CHAPTER 6

Symbolic Interactionist Theorizing

Most of early sociology was decidedly macro in its concerns with the big changes in human societies that came with industrialization and modernity. There are hints of a more micro-level focus in Emile Durkheim's analysis of religion and rituals, in Georg Simmel's analysis of the modern self in complex societies revealing multiple and cross-cutting group affiliations, in Max Weber's analysis of four types of action undergirding legitimated orders, in Herbert Spencer's concern with ceremonial institutions, and even in Karl Marx's portrayal of alienation and the emotional arousal accompanying mobilization for conflict. But, most of this work was intended to explain more macro-social forces and societal-level evolutionary trends.

In the United States, in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and into the first three decades of the twentieth century, there was a convergence of thought from diverse disciplines on understanding human behavior and social interaction. The most important figure in this more micro analysis was George Herbert Mead[1] who was a philosopher at the University of Chicago and advocate for a school of philosophy known as *pragmatism*.

Pragmatism argued that humans constantly seek to make adjustments in their actions so as to adapt to ongoing social processes. People do "what works," and this criterion of adaptation can explain a great deal about the development of persons from their first moments in societies. Pragmatism was a broad intellectual movement that still has adherents, but several generations ago, many more key figures in the history of philosophy, psychology, and sociology considered themselves pragmatists. And, it is from the synthesis of their ideas by George Herbert Mead that micro sociology was born, despite the fact, which perhaps is embarrassing for the discipline, that Mead was not a sociologist.

George Herbert Mead's Synthesis

Mead not only followed the general philosophy of pragmatism, but he also saw an affinity of pragmatism with behaviorism, utilitarianism, and Darwinism. To him, these theoretical

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[1]Mead's most important sociological ideas can be found in the published lecture notes of his students from his course in social psychology. His most important exposition is found in his *Mind, Self, and Society*, ed. C. W. Morris (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934). Other useful sources include George Herbert Mead, *Selected Writings* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964) and Anselm Strauss, ed., *George Herbert Mead on Social Psychology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

approaches in, respectively, psychology, economics, and biology described *human behavior as adaptation*.[2] If behaviorism is freed from its strict methodology of avoiding the black box of human cognition, then behaviors hidden in the human brain—that is, capacities to learn language, think and make decisions, see and evaluate self from the perspective of others and cultural codes, and cooperate with others in organized groupings—can be seen as behaviors that are learned because they bring the rewards associated with cooperating with others in societies. Similarly, the utility-seeking, rational, and decision-making actors of utilitarianism and neo-classical economics are also doing the same thing: trying to adjust and adapt to social circumstances in order to maximize utilities or rewards. And Darwin's notion of natural selection can be applied to social behaviors, whereby those behaviors that facilitate adjustment and adaptation to the social environment are retained in the behavioral repertoire of a person.

And so, for Mead, the basic question was this: What behavioral capacities do humans learn during the course of their lives that enable them to adapt to ongoing coordinated actions in societies? His answer to this question pulls ideas from philosophy and the social sciences; and in bringing related strands of thinking together, Mead accomplished what no one else had ever done: uncover fundamental processes of social interaction among human beings. Human behavior, interaction, and social organization are possible by virtue of several unique human abilities, beginning with the capacity to use and read *conventional* or *significant gestures* that mean the same thing to the sending and receiving organism. Mead incorrectly thought that only humans had this capacity to develop conventional meanings for words and body gestures that mean the same thing to all parties in an interaction, but still, humans can probably engage in interactions using arbitrary symbols and signs more than any other animal. With the ability to use significant gestures, humans learn to *take the role of the other* or *role take*, by which he meant humans' capacity to read the conventional gestures of others, put themselves in each other's place, anticipate the role they are likely to play out, and then make the necessary adjustments to others so as to facilitate cooperation.

With the ability to read, interpret, and use conventional gestures and, then, to role take with others come additional capacities. One is the capacity for *mind* that Mead adopted from his colleague at the University of Chicago, John Dewey.[3] For Dewey, mind is the ability to imaginatively rehearse covertly alternative lines of conduct, to perceive the likely consequences of these alternatives in a situation, and then to select that alternative that would facilitate adjustment to, and cooperation with, others. If an organism can engage in such covert behaviors, Dewy asserted, it had the behavioral capacity for *mind*. Thus, for Dewey and Mead, mind is not a thing, but rather, a behavioral ability that is learned like any other behavior response: if it brings reinforcement and rewards by facilitating adjustment and adaptation to the social environment, it will be retained in the behavioral repertoire of an individual. Thus, while minded behaviors have a biological basis, this basis is only used when it is mobilized to facilitate adjustment and adaptation of individuals to ongoing social contexts. Because humans must cooperate in groups to survive, having the abilities outlined by Dewy for mind would be highly rewarding. With mind, role-taking can be much more subtle and complex, and this too is rewarding because it makes cooperation more viable.

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[2]Jonathan H. Turner, *Contemporary Sociological Theory* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2012), pp. 312–313.

[3]John Dewey, *Human Nature and Human Conduct* (New York: Henry Holt, 1922), p. 190. For an earlier statement of these ideas, see John Dewey, *Psychology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1886).

With the ability to read and use conventional gestures, to role take, and anticipate likely responses of others to various lines of behavior (i.e., to have a facility for mind), another critical behavioral capacity is acquired: The ability to see one's self as an object in a situation. Mead borrowed this idea from Charles Horton Cooley[4] at the University Michigan, where Mead had begun his career, and from the famous pragmatist psychologist, William James.[5] Cooley used the interesting phrase "looking glass self" to outline self-related behaviors. People read the conventional gestures of others as if looking into a mirror (or, the "looking glass," which was a term used for "mirror" in the nineteenth century). By looking into this mirror, one's self is reflected, or at least the reactions of others are reflected; and as a person interprets these gestures of other, this person will experience self-feelings ranging from *pride* at the positive end of emotions to *shame* at the negative end of the continuum. By seeing "oneself as an object" (reflected in the gestures of others operating as a kind of mirror), individuals make adjustments to their behaviors so as to sustain a positive reflection of themselves. William James added to this kind of analysis the notion that people's images of themselves, as reflected in the mirror of others gestures, will crystallize over time into more enduring views of self that persons carry with them. James also emphasized that individuals develop different types of selves—material, social, and spiritual, for example—that become relevant to them in various situations and that they seek to verify in the eyes of others.

Mead took these ideas and developed a view of individuals as deriving a self-image from the responses of others, which they evaluate for what these responses of others say about a person's conduct in ongoing groups; then, he added James' key idea: from these self-images that arise in every interaction, people's sense of self becomes codified into a more stable and enduring *self-conception*. This self-conception is more stable, and it represents the fundamental cognitions, feelings, and evaluations of self that emerge over a person's lifetime. It is this self-conception that, once formed by young adulthood, gives persons' actions a certain predictability and constancy because people's behaviors reflect the kind of persons that they consider themselves to be.

