Sociology 1001, Fall 2004
Short Reports

Based on real experiences as a social observer using your sociological imagination, you’ll write TWO short reports from the following three choices describing and analyzing your experiences and evidence. Each report will be 4 typed, double-spaced pages using a standard 12-point font and 1 inch margins.

- **Media and Society**
  You will examine how social issues are covered in a major news media source in this project. First choose one current issue that you are interested in (some examples receiving coverage: gay marriage, war in Iraq, Hmong refugees in Minnesota, unemployment, and the presidential election). Using one newspaper source (e.g., Pioneer Press or Star Tribune or Washington Post or New York Times), examine four news articles that cover your issue on four different days. Save your articles and include them in your report!

  In your report, first summarize the key positions on all sides of this social issue. What are the two most important things we should know about this issue? What do your articles identify as the major forces affecting this issue (e.g., individuals, small groups, organizations, etc)? At what levels of society (micro, middle, macro) do these social forces operate? Why is it important that these particular actors and parts of society are involved? Then identify other social factors that you think may be shaping the issue based on your knowledge of sociology. Explain why these factors may be missing from the articles. To what extent do you think a sociological perspective is represented in the articles you read? Why? Support your discussion with evidence from the course (e.g., readings, lectures, discussion).

  **Media and Society Report DUE Sept. 29**

- **Deviance and Social Control**
  Select a norm that is part of your everyday life and clearly state what that norm is. Now violate that norm in two different settings when there are other people present. Observe and record the reactions that you get to your norm violations. Please be sure to do this activity in a way that is safe, legal, and ethical.

  In your report, first describe what you did and the norm you violated and how the settings in which you violated the norm are different from each other. Discuss the responses you observed to your norm violation and how you felt while breaking this social rule. Next, analyze the responses to your deviance using ideas and concepts from course materials (e.g., readings, discussions, and lectures). In what ways did others engage in social control that was directed at your norm violation? What similarities and differences did you observe in social control responses across the different settings and why are they important? What do you think these social control responses indicate about the roles and significance of norms, deviance, and conformity in everyday life?

  **Deviance and Social Control Report DUE October 25.**

- **Patterns of Campus Life**
  In this project, you will consider the ways in which campus life is stratified based on your knowledge of stratification and social institutions. You will also establish connections between research about stratification and your own experiences as a member of the University.

  **Patterns of Campus Life Report DUE November 25.**
In your report, first define social stratification based on your understanding of sociology. In general, what factors are stratified systems based on? Next, address how stratification operates on campus. Is there a system of stratification among the student population at the U of M? What are the criteria used in ranking individuals and groups of students in this system? What consequences does stratification have for students’ opportunities on campus? Explain and provide evidence for your answers. Finally, draw links between your discussion of campus stratification and broader systems of social stratification. Tie your discussion of patterns of campus organization to your earlier discussion of how sociologists think about stratification (for instance, where do power and access to resources fit into your discussion of campus stratification?). Support your claims with evidence from the course (e.g., readings, lectures, videos, discussion).

Patterns of Campus Life Report DUE Nov. 19