Essential Element:** The essential elements are Culture & Contextualization and Contextualization for Constructive Social Change

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is a variant analysis focusing on the negative aspects of American culture and solutions to understanding the diversity and multicultural population. While there is conflict, Hartman merely smears America while making a mockery of American accomplishments and beliefs.

**Contextualization:** This review by Doughty (2015) is a critical piece of my research. My research topic is centered around the loss of religious freedom in our country, and in particular, in our schools. In many ways, Hartman’s (2015) words may seem offensive, but sometimes looking at the world from the perspective of others helps to give clarity to our own beliefs. Hartman (2015) believes Americans believing in demons and angels is a joke. It reminds me of this passage, There is a way *which seems* right to a person (Proverbs 14:12-16; NASB, 2020). Many of the people I work with don’t see the relevance of God’s Word. I believe this is the burden we share at OGS as we try to carry out Matthew 28:18-20. How do we more effectively make them see? (NASB, 2020)

**Comment 2:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Those who espouse emancipatory education are hard-pressed to celebrate a victory and those who insist that traditional values have

been undone by pot-smoking hippies have not noticed that college students today seem to be more concerned with their future careers than with political engagement, no matter how many desultory nods they may give to the environment and no matter how enlightened their attitudes toward matters of sexual orientation and racism may appear to be. Andrew Hartman, then, has provided a useful work that summarizes the attitudes actions, beliefs, and behavior of a variety of fascinating people embroiled in a battle of wits and wills. In the end, however, the enduring lessons of the 1960s and beyond have yet to be fully learned.”

“Let me then leave the last word on the matter to Tom Palaima (2015):”

“I am not sure my country has the soul that historian Andrew Hartman gives metaphorically in his title. Nor am I sure that there is a God lending support to the factions in the culture wars that claim to practice and promote what they call his political, moral, and ethical values. But if both exist, Hartman’s take on how, since the 1960s, different groups of Americans have fought to define and control our way of life convinces me that we should pray for mercy on our souls”  
(Doughty, H. A., 2015).

**Essential Element:** The essential elements are Culture & Contextualization and Contextualization for Constructive Social Change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is a variant analysis. I appreciate how Doughty brought his thoughts about Hartman’s book all together in a more neutral analysis.

This is a variant analysis of my Christian contextualization of what is happening in America.

**Contextualization:** We need schools for the masses to ensure literacy and education for society's young. As I read this article, it helped me to realize the importance of adding to the body of literature in writing about social issues as a way of serving Christ and providing hope. It also made me realize the giant we are facing should we go against the postmodern norms and trends driving our world right now. What gives me hope is Jesus. I thank God for Jesus' prayer in John 17 (NASB, 2020). God loves us and will continue to guide and help us as we do His will.

**Source Two:** Spring, J. (2019). *American education*. Routledge.

**Comment 3:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** "What are the fruits of the political goals for American schools? There seems to be little relationship between school attendance and voter turnout. While American students compare well to other nations in civic knowledge, their concept of good citizenship is primarily passive: respect and obedience. Does this mean that American public schools are educating a large number of citizens who will not vote and who do not believe that good citizenship involves active participation in civic and political life? Is the major accomplishment of the political goals of American schools an inactive citizen who demonstrates little civic responsibility but who is obedient to authority and the

law? Is this the meaning of a democratic education?" (Spring, J., 2019, pp. 28-29).

**Essential Element:** The essential element is contextualization for social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive analysis in helping to understand what appears to be apathy. This author is making an argument that it is the way Americans are educated in schools to simply be obedient and follow the laws instead of being active in civic life and working toward positive change.

**Contextualization:** If the research shows that the majority of Americans are not voting or taking a more active role in government, that shows a need to help our teachers learn the concept of contextualization. This is a concept that can be used to help your people apply their learning to action rather than to have the learning passively sit with them.

