

SOCI 101
INTRODUCTION TO
SOCIOLOGY

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E. Socialization

1. a. Socialization = Social Experience
 The lifelong social experience by which individuals develop their *human potential* and learn about their culture.

Social experience is also a large part of:

b. Personality
 A person's fairly *consistent patterns* of acting, thinking, and feeling.
 Personality should not be mistaken for:

c. Identity
 The process of construction of self-knowledge and meaning based on cultural attributes.

Q: What effect does "socialization" have on "self"?
 Q: Where does one's personality come from?
 Q: Is one's identity fixed or changeable?

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How much are we – our personality and identity – guided by *biological factors (our DNA)* and how much does *social learning (our culture)* account for?

2. Nature vs. Nurture?

Nature *Meets* Nurture
 -or-
Self = DNA + Culture

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2. Nature vs. Nurture

We're scientists: how can we test which side of the debate gives a better explanation of personality?

"Control" the equation.

a. Dependent Variable = Nature (DNA, biology)

Independent Variable = Nurture

Possible tests? ("operationalize"): can you change our nature?

- Examine changes in

brain **chemistry** OR **composition**;

Examples: *Temporary chemical change* to brain and to personality caused by drinking, drugs

Permanent compositional change to brain and personality caused by structural damage from tumors, accidents, frontal lobotomies, etc.



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2. Changing Nature: Altering the Brain

The Tale of Phineas Gage

Honest, well liked by friends and fellow workers on the Rutland and Burlington Railroad, Gage was a young man of exemplary character and promise until one day in September 1848. While tamping down the blasting powder for a dynamite charge, Gage inadvertently sparked an explosion. The inch-thick tamping rod rocketed through his cheek, obliterating his left eye on its way through his brain and out the top of his skull. The rod landed several yards away, and Gage fell back in a convulsive heap.

Yet a moment later he stood up and spoke; his fellow workers watched, in horror, then drove him by oxcart to a hotel, where a local doctor dressed his wounds. As the doctor stuck his index fingers into the holes in Gage's face and head until their tips met, the young man inquired when he would be able to return to work.

Within two months, the physical organism that was Phineas Gage had completely recovered—he could walk, speak, and demonstrate normal awareness of his surroundings. But the character of the man did not survive the tamping rod's journey through his brain. In place of the diligent, dependable worker stood a foulmouthed and ill-mannered liar given to extravagant schemes that were never followed through. "Gage," said his friends, "was no longer Gage."

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2. Nature vs. Nurture

b. **Dependent Variable = Nurture** (culture, learning)
Independent Variable = Nature

Possible tests? How can you change nurture?

- Examine **social isolation**.

i. **Impact on nonhuman primates (Harlow's monkeys)**

The Harlows' experiments showed disturbed development after 6 months of isolation. They also showed that the **need for nurturance is innate** (natural) for primates.

ii. **Impact on human children**

1. **Feral ("wild") children**
2. **Anna/Isabel** – Kingsley Davis (1947)
3. **Caspar** – After 2 years of care, the following 11 years of isolation left her with the mental capabilities of a one-year-old.

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3. Agents of Socialization

a. We adopt our **inner self** (mind, identity, "I") from **significant others** as we interact and reproduce our **outer self** (role, personality, "me") in the process of interaction.

b. **"Agency" means having the ability to act and create change. What "agents" are significant?** In American culture, our chief agents of socialization are **Parents, Peers, Teachers, and the Media.**

c. **How do we begin to learn our culture?**
"Mirror Neurons": the biology of imitation

A recently discovered system in the brain may help explain why we humans are so naturally social, and why we develop culture. See [the work of neuroscientist V.S. Ramachandran](#).

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4. Personality Development

a. Sigmund Freud

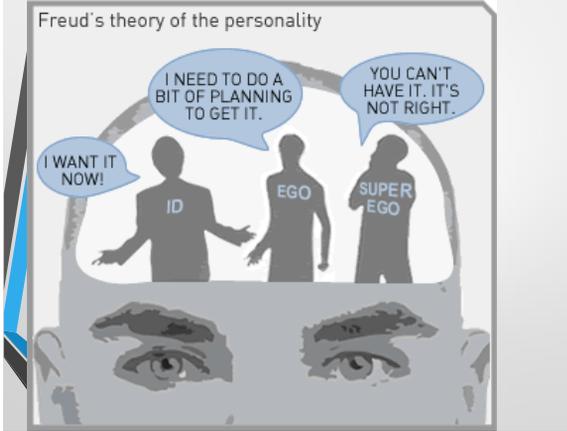
Mind is made up of three parts:

- Inner Self**
- i. **ID** (Latin for "it") – **the basic drives** (anger, aggression, hunger, passion, sexuality or 'libido') which govern how we react to pleasure and pain, or the *instincts* that are still within us.
- Outer Self**
- ii. **SUPEREGO** (Latin meaning 'above' or 'beyond' the ego) **the operation of culture within the individual;** norms, taboos, folkways and mores: *conscience*
- Known Self**
- iii. **EGO** (Latin for "I") – **the conscious self;** that part of the self that thinks, reasons, and balances the forces of the Id and Superego.

EGO = Battle of the Id and Superego

Our mind and personality are formed by the way in which we balance the strong personal forces of self-interest against the strong social forces of the norm, cultural values and taboos.







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4. Personality Development

b. George Herbert Mead on **ROLE-MAKING**

i. **Self**: the self develops *only* with symbol-use (language) *and* social interaction

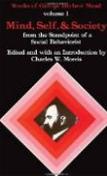
ii. Two forms of self-reflection: **I & ME**

Inner Self

a. **"I"** = active, creative, imaginative part of the self that comes from *within*
(*subjective* form of personality; the "soul" or "true, essential self").

Outer Self

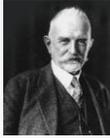
b. **"Me"** = our perceptions of our "outer" self
(*objective* form of personality; the "looking-glass self", a mirror reflection).

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4. Personality Development Theory

George Herbert Mead



iii. Self-development happens as we reflect upon our place in our social world, and the roles we play.

We learn how to "take roles" when we are young:

→ Stages of Role-Taking Ability:



Examples: **infancy** **playing house** **playing on a baseball team** **becoming a citizen**

The state of recognizing the "generalized other" is a full recognition of one's belonging to a larger, complex network of significant relations.