Mead added several refinements to his notion of self. He recognized that individuals do not just role take with specific others in a situation. The can often role take with others who are not co-present but who are important to an individual and whose evaluation is particularly significant. A person can imagine what these others would say, do, or think about their actions, as if they are present in the situation; and often, people are responding to these distant drummers more than the people right in front of them. Mead then added yet another critical idea: people role take with what he termed the *generalized other* or a "community of attitudes" and the broader perspective of a situation. Indeed, Mead felt that people's capacities for role-taking were not complete until they could assume the perspective—the values, beliefs, collective attitudes—of communities of others. These communities of attitudes can be the immediate group, to ever-larger and more encompassing structures, including a whole society. Thus, in Mead's view, culture comes to individuals through role-taking with generalized others.

These are the basic ideas in Mead's theory of interaction, and they capture the core processes of face-to-face interaction that have served sociology for one hundred years. These ideas have been expanded upon, as we will see in this and the next chapter, but without Mead's synthesis, none of

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[4]Charles Horton Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order* (New York: Scribner's, 1902) and *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind* (New York: Scribner's, 1916).

[5]William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt, 1890), vol. 1, pp. 292–299.

this subsequent elaboration of his scheme would have been possible. Mead's ideas have been carried forward through a theoretical perspective known as *symbolic interactionism*. This label was given to Mead's work by Herbert Blumer[6] who took over Mead's famous social psychology course at the University of Chicago upon his death. I am not sure that Mead would have approved of this label, but it has stuck as the name for theorizing in the Meadian tradition. The label, symbolic interactionism, denotes a wide range of phenomena, from the mutual signaling of gestures in interaction to the codification of a self-conception, but it is last element of Mead's scheme—the social self—that has been the focus of symbolic interactionists over the last few decades.

Contemporary Symbolic Interactionism and the Analysis of Identities

For some decades, the terms self-image, self, and self-conception were used by symbolic interactionists, but in recent decades, the label *identity* has become more widespread. The reason for this shift in terminology is that sociologists have increasingly theorized many dimension, types, and forms of self, and clearly, the notion of identities captures this emphasis. As Mead recognized but did not elaborate upon, people have multiple selves that differ along a number of potential dimensions, including: How emotional attached are individuals to diverse identities? How general or situation-specific are various identities? How connected to culture and its moral codes are various identities? How salient or relevant are various identities in particular situations? And, how high or low in a hierarchy of identities is any particular identity? These kinds of question have become increasingly important as theorists pursued Mead's and the sources of Mead's ideas over the last thirty years.

Multiple Identities

For many decades after Mead's great synthesis, theorists followed Mead's lead and distinguished between identities tied to particular situations—family, work, school, church, team, etc.—and the general self-conception that a person has of himself or herself. But, empirical research has revealed that people have potentially many more identities, including a general conception of themselves as a certain kind of person, as well as a host identities tied to various types of situations. There is no consensus about basic types of identities, but a set of distinctions that I work with captures the current state of theorizing on types of identities. Figure 6.1 outlines four basic types and levels of identity in terms of their generality and emotional content.[7] Some identities are very general and, moreover, are always with a person, much like a shell on the back of a snail. We walk around with them, and they are almost always relevant and salient to a certain degree. At the other extreme, some identities are tied to a particular role in a particular social structure. For example, I have an identity of myself as a professor as a role in a particular type of organization. A female may have an identity of herself as mother in a family structure. These identities are clearly narrower than a
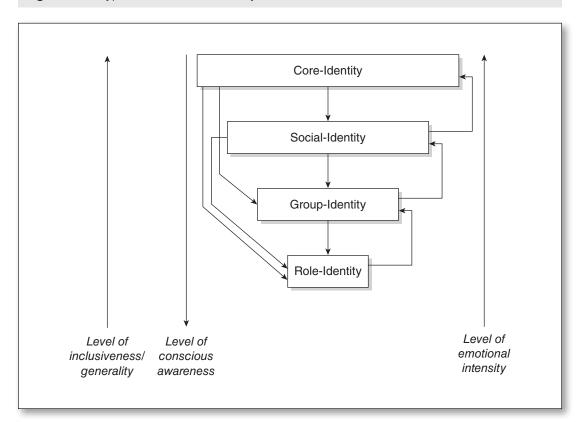
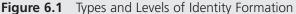[6]Herbert Blumer, *Symbolic Interaction* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1969).

[7]Jonathan H. Turner, *Face-to-Face: Toward a Sociological Theory of Interpersonal Behavior* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002); See also, Jonathan H. Turner, *Theoretical Principles of Sociology, Volume 2 on Microdynamics* (New York: Springer, 2011).

more general self-conception. Yet, we need to be careful here because some role-identities may also be central to a person's more general self-conception. For example, the longer that I have been a professor, the more of my general identity is tied up with my role as professor, and such is often the case for women's role-identities as a mother.

In Figure 6.1, I placed what I term as *core-identity* at the top of a hierarchy that also emphasizes two dimensions of identities: (1) the emotions tied to them and (2) the degree to which we are cognizant of the nature of an identity. I would argue that people will have some difficulty in articulating their core-identity or what some now call *person-identity*. The reason for this is that some dimensions of this identity are unconscious, or even repressed, but these elements still influence how persons act and even how they evaluate themselves. A great deal of emotion is tied up in identities, especially core-identities, and people react very emotionally to failure to verify this level of identity. As a result, they often push the negative emotions that come with failure below the level of consciousness, but this does not mean the emotions go away or the evaluations of others about core-identities are ignored. They are pushed below the level of consciousness, but eventually, the emotions will come out, often in rather transmuted form, as we will see later in discussing more psychoanalytic theories of symbolic interactionists.

At the bottom of the hierarchy in Figure 6.1 are *role-identities*, which people can usually describe with accuracy. Thus, if you asked someone what kind of father, student, professor, mother, worker, etc. they are, they can usually respond with clarity and specificity. These identities are evaluated by

Figure 6.1 Types and Levels of Identity Formation

individuals, and so like all identities, there is emotion attached to them, but not to the extent of a core- or person-identity. Yet, as noted above, if a particular role is bound up with a person's fundamental feelings about themselves at the person-identity level, then there will be much more emotion inhering in individuals' description of a particular role-identity.

