

SOCI 101
INTRODUCTION TO
SOCIOLOGY

SOCIALIZATION

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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.
 Question: What effect does "socialization" have on "self"?

Social experience is also a large part of:

b. Personality
 A person's fairly *consistent patterns* of acting, thinking, and feeling.
 Question: What are some examples of personality characteristics?

Personality should not be mistaken for:

c. Identity
 The process of construction of self-knowledge and meaning based on cultural and environmental attributes.
 Questions: What are some examples of identity types? Is one's identity fixed or changeable?


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Are our personality and identity guided by *biological factors (our nature, such as DNA)* or do they come from *learning (our social environment, such as culture)*?

2. Nature versus 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?

Isolate variables to balance the equation.

a. Independent Variable = NATURE (DNA, biology)

Dependent Variable = Self

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. Independent Variable = NURTURE (culture, learning)

Dependent Variable = Selfhood

Possible tests? How can you change nurture?

- Examine **identical twin studies**: "It is clear from the brief summaries provided on twin, adoption, and family studies that there is no black or white answer to the age-old question of what contributes to human behavior and personality." ([Haimowitz 2006](#))

- 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: Cases of Neglect

1. [Feral \("wild"\) children](#) (example, Uxana Malaya, Ukraine)
2. [Anna/Isabel](#) – Kingsley Davis (1940)
3. [Genie](#) – After 2 years of care, the following 11 years of isolation left her with the mental capabilities of a one-year-old. (1978)
4. [Danielle](#), Plant City, Florida (2005)



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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 many cultures, the 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:

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.

ii. SUPEREGO (Latin meaning 'above' or 'beyond' the ego) the operation of **culture within the individual**; norms, taboos, folkways and mores: *conscience*

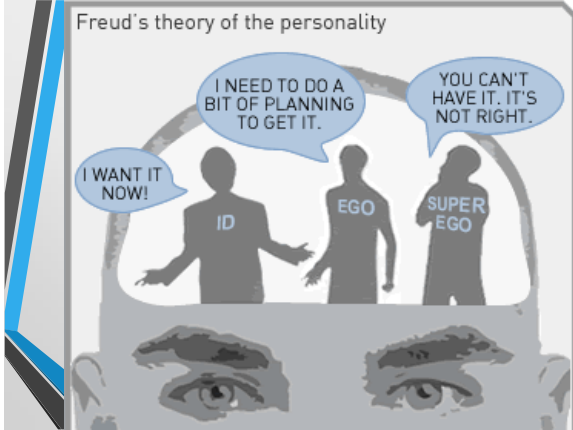
iii. EGO (Latin for "I") – the **conscious self**; that part of the self that thinks, reasons, and balances the forces of the Id and Superego.

EGO = Battle of the Id and Superego

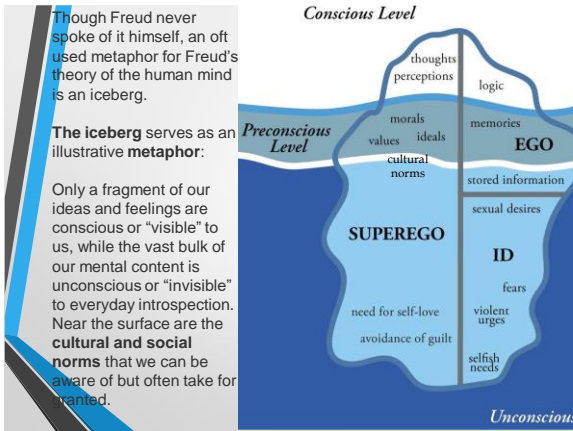
Our mind and personality are formed by the way in which we balance the strong personal forces of self-interest against the strong social forces of the norm, cultural values and taboos.



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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. You are a product of constant reflection.

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

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

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




Inner Self

Outer Self

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4. Personality Development Theory

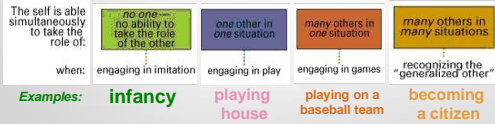
George Herbert Mead



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

We **learn** how to "take the role of the other" when we are young (in psychology this idea is called "**theory of mind**"). Mead argued that this **role-taking ability is learned in stages** as we mature.

→ Stages of Role-Taking Ability:



The final state of recognizing the "generalized other" is a full recognition of one's belonging to a larger, complex network of significant relations, in other words, our ability to "see" society as connected to our own individuality, which describes the "**sociological imagination**." (C. Wright Mills)
