PHI 815-22 History of the Integration of Religion and Society

C. Brian Diggs

Omega Graduate School

Date: August 17, 2024

Professor

David Ward, Ph.D., Th.M.

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).

Social reforms encompass organized initiatives to enhance or alter specific aspects of society to improve the welfare of individuals and communities. These initiatives can tackle economic inequality, education, healthcare, civil rights, and environmental issues. Advancing social reforms entails utilizing diverse strategies and methods tailored to the particular context and issues in question.

In seventh grade, I observed my cousin, a police officer, carry himself with great discipline and pride in his uniform. Unfortunately, his partner was killed tragically, and witnessing the impact it had on him, his colleagues, and our community was truly devastating. This experience sparked a desire to become a police officer, to prevent harm to good people by stopping the bad guys. Back then, the perception of law enforcement was different. There was a strong sense of mutual respect between police officers and the community; they knew us by name, and we knew them by name. This reverence for policing inspired me, and when I became a state trooper in 1987, I was honored to uphold the responsibilities of wearing the uniform and protecting those I had sworn to serve.

As a state trooper, I have observed considerable changes in law enforcement. The public's regard for law enforcement has declined due to several widely publicized cases of police misconduct, pervasive low morale within law enforcement agencies stemming from inadequate working conditions, and a diminishing interest in pursuing a career in law enforcement. This transformation in the perception of policing has sparked a nationwide push for police reform.

The grassroots movement has been instrumental in mobilizing local communities to advocate for change, particularly in response to the issue of lethal and unaccountable police violence against the black and brown population, which has become a defining political issue in the United States in the twenty-first century (Reny & Newman, 2021). These movements have raised awareness, built solidarity, and exerted pressure on decision-makers through collective action. The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, in response to continued incidents of police violence against Black civilians, has emerged as a leading advocate for civil rights, racial justice, and police reform (Reny & Newman, 2021). As a result, police reform has gained significant momentum at the national level, particularly following the tragic killing of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, sparking widespread civil rights protests and bringing issues of police violence and systemic racism to the forefront of national discourse on an unprecedented scale (Barna, 2021).

This recent wave of police reform has significantly impacted our agency, influencing our training methods and daily operations. Many city and local proposals are focused on reducing police interactions with the public. For example, in Berkeley, California, the city police officers are now limited in the reasons for stopping drivers to prevent potential racial profiling and avoid situations escalating into violence. Consequently, officers are no longer permitted to pull over drivers for certain offenses, such as not wearing a seat belt, failing to dim high beams, or having an expired vehicle registration (Barna, 2021). Furthermore, situations involving police interaction with individuals experiencing a mental health crisis can quickly escalate into violence. Some states and cities have implemented protocols whereby mental health professionals, in conjunction with the police, are dispatched to appropriate 911 calls (Barna, 2021).

Raising public awareness is potent in shaping public policy and instigating social change. By educating the populace, rallying support, and swaying political determination, awareness campaigns can bring about substantial reforms to tackle critical social issues. Effective social reforms commonly hinge on grassroots movements, advocacy, policy adjustments, and cooperation among diverse stakeholders, encompassing government, non-profit organizations, and community members. The objective is to foster a fairer, more just society that uplifts all individuals.

**Good job with Assignment #1 for PHI 815-22, Brian! You did a wonderful job responding to the course essential element of Social Reforms. You are positioned to do research in the criminal justice system that could create truly needed social reforms. You contextualized the course element to your professional field excellently. Nice work using scholarly citations to support your responses, but note the feedback about proper APA 7 form. Keep up the great work! -- Prof. David Ward**

 **References**

Barna, M. (2021). Public health approach to police reform gaining momentum: States, cities redirecting police funding. *the Nation’s Health*, *51*(5), 1–8.

Barna, M. (2021). Public health approach to police reform gaining momentum: States, cities redirecting police funding. *the Nation’s Health*, *51*(5), 1–8.

Excellent APA except for the missing .5 inch hanging indent.

Reny, T. T., & Newman, B. J. (2021). The Opinion-Mobilizing Effect of Social Protest against Police Violence: Evidence from the 2020 George Floyd Protests. *American Political Science Review*, *115*(4), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055421000460

Reny, T. T., & Newman, B. J. (2021). The opinion-mobilizing effect of social protest against police violence: Evidence from the 2020 George Floyd protests. *American Political Science Review*, *115*(4), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055421000460

Excellent APA except for the missing .5 inch hanging indent and the title of articles is to be in sentence case with only the first word of the title, subtitle, and proper nouns capitalized.