

## Assignment Prompt

### Learning Objectives

In each of the required two, six-to-eight page response paper assignments, you will:

- identify the institutions and/or cultures that have had the greatest impact on an aspect of your socialization;
- apply sociological theory to your reflections of your institutional and cultural socialization;
- formulate what social justice means to you, based on your experiences; and,
- write a complete draft of your paper, and evaluate at least two peers' papers in a structured peer review process, before your final submission.

### Assignment Overview

Our college's mission is grounded in a commitment to civic engagement and social justice by creating an environment that demands academic excellence, fosters intercultural understanding, and endeavors to stimulate a passion for learning and a commitment to building a more just and sustainable world (State University of New York College at Old Westbury Mission Statement). You are often told that social justice is both the ideal and the reality to which you should be striving, and contributing to, as scholars and as citizens. However, you are often not given the space-and the challenge-to grapple with what social justice means to, and for, you. These papers aim to do just that.

Bobbie Harro's "The Cycle of Socialization" visually represents that we are born into a specific set of social identities and that they predispose us to unequal roles into an "oppressive system." Harro describes this process as pervasive, consistent, circular, self-perpetuating, and usually invisible (Harro, 2000).

You will focus on the "Institutional and Cultural Socialization" portion of the cycle, which details institutions and cultures. Institutions may be churches, schools, television etc., and cultures may be practices, song lyrics, language etc. In no way are these institutions and cultures exhaustive; instead, they are used as inspiration to spark your brainstorming on what has had the greatest impact on your socialization, and ultimately your conceptualization of what social justice means to, and for, you.

There are four units in the course:

UNIT 1: Sociology of Knowledge—How Do We Know What We Know?

UNIT 2: Sociology of Identity—Who and What Constructs Who We Are?

UNIT 3: Social Constructions of, and Interactions between, Race and Class

## UNIT 4: Social Constructions of, and Interactions between, Gender and Sexuality

You will produce two six-to-eight page response papers, each of which are scaffolded.

The first response paper corresponds to units 1 and 2. The central questions, grounded in the unit titles above, are as follows: How do you know what you know? What has had the greatest impact on who you are?

The second response paper corresponds to units 3 and 4. The central question, grounded in the unit titles above, are as follows: What has had the greatest impact on your understanding of race, class, gender and/or sexuality? You have some flexibility here to focus on a single identity (e.g. race or class), or focus on multiple (e.g. race, class and gender). This is *your* theoretical application of your socialization; you know best.

### Response Paper 1 Assignment Prompt

Our work in Unit 1: Sociology of Knowledge: How Do We Know What We Know? and Unit 2: Sociology of Identity-Who and What Constructs Who We Are? has been designed to prepare you for this assignment. The central questions, grounded in the unit titles above, are as follows: How do you know what you know? What has had the greatest impact on who you are? What does social justice mean to you?

#### Unit 1: Sociology of Knowledge-How Do We Know What We Know?

Anzaldúa, G.(1987). *Borderlands/La frontera: The new mestiza*. Aunt Lute Books.

Foucault, M. (1980). Truth and power.

In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody ,S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp. 305-313). Wiley-Blackwell.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (M. Ramos, Trans.), Herder and Herder (Original work published 1968)

Gramsci, A. (1971).On hegemony.

In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody ,S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp. 237-250). Wiley-Blackwell.

Smith, D. (1990). The conceptual practices of power.

In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody ,S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp. 398-406). Wiley-Blackwell.

#### Unit 2: Sociology of Identity-Who and What Constructs Who We Are?

Blumer, H. (1969). Symbolic interactionism.

In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody ,S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp.62-73). Wiley-Blackwell.

Collins, P. H. (1990). Black feminist epistemology.

In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp.407-416). Wiley-Blackwell.

Goffman, E. (1956). Presentation of self in everyday life.

In C. Calhoun, J. Gerteis, J. Moody, S. Pfaff, & I. Virk (Eds.), *Contemporary sociological theory* (3rd ed., pp.46-61). Wiley-Blackwell.

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society: From the standpoint of a social behaviorist* (C. W. Morris, Ed.) University of Chicago Press.