#### **Comment 4:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** "Political education in American schools is plagued by controversies over its content. Also, a large percentage of school graduates do not vote despite this being a central creed of civic instruction. Many students seem to leave school with a concept of citizenship focused on obedience to the law and authority in contrast to community activism. In considering these issues, the reader might ask the following questions: • Should there be a consensus of political values in the United States, and should public schools develop that consensus? • Should public schools develop emotional or patriotic attachments to symbols of the state through the use of songs, literature, and history? • Should the

purpose of teaching history be the development of patriotic feelings? • Does the teaching of patriotism in schools throughout the world increase the potential for international conflict? • Who or what government agency should determine the political values taught in public schools?” (Spring, J., 2019, p. 29).

**Essential Element:** The essential element is culture and contextualization

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive analysis to understanding of what is lacking in American Civics classes in school. The study shows that the majority of students graduating from our schools do not feel the need to vote. The author challenges the reader by asking thought-provoking questions for reflection, and maybe even action.

**Contextualization:** I used to teach Civics and Government classes in high school years ago. The classes revolved around the makeup of the branches and how laws were made. There was a lot of information for students to learn about how our government works. I remember teaching about antitrust and monopoly laws, and individual rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution.

**Source Three:** Pfeffer, L. (2018). *Church, State, and Freedom: Revised Edition*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.

#### **Comment 5:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “On the whole, the decisions of the Supreme Court, with the exception of *Zorach vs. Clauson*, have been consistent in interpreting the meaning of the no-establishment clause. Under these decisions, the First Amendment, which merely makes explicit what is implicit in the Constitution itself, requires



the government in the United States to be secular. Its ends must be exclusively secular and, in achieving them, it may use only secular means. The Preamble to the Constitution sets forth the purposes for which the new republic in the Western Hemisphere was established, all of them secular: “to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessing of liberty...” (Pfeffer, L., 2018, p. 178).

**Essential Element:** The essential element is contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive analysis to understand how the US Constitution can support parents. The school systems are imposing on parental rights to raise their children to uphold their religious or ideological beliefs all over the country.

**Contextualization:** In working in the public school system, it is a joy to see the children every day. It is also a joy when I see the community come together at wonderful events we have in the evening. For the most part, Americans trust schools. Yet, schools around the nation are overstepping their authority, which is troubling to me. Freedom is being lost through some of the practices. In the past, parents could opt out of sex education, which allowed parents to teach their children their morals. Today school districts have stopped that practice to impart the school’s district sexual and family moral values to children. For parents who

are protesting this violation, they will need to arm themselves by using the United States Constitution.

**Comment 6:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “When government affects its secular purposes, it may as an incidental by-product, affect religion, either beneficially or detrimentally, (Indeed, one would assume that would generally be so), and that fact, the court has consistently held, does not restrict government in the manner in which it affects its purposes. Thus, in the Everson case, a state may seek to achieve its secular purpose of protecting children from the hazards of traffic by providing them with free transportation to the schools they attend and the fact that an incidental by-product benefits religion by relieving parochial schools of what might otherwise be a necessary part of their budget, the court held, does not render its action unconstitutional” (Pfeffer, L., 2018, p. 178).

**Essential Element:** The essential element is contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive analysis to understand how the US Constitution can support parents but at the same time support the school system in its secular purpose of protecting children. Conflict occurs when one side is not willing to compromise to allow freedom of choice.

**Contextualization:** I asked myself, What has changed in schools? I believe that what has changed is that many students were harmed. Due to the harm done, school districts had to find ways to protect children. These issues are very

complex, which is why I appreciate Pfeffer's work (2018). As a U.S. Constitutional Law expert, he believes what is best is to adhere to the separation clause (2018). The majority of people in education love their students and will do what is necessary to protect them. However, what many educators do not understand in making these policies, you cannot go against the laws of God. The Bible tells us, plain and simple, "There is a way *which seems* right to a person, But its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12, NASB, 2020). What has changed is parental authority to raise their children with their moral beliefs. Before parents could opt their children out of certain classes or lessons. Now, school districts are stripping away parents' rights to "opt-out," of anything.

