

**Unit Essay**

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### Unit Essay

The first change I made is to my APA style format. For the title page I deleted the student version and made it the professional version because we write in Professional APA style format. Second, I changed my references page to make it an APA style format because originally it was not in APA style. Third, I changed the flow of my paper, fixed grammatical errors, and spelling errors. I made these changes because at points it was hard to follow my writing and by having grammatical and spelling errors it made some of the concepts I was trying to discuss muddy.

Influential figures have helped to establish sociology as a scientific discipline. In an article written by Karen Sternheimer, she discusses how, “it is important to start a discussion on why a sociological theory was started and also adding something new to that theory” (Sternheimer, 2018). Some of these early figures included Auguste Comte, Harriet Martineau, and Herbert Spencer. Depending on the time, there are different events that help with knowing the context for understanding these theorists' work. Auguste Comte's contributions included the aim to create a naturalistic science of society, which explains the past and predicts the future of mankind. Comte's key concepts to achieving this goal included social physics/sociology, social dynamics, social statics, methods of inquiry, the law of three stages, and positivism. Social physics is the original term to describe the new science. However, it was abandoned because it was stolen by another academic. Social dynamics are changing forces and phenomena in society. It is also how societies establish change and order. Methods of inquiry include observation, experimentation, and comparison. The law of three stages includes theological, metaphysical, and scientific or positive. Theological seeks awareness of origins and the purpose of being. Metaphysical is the transitory stage where a human is able to notice facts. Scientific forces abandon supernatural and abstract facts, so there is no absolute truth. The law of three stages

explains the key to progression is the succession of old stages. Positivism stems from the law of three stages and is the way to know and establish a foundation for the truth of the world.

Harriet Martineau's contributions to society included morals and manners, things, discourse of persons, impartiality, critique, sympathy, domination, and feminism. Martineau's contribution to society aimed to create a science of society that would be systematically grounded in empirical observation, so people would be able to make personal and political decisions for themselves. Morals are collective societal ideas that promote behavior. Manners are the observable patterns of actions in a society. Things are objects. Discourse of persons refers to interactions between people. Domination is the enforced "submission of one's will to another." Feminism is a consciousness-raising movement based on the idea that women and men should be equal.

Herbert Spencer's contribution to society was laying the groundwork for functionalism. Functionalism states that everything in a society serves a purpose. The key goals in achieving this were growth, structure, and differentiation, militant and industrial societies, functionalism, social Darwinism, and survival of the fittest. Growth means that societies start small and progressively increase in size. Structure means that societal structures must change as they grow to remain viable. Differentiation refers to societies starting with lots of homogeneity and evolving to become heterogeneous. Militant and industrial societies focus on how societies develop an imperial regulation system. Social Darwinism is based on biological ideas. Survival of the fittest is the idea that only the strong survive, and it is innate.

Theories are assumptions, interrelated concepts, and statements about relationships. However, sociological theories are a set of ideas that explain observable facts and involve experiences. Furthermore, sociological theory is not meant to be predictive like theories in the

natural sciences. Sociological theory can also be described as a broad explanation of human behavior and helps to answer the question, “why people act the way they do.” Sociological theories are informed by personal experiences, past work, new observations, and the times that an individual lives in. When there are new observations about sociological theories, they can either extend old theories, modify old theories, or refute old theories. When they extend old theories, they add more to the theory to make it more extensive. When they modify old theories, they change the theory to reflect society at the time. When they refute old theories, they prove a theory false. Sociological theory tends to be more evaluative and critical than the natural sciences. Sociological theory is the foundational component of sociology. It is meant to provide a pattern in which to explain broad phenomena. It also provides us with an explanation for human behavior. Additionally, it provides a way to describe why and how humans behave the way they do in different circumstances. It also provides us with an explanation of how humans behave under social circumstances. Sociological theory is also the framework to encourage societal change. Overall, sociological theory is a way to understand and make sense of social reality.

Sociological theory is unique from other scientific theories because it focuses on theories that have to do with societies as a whole. Moreover, it tries to make statements about why and how the social world is. Scientific theories are supported by evidence and are a way of thinking about a phenomenon. Moreover, in an article by Karen Sternheimer, she explains that, “theories are ideas that were created after multiple studies had been completed” (Sternheimer, 2020). Another article states that, “theories are a system of generalized statements or propositions about a phenomenon” (Edles, 2010, p. 3). Sociological theories are also constantly changing due to societies constantly evolving. Whereas scientific theories are statements that stay true for long periods due to the fact that they are based on evidence. Sociological theories are also unique

from other scientific theories because the focus on socially occurring phenomena happens on three levels: micro-level, meso-level, and macro-level. Micro-level includes small, individual-level interactions between people and how they understand the interaction. Meso-level includes medium-sized components of society that can include groups of people, specific organizations, and communities in a society. Moreover, it explains the relationships between people and groups. Macro-level includes large holistic-level societies as a whole with major social institutions. It helps explain how organizations of the whole shape the behavior at the micro-level. Furthermore, different aspects such as social, economic, political, and cultural forces create unique contexts for social behavior. In contrast, scientific theories do not have levels. Sociological theory has certain goals, such as evaluating certain aspects of society and critically challenging how we come to understand society, people, or both.

