

## THEORETICAL CONSIDERATION OF INTEGRATING SOCIAL STRUCTURE INTO SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM: SELECTED METHODOLOGICAL INSIGHTS

---

ARTHUR F. CLAGETT

*Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas*

The purpose in this paper was to elucidate the process-social structure controversy, concerning the relationships of self to symbolic interactionism. Increasingly, knowledgeable scholars of self theory are gaining methodological insights, which support the fact that our conceptions of process and social structure are each incomplete, supplementary dimensions articulating the same phenomenal states of being and development. Just as self and society are “twin born”; structure and process are analytically separable dimensions of self that, however, are not mutually reducible. Hence, the basic problem, attempted herein, is to expound dimensions of the symbolic interactionist perspective required for logically specifying and analyzing those psychological, social, and situational conditions under which social structure and social process each exert their differential – as well as their combined, simultaneous influences in determining consequences that self has for social behavior.

*Keywords:* integrating social structure, symbolic interactionism, methodological insights.

The process-social structure controversy concerning the nature of self affected a major split, over the decades, among proponents of the symbolic interactionist perspective.<sup>1</sup> Currently, however, there appears to be concerted research efforts among an ever-increasing number of unaligned, “independent” theorists and researchers to alleviate the necessity for this controversy within our discipline. Increasingly, knowledgeable scholars of social science are gaining methodological insights from the fact that the concepts of process and structure are each incomplete, supplementary dimensions articulating the same phenomenal states of being and development. Very simply stated, structure constitutes essentially integrated, characteristic patterns of configuration among related, interdependent elements composing any given phenomenon. On the other hand, process constitutes sequential continuity of interaction among those interdependent structural elements, which rearranges or alters their pattern(s) of configuration, thereby facilitating structural modifications in the phenomenon, in question. Just as self and society are “twin born,” structure and pro-

---

<sup>1</sup>See Clagett (1983), pp. 9-19 for basic contributions made by three pioneer symbolic interactionists. William James and George Herbert Mead founded and developed symbolic interactionism from the process perspective. The latter, Manford Kuhn, introduced structure into his perspective, thereby providing the basis for the social process-social structure controversy that developed and intensified over the year.

Correspondence and reprint requests should be addressed to: Arthur F. Clagett, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Sociology, 609 Egret Drive, Nacogdoches, Texas 75961, USA.

cess are analytically separable, dimensional qualities that, however, are not mutually reducible. Accordingly, the attempts of a certain school of sociologists to “assimilate” process within their concept of structure have perpetrated the well-known fallacy of sociological determinism. It is inconceivable that any symbolic interactionist would ever be guilty of committing this fallacy. Yet, those symbolic interactionists who attempt to “dissolve” social structure in the fluidity of social process have failed to recognize their unsuccessful, albeit unwitting, efforts to resolve the dilemmatic, dualistic fallacy of social structure and process.<sup>2</sup>

In any event, scientific evidence is becoming available which should justify our belief that social structure can and should be meaningfully adapted and integrated within the perspective of symbolic interactionism. In essence, of course, the process-social structure controversy constitutes opposing one-sided arguments as to whether self is the result of social structural influences, or influences of the social process(es) of symbolic (and nonsymbolic) interaction. Actually, this author maintains that the very complex differing social and situational conditions – especially over extended time frames – produce empirically identifiable self-involved behavior resulting both from the influences of social structure and the process(es) of symbolic interaction. Hence, the real problem is to develop a symbolic interactionist perspective which can validly specify and analyze those social and situational conditions under which social structure and social process each exert their differential – as well as their simultaneous, combined – influences in determining consequences that self has for social behavior.