Between these levels of core- and role-identities are two others that I typically highlight. One is a *group-identity*, which is a step up from a role-identity. These are identities built around membership in, desire to be a member in, or vicarious identification with a group or organization. A fan of a sports team is a good example of group-identity built around often excessive identification. As is all too evident, rabid sports fans are quite emotional about their identification with a team; they can talk about their identity at quite some length, often endlessly. As a student, even after graduation, you may have the identity of once being a member and now an alumnus of a university or college, and people vary enormously in how important this group-identity is. A worker usually has some sense of identity with his or her place of work, even if it is negative, and we rarely have any trouble talking about how we see our workplace. Indeed, like role-identities, group-identities (as well as organizational and community) can carry emotion but remain cognitive in that people can articulate the nature of the identity. Moreover, the identity is generally confined and not highly general, unless group membership in an important part of a person- or core-identity. The final level and type of identity is what is called a *social-identity* in the psychological literature; this identity is about broad social categories that people belong to, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, age, social class, and any social category that is salient in a society. These identities are quite general and must be carried around like person-identities because our gender, age, ethnicity, and other memberships in social categories are often quite visible, but more importantly, there are beliefs, evaluations, expectations, and norms associated with each of these social-identities.[8] People may not like them, or embrace evaluations and expectations, but emotions are almost always tied to social-identities. People have cognitive awareness of the nature of this identity, but if they are ashamed of their social-identity, then emotions and defense mechanisms distort these cognitions, with the result that people's ability to describe their social-identity accurately is less than is normally the case for describing their group- and role-identities.

These are not the only identities found in theory and research on self. Recently, for example, some have argued that there is a separate "moral identity"[9] whereby people have conceptions about how moral they are and how they feel about this morality. This moral identity might be considered a component of a core-identity, but since so much research is being conducted on this question of conscience and morality, it may become a distinctive identity in social science typologies, if only because it has been studied as a distinct level and type of self. But, those who make the argument for a moral identity point out that it affects all of the other levels of identity enumerated in Figure 6.1. Time will tell on how this, and other potential candidates for a new type of identity, shake out in the theoretical literature over the next decade.

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[8]In the expectation-states literature, these memberships in categoric units are conceptualized as "diffuse status characteristics" about which there are status beliefs about the worth and characteristics of members. These translate into a series of expectations for how these members of social categories should behave.

[9]See, for example, Steven Hitlin, ed., *Handbook of The Sociology of Morality* (New York: Springer, 2010); Steven Hitlin, *Moral Selves, Evil Selves: The Social Psychology of Conscience* (London, UK: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2008)

Hierarchies of Salience and Prominence

Much theorizing on identities sees identity dynamics as revolving around a hierarchy of salience and prominence. The underlying idea in these approaches is that identities constitute a hierarchy of *how important they* are to people in *how many situations*. The more people present a particular identity in situations, the higher in the hierarchy it is, and the more important is this identity to a person. If the identity is verified and accepted by others, it remains in the hierarchy. However, if people do not accept this identity, and consistently so, it will move down the hierarchy and, in extreme cases, disappear. Thus, this literature brings an important force into interaction: people seek to have others verify and confirm those identities that are high in a hierarchical ranking of all identities. Much of what goes on in interaction is an effort to present to others a particular identity with the hope and expectation that others will accept this presentation and, thereby, verify this identity. Identities that get consistently verified, then, will move up and stay high in the hierarchy of salience and prominence. At times, social-structural and cultural constraints restrict the range of identities that can be presented to others, as might be the case in a formal office setting, but even with these restrictions, people can often present multiple identities, and when an identity is high in the salience hierarchy, it is sure to be one of those identities that is added to a person's presentation of self to others. There are some variations in theories using this basic idea of hierarchy, and so, let me outline two of the most important theories.

Stryker's Theory of Identity Salience

Sheldon Stryker[10] argues that people become committed to identities, for a variety of reasons: an identity is positively valued by others and by broader cultural definitions; it is congruent with the perceived expectations of others on whom one will be dependent for identify verification; it is an identity that is part of a more extensive network of persons who have expectations for this identity; and it may be an identity that larger numbers of people, regardless of their network location, expect a person to play.

Identities to which persons have commitments move up the *salience hierarchy*, with the result that individuals will emit role performances to others that are consistent with this highly salient identity. Moreover, identities high in the salience hierarchy are likely to push individuals to perceive that a given situation is an opportunity to present this identity; and more generally, persons are likely to seek out situations where they can present this salient

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[10]Sheldon Stryker, *Symbolic Interactionism: A Structural Version* (Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin/Cummings, 1980); "Identity Salience and Role Performance: The Relevance of Symbolic Interaction Theory for Family Research," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (1968): pp. 558–564; "Fundamental Principles of Social Interaction," in *Sociology,* 2nd ed., Neil J. Smelser, ed. (New York: Wiley, 1973), pp. 495–547. For a more recent version of the theory, see Sheldon Stryker and Richard T. Serpe, "Commitment, Identity Salience, and Role Behavior," in *Personality, Roles, and Social Behavior*, eds. William Ickes and Eric Knowles (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1982), pp. 199–218; Richard T. Serpe and Sheldon Stryker, "The Construction of Self and the Reconstruction of Social Relationships," *Advances in Group Processes*, 4 (1987): pp. 41–66; and Sheldon Stryker, "Exploring the Relevance of Social Cognition for the Relationship of Self and Society," in *The Self-Society Dynamic: Cognition, Emotion, and Action*, eds. Judith Howard and Peter L. Callero (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 19–41.

identity. However, if the identity is not verified by others, for whatever reason, it will move down the hierarchy.

Identities link people to structures because people are more likely to play identities that are consistent with cultural beliefs and values, with norms in situations where they have opportunities to present an identity, with networks of persons who have expectations for certain kinds of role performances, and situations where a person is allowed to present an identity. These pressures mean that there will generally be *correspondence* between identities that are highly salient to a person and the expectations inhering in social structures and the cultures of these structures. The self-esteem of a person is dependent upon playing a highly salient identity, and thus self-esteem is also dependent upon meeting the expectations of networks, social structures, and culture. In this way, person, salient identity, roles displaying this identity, social structure, and culture are lined up and generally compatible.

If the structure and culture of a situation change, however, then identity salience and commitment will change, and any identity can change if it is consistent with the person's value commitments. When people experience strong negative emotions in situation, this almost always means that there is discordance with the identity presented and situational expectations generated by networks, social structures, and culture. Individuals will, therefore, frequently have to alter their commitments to an identity and seek out a new identity that is compatible with a situation that has changed. Thus, the emotions attached to an identity are both an early warning system that something is amiss as well as the motivational force that pushes individuals to find either a whole new network of relations or alter an identity. The latter is more likely because people are generally not free to change social structures on which they depend, and thus, an unverified identity will move down the hierarchy, and an identity more consistent with situational expectations will move up the hierarchy.

McCall and Simmons' Hierarchy of Prominence

George McCall and J. L. Simmons focus on role-identities.[11] Role-identities are tied to roles, and these roles are, in turn, tied to social structures and culture. While social structure and culture constrain the roles that a person can play, and how they play these roles, there is always a certain amount of latitude in how a person presents himself or herself to others in a situation. McCall and Simmons posit a *hierarchy of prominence* among various role-identities, which consists of several elements: (a) the idealized view that individuals have of themselves (e.g., smart, funny, intelligent, etc.) that will determine not only which role they will play but also how they will play this role; (b) memories about the extent to which these ideal views of self have been supported by audiences; (c) emotional commitments to those roles that, in the past, have been supported; and (d) the amount of previous investment in time and energy for a particular identity that has been played out in a role.