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**Unit Essay 2**

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## Unit Essay 2

A summary of the change that I made to the second Unit Essay is deleting the discussion of DuBois creating the Critical Race Theory and the usage of “critical theory”. He did have an influence on the two, however, he did not create or use the two. I made this change because in the first draft of my Unit Essay, I was not able to properly demonstrate the ability to understand the coursework and correctly apply the course material.

Many sociologists have paved the way for sociology as we know it today. Women and African Americans have had to “work a little harder” or “work ten times as hard to get noticed” (Edles, 2010). In an article by Karen Sternheimer she explains that, “theories are ideas that were created after multiple studies had been completed (Sternheimer, 2020).” Moreover, many theories were overlooked due to women and African Americans coming up with them, however, today this is less of a problem. W.E.B. DuBois is an African American, male, sociologist that has contributed to the field of sociology majorly. W.E.B. DuBois rose after Booker T. Washington and helped to elevate the field of sociology as we know it today (Morris, 2015). However, he did face many social issues and sociological puzzles. A lot of individuals had questions or even overlooked his work in general. The first major concern about DuBois is that he was African American. During his time Dubois faced racism because of his skin color. His work went overlooked for years and he had to work ten times as hard just so his point could be heard. DuBois was born five years after the Emancipation Proclamation and three years after the Civil War, so tension was still at a peak between races. He was also during the times of the Jim Crow Laws which addressed segregation, voting rights, and interracial marriages. Per these events, W.E.B. DuBois was still being stereotyped by white people. Thus, his work is being overlooked. Second, DuBois faced colonialism. Colonialism in Dubois eyes meant racial inferiority and



capitalist exploitation. DuBois fought for others to take a stand against exploitation against the lower class.

W.E.B. DuBois had many key theoretical contributions to the field of sociology. His major contribution to the field of sociology is the color line, the Veil, double consciousness, race as socially constructed, and multi-methods/mixed methods. You can think about these contributions as 'The Color line' being the overarching idea involving understanding racism and colonialism. "The Color line" draws analytical attention to how race was and is a driving force in society. Racism and colonialism is the central organizing mechanism in the modern world today. Race and racism is not logical because there is no biological race, however, society created race and racism to be real. Moreover, there are two concepts that help to capture this part of the color line: the Veil and Double Consciousness. The Veil is how race and racism is able to shape and define one's experience and interactions with others, so African Americans see the world differently than Caucasian individuals. There are visual and symbolic walls of separation that highlight sociological and psychological racial boundaries and the "invisibility" of African Americans. Double Consciousness is how Black identities are divided into parts, making it difficult or impossible to have a unified identity. The Veil stops black people from having true self-consciousness. There are two parts for an African American to have self-consciousness. The first part is understanding themselves through families and communities. The second part is viewing themselves through the eyes of others who see them as different. Race as socially constructed means it is not rooted in biological meaning, it is human intervention as a way to categorize people based on observable differences, it is created through interactions with others, and embedded into how social institutions operate and function (Morris, 2015).

Multi-Methods/mixed methods equals qualitative data plus quantitative data. Qualitative data is non-numeric and quantitative data is numeric data.

DuBois's theoretical contributions are still relevant in studying and understanding society today. The Veil is still relevant in society today for African Americans. Race and racism is able to shape and define one's experience and interactions with others, so African Americans see the world differently than Caucasian individuals. There are visual and symbolic walls of separation that highlight sociological and psychological racial boundaries and the "invisibility" of African Americans. There are three components that help to define the term "the Veil". First, the literal darker skin of Black people is a physical distinction of difference from whiteness. Second, There is a barrier preventing Whites from seeing Blacks as "true" Americans. Third, there is a hurdle preventing Black people from seeing themselves outside of what white America describes and prescribes for them. Filters how White people look at Black people and race through a lens of racial prejudice. It is basically meant to help Whites understand black experiences in America. In today's society the world still faces African Americans having to clear differences between Black people and White people. African Americans also have to still hide their personalities to be accepted in today's society, however, it is not as bad as it was back in the day. The NAACP is also something that is still relevant in today's society. W.E.B. DuBois helped to establish the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The NAACP is a civil rights organization formed in 1909 to advance justice for African Americans. The NAACP is actively fighting for racial equality for African Americans. The NAACP has grown immensely in numbers through youth chapters, college chapters, and state chapters. Overall, in today's society African Americans are still fighting for equal rights on a daily basis.