Stryker (1980, pp. 51-85) has developed a generalized symbolic interactionist model in which, he believes, social structure can be meaningfully integrated. Stryker’s model is prefaced by two basic assumptions. First, social behavior is not simply the result of expectations, but is the product of a rolemaking (negotiated) process. Second, the enactment or performance of a role is a variable. Hence, “there may be some choice in whether or not to perform a role and...there may be the opportunity to reject the expectations attached to a position occupied or to modify the performance called for.” (Stryker, 1980, pp. 78-79). Data required for supporting the above assumptions will be explicated, and the other questions that have been raised in this section will be dealt with in turn. First, the relations of symbolic interaction to role-making will be analyzed.

---

<sup>2</sup> Structural-processual dualism inappropriately dichotomizes social structure and process because each is a supplementary dimension that articulates the same phenomenal states of being and development. Accordingly, social structure does not exist independently of social process, any more than society could exist independently of culture. In fact, conflict between ideal and actual culture is a principal source of processual change(s) in the social structure of society (Moore, 1963, pp. 18-21; cf., Dahrendorf, 1958, pp. 170-183). Sociological determinism, of course, is the view that essentially all individual behavior is determined by cultural and group influence. Hence, this view fails to take into account psychological factors which facilitate the significant, disproportional influences that dominant individuals have in shaping policymaking decisions which modify or change group structure – especially at the micro level of analysis (Theodorson & Theodorson, 1969, pp. 400; cf., Mills, 1956).

**RELATIONS OF SYMBOLIC INTERACTION TO ROLE-MAKING**

Each episodic event of symbolic interaction is facilitated both by pre-existing, generalized, situational definitions, and emerging, shared situational perspectives, which develop among the participating actors. Each actor involved begins with a set of attitudes, anticipated goal(s) and his/her conceptual understanding of the situation. On the one hand, communication coupled with interpretation of evidence, which is presented, may confirm pre-existing definitions of the situation as it develops. On the other hand, especially among strangers in an ambiguous situation, communication and interpretation(s) of evidence received may allow or require that existing expectations be reconsidered or even changed. In the event of dissensus among the interacting participants, cooperative efforts usually are conducive to producing a mutually satisfactory definition of the situational event and obligations required for establishing consensus – or at least accommodation. Otherwise, any progressive breakdown in communication enhances the probability of conflictual interaction, structured through incompatible definitions of the situation, or the termination of interaction altogether (Weinstein, 1969).

Lauer and Handel (1977, pp. 93-94) have emphasized the processual quality in analyzing social interaction. Each episode of interaction has its own history...This historical approach to particular episodes of interaction provides a relatively straightforward way to analyze the processes involved.

In sum, this approach: (a) deals with each actor's expectations upon entering the interaction; (b) takes into account how those expectations are modified by first impressions of the actual situation; (c) copes with responses to dissensus, if encountered; and (d) considers certain pertinent, broader consequences and implications of this view of interaction (Lauer & Handel, 1977).

Role relationships, although they do not rigorously define the content of an interaction event, do constrain its form (McCall, 1970). Role-taking, which initially sets the stage for all such relationships, has been a central concept in orthodox symbolic interactionism. In essence, role-taking is conceptualized as "the process whereby an individual imaginatively constructs the attitudes of the other, and thus anticipates the behavior of the other" (Lauer & Boardman, 1971, pp. 137). The process of role-taking thus involves not only role-playing, but empathy and identification as well. Individuals very rarely, if ever, are able to perfectly take the role of one another. Even so, role-taking is an essential process of human society. In fact, symbolic interaction involves behavior which is intended to influence participating individuals to take account of the behavior of the other by taking that other's role. In contrast to infrahuman society, Mead (1938, pp. 625) held that the human capacity for role-taking is the creation of "the duties, rights, the customs, the laws, and the various institutions in human society". Lauer and Handel (1977, pp. 61) have stated Mead's thesis as follows: "Role-taking is the basis of a society because cooperative processes are necessary for the maintenance of an organized community, and cooperative processes can only occur to the extent that individual members are able to apprehend the general attitudes and therefore, predict the behavior of other members of the society." The Meadian stages of role-taking are mentioned only briefly, at this point, so as to establish

