Schools of Thought Assignment Sheet

For the schools of thought assignment, you must write a paper that:

1. Reviews the scholarly literature applicable to your particular research question. Your focus is on how scholars have tried to answer your research question. What are their explanations? **You are particularly interested in how scholars have explained variations in your dependent variable.** What cause have they assigned to the effect you wish to study?
2. Organizes that scholarly literature into groups (schools of thought) centered around a common explanation. Most research issues have only a few dominant answers, and thus can be organized into collections centered around a particular answer.
3. Evaluates the schools of thought on the basis of their evidence and logic. Are they effectively argued? Do they have solid evidence to back up their conclusions? How useful are they to your research? You should point out whether there is a scholarly consensus around the issue, a scholarly debate around the issue, or a scholarly void around the issue where either the evidence or the logic is lacking.
4. Think about and try to describe the theory that each school of thought has at its center. If they agree on a common answer to a common question, then they are, in essence, sharing a similar theory and, potentially, a similar hypothesis. Try to outline what each of those might be.
5. Decides how these theories and hypotheses relate to each other. Are they supporting? (both could be true) Competing? (one or the other has to be true) Look for gaps in the literature where you might put your own theory and hypothesis.

We will talk about this in class but the most important thing to do now is start reading as widely and deeply in your topic as you can.

Requirements: 1500 word minimum. Citations and a bibliography.

Due: October 4 at 11:59 pm (Internet willing).