

# **SOC 776/978**

## **WRITING SOCIOLOGY**

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Room 3.59

Consultation Hours:

**Tuesdays 14.00-15.00**

**or by appointment**

# Book/Article Review

- ***1st draft:*** due Sunday, April 10, 12.00 pm in Homework Vault
- ***Comment Sheet:*** **Hard Copy due IN CLASS**, Tuesday, April 12; post electronic version in Homework Vault simultaneously
- **Book/Article Review** – min. 600 words; max. 1000 words

# SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE SOCIAL ISSUE ESSAYS

- You needed to re-write and cut – many went over the 1200 words maximum.
- Are you reading them aloud?
- Eliminating wordiness – remember Becker and making sure each word is doing a job.
- Passive tense
- References ASA Style

1. What is the book's argument? What is the author saying?
2. Does the book do what it says it is going to do?
3. Is the book a contribution to the field or discipline?
4. Does the book relate to a current debate/trend in the field? How?
5. What is the theoretical lineage or school of thought out of which the book rises?
6. Is the book well-written?
7. What are the book's terms and are they defined?
8. How accurate is the information (e.g. footnotes, dates, data, etc.)?
9. Are the illustrations helpful? If there are no illustrations, should there have been?
10. Who would benefit from reading this book?
11. How does the book compare to other books in the field?
12. If it is a textbook, what courses can it be used in and how clear is the book's structure and examples?

# WRITING A BOOK REVIEW

- ***Summarizing*** – What is the point? What is the author saying? Tell what the book is about *not* what you think should be!
- ***Analyzing*** – looking at relationships between: evidence & conclusion(s), author's various concepts; author's concepts and those of others
- ***Evaluation*** – establish your criteria and assess whether the book has succeeded

# ***POTENTIAL***

## **Structure of a Book Review**

- Title including complete bibliographic citation:  
*Mexican Women and the Other Side of Immigration: Engendering Transnational Ties.* By Luz María Gordillo. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010. Pp. x+211. \$55.00
- Paragraph identifying thesis and whether author achieves stated purpose
- 1-2 paragraphs summarizing
- Paragraph on strengths
- Paragraph on weaknesses
- Paragraph assessing strengths and weaknesses

# Another Structure of a Book Review

- **Enticement**
- **Examination**
- **Elucidation**
- **Evaluation**

# WRITING AN ARTICLE REVIEW

- **Thesis** – What is the main point? Is it clear? Do you have to hunt it down? Does it address a relevant issue in your discipline?
- **Method(s)** – How does the author support the thesis? Appropriate? Applied correctly? What about Methodology/justification?
- **Evidence** – What are the strengths/weaknesses? How well does the evidence support the thesis?
- **Evaluation** – Who will benefit from reading the article? What will the benefit be and how important is it? Suggestions for improvement?



# *POTENTIAL*

## **Structure of an Article Review**

- Title including complete bibliographic citation:  
Brettell, Carolyn B. 2005. “The spatial, social, and political incorporation of Asian Indian immigrants in Dallas, Texas.”  
*Urban Anthropology* 34 (2/3): 247-258.
- Paragraph identifying thesis and whether author achieves stated purpose
- Summary/Evaluation of Method(s)
- Summary/Evaluation of Evidence
- Your overall Evaluation and Assessment

As we can see from the above literature, coming from politically marginalized and disadvantaged strata of society, these groups end up neglected and impoverished. Though development is considered as national progress, ~~but~~ it makes the rich, ~~the~~ richer and the poor, ~~the~~ poorer. Development is considered as a myth, as it implies development in one ~~section~~ sector at the cost of ~~the~~ impoverishment of the other.

First of all, Czechs do not trust in political institutions, ~~which,~~ which in my ~~our~~ opinion may be explained in one of two ways. ~~that (a)s~~ State policy on particular issues ~~doesn't~~ may not reflect people's expectations.

Alternatively, ~~or (b)~~ it is caused by the communistic past, and ~~so~~ people still haven't begun to ~~started~~ trust in the legal system (because usually during the period of transition to the capitalistic system, ~~the~~ injustice is raised). To more closely discover ~~For more closely discovering~~ of these reasons, we should examine the trends in the level of trust in the legal system ~~in trends:~~ how it changed from 1989 to the present time. ~~The~~ Distrust in the legal system ~~is~~ also influences ~~the~~ distrust in the courts, as the instrument of procedural justice.

Poor governance is a ~~the~~ major contributor to the rise of school dropout rates in ~~Malawi as a country is facing so far~~. Malawi's government fails to implement policies that would help a person from a low income family to become self reliant and in turn ~~can be able to~~ send children to school without any problem. Additionally, the government does not have sound policies to ensure that education is free for all. Instead of ~~being busy with~~ economic revitalizing campaigns, ruling governments are ~~always busy~~ strategising on how to silence ~~the~~ opposition members. This, however, leads to high levels of corruption involving government officials, which ~~that~~ has put the country into economical turmoil ~~such that~~ and parents can no longer afford to pay for their children's education.