**Source Four:** Pollman, E. (2021). The Supreme Court and the Pro-Business Paradox. *Harv. L. Rev.*, 135, 220. [https://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/faculty\\_scholarship/2794/](https://scholarship.law.upenn.edu/faculty_scholarship/2794/)

**Comment 7:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** "Landmark cases from previous Terms such as Citizens United and Hobby Lobby have garnered significant attention on the first part of the equation — expanding rights.<sup>30</sup> Running through these cases is a failure to capture the full nature, dynamics, and facts on the ground of corporations. By describing corporations as "associations of citizens" in a "corporate democracy,"<sup>31</sup> and projecting the beliefs of shareholders onto corporations,<sup>32</sup> the Court has empowered corporations with greater speech rights and religious liberty.<sup>33</sup> In Citizens United, the Court held that corporations have a First Amendment right to make independent political expenditures.<sup>34</sup> In Hobby Lobby, the Court held that

the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993<sup>35</sup> (RFRA) applied to three closely held business corporations, allowing them to claim a religious exemption from providing certain contraceptive coverage to their employees.<sup>36</sup> In both cases, the Court extended protections — either constitutional or statutory — to for-profit business corporations” (Pollman, E., 2021, pp. 226-227).

**Essential Element:** The essential element is contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is a variant of my understanding of religious freedom. I concur with the author that the Roberts Court have overreached in protecting corporations versus the consumers and human liberties. However, I agree with the Roberts Court on the intent of the Establish Clause to separate church and state. Religious businesses should be protected under the law by not having to adhere to secular ideologies against their religious beliefs.

**Contextualization:** As a former Social Studies teacher, it is troubling that so many people are oblivious to all of this going on. I am seeing the need to put back on my teacher hat as a Social Studies teacher, but this time not with high school students but with adults. The body of literature by scholars around the world is influencing college students and leaders to break down Christian and religious protections. Some of this is because of the entanglement of Christians, whether with corporations, groups, or individuals, with the world, and people honestly not being able to tell the difference.

**Comment 8:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “This Comment makes two primary contributions. It first observes that cases from the recent Term reflect an important way in which the Roberts Court has earned its reputation: over the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Court has often expanded corporate rights while narrowing corporate liability or access to justice against corporate defendants. Part I of this Comment sets forth this argument, using *Americans for Prosperity*, *Ford*, and *Nestlé* as case studies to show how the Court uses ill-fitting conceptions or overbroad generalizations to empower corporations and limit their accountability. This trend gives rise to a paradox that Part II subsequently explores: the “pro-business” Court is often at odds with internal activity in corporate law and governance. Quite remarkably, as the Roberts Court has expanded corporate rights and narrowed pathways to liability, many shareholders and stakeholders have become vocal participants, putting pressure on corporations to rein in the use of their rights, to mitigate risks generated by their externalities, and to take account of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) concerns. The Court’s expansion of corporate rights not only deserves many corporate participants and spurs them to action but also might fuel challenges to new disclosure rules about corporate political activity or other ESG-related concerns that investors and others seek for effective participation in corporate governance. Further, as the Court has downplayed or ignored corporate decision-making structures in its jurisprudence expanding rights and narrowing liability, by contrast, in the world of corporate law and governance, we see that board oversight, monitoring, and compliance

functions have grown in importance. State corporate law cases have heightened attention on the board's role in providing oversight to ensure legal compliance throughout the corporation's operations and to mitigate litigation and reputational risks that can arise from corporate abuses around the world" (Pollman, E., 2021, p. 225).

**Essential Element:** The essential element is contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** The article is an additive analysis. I agree with Pollman that the Roberts Court is giving corporations too much power to operate without regulations and accountability for human rights violations around the world. Almost daily there are recalls for unsafe foods and products.

**Contextualization:** The power of corporations today with their greed and inhumane practices is appalling. Somehow Christians who are supposed to be the voice of all that is good and charitable are entangled in all that is greedy and careless. For the Bible warned us, "For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs" 1 Timothy 6:10. As I research, it is raising my consciousness. As I read about Nestlé, I thought about that harmless sugar-free hot chocolate I love to drink. Knowledge holds all of us accountable.

