Intersectionality

1. Administrative
2. Interactional sociology
3. Dramaturgical theory
4. Status and Roles
5. Boundaries, status, & class

Worksheet deadlines

- 11:59pm deadline is *strict*
- Peer evalutation tool cannot allow late submissions
- Submit your worksheets first to FeedbackFruits

Interactional sociology

Interaction is a basic part of social life

⋮ Present in much of what we have discussed so far

⋮ Socialization—understanding self in relation to society

⋮ Symbolic interactionism as basis of 'self'

The individual often taken for granted

⋮ Many analyses start with the idea that there is such a thing as the individual, then discuss the ways that interactions and macro-social forces influence those individuals

Interactional sociology 'starts' with interaction

- Not just about how interaction shapes the individual or defines groups

- Social interaction is the starting point from which individuals and groups arise

The self as collection of the social situations we encounter

- **Series of interactional 'situations'**

  College lecture, argument with stranger, meeting a friend

- ***Interactional theorists***:
  We should focus on those situations, the expectations they entail, the way they are resolved again and again

  From there, try to understand sense of self, agency, role

Shift away from primacy of individual

Goffman concluded: "not men and their moments, but moments and their men." In gender-neutral language: not individuals and their interactions, but interactions and their individuals; not persons and their passions, but passions and their persons. "Every dog will have its day" is more accurately "every day will have its dog." Incidents shape their incumbents, however momentary they may be; encounters make their encountees. It is games that make sports heroes, politics that makes politicians into charismatic leaders … To see the common realities of everyday life sociologically requires a gestalt shift, a reversal of perspectives. Breaking such deeply ingrained conventional frames is not easy to do; but the more we can discipline ourselves to think everything through the sociology of the situation, the more we will understand why we do what we do.

Randall Collins, *Interaction Ritual Chains* (2004:5)

Drama-turgical theory

"One of the most trenchant contributions to social psychology in this generation." —American Journal of Sociology

Erving Goffman *(1922–1982)*

- Among the most well known and influential sociologists of 20th century
- Defined much of the study of social interaction and how we think of roles, conversation, nonverbal communication, …

Goffman's dramaturgy

- Individuals put on different *faces* depending on who we are interacting with
- Situations necessitate 'lines'—claims toward particular versions of ourselves
  Am I an engaged instructor? a disinterested observer? a critical participant? a helpful mediator?

Lines depend on situation

- The lines we commit to are contingent on appropriateness for the situation at hand Who is party to the interaction? What environment are we in?
- Constantly switching 'roles' to adapt to different situations

DRAMATURGICAL THEORY

Self as collection of dramaturgical roles

- At any moment, we are presenting one mask or another; enacting one part or another depending on the situation
- Goffman: there is no psychological self outside of these interactional lines
- Individuals are not playing these different parts they *are* those parts

Self as collection of dramaturgical roles

⋮ At any moment, we are presenting one mask or another; enacting one part or another depending on the situation

⋮ Goffman: there is no psychological self outside of these interactional lines

⋮ Individuals are not playing these different parts they *are* those parts

Interaction is impression management

- *Face work*
- Individuals work to make their 'lines' credible; for the situation to 'work out
- Situations that are *not* working out create a crisis of identity

Strained situations

- Differing ideas about expectations

  E.g. turn-taking, personal space, etc.
- Conflicting roles

  Intersecting social spheres

Impression management is a group task

- Usually everyone wants a situation to 'work out'
- Embarrassment is the result of the situation not being maintained

Status
& roles

Social status and social roles
- Relationship between status and roles is central to interactional sociology

Status
- Perceived categories that others use to define us
- *Ascribed status*

  Gender, race, age, …
- *Achieved status*

  Profession, popularity, wealth, …

Roles
- Expectations of behavior based on status
- Roles learned through socialization

Still from *Trading Places* (1983)

Status hierarchy

- Status is usually realized in an implicit *hierarchy*
- **Wealth, profession, race, gender** are "*Status characteristics*" that inform high- versus low-status
- Status is **realized in interaction**
  People in high-status jobs get used to deferential treatment
  Many people are accustomed to disregarding those in poverty

Status mismatch

- **Certain statuses are assumed to 'go together'**
  College degree and employment
  Homemaker and woman
- **Notable when those assumptions are subverted**
  Well-payed garbage collector
  Men doing childcare

Still from *Trading Places* (1983)

Boundaries, status, & class

Social status

- *Social status*: Honor or prestige attributed to one's position in society
- *Status groups* share styles, tastes, culture
  (Max Weber; Pierre Bourdieu)

Permeable status categories

- Status is attributed using cultural categories
- Membership in status categories is constructed
- Social status requires agreement
  Membership requires the agreement of others

BOUNDARIES, STATUS, & CLASS

Boundary processes

⋮ Social process of inclusion and exclusion

⋮ Criteria establish difference, draw boundaries, distinguish

How to dress
How to act
Right jokes to make
Right way to make plans
Cultural touchstones
…

Status boundaries defined by hierarchy

⋮ People excluded from status categories 'above'

⋮ Status boundaries helps people distinguish
themselves from those they perceive as lower-status

Social class

⋮ One way to think about class: bundles of status categories associated as one

⋮ Class is established by ability to navigate clusters of social boundaries

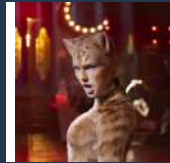⋮ To be high-class you must 'pass' as high-class

Image credit

 Photo by <u>Kyle Glenn</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>

 Photo by <u>Trung Thanh</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>
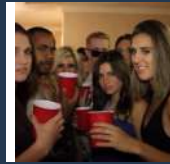
 Photo by <u>Ardian Lumi</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>

 Still from *<u>Cats</u>* <u>(2019)</u>

 Photo by <u>chen zy</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>

 Unknown source, via <u>X</u>

 Photo by <u>Boris Stefanik</u> on <u>Unsplash</u>

 Still from *<u>The Hunger Games</u>* <u>(2012)</u>

Image credit

 Still from *Trading Places (1983)*

 Still from *Trading Places (1983)*

 Photo from Getty Images via Forbes

 Shaikh Muhammad Amir, via the BBC

 Still from *Inventing Anna (2022)*