Politicians do not consider ~~the~~ people from the grassroots when they come into power. A, all they remember is how to fill their pockets with more money, taking ~~an~~ advantage of a poor Malawians. The pPolitics of conviction plays a crucial role instead of the politics of responsibility. Therefore, the government should be held responsible for the current increase in a the number of students ~~who are~~ dropping out of school because of poverty.

# **NEXT WEEK'S READINGS**

## **REQUIRED READING:**

- Turabian, Ch. 1-3, pp. 1-43. (43 pp.)



# TQS shorthand:

- I am working on the TOPIC of...
- ...because I want to find out how or why... (QUESTION)
- ...so that I can help others understand how or why.... (Significance/SO WHAT)



# Why do we review literatures?

- To map the field or fields relevant to the inquiry (historical development, empirical/theoretical bases, key figures/texts, major debates)
- To establish which studies, ideas and/or methods are most pertinent to the specific research being undertaken
- To create the warrant for the research (identifying gaps, bringing the separate together, speaking to a particular debate or puzzle)
- To identify the particular contribution *your* research will make

# **BUT it is *not* just a review or “laundry list”**

## **We are “narrating” the literatures (plural)**

- How much do we know about the topic?
- What is the best available info and why?
- What methods have researchers used? Are they effective?
- What data are available?
- What are the main conclusions?
- What is missing? What can you discover?
- How will readers benefit from your contribution?

# How to understand working with literatures

- ***Writing as discursive social practice*** – What is your academic climate?
- ***Writing as dialogic*** – Is your work lively and pleasurable to read; does it engage the reader in a conversation?
- ***Writing as text/identity work*** – “The practices of academic writing produce simultaneously a scholar and a text.” Learning to write with authority

# Mapping the field of literatures

## Getting Started

I turn now to what is already known about

\_\_\_\_\_.

I look first at why, according to the literatures,

\_\_\_\_\_, and I detail the

\_\_\_\_\_ that has resulted.

I note the minimal focus on \_\_\_\_\_

relative to other research and the limited work

which foregrounds \_\_\_\_\_.

It is this gap to which I am to contribute.

# Mapping the field of literatures

I turn now to what is already known about dogs as pets. I look first at why, according to the literatures, some dog breeds are seen as compatible with humans and others are too aggressive, and I detail the data collection practices that have resulted. I note the minimal focus on the role of dogs as companions that are “fun” relative to other research and the limited work which foregrounds the structures of meaning underlying pet selection and ownership. It is this gap to which I am to contribute.

# Mapping the field of literatures – Part II

The study builds on and contributes to work in

\_\_\_\_\_.

Although studies in \_\_\_\_\_ have examined

\_\_\_\_\_ there has not been an \_\_\_\_\_.

As such, this study provides additional insight into

\_\_\_\_\_.

The analytic focus on \_\_\_\_\_ enables another contribution.

This study analyses \_\_\_\_\_.

Although numerous studies ( ) have identified \_\_\_\_\_,

little analytic attention has been paid to \_\_\_\_\_.

I address this issue by demonstrating \_\_\_\_\_.

# Mapping the field of literatures- Part II

The study builds on and contributes to work in the study of dogs as pets. Although studies in pet ownership have examined the role of aggressiveness as a measure of suitable companionship and ownership of dogs, there has not been a sustained engagement with *why* people choose to have dogs as pets. As such, this study provides additional insight into the ways in which “fun” represents an important factor in assessing a particular dog breed’s suitability as a pet. The analytic focus on cultural structures enables another contribution. This study analyses the ways in which pet owners engage in the process of meaning making about their pets. Although numerous studies (Pavlov 1890; Jones 1992; Smith 2007) have identified objective criteria (e.g. aggressiveness), little analytic attention has been paid to how dogs can be “fun” pets. I address this issue by demonstrating that pet ownership is an inherently cultural practice.

# Tips for Searching

- Use Google Scholar - [Transnational migration studies: Past developments and future trends](#) [PDF] from [peggylevitt.org](#)  
..., BN Jaworsky - Annu. Rev. Sociol., 2007 - [annualreviews.org](#)

Abstract The past two decades have witnessed a sea change in migration scholarship. Most scholars now recognize that many contemporary migrants and their predecessors maintain various kinds of ties to their homelands at the same time that they are incorporated into the ...

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- Using Boolean Operators:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oa66AxTbjxA>



# SYLLABUS

Week 1 - Introduction to course

Week 2 - What is sociology and what can we do with it?

Week 3 - What is bad writing and how can we recognize it?

Week 4 - How do we write a good great expository or opinion essay?

Week 5 - How do we help one another constructively?

Week 6 - How do we review a book or an article?

Week 7 - NO CLASS (Reading Week)

Week 8 - How do we begin sociological research?

Week 9 - How do we finish sociological research and begin writing?

Week 10 - How do we finish writing a research essay?

How do we talk about our work to others?

Week 11 - NO CLASS (Holiday)

Week 12 - NO CLASS (Holiday)

Week 13 - How do we get published?