**Source Five:** Coley, J. S., & Das, D. (2020). Creating safe spaces: Opportunities, resources, and LGBTQ student groups at US Colleges and Universities. *Socius*, 6, 2378023120971472. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2378023120971472>

**Comment 9:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “A large and growing literature demonstrates the positive impacts of LGBTQ student groups in schools. Studies show that LGBTQ student groups play a positive role in the lives of students, as LGBTQ participants are more likely to develop positive personal relationships and report better mental health than nonparticipants (Fetner and Elafros 2015; Kulick et al. 2017; Woodford, Kulick, et al. 2018). Some evidence suggests LGBTQ student groups also make schools safer, including by decreasing incidences of bullying and harassment against LGBTQ students in schools (Marx and Kettrey 2016). Nevertheless, previous literature has been mostly silent on the question of why some colleges and universities are home to LGBTQ student groups whereas others are not (though see Kane’s 2013 study on LGBTQ student groups at North Carolina colleges and universities and Coley’s 2017 study on LGBTQ student groups at U.S. Christian colleges and universities)” p. 10

**Essential Element:** The essential elements are culture and contextualization and contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This article is a variant analysis of my Christian beliefs. However, the question is do LGBTQ student groups have a right to exist? Many questions will struggle with this question. A greater question today is will religious organizations remain protected against not having LGBTQ student groups.

**Contextualization:** For a few years, I worked in a Christian school as a teacher. I got a glimpse of what it was like to live in a Christian bubble. Because I was exposed to so much more before this experience, I knew there was a real world out there that needed me. Thus, I left working in a parochial school to work in the public school system. When I first started researching for this ministry that God has called me to, I thought I had it all figured out, until God brought a young white teacher into my life group, who was struggling with being gay. She knows it is wrong, and she knows what I believe. She was married to a woman, divorced her, and now a few years later, they are back together. Freedom, what is it? Who is it for? How do we protect it? Who has rights?

I care about the people I lead and serve every day in school; the staff, the families; the students, and out of school. I watch the staff at my school work tirelessly teaching and caring for our students, most non-Christians. Some of them even volunteer outside of school to help the needy. My elementary school has a straight counselor who is leading the charge for a “Safe Schools” initiative. In our latest showcase exhibit, some of the students showcased posters about loving everyone...Of course, we are supposed to love everyone, that is what the Bible says. Dr. Matt Vos discussed the “us” vs. “them” during our Congregation Weekend. I am praying for wisdom that God will continue to guide me to teach and lead authentically with love inclusive of everyone. But here is the thing, the factor that many in the gay community fail to realize is the same factor that many in the straight community fail to realize, God has rules (Genesis 1, Exodus 20,



Romans 1, The Bible, 2020). The hard Christian reality is that God does not allow us to do whatever we want. We need to die to ourselves daily to please God (John 12:24; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 2:15, NASB 2020)!

**Source Six:** U.S. Const. amend. <https://constitution.congress.gov/constitution/>

**Comment 10:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “First Amendment: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances” (U.S. Constitution. amend. 1).

**Essential Element:** The essential element is contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This article is an additive analysis to my understanding of the separation of church and state. The Establishment Clause guarantees protection against a state religion and guarantees the freedom of speech. The school systems endorsing and embracing non-Christian ideologies and religions are violating the First Amendment.

**Contextualization:** In thinking about the complexity of the culture wars in America and secular schools and colleges around the nation, it is more than just people clashing. In reading the literature on this topic, scholars around the globe are adding to the body of literature from multiple and diverse viewpoints. I believe there is a lack of literature from a Christian perspective or a biblically

conservative perspective supporting the Establishment Clause. The other observation that I see is that scholars and policymakers of opposing biblical views are finding ways to get around the Establishment Clause and get their ideologies embedded in society through syncretism. Syncretism seems harmless on the surface. For instance, when you look at syncretism from a White or Black American point of view with other countries, one might say, “Well, that is a different country,” such as a conservative Christian White or Black American community, versus a Christian Black Nigerian, African Community or a Christian Haiti or Turkish Community. Syncretism today in America has become much more complicated because the “others” want to be recognized as Americans with the same level of influence. Thus, we have American schools showcasing Ramadan, Diwali, and other ideologies. But here is the problem, Christianity is built on the Bible, and at the end of the day, Mark 7 warns us about following the traditions of men that go against God’s Word (NASB, 2020).

