Instructions for Soc 411 reading synopsis

These synopses will serve as the focus for the group discussions as well as study guides for exams. They are due at the end of class on the days listed in the syllabus. **ALL SYNOPSES MUST BE TYPED AND NO LATE SYNOPSES WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PRIOR ARRANGEMENT!** Each outline will be worth up to 25 points for a total of 100 points. Synopses should be between 4-10 pages in length. You should double space the following sections of the synopses: (1) Biography, (2) Social/Historical Location, and (3) Critique. All other sections are to be single spaced. Proper writing is expected (i.e. proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation). Poor writing will result in a loss of up to 10 points! Use the headers as provided for each section.

You should prepare synopses for the following theorists:
1) Durkheim; 2) Bourdieu; 3) Weber; 4) Blumer

You should answer the following questions for each theorist:

1. What is the biographical background? (Biography)
   Identify all relevant biographical information such as dates of birth and death, where the theorist was born and where the theorist lived, class background, religion, parent’s occupation, etc.

2. What is the context? (Social/Historical Location)
   Identify the events and people that have affected the theorist and the theory. This section should be in partial outline form using the following structure:
   - Social/Historical Location
     - Events
       - French revolution
         - Explanation of how the French Revolution affected theory (this should be in normal paragraph form)
     - People
       - James Dewey
         - Explanation (this should be in normal paragraph form)
       - Hegel
         - Explanation (this should be in normal paragraph form)
   
   NOTE: Be sure to not only identify the social/historical factors, be sure to explain **how** these affected the thinking of the theorist in question.

3. What’s the question? (Research Questions/Problem Statements)
   Develop from the reading the general problems which the theorist attempts to explain or which guides the theorist’s inquiry.

4. Terms & Concepts
   List and define as many key terms as you can that are used by or associated with the theorist.

5. Dichotomies, Trichotomies, etc.
   A dichotomy is a division into two contradictory parts (e.g. order vs. chaos), a trichotomy is a division into three contradictory parts (e.g. religion, philosophy, science). The idea here is to scan your list of terms & concepts and then put those dichotomous, trichotomous, etc. variables here as well. Be sure to include the differences between each.

6. What’s the reason? (Theory, Explanation)
   Summarize the key points of the theorists’ theory using as much detail as possible. After summarizing the theory, provide a short critique.