Because most interactions are somewhat underspecified about how one should behave, this ambiguity gives individuals some flexibility in presenting roles to others. This ambiguity can be reduced by role-taking with other individuals, and through what McCall and Simmons call *an*

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[11]George P. McCall and J. L. Simmons, *Identities and Interactions* (New York: Basic Books, 1960). A second edition of this book was published in 1978, although the theory remained virtually unchanged.

inner forum (or minded deliberations in G. H. Mead's scheme), persons adjust their roles and the identities embedded in them to accommodate others' dispositions and likely actions, if they can. There are always expressive strategies for orchestrating gestures in order to present a certain kind of self to others during their role-taking, and these expressive and strategically presented gestures will typically present a role-identity high in a person's hierarchy of prominence.

Undergirding this strategic presentation of self is an exchange dynamic (see previous chapter). There can be *extrinsic rewards* in a situation, such as money, and there are almost always *intrinsic rewards*, such as satisfaction, pride, happiness, sense of efficacy, and role support by others. Indeed, one of the most important intrinsic rewards is others' support for a role-identity that a person presents, and individuals are highly motivated to secure this support because it offers the most reward for presenting a role-identity. There is, McCall and Simmons argue, a kind of marketplace for exchanges of rewards, and like any exchange in a quasi markets, individuals try to exchange similar rewards that allow both parties to an interaction to realize a profit—rewards less costs and investments in securing roles. There is also always a calculation of fairness and justice that determines if rewards given to each person are proportional to their respective costs and investments in a particular role-identity.

McCall and Simmons distinguish between *situated self* and *ideal self*. A situated self is the role-identity to which a person is committed in a situation and is most likely to present to others. The elements of a situated self will vary, depending upon the situation where individuals can have somewhat different hierarchies of prominence. The ideal self, like G. H. Mead's self-conception or core-self (see Figure 6.1 above) is more permanent and is almost always present in self-presentations; and thus, this ideal self is generally the self that is highest in the prominence hierarchy. This self, then, is the most salient identity, and individuals fill in elements of other role-identities around this ideal self.

Finally, McCall and Simmons anticipate more psychoanalytically oriented symbolic interactionist approaches by noting that when a self-presentation is not fully accepted by others, individuals will engage in *defensive strategies* to protect themselves. They list a number of potential strategies: (1) *selective perception* of others' gestures so as to ensure identity verification and support; (2) *selective interpretation* of others' gestures; (3) *disavowal of a performance* as not truly indicative to self and *disavowal of the audience* as not important or relevant to self-evaluation; and (4) *riding out* the temporary incongruity between sense of self and others' evaluations of self by drawing upon past memories in which the self presented has indeed been verified. These defensive strategies will not always work, but they can allow individuals to get through situations where self is not perceived to have been verified by others. Since support and verification of a role-identity are the most valuable intrinsic rewards for individuals, emotions run high in the process of mutual role-taking and presentation of role-identities; and so it is not surprising that individuals seek to protect self from painful negative emotions like *shame*.

Emotions, Defensive Strategies, and Defense Mechanisms

A basic principle in all symbolic interactionist theorizing about identity is this: When an identity goes unverified by others, persons will experience powerful negative emotions and be motivated to bring the identity presented and the responses of others back in line, or congruity. McCall and Simmons emphasize adjustments to role behaviors as well as defensive

strategies. Another theory that has addressed this issue is Peter J. Burkes' and, at times, Jan E. Stets' Identity Control Theory.[12]

Burke' and Stets' Identity Control Theory

Peter Burke first developed this approach to identity dynamics, and he and Jan E. Stets have recently expanded the theory.[13] The basic argument is that individuals have multiple identities that are only loosely arranged in a hierarchy. Using the identity levels in Figure 6.1, they posit that people evidence a person-level identity or what is also called core-identity in the figure, a number of social-identities, and many potential role-identities. For each of these identities there is what they term a *comparator*, which is an identity standard against which the behaviors of a person and the responses of others are compared to see if indeed behavioral *outputs* by a person and role-taking *inputs* subject to *reflective appraisal* meet identity standards. If they do, then a person experiences positive emotions and continues to play out an identity. If, however, there is a lack of congruence between the comparator, on the one hand, and behavioral outputs of the individual, inputs of people' reaction to behavioral outputs, and reflective appraisal, on the other, then a person will experience negative emotions such as *distress*, *anxiety*, *sadness*, *shame*, and other negative emotions about self.

Humans are cybernetic organisms in that they seek to sustain an equilibrium for each identity. Thus, when an identity goes unverified, and a person experiences negative emotions, this individual will work to restore the balance by (a) adjusting behavioral outputs that allows others to verify the identity and (b) presenting a new identity with a different identity standards and comparator. There is of course an alternative, not part of Burke and Stet's theory: invoke one of the defensive strategies suggested by McCall and Simmons—selective perception and interpretation of others' responses, disavowal of the audience's right to evaluate a set of behavioral outputs, or disavowal the behavioral outputs as indicative a person's self. This is about as far as most identity theories will go, but another, much smaller group of symbolic interactionists emphasizes repression and use of more powerful defense mechanisms to sustain, at the least, a sense of equilibrium. But, once emotions are repressed, the dynamics of self change significantly. Repressed emotions will often transmute to other negative emotions, and individual will no longer have full cognitive access to the original repressed feelings, with the result that this person's actual behaviors may not correspond to self-perceptions of these behaviors. Moreover, others' evaluation of these behaviors will be difficult to interpret because these others may be reacting to emotional cues about which the person has little awareness.

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[12]Peter J. Burke, "The Self: Measurement Implications from a Symbolic Interactionist Perspective," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 43 (1980): pp. 18–20; "An Identity Model for Network Exchange," *American Sociological Review* 62 (1997): pp. 134–150; "Attitudes, Behavior, and the Self," in *The Self-Society Dynamic,* eds. Judith Howard and Peter L. Callero (cited in note 10), pp. 189–208, "Identity Processes and Social Stress," *American Sociological Review* 56 (1991): pp. 836–849; P. J. Burke and D. C. Reitzes, "An Identity Theory Approach to Commitment," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 54 (1991): pp. 239–251; P. J. Burke and Jan E. Stets, "Trust and Commitment through Self Verification," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 62 (1999): pp. 347–366; and Peter J. Burke and Jan E. Stets, *Identity Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press).

