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

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Professor

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Assignment #3 – Essay

1. Write a 5-page essay that analyzes the following items:

a. Introduction of the Present Issue: Begin with a contemporary social issue that

has a (probably unappreciated) history of positive Judeo-Christian response to it.

b. Body Sections:

i. Biblical Worldview Perspective: Locate the issue in the progress of

Biblical revelation and explain the foundations of a Judeo-Christian

perspective. What is a biblical/theological position on this issue based on

sound biblical interpretation?

ii. History of the Issue: Trace the development of the selected issue

alongside the history of Christianity's social impact on it. Summarize the

historical trend at different points in history with an eye to identifying

significant causes of the social problem, identifiable processes at work,

and enduring patterns that emerged. How did the problem/issue originate

and develop? What were the causes of the social problem? What

identifiable sociological or theological processes were at work? What

enduring patterns emerged that recur?

iii. Exemplars of Religion and Society Integration: Present a specific

example (e.g., key leader(s) or movement(s) of socially and intellectually

active Christians) of religion and society integration. If known, discuss

how God raised up the leader or movement.

iv. Applicable Principles: Distill the timeless principles of truth or leadership

derived from the historical examples above. (Develop these based on the

Body Sections #1-#3). Pose possible contemporary applications for the

integration of religion and society in your field of influence.

c. Conclusion: End with a conclusion that reaffirms your thesis. Discuss what

impact this research had on your sense of calling to change your world.

2. Paper Outline

a. Begin with an introductory paragraph that has a succinct thesis statement.

b. Address the topic of the paper with critical thought.

c. End with a conclusion that reaffirms your thesis.

d. Use a minimum of eleven scholarly research sources (two books and the

remaining scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles).

**Brian, I learned a lot! Your essay does a good job addressing the history and challenges with police brutality. Here are some constructive suggestions to prepare this essay for use beyond an assignment:**

**You hit the target including biblical references in that required section of the paper’s outline. The one writing technique to improve is with quotations of longer than 40 words. Your citation of Romans 13:1-4 should be laid out in a block quotation. See my marginal notes in that section.**

**You made excellent use of MLK as an exemplar, a historical figure who incarnated the principle you are illustrating from history. Also, it is well-supported by a scholarly source (Johnson, 2007). The Goerge Floyd tragedy was an exemplar contrasting with MLK. Both were controversial, but where MLK was redemptively controversial, the Floyd case was divisively destructive. I wonder if MLK would have engaged that tragedy more constructively? You demonstrate insightful faith-learning integration with your discussion of Civil Rights Movement leaders using religion redemptively for constructive social change!**

**Your discussion of the recent historical developments in technology with social media and smart phone technology was insightful. Policing has become more visible and under public scrutiny on YouTube. That increases the pressure on police with a difficult job.**

**You could develop the historical section of the essay a little more. By digging into how implications of the Civil Rights Movement could impact current policing practices, you could explain what lessons can be learned, and how they could inform present-day practices.**

**The way you integrated the personal experience of your own journey in law enforcement added credibility to your treatment of this controversial issue, which is rhetorically effective. Such authenticity makes you relatable as a writer and personalizes scholarly writing.**

**It is always valuable to address counterarguments and different perspectives on controversial issues like police authority and accountability. You could strengthen your argument by showing an understanding of opposing viewpoints.**

**The conclusion should be stronger. In addition to a brief summary, make your conclusion more memorable by issuing a call to action or offering specific policies that could be enacted to address police brutality.**

**Works Cited APA tips are mainly about carefully knowing how to format titles in Sentence Case.**

**Overall, this was a good essay, Brain. Keep up the good work!**

**Dr. Ward**

**Grade: A-**

The history of police brutality is complex and influenced by social, political, and cultural factors. In the early days, law enforcement focused on controlling marginalized communities. The impact of systemic racism in law enforcement contributes to ongoing tensions with communities of color. Civil rights leaders have been instrumental in advocating for racial equality and social justice.

As a young man, after completing my time in the police academy and field training, I quickly realized that police work is influenced by two primary sources: man's laws and the Bible's teachings. Balancing that dynamic has been difficult at times. Policing emphasizes combating crime; it operates within a system of laws established by man with inherent limitations. Religious teachings, moral principles, and ethical considerations in the scriptures guide the Christian perspective on policing. Romans 13:1-4; Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer (NIV Bible, 2011). Romans 13 implies that police officers should be respected as agents of order and justice (NIV Bible, 2011). While respect for authority is emphasized, there is also a recognition that authorities must act justly and be held accountable for their actions. Misuse of power is condemned, as seen in Isaiah 10:1-2, which warns against unjust laws and oppression (NIV Bible, 2011). By reconciling these two perspectives, I gained an understanding that police officers can establish a framework for policing that glorifies God and promotes genuine justice.

