



Book Critique Instructions

Instructions: Your critique should be AT LEAST THREE TYPED, DOUBLE-SPACED PAGES EACH.

Your critique should answer the following questions/statements in response to Beverly Tatum's book, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*

Your responses must be in paragraph form.

- 1. What is the author's major thesis?**
- 2. Do you feel that the author is effective in support of his thesis? Why or Why not?**
- 3. Which theoretical perspective in sociology is best reflected in the book?**
- 4. Are there any biases in the book?**
- 5. Is there anything that you disagreed with? Why or Why not?**
- 6. Your comments, opinions, etc.**

MAJOR THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN SOCIOLOGY

Henslin (2007:11-17)

- **Symbolic Interactionism**: a theoretical perspective in which society is viewed as composed of symbols that people use to establish meaning, develop their views of the world, and communicate with one another. In short, symbolic interactionists analyze how our behaviors depend on the way we define ourselves and others.
- **Conflict Theory**: stresses that society is composed of groups that are competing with one another for resources. More specifically, conflict theory focuses on how elites use their power to control weaker groups.
- **Functional Analysis**: a theoretical framework in which society is viewed as composed of various parts, each with a function that when fulfilled contributes to society's equilibrium; also known as functionalism and structural functionalism.

Detailed Book Critique Instructions

*Do not place any numbers on your paper. Each number basically represents a different paragraph.

*A thesis (#1) is a statement that reflects a position that can be defended. For example, "The author's major thesis was that the criminal justice system is extremely unfair." Please present the thesis statement as it was presented in the example. Do not state "the author's main ideas was....." A main idea and a thesis are two DIFFERENT things. Remember to add at least one direct quote from the author that substantiates your claim.

- *Do you feel the author is effective in support of his thesis? Here, you need to explain whether or not you believed the author effectively supported his thesis. Effectively buttress your position with a supporting quote or two. Thoroughly explain yourself in this paragraph.
- *Which theoretical perspective is best reflected? Here, you state, based on the examples provided on the format sheet, which sociological perspective you believe the author is speaking from. Use the definitions provided of each perspective and explain yourself thoroughly with examples. It is possible to assert that the author is speaking from more than one perspective. This is okay. Just support your position(s) with information from the text.
- *Are there any biases? What I mean by “bias” is does the author make an assertion (e.g., the criminal justice system is racist) without presenting data or research to back up the claim. If according to the definition of “bias” you believe the author is biased, use quotes to support this position with a thorough explanation. If you believe the author is not biased, give some examples of information that he presents that is non-biased. Remember my definition of “bias.”
- *Is there anything you disagreed with? Here, state if you disagreed with anything. Give succinct examples and thoroughly explain yourself. If you agreed with everything, provide several examples of information/data that you agreed with.
- *Your comments, opinion, etc. Here, you give your thorough assessment of the book, and I do mean thorough.

*****I will strictly follow the above guidelines/format in grading your paper. Remember to cite at least one idea when answering each question.

Attention:

1. Format: Double-spaced pages in Times New Roman 12-points font with 1-inch margins. Put your name at the left top corner and page number at the right top corner. No cover page is needed. NO extra space between title and the main text. Acceptable formats should be submitted in Microsoft Words, Mac Pages, or Google Open Word Document.
2. Plagiarized assignment may receive zero on the assignment. The assignment will be examined by Blackboard SafeAssign function for plagiarism. DO NOT QUOTE content from the book but paraphrase it with citations.
3. It is highly recommended that you may incorporate some major sociological theoretical perspectives in your book critique.
4. Sample book critique attached in the syllabus is for a different book (Colorblind: the rise of post-racial politics and the retreat from racial equity). It is NOT the assigned book so the attached book critique is just an example for your references.