Preliminary Research Assignment #2

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Sociology 3301W: Introduction to Political Sociology

Due: Monday, November 20, 11:15am (beginning of class)
Length: Approximately 2 pages, Times 12 double-spaced (3 pages max)

In the first research assignment you began to study an organization. In this assignment, you will start tying together the ideas from this class with the organization you are focusing on. And, in the process you will narrow the topic of your final research paper.

Your task is to choose a major theoretical concept from the class and discuss how it applies to your organization. Some of the concepts we have covered thus far include:

1. Class conflict
2. Pluralism
3. Civil society
4. Social capital
5. Social movements
   -- including resource mobilization, framing, opportunity structures, etc.

There are other possible concepts that you can focus on if you wish. But, check with me first if it isn’t on the list. Once you have chosen a concept, you must do two things:

1. Describe how that concept applies to your organization. If you are looking at social capital, you could discuss how your organization facilitates social capital in the community. If your focus is class conflict, you could discuss how your organization fits into that larger perspective -- how it acts on behalf of certain class interests, or how class power affects your organization. If the focus is on social movements, you could discuss how your organization engages in resource mobilization, framing, etc.
   Note: Not all class concepts apply equally well to all organizations. Pick one that fits with your organization.
2. You must conduct additional research on the main concept involved and incorporate that into your discussion, beyond the material presented in class. You will be expected to look up a minimum of three additional reference sources relevant to the main theoretical concept (beyond assigned readings) in your final research paper. For this research assignment you must: a) read one of your three additional sources and incorporate it into your discussion; and b) List, in your bibliography, at least three sources relevant to your main concept. You may not have read all three at this point, but at least identify them.
**Service Learning Students:** Please note on your paper that you are participating in service learning. Your final papers will focus more on observations and experiences during your 20 hours of work. You must still relate those experiences to concepts from class. But, you are exempted from the requirement of doing library research and finding three additional sources of information on your main concept -- both for this assignment and in the final paper.