For this assignment, you are required to apply **two theorists**, one from Unit 1 and one from Unit 2. Application includes: a general introduction into each theorist's main ideas; a connection of the dots between your experience and some of the theorist's key concepts; and, incorporation of direct quotations to support your discussion.

### **Paper Outline and Rubric**

I will speak with each of you regarding the outline for your *specific* paper, but the *general* format is as follows:

- an introduction that is creative and engaging, concluding with a thesis statement that specifies the institution(s)/culture(s) and theories to be explored in your paper;
- an autobiographical sketch that provides substantive detail to convey to the reader why the institution(s) and/or culture(s) you will develop in your paper have shaped your response to the paper's central questions;
- a discussion and theoretical application (incorporating direct quotations) of institution(s)/culture(s) # 1;
- a discussion and theoretical application (incorporating direct quotations) of institution(s)/culture(s) #2;
- a discussion of what social justice means, given the previous explorations of theoretical application to socialization; and,
- a thoughtful conclusion.

Please see the assignment rubric.

## Scaffold Assignments

- *Scaffold Assignment 1*: Institution(s)/Culture(s): Theorist and Institution(s)/Culture(s) Brainstorm
- *Scaffold Assignment 2*: Conference to Discuss and Finalize Theorists and Institution(s)/Culture(s)
- *Scaffold Assignment 3*: Submission of Complete Final Paper Draft in Peer Review Group
- *Scaffold Assignment 4*: Submission of Peer Review Feedback in Peer Review Group
- *Scaffold Assignment 5*: Submission of Final Version

## Peer Review Instructions

1. Click on “Peer Review” on the Course Navigation Panel. This will take you to your Response Paper I Peer Review Group. You’ll see the “Group Properties,” which is a Group Description with each group member’s name and “Group Tools,” which includes the Group Discussion Board. You will work in the Group Discussion Board for this peer review.
2. Create a new thread in your Group Discussion Board. Upload your paper as a Microsoft Word attachment or PDF.
3. Read each of your group members’ papers in their entirety. Once you have done so, reply to their post answering the Peer Review Feedback Questions below. These questions are aligned with the assignment rubric, which I use to evaluate and grade the final version of your paper. Please answer these questions in a constructive manner. These questions will help your peer produce an “exceptional” final paper, per the assignment rubric. Please **clearly label** your responses to the questions:
  - a. What do you observe as the most interesting and engaging components of the introduction?
  - b. Please, cut and paste the author’s thesis statement that identifies the institution(s) and/or culture(s), along with the two theorists, to be addressed in the paper. If you are unable to identify it, please indicate that. This is very helpful to the author!
  - c. Does the autobiographical sketch illustrate why the institution(s) and/or culture(s) to be explored in the paper are most impactful to the author’s socialization? What are your recommendations for how the author may improve the autobiographical sketch? Please, explain.
  - d. Would you characterize the discussion of Institution/Culture # 1 as clear, informative and substantive? Please, explain.
  - e. Would you characterize the discussion of Institution/Culture #2 as clear, informative and substantive? Please, explain.
  - f. Does the application of theorist #1 generally introduce the theory, incorporate key concepts and adequately apply the theory to the writer’s autobiography? Please, explain.

- g. Does the application of theorist #2 generally introduce the theory, incorporate key concepts and adequately apply the theory to the writer's autobiography? Please, explain.
  - h. Which two theorists have been introduced in the paper?
  - i. In a paragraph, discuss your understanding of the author's conceptualization of social justice. Please, write a complete paragraph as it should be clear to you, having read the paper. If it is not clear, please communicate that.
  - j. Does the conclusion adequately "tie-up" the paper, i.e. revisiting key points from the introduction, autobiographical sketch, theoretical application and social justice conceptualization? What does the paper need to better conclude the paper? Please, explain.
  - k. Is the paper a complete six-to-eight pages of text? A reference page is not text. NOTE: You will need in-text citations and a references page for the final version of the paper.
  - l. Other thoughts/comments: Please share any other constructive thoughts/comments you have on the paper.
4. When you receive feedback on your paper, please review it and incorporate as you see fit. Review the assignment rubric and submit the final version of your paper via "Response Papers" on the Course Navigation Panel. Please do not submit in your peer review group!