Podcast Review

This assignment requires students to listen to a podcast episode each week that relates to the topical discussion in the course for the week. Students have the option to select an episode from one of many different podcasts in the discipline and that pertain to the course topic for the week/s they are assigned (e.g., in SOCI 219 Sex and Gender in Society I used the options of New Books in Sociology, New Books in Gender Studies, The Annex Sociology Podcast, or The Social Breakdown each week).

The weekly reviews will be approximately 1,000 words in length – you can use word count on Microsoft Word to ensure you have met this requirement. An essential feature of a good audio review is the reviewer’s ability to write concisely so that a comprehensive evaluation of the podcast episode can be obtained from a brief reading of your writing. So, do not write more, write more concisely. It is also important to find creative ways to connect material from in-class lectures, the course textbook, and other scholarship when evaluating the podcast episode you listened to for your short essay.

The point of a podcast review is not to summarize what you listened to, but to situate the historical merit of the episode and to critically evaluate the author’s purpose, thesis, contentions, and methods of analysis in the research they talked about. Hence, the bulk of the body of one’s review essay will be to conduct a scholarly review of the episode you listened to. To do this you will use the course textbook (and other scholarship) to evaluate the commentary the author and the host engaged in about the book.

Among the features of a strong review are:

- A discussion of the main contentions discussed in the podcast episode
- An explanation of the sources the podcast host (or guest) utilized in their discussion
- An assessment of the strong points or shortcomings of the podcast episode
- How does the podcast episode you listened to change the way one should think about the topic of discussion?

Finally, you will want to make references to specific portions of the interview (use timestamps) to illustrate the specific parts of the interview that are under evaluation. The challenge will be to do as much of this as possible and yet not let it interfere with the restricted length of the essay. In other words, find creative ways to give examples from the interview, use scholarly sources to support your stance, and do so in a limited amount of space. Obviously, direct quotations should be kept to a minimum, and should rarely exceed one sentence.