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**Unit Essay 3**

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### Unit Essay 3

To this essay I changed the organization of the essay, so that it is more easy to follow because the original had certain points that were not easy to follow. I also added two more sources that related to this specific paper because my original paper did not reach the minimum amount of course material. I changed the formation of my questions, so they accurately represented the course material better. My original submission lacked one small misrepresentation or application in questions one through three.

There are many theoretical traditions that help to offer unique insight into the social world. This Unit Essay will cover feminism and the effect it has made on the social world. Feminism is an intellectual, consciousness-raising movement based on the idea that women and men should be granted equal opportunities and respect. Feminism is used to understand and transform inequalities between women and men. Believing that these gender differences between women and men are culturally produced and socially constructed. There are four waves of feminism that address major concerns, questions, social issues, and sociological problems about the theoretical tradition. The first wave of feminism occurred during the years of 1848-1920 and was the earliest period of feminist activism. The major concerns that feminism addressed at this time was the women's suffrage and the resentment towards black men for having secured rights. The second wave of feminism occurred during the years of the 1960s to the 1980s and was also known as the "women's liberation movement." The major concerns that feminism addressed at this time was women's equal access to employment, pay, education, and reproductive rights. The third wave of feminism occurred during the years of the 1990s to the 2010s and focuses on the issues of diversity and the variety of identities that women can possess. The major concerns that feminism addressed at this time was addressing past inequalities within

feminist movements and sexual harassment in the workplace and sexuality. Last, the fourth wave of feminism is occurring at this time in the present day. Being that this wave is occurring in real time, it is hard to define. Some of the emerging issues feminism in this time is addressing are patriarchal norms and practices, holding men accountable for their actions, embracing intersectionality, and diversity of femininity.

There are many famous sociological theorists who help to utilize the theoretical tradition of feminism. I will be discussing two within this Unit Essay. The two sociological theorists who utilized feminism that I will be discussing within this essay are Jane Addams and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. Jane Addams was born on September 06, 1860, in Cedarville, Illinois. Her major ideas and phrases to understand were the Hull House, Social Ethic, Situation-at-hand, Narrative, Embodied social being, and factors needed for social change. “Addams wrote social theory as part of her larger project of achieving ameliorative social change in her own society and time. Her chief proposition is that the times require a social ethic as the prevailing principle of conduct in society: people must learn to identify their individual interests with the common good, and the common good must be defined so as to recognize that an injury to one is an injury to all. Her social theory is devoted to a careful explanation of the need for this ethic and the conditions necessary to achieve it.” (Lengermann & Niebrugge, 2007, p.74). Moreover, Jane Addams places ethics at the center of her analysis of society and social life. Charlotte Perkins Gilman was born on July 03, 1860, in Hartford, Connecticut. Her major ideas and phrases to understand were reforming social Darwinism, Work, Common consciousness, Excessive sex-distinction, sexuo-economic relation, sociality, and Androcentric culture. “Gilman was a theorist who genuinely believed in the critical and ameliorative possibilities of theory. With this faith, she constructed a systematic social theory that explains human life as characterized both

by a fundamental sociality and by unnecessary, socially produced human pain. Central to Gilman's dual vision of society – what it is and what it might be – is the dynamic relation between gender and social structure.” (Lengermann & Niebrugge, 2007, p.113-114). Furthermore, Gilman focused on social reform and had heavy emphasis on gender differences.

You can see these sociological theorists, Jane Addams and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, illustrate feminism within their work. Jane Addams illustrates feminism in her work through social ethics. Moreover, she challenges society to critically think about how an individual's interest can align with the common good. Social ethics to me means society having the collective responsibility to engage in social problems and focus on a group as a whole and not just their individual self. Social ethics helps to explain contemporary problems in society because being that we live in a Westernized, individualistic culture, we are still fighting for social problems with an individualistic mindset and not a collectivistic mindset. Moreover, this means that we are still trying to make systematic change and not focus on our individual self. Charlotte Perkins Gilman illustrates feminism in her work by reforming social Darwinism. Moreover, she challenges society to critically think about the dynamic relation between genders and social structure. The reformation of social Darwinism helps to explain contemporary problems in society by expanding on the idea that gender equality should be applied. In today's society, women are still fighting for the same equal rights as men.

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