Throughout the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement saw significant activism, often met with police brutality against African Americans, such as during the Birmingham protests in 1963. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 Birmingham campaign exemplified a cross-racial vision. Employing the concept of the "image event" as a form of public address, King aimed to awaken the conscience of white moderates by shedding light on the harsh realities of racial injustice (Johnson, 2007, pp.1-25). His goal was to expose the injustice of segregation to a demographic of white moderates who were not regularly confronted with or exposed to the realities of racism (Johnson, 2007, pp.1-25). The dramatic images of uniformed police officers wielding fire hoses and snarling dogs against young black protestors constitute a powerful scene in the nation's collective memory of the civil rights movement (Johnson, 2007, pp.1-25).

In the 21st century, the rise of social media and smartphone technology has increased the visibility of police encounters. The perceptions of African American males on the relationship between African Americans and the police are often portrayed in YouTube videos. It emphasizes that this issue is complex and not simply black or white, but rather a universal human problem that extends beyond the United States to the global community and provides valuable insight for criminal justice professionals, law enforcement agencies, criminologists, community organizations, African American families, and anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the realities, fears, and concerns of African American males (Dingle, 2022).

The death of George Floyd in 2020 during an arrest by Minneapolis Police Officers further fueled global protests against police brutality and systemic racism. Lethal and unaccountable police violence against Black civilians is one of the defining political issues of the twenty-first century in the United States (Reny & Newman, 2021). This case catalyzed the national dialogue surrounding policing reform and accountability. The widespread protests that ensued after the police killing of George Floyd in May 2020 marked the most significant moment of social protest within the BLM movement and the enduring history of Black resistance against dehumanization and state violence in the United States (Reny & Newman, 2021). More recently, an investigation into Miami Dolphins star Tyreek Hill's traffic stop and detainment revealed that the officer involved had been suspended multiple times, received reprimands, and faced numerous complaints, according to his employee profile released by the Miami-Dade Police Department. Police officers are required to study ethics for various reasons. Police officers have significant discretion and are responsible for enforcing the law. It is their duty to uphold constitutional protections, including due process and equal protection, which are the foundation of our legal system (Dempsey & Forst, 2016). The Civil Rights Movement was deeply influenced by religious leadership, with figures such as Martin Luther King Jr., Ralph Abernathy, and Andrew Young drawing inspiration from their Christian faith. They utilized religious congregations as organizing centers for peaceful protests and advocacy for racial equality. A climate of religious freedom that served as a catalyst for and was integral to the success of the spirited activism of the civil rights movement.

The crucial influence of Christian beliefs on the strategic leadership of the civil rights movement has been extensively recorded. Contrary to common misconceptions, formal leaders and grassroots leaders with religious grounding did not view religion as having a purely spiritual role in society. Instead, many believed that religious beliefs, particularly those upheld by Black Christians, offered symbols, principles, and an alternative vision that could propel the pursuit of freedom and equality (Roberts, 2024).

The ongoing work of faith-based leaders to protest and agitate for the extension of rights to racially vilified minorities has been widely discussed. By resisting undemocratic and religiously discriminatory laws, prayer-filled foot soldiers were forcing America to live out the true meaning of its democratic and constitutional principles (Roberts, 2024). The movement framed the struggle for civil rights as a moral imperative, drawing upon principles of justice, love, and equality found in religious teachings. The integration of religion and society has manifested in various ways throughout history, often leading to significant social movements, community development, and cultural enrichment.

The problem of police brutality is closely connected to societal issues such as racial discrimination, unequal treatment in the black and brown, marginalized communitues. Sustained dialogue and activism are vital in addressing these challenges and advocating for a more just and ethical policing system.

Most recently, Benjamin Crump stands out as a civil rights attorney known for his advocacy against police brutality and his dedicated work on behalf of marginalized families in cases involving police violence and racial injustice.

His commitment and those civil rights leaders that came before him have laid the groundwork for continued endeavors against police brutality. Their advocacy has raised awareness, prompted legislative reforms, and sustained activism.

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