

The Social Self

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Socialization

The interactive process through which people learn the basic skills, values, beliefs, and behavior patterns of a society

Self

Your conscious awareness of possessing a distinct identity that separates you and your environment from other members of society

Theories of Socialization

Locke: Tabula Rasa

- Newborns were born with a tabula rasa (clean slate)
- Born with no personality
- Acquire personality as a result of personal experiences
- Humans can be molded into any type of personality

Theories of Socialization

Cooley: The Looking-Glass Self (Interactionist Perspective)

- Develop an image of ourselves based on how we imagine we appear to others
- Other people act as a mirror reflecting back the image we project through their reactions to our behavior

Theories of Socialization

Cooley: The Looking-Glass Self

3 Step Process of Development of Self

1. Imagine how we appear to others
2. Based on their reactions to us, we attempt to determine whether others view us as we view ourselves
3. We use our perceptions of how others judge us to develop feelings about ourselves

Theories of Socialization

Cooley: The Looking-Glass Self

- Process begins very early in childhood
- A newborn has no sense of person or place
- Child's primary group (family) interact, talk, reward, punish

Theories of Socialization

Mead: Role-Taking

- Builds off Cooley's Looking-Glass Self
- Eventually we take on or pretend to take on the role of others (Role-Taking)
- Allows us to anticipate what others expect from us
- Learn to see ourselves through the eyes of others and act accordingly
 - Significant others then Generalized other

Mead's Development of Self

Step 1: Imitation (Under age 3)

- No sense of self and can only imitate

Step 2: Play (ages 3 – 6)

- See themselves in relation to others
- Recognize specific roles and act out those roles

Step 3: Organized Games (Over age 6)

- Take on their own roles as well as anticipate the actions of others

Mead's Development of Self

I vs Me

- According to Mead, the self consists of two related parts
- The “I” is the unsocialized, spontaneous, self-interested component of personality and self-identity
- The “me” is aware of expectations and attitudes of society, the socialized self

Theories of Socialization

Goffman: Impression Management

- Builds off Mead's Role Taking
- “Dramaturgy” – social interaction is like a drama being performed on a stage for an audience
- We change our personalities based on what impression we want to convey
- Each role has a setting and props