[13]Peter J. Burke and Jan E. Stets, *Identity Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Thus, in Burke's (and Stet's) theory, the more salient an identity in a role, the more motivated are individuals to achieve a sense of congruence between the expectations established by the identity standard and the responses of others in a situation. When the responses of others match the expectations dictated by an identity standard, the more positive are the emotions experienced by individuals and the greater is their level of self-esteem. People experience enhanced positive emotions when self is verified by others; and as a result, they develop positive emotions, trust, and commitments to these others. In contrast, the less responses of others match an identity standard, the more likely are the emotions experienced by individuals to be negative, with such incongruence between expectations set by an identity standard and the responses of others increasing when individuals have (a) multiple and incompatible identity standards from two or more role-identities, (b) an over-controlled self in which the elements of the identity are tightly woven into inflexible identity standards, (c) little practice in displaying an identity in a role, and (d) consistent failure in their efforts to change and/or leave the situation.

The intensity of negative emotions from these failures to verify an identity increases with (a) the salience of an identity in the situation, (b) the significance of the others who have not verified an identity, and (c) the degree of incongruity whether above or below expectations associated with an identity standard. In contrast, the intensity of negative emotions from the failure to verify an identity will decrease over time as the identity standard is readjusted downward so as to lower expectations, thereby making congruence between identity standards and reflected appraisals of people's response to behavior output. Yet, like so many symbolic interactionist approaches, the Burke-Stets model does not consider another way to create congruence: repression of the negative emotions aroused when an identity is not verified or supported by others. This oversight has called for more psychoanalytical theories.

Psychoanalytic Symbolic Interactionist Theories

Thomas Scheff and Jonathan Turner are the most prominent theorists who have blended identity theories from symbolic interactionism with the basic argument of psychoanalytical theory. The general line of argument is that when interpersonal behaviors lead individuals to experience *shame*, persons often repress in some way this very painful emotion. When they do so, the person no longer has direct access to this shame but will experience other emotions such as *anger* and will act in ways that further disrupt interpersonal processes. The important point is that people often protect self by repressing negative emotions—*shame* but also other emotions like *anger*, *guilt*, *humiliation*, *frustration*, etc.—that signal incongruity between people's presentations of self and others' negative responses to efforts to get this self verified. Let me first review Scheff's theory.

Scheff on Pride, Shame, and Interpersonal Attunement

One of the great shortcomings of George Herbert Mead's synthesis is that emotions are not examined. The potential to address emotions surrounding self and identity was there in the sources of Mead's synthesis; indeed, Charles Horton Cooley[14] emphasized that people have feelings about themselves as they read the gestures of others in role-taking.

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[14]Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order* (full citation in note 4).

For Cooley, people are in a constant state of low-level *pride* and *shame*, depending upon what they "see" in the looking glass. When the gestures of others signal that a person has behaved properly, this person will experience mild levels of *pride*. But, when the gestures of others signal that a person has acted inappropriately, the negative feelings about self will revolve around various levels of *shame*.

Symbolic interactionists who have followed Cooley as much as Mead have generally been sympathetic to psychoanalytic theorizing because, as Sigmund Freud[15] emphasized, negative emotions like *shame* and *guilt* are painful, and individuals will often invoke defense mechanisms to protect self. Thomas Scheff has for many decades been the most persistent advocate of incorporating at least elements of psychoanalytical theory into symbolic interactionism, although he has been reluctant to characterize his theory as I have (that is, as "psychoanalytic").

Scheff[16] adopts Cooley's view that humans are in a constant state of self-feeling, particularly with respect to *pride* and *shame*. This state of self-feeling is an outcome of the fact that people are also in a constant state of self-evaluation, even when they are alone and think back on situations; in addition, as they evaluate themselves in situations, they will experience either *pride* or *shame*. Pride is a positive emotion that verifies self and thus generates a sense of well-being; moreover, pride generally makes individuals more attuned to others and more willing to offer supportive responses to these others. Thus, pride is a key mechanism by which strong social bonds and social solidarity are generated in face-to-face encounters and, ultimately, in societies. In contrast, *shame* is a negative emotion and, if unrecognized by a person, leads to a loss of attunement with others and, if widespread among many others, in a society as a whole.

Thus, *pride* and *shame* not only have consequences for individuals' self-feelings; they also affect attunement in social relations and, potentially, the viability of larger-scale social structures, including the society as a whole. Pride and shame, Scheff argues, are emotions that are essential to the social order; and yet, they are virtually invisible, for several reasons. One is that they are generally experienced at relatively low levels of intensity. Another is that they can be repressed to a certain degree—*pride* because a person does not want to reveal "too much" pride to others (less they see it as *vanity*) or too much shame to others and to oneself. Another reason for the apparent invisibility of *shame* is that it is often repressed. Scheff borrows from the psychoanalyst, Helen Lewis,[17] to emphasize that shame is often unacknowledged, denied, or repressed. When such is the case, a shame-anger cycle can be initiated in which *shame* is transmuted to *anger*, with each outburst of anger causing more *shame* that is denied in ways escalating the intensity of the next outburst of *anger*.

Following Lewis, Scheff emphasizes that one path to denying shame is through the experience of *overt, undifferentiated shame*, in which the person has painful feelings that come with *shame* but hides from the real source of these feelings: shame. The shame is disguised

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[15]Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (London: Hogarth Press, 1900).

[16]For examples of Scheff's work, see "Shame and Conformity: The Deference-Emotion System," *American Sociological Review* 53 (1988): pp. 395–406; "Socialization of Emotion: Pride and Shame as Causal Agents," in *Research Agendas in The Sociology of Emotions*, ed. T. Kemper (Albany, NY: SUNY Press), pp. 281–304; "Shame and the Social Bond: A Sociological Theory," *Sociological Theory* 18 (2000): pp. 84–99; "Shame and Community: Social Components in Depression," *Psychiatry* 64 (2001): pp. 212–224; "Shame and Self in Society," *Symbolic Interaction* 26 (2002): pp. 239–262.

[17]Helen Lewis, *Shame and Guilt in Neurosis* (New York: International Universities Press, 1971).

by words and gestures signaling feelings other than shame. People can blush, slow their speech, lower the auditory levels of their voices, and utter such words as "foolish," "silly," stupid," and other such labels that denote negative feelings but hide that fact that these feelings have arisen because of shame.

Another path to denying the shame is to *bypass the shame*. When this defense mechanism is employed, individuals engage in hyperactive behavior such as rapid speech and demonstrative gesturing before the shame can be fully experienced for what it is. The result is for individuals to avoid the pain of shame but at a high cost of having to live with unacknowledged shame that, in turn, will often disrupt social relations.

Later, Scheff began to term these two paths to denial of shame *underdistancing* (overt, undifferentiated) and *overdistancing* (bypassed) shame. In both cases, the shame is repressed from conscious awareness and, ultimately, leads to anger and hostility that, in turn, disrupt interpersonal attunement. Without attunement, it is difficult for individuals to develop mutual respect and solidarity. In Figure 6.2, I have drawn out Scheff's underlying model.