## 100 INTEGRATING SOCIAL STRUCTURE INTO SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

continuity inspecifying Lauer's and Handel's conceptual dimensions of role-taking at the different stages of the role-taking process. As conceived by Mead, the socializing process of role-taking, in the course of an individual's self-development, ranges first, from the "play stage" of discrete individuals, through the "game stage" of discrete organized groups, to that of the "composite role" of the "generalized other." This later abstract process constitutes one's internalization of conceptually integrated perspective(s), derived from collective expectations of those dominant significant others composing subject actor's reference sets. Lauer and Handel (1977) have sharpened the role-taking concept and made it more useful by recognizing the following four types.

1. "Basic role-taking" conforms to its customary usage as the process of imaginatively constructing the attitudes of the other so as to anticipate his/her behavior.
2. "Reflexive role-taking," in the Meadian tradition, is related to the reflexive nature of self, perceived by the individual both as subject and object. This process is described further by Turner (1956, pp. 321) as the process in which "the role of the other is employed as a mirror, reflecting the expectations or evaluation of the self as seen in the other-role."
3. "Appropriative role-taking" refers to subject actor's imaginatively constructing attitudes of the other and internalizing them into the structure of his self. "These attitudes are not necessarily evaluative; reflexive role-taking may or may not be associated with appropriative role-taking" (Lauer & Handel, 1977, p. 63).
4. "Synisic role-taking," which is a more inclusive process than "basic role-taking," is an effort to apprehend the feelings and perceptions of the other to the extent that subject actor acquires insights into the other's psychodynamic processes – e.g., role-taking which occurs in the casework of the psychiatrist or rehabilitation counselor.

This paper is concerned principally with merely a cursory description of relations among the above four types of role-taking to the processes of identifications and empathy. "Basic role-taking," which of course requires symbolic "role-playing," refers to the fulfillment of some pattern of behavior associated with a social position. Hence, in the development of one's self, "basic role-taking" both facilitates and is facilitated by "reflexive-appropriative role-taking". Following this line of reasoning a bit further, the related process of identification is basically appropriative role-taking, even though identification may also involve reflexive role-taking (Lauer & Handel, 1977).

Similarly, the process of empathy is based upon feeling so that the other's experience is not only understood but, to some extent, shared. In sum, the individual imaginatively constructs the attitudes of the other and thereby plays at the other's role. In the course of playing at the role and acting out the attitudes of the other, the individual internalizes some of these attitudes (which of course, include feelings). Hence, the individual has constructed the attitudes of the other, acted them out, found them to be appealing, and appropriated them as his/her own.

Role-taking, of course, is situational. Accordingly, the kind of role-taking in which individuals actually engage is, at least partially, a function of the social context. Structural conditions, moreover, that tend to be associated with greater or lesser amounts of role-taking can be identified. The structure of power, for example, is an important variable with respect to the amount of role-taking. An investigation of role-taking in families found that role-taking was most

accurate among the children, less accurate among mothers, and least accurate among fathers (Thomas, Franks, & Calonico 1972). Thus it is, in the context of social process, social structure influences conceptions of self, differential definitions of situations and behavioral opportunities that bind or guide the interaction process (Stryker, 1980).

Turner (1970) has stressed the dynamics of role relationships, with respect to the importance of communicative and symbolic process(es) involved in role-taking. Moreover, he introduced the concept “role-making” in his efforts to energize the implicit activities of interaction as emergent and constructed. In fact, Turner (1962) believes that in order for interaction to take place, actors must be represented symbolically – by locating oneself and others in roles. Role-taking, therefore, plays an important part in “role-making.” In essence, “role-making” shifts emphasis from the simple process of enacting a prescribed role to activating a performance on the basis of an imputed other-role.

Turner takes the position that traditional role theory neglects the impact that role enactment may have on social structure. He notes, for example, that self-direction and role-creation require increasingly important skills when structural arