Sociology 101: Sociological Autobiography

For this assignment you will write a sociological autobiography of at least five pages. You will analyze your lived experiences by applying the sociological imagination. Your task will be to place aspects of your life within social context. This will require an in-depth examination of how both time and place have been influential in shaping your life. The goal is to make a connection between your biography (personal experience) and social history (larger movements and patterns in society).

What you must do for this assignment:

• Decide what sociological topics you want to focus on. You will need to analyze at least 3 major topics discussed in class. For example, you may choose to focus on culture, socialization, groups, deviance, race, class, gender, religion, family, or education. When deciding on these major topics, think about the chapter themes we covered in class.

• Discuss events from your life that are related to the sociological topics you have chosen. For example, if you choose education as one of your major topics, you will provide a description of your own personal experiences related to education and the significant educational events that have occurred in your life.

• Apply sociological terms, concepts, theories and/or perspectives to your lived experiences. For example, if you are analyzing the topic of education you may examine the significance of labeling theory, apply concepts like tracking and the hidden curriculum, and discuss how the conflict or functionalist perspective helps make sense of your experiences. Remember, you must use sociological language. Be sure to reference the textbook and provide a description of the concepts you are discussing. The use of sociological terms is necessary for making your work different than the typical autobiography. I do NOT want an account of your life story without the use of the sociological imagination.

• Provide an introduction to your paper that gives an overview of who you are, including major biological, historical, and cultural factors influential in shaping your experiences. Also introduce the major sociological topics you will be analyzing in your paper.

• Provide a conclusion that highlights how the personal events in your life are connected to larger social forces from the past or present. For example, how are your personal experiences as a college student connected to the current state of higher education in our state/country? How are your own personal experiences connected to the experiences of others? Your conclusion should provide a reflection of the insight you have gained from this assignment.

Your paper should be organized in the following way: 1) Introduction; 2) Sociological topic one; 3) Sociological topic two; 4) Sociological topic three; and 5) Conclusion. You may find that some topics/concepts overlap. For example, while analyzing your experiences in education, it may be important to examine the role of race, class, or gender. This type of overlap is encouraged.