Across the top of the figure, the receipt of deference from others leads to positive self-evaluations and a sense of pride, which encourages interpersonal attunement, mutual respect, and social solidarity. It is the dynamics below this top row of processes that is the cause of problems for persons and, potentially, larger-scale social structures. When individuals perceive that others exhibit a lack of deference, they experience negative self-evaluations that cause shame. If, however, the shame can be "acknowledged" and seen for what it is, it can lead to efforts at *interpersonal attunement* between a person and others, ultimately causing mutual respect, and social solidarity. When the same is denied by overdistancing or underdistancing, it can initiate the anger-shame cycle that ensures that individuals will lack proper deference to others and perceive a lack of deference from others. In turn, the negative evaluations will cause shame that, if acknowledged at this point, can perhaps lead to attunement and mutual respect, but if the anger-shame cycle becomes habitual, then the denial of shame only stokes the emotional hostility that sustains the cycle at the bottom of Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.3 outlines some of the more macrostructural implications of the anger-shame cycle outlined in Figure 6.2.[18] If social structures and the culture in the broader society systematically generate shame, as is often the case when relations are hierarchical, but at the same time, impose prohibitions against acknowledging shame, societies can reveal the potential for collective violence. If enough persons in enough encounters over long periods of time are forced to endure shame but cannot acknowledge it but, instead, must repress their shame, the lack of interpersonal attunement and the *shame–anger–more shame–more hostility* cycle is sustained, individuals in this state can be mobilized for collective action, often of a highly violent nature. Thus, if the experience of shame is widespread and if cultural prohibitions inhibit individuals from acknowledging their shame, denial of this negative emotion can become an emotional powder keg in a society. Events at the micro-interpersonal level can, therefore, have far reaching consequences for the stability of macrostructural formations and their cultures.

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[18]See for examples of work on conflict and violence from repressed shame the following: Thomas J. Scheff and Suzanne M. Retzinger, *Emotions and Violence: Shame and Rage in Destructive Conflicts* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1991). For an example of work arguing much the same as Scheff from a psychiatrist, see Vamik Volkan, *Killing in the Name of Identity: A Study in Bloody Conflicts* (Charlottesville, VA: Pitchstone Press, 2006), *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (Charlottesville, VA: Pitchstone Press, 1999).
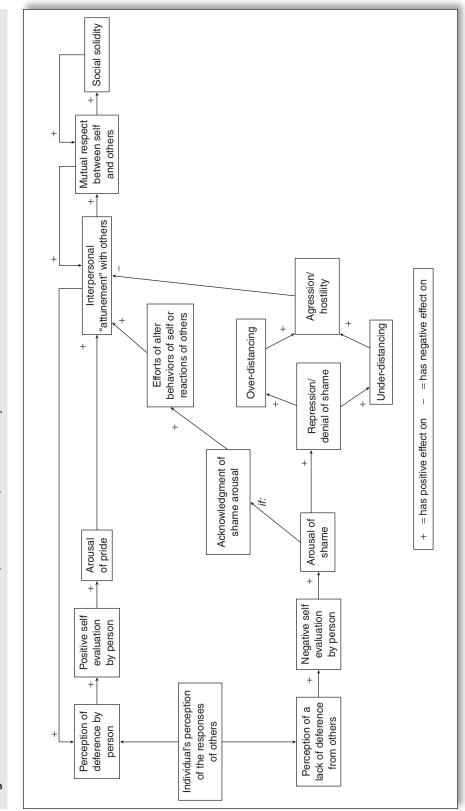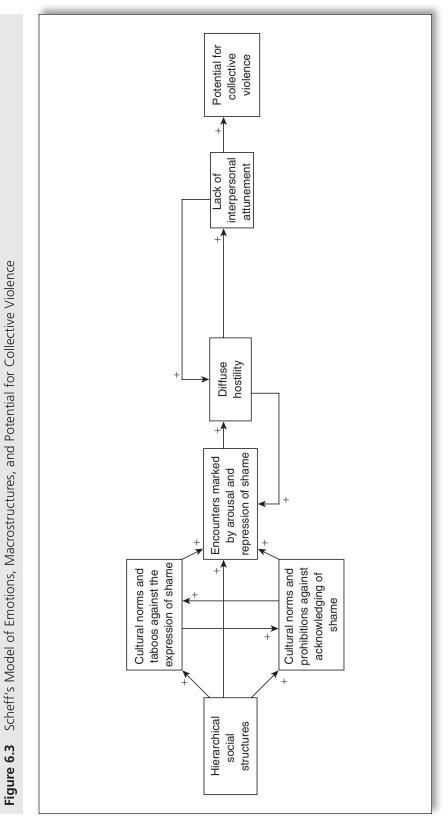
Figure 6.2 Scheff's Model of Emotions, Attunement, and Solidarity

+ = has positive effect on   − = has negative effect on

Figure 6.3 Scheff's Model of Emotions, Macrostructures, and Potential for Collective Violence

Jonathan Turner's Theory of Transactional Needs

As part of my general theory of microdynamic processes,[19] I see *transactional needs* as a critical force in human interaction. Humans have certain fundamental need-states that, to varying degrees, are always activated when individuals interact. These are transactional needs in two senses: First, some of these needs and typically all of them are activated during interaction; and second, success or failure in meeting these needs dramatically affects the flow of interaction. Here, I will only focus on the most important need in this hierarchy of need-states: the need to verify the identities making up self. As Figure 6.1 on page 100 summarizes, I have come to visualize self as composed of four fundamental *identities*, although people can probably have an identity about almost anything. For example, as noted earlier, recently there has been great interest in people's moral identities or the extent to which, and the arenas into which, people see themselves as "moral." Still, the most central identities are (1) *core-identity*, or the fundamental cognitions and feelings that people have about themselves that are generally salient in almost all situations (some have termed this *person-identity*); (2) *social-identities*, or the cognitions and feelings that people have of themselves as members of social categories (for example, gender, sexual preference, ethnicity, class, or any social category) that define people as distinctive and that generally lead to differential evaluation of memberships in social categories; (3) *group-identities*, or cognitions and feelings about self that stem from membership in, or identification with, corporate units revealing divisions of labor (groups, communities, and organizations being the most likely sources of a group identity); and (4) *role-identities* or the roles that people play in any social context, but particularly the roles associated with membership in the divisions of labor in corporate units and, at times, memberships in social categories or what I term *categoric units*.[20] I am skeptical that there is a neat linear hierarchy of prominence or salience among identities, as is posited by most identity theories, but I do believe that some are more general than others, as was summarized in Figure 6.1.

The dynamics of identities reveal many of the cybernetic processes outlined in Burke's theory. People orchestrate their behaviors in an effort to verify any or all of the four identities in a situation; if others signal their acceptance of an identity or identities, a person will experience positive emotions from *satisfaction* at the lower-intensity end to *joy* and *pride* at the higher-intensity end of positive emotions. In contrast, if an identity is not verified, individuals will experience negative emotions such as *anger*, *fear*, *embarrassment*, *shame*, *guilt*, and many other negative emotions. When people become aware of their negative emotions, these emotions signal to them that, *a la* Stryker's argument, something has gone wrong in the presentation of self and that,

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[19]See, for examples, my *A Theory of Social Interaction* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); *Face-to-Face* and *Theoretical Principles of Sociology*, *Volume 2 on Microdynamics* (cited in note 7); *Human Emotions: A Sociological Theory* (London: Routledge, 2008); "Toward a Theory of Embedded Encounters," *Advances in Group Processes* 17 (2000): pp. 285–322; Jonathan H. Turner and Jan E. Stets, "The Moral Emotions," in *Handbook of The Sociology of Emotions*, Jan E. Stets and Jonathan H. Turner, eds. (New York: Springer, 2006), pp. 544–568; Jonathan H. Turner, "Emotions and Social Structure: Toward a General Theory," in *Emotions and Social Structure*, D. Robinson and J. Clay-Warner, eds. (New York: Elsevier, 2008), pp. 319–342; Jonathan Turner, "Self, Emotions, and Extreme Violence: Extending Symbolic Interactionist Theorizing," *Symbolic Interaction* 30 (2008): pp. 275–30l; "Toward A Theory of Interpersonal Processes," in *Sociological Social Psychology*, J. Chin and J. Cardell, eds. (Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 2008), pp. 65–95; Jonathan Turner, "Identities, Emotions, and Interaction Processes," *Symbolic Interaction* 34 (2011): 330–339.

[20]See Turner, *Face-to-Face* and *Theoretical Principles of Sociology*, volume 2 (both cited in note 7).

following Burke's theory, motivates individuals to re-appraise their behavior and modify their actions so as to secure verification of an identity. But, these dynamics only unfold *if* a person becomes fully aware that an identity has not been verified.

As McCall and Simons suggest, people often invoke a variety of "defensive strategies" to protect self from this fate. People can engage in selective perception and/or interpretation of the responses of others; they often disavow the audience that has rejected their claims to verification; and they often leave situations where they cannot have identities confirmed by others. Yet, I do not think that McCall and Simons go far enough; people often repress the negative emotions that have come from failure to verify an identity. They simply push these feelings below the level of consciousness and do not feel them consciously, although the emotions may still be evident to others or become transmuted to a new, often more volatile negative emotion that others must endure. Thus, true defense mechanisms break the cybernetic cycle outlined by Burke and implied in other identity theories. The break prevents individuals from accurate "reflected appraisals" among their identity standard, behaviors, and others responses to behaviors.

In Table 6.1, I enumerate various types of *defense mechanisms*, seeing *repression* as the master mechanism that removes emotions from consciousness; then, additional types of defense mechanism may be subsequently activated: *displacement* (venting emotions directed at self on others), *projection* [imputing the repressed emotion(s) to other(s)], *sublimation* (converting negative emotions into positive emotional energy), *reaction formation* (converting intense negative emotions into positive emotions directed at others who caused the negative emotion), and *attribution* (imputing the source cause of emotional reactions). The first five defense mechanisms are those often posited by those working in the psychoanalytic tradition, while the last— *attribution*—comes from cognitive psychology (and earlier, from Gestalt psychology).

Attribution is generally not considered a defense mechanism, but I think that it may be the most sociologically important mechanism. People make attributions for their experiences, and they generally make self-attributions (that is, see themselves as responsible) when experiencing positive

Table 6.1   Repression, Defense, Transmutation, and Targeting Emotions

Repressed Emotions	Defense Mechanism	Transmutation to	Target
anger, sadness, fear shame, guilt, and alienation	displacement	anger	others, corporate units and categoric units
anger, sadness, fear, shame, guilt, and alienation	projection	little, but some anger	imputation of anger, sadness, fear, shame or guilt to dispositional state of others
anger, sadness, fear, shame, guilt, and alienation	reaction formation	positive emotions	others, corporate units, categoric units
anger, sadness, fear, shame, guilt, and alienation	sublimation	positive emotions	tasks in corporate units
anger, sadness, fear shame, guilt, and alienation	attribution	anger	others, corporate units, categoric units

emotions, whereas with negative emotions, they may blame others, categories of others, and social structures in an effort to protect self from having negative self-feelings.

This *proximal bias* for positive emotions to be attributed to self or others in the immediate situation and the *distal bias* for negative emotions to target more remote objects as responsible for these negative feelings have important implications for people's commitment to others and social structures. People feel positive emotions about themselves and perhaps immediate others when experiencing the positive emotions that come with identity verification. They feel that they have been positively sanctioned and have met situational expectations, and in so doing, they feel good about themselves because their identity or identities have been verified. In contrast, when people have not met expectations, have been negatively sanctioned, and hence have failed to confirm an identity in a situation, the negative emotions aroused, such as *shame*, are too painful and are repressed; then more remote social units, such as members of a social category or the social structures of a corporate unit, are blamed for their feelings. In this way, despite feeling negative emotions, a person can protect self by seeing objects outside of self as causally responsible for his or her negative feelings. These negative emotions generate prejudices against members of social categories (by gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, for example) and alienation and/or loss of commitment to social structures. In contrast, positive emotions increase commitments to others and situations.

Yet, if emotions have these proximal and distal biases, how are more remote objects, such as social structures, to be the targets of commitments by individuals when self-verification, meeting expectations, and receiving positive sanctions from others activate the proximal bias—thereby, remaining local, tied to encounters at the micro level of social organizations? What would allow for positive emotions to break the centripetal force of the proximal bias built into attribution processes? My answer is that when people *consistently experience* positive emotions in particular types of situations, they begin to make attributions to the larger social structures in which these situations are embedded. As they do so, they develop positive feelings about, and commitments to, these structures because they see these structures as causally responsible for the verification of self and the positive feelings that arise from identity verification.

In this manner, consistent self-verification will ultimately lead to commitments to those social structures in which encounters have aroused the positive emotions that come with self-verification. And, the more identities that are verified, the greater will these commitments ultimately be. Indeed, if a group-identity with particular types of corporate units or even a whole society did not already exist, it is likely to form when individuals validate other identities within a particular type of social structure. And to the extent that other identities are tied to roles in divisions of labor and are verified in encounters within this division of labor, identity dynamics become the underlying force behind commitments to this social structure and perhaps the larger institutional domain in which this structure is lodged. For example, a good student who has consistently been rewarded and had the role-identity of student verified will, over time, develop commitments to successive schools and eventually the entire institutional domain of education (compare my argument with Lawler et al., pp. 86–91, whose exchange theory is very much like my theory from entirely different sources and traditions).