**Source Seven:** Blackman, J. (2021). The " Essential" Free Exercise Clause. *Harv. JL & Pub.*

*Pol’y*, 44, 637. [https://journals.law.harvard.edu/jlpp/wp-content/uploads/sites/90/2021/06/](https://journals.law.harvard.edu/jlpp/wp-content/uploads/sites/90/2021/06/Blackman-The-Essential-Free-Exercise-Clause.pdf)

[Blackman-The-Essential-Free-Exercise-Clause.pdf](https://journals.law.harvard.edu/jlpp/wp-content/uploads/sites/90/2021/06/Blackman-The-Essential-Free-Exercise-Clause.pdf)

**Comment 11:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** “Historically, constitutional law has developed at a glacial pace. Change could be measured in years and decades. But during the COVID-19 pandemic, courts were rapidly confronted with novel and difficult questions. Did the state have the power to restrict religious assembly, but permit other types of

commercial gatherings? These cases were resolved in a manner of days and weeks. Judges reached to longstanding First Amendment doctrine. But none of these cases were well for the unprecedented nature of COVID-19 lockdown measures. Initially, courts largely deferred to the states. But as this pandemic stretched from weeks to months, that restraint inevitably waned. And the patience for unilateral executive action faded. The journey from South Bay to Tandon tells the story of the American experience with civil liberties and COVID-19. As this Article goes to press in May 2021, our polity can begin to reflect on this remarkable journey”

**Essential Element:** The essential elements are culture and contextualization and contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This is an additive analysis to my knowledge of how the Establishment Clause was argued in court during the COVID-19 Pandemic and was kicked back to the States. This article helps in understanding the inconsistencies during the Pandemic from state to state.

**Contextualization:** I didn't realize how COVID-19 re-imagined the Establishment Clause. How interesting? I asked God to show me how to speak on the issues plaguing our schools. God is showing me how the Establishment Clause is at the center of it all. With this understanding, it shows the depth of this next election and why people are fighting so hard on both sides. As the Supreme Court ages, who replaces the justices is crucial.

**Source Eight:** Lund, C. C. (2022). Second-Best Free Exercise. *Fordham L. Rev.*, 91, 843.

<https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5973&context=flr>

**Comment 12:**

**Quote/Paraphrase:** So despite having an official rule against religious exemptions, the Roberts Court has somehow managed to keep giving religious exemptions in case after case. The Court has been able to do this by developing a powerful and conceptually elaborate set of new rules about what counts as discrimination. These new rules all make sense, and they certainly ameliorate some of Smith's harsh effects. But they also warp the doctrinal fabric of free exercise.<sup>10</sup> This piece sees five issues as being of particular importance: (1) the concern of manipulation, (2) the risk of going too far, (3) the return of balancing, (4) the problem of constitutional luck, and (5) the plight of religious minorities (Lund, C. C., 2022, p. 845).

**Essential Element:** The essential elements are culture and contextualization and contextualization for constructive social change.

**Additive/Variant Analysis:** This article is a variant analysis. The Establishment Clause is to protect the rights of religious organizations to exercise their faith as long as it does not violate the law. The author is complaining that Roberts Court has protected the right of religious organizations to hire, fire, and uphold policies in alignment with their religious beliefs.

**Contextualization:** Through my research, the Lord is showing me the depth of what is happening in the schools and our society. I am beginning to understand the endless reach of the anti-Christian culture movement today in removing all

barriers to non-Christian ideologies, lifestyles, and practices in every facet of society. The influencers from Hollywood to the political arena to the School Districts across the country are working to that end. I feel it and see it every day at work, and I am trying to lead a ministry to help other educators survive and thrive in the midst of it. May the Lord help us and use us to His glory upon this Earth.

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