In this way, forces like transactional needs for verification of self can have large effects on more macro-level social structures, and vice versa. Macrostructures that set people up for success in verifying role-identities and any other identities tied to these roles in groups and organizations will reap what they sow: commitments from individuals. And these

commitments may eventually move to the institutional domains or whole society in which these groups and organizations are embedded.

Conclusion

Symbolic interactionism has carried the synthesis of George Herbert Mead into the twenty-first century, and in so doing, it has come to emphasize the importance of identities in interaction and the dynamics revolving around individuals' efforts to have their identities verified. But, as is evident with Stryker's, McCall and Simons', Burke and Stets', Scheff's, and my theories, there has also been a serious effort to connect these identity dynamics to social structures and cultures. Identities can only be played out within the confines of culture and structure, which set limits on which identities can be presented in what manner; and once the verification of identities becomes tied to social structure and culture, they can operate to sustain and reinforce social structures. Identities that are not viable in a situation will move down the hierarchy of salience or prominence, and new identities more compatible with structure and culture will move up, thus increasing congruence among self, social structure, and culture in a society.

In more psychoanalytic oriented theories, the arousal of negative emotions around self-presentations to others, the negative emotions experienced when others do not verify self or accept particular lines of behavior more generally, lead a person to experience negative emotions like *shame*, which if not fully acknowledged and/or if repressed will transmute into other emotions and associated behaviors that break the social bond. Once the social bond is broken, interactions become disruptive and destroy group solidarity. When emotions are repressed, they often transmute into anger and other negative emotions that disrupt interaction and ensure that persons will have trouble verifying their identities, which only leads to more negative emotions.

Emotions aroused at the level of interpersonal behavior are subject to attributions by individuals as to who or what causes these emotions. Positive emotions lead to positive sanctions toward others and, typically, stay local in the situations where they were first aroused. Negative emotions tend to be more distal because of the effects of repression to protect self. When negative emotions are repressed, they often transmute into anger and anger-driven cognitive states like prejudice that target social structures, culture, and categories of others—thereby protecting self and the local situation. Thus, many macro-level processes, such as conflict, ethnic violence, and mass mobilizations of angry persons can be often tied to what people have experienced at the level of interaction and in their efforts to get identities verified.

Verification of identities consistently across situations begins to break the proximal bias of positive emotions, causing people to make external attributions to local groups, and then the larger social structures in which groups are almost always embedded. This embedding generates conduits for positive emotions to move outward to macrostructures and potentially the whole society, creating commitments and legitimacy for macrostructures built ultimately from individuals at the micro level to verify key identities across many diverse micro-level interactions.

Thus, theoretical sociology has taken Mead's ideas considerably beyond his original formulation, and so we can conclude by outlining the basic elements of symbolic interactionism as it has developed over the last one-hundred years.

1. Individuals are born into ongoing social activity constrained by social structures and regulated by culture. Individuals will learn and retain in their behavioral repertoire those behaviors that facilitate adaptation to ongoing patterns of cooperative behavior.

2. The first critical behavioral capacity that individuals learn is *conventional gestures* that carry the same meaning for the person sending and receiving communication. Such capacities are adaptive because they allow individuals to effectively communicate their needs and intentions.

3. With the adaptive capacity for using conventional gestures, individuals acquire the capacity to *role take* with other and to place themselves in the role of these others and to determine their perspective on, and likely course of action in, a situation, and thereby, to cooperate with these others in ongoing coordinated activity. Over time, the ability to role take expands so that individuals can role take with

   A. Multiple others at the same time engaged in coordinated activities

   B. Others who are not present in the situation

   C. Generalized others that personify values, beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives of situations, groups, organizations, communities, institutional domains, and even the entire society

4. With role-taking comes the capacity for *mind*, or the ability to imagine alternative courses of action, to visualize their likely consequences in a situation, and to select that course of action that will best facilitate cooperation with others.

5. With the capacity for (2), (3), and (4) above, individuals acquire the ability to see themselves as an object in a situation, to read and interpret the gestures of others for what they say about a person's presentation of self, to evaluate self from the perspective of others and generalized others, and to derive images and conceptions of themselves in a situation.

6. These images of self will, over time, crystallize into *conceptions of self* that make up a series of identities that, in turn, individuals seek to verify in their interactions with others. These identities can develop along several basic dimensions:

   A. *Core- or person-identity*, which is the more permanent and stable cognitions and emotions that persons feel about themselves in all situations

   B. *Social-identities*, which are those conceptions, evaluations, and emotions of self tied to memberships in social categories that are salient in a situation and, more broadly, in a society

   C. *Group-identities*, which are conceptions of self and states of emotional arousal tied to identification with, or membership in, groups, organizations, and communities

   D. *Role-identities*, which are conceptions of self and emotions of self arising from incumbency in social structures and playing roles in this structure

7. Identities can be arranged into hierarchies of prominence and salience, which determine how often, when, and where a particular identity will be presented to others.

8. Identities are one of the most powerful motivating forces in human action because all identities in all situations are presented with an eye to having others verify the identity

   A. When identities are verified by others, individuals will experience positive emotions, positively sanction others, and develop commitments to others and the situation

   B. When identities are not verified by others, individuals will experience negative emotions and seek to bring their identity presentations and reactions of others into congruence through a number of ways:

      1. Adjusting behaviors so that others will verify an identity

      2. Changing the identity presented to others

      3. Avoiding situations where identities are not verified

      4. Engaging in defensive strategies, including the following:

         a. Selective perception of the responses of others

         b. Selective interpretation of the responses of others

         c. Disavowing behaviors that led to a failure to verify self

         d. Disavowing the audience as having the right to evaluate self

         e. Using credits from past experiences where identity was verified to ride out a particular situations where it was not

         f. Repressing negative emotions associated with failure to verify self

9. Verification or failure to verify self at any identity level can have repercussions for person's commitments to others, situation, and broader social structure, depending upon the attributions that individuals make for their emotional experiences

   A. When self and identities are verified, individuals develop positive emotions for self and others and commitments to others and the local situation

   B. When self and identities are verified consistently across a larger number of situations within a variety of institutional domains in a society, individuals will experience positive emotions that will begin to target macrostructures and, thereby, lead them to develop commitments to more macro social structures and their cultures

   C. When self and identities are not verified, individuals will generally make more external attributions to categories of others and external social structures rather than to self or others in the local situation and, in so doing, lower their commitments to these external social structures

10. Patterns of social organization and culture constrain individuals are created, sustained, and changed by individuals revealing the above behavioral capacities, with verification of self leading to commitments that sustain social structure and culture and with failure to verify self leading to negative emotions targeting external social structures and their cultures. Thus, the positive emotions arising for verification of self sustain and legitimate social structures, whereas the negative emotions arising from failure to verify self can lead to change in social structure and cultures when sufficient numbers of individuals have such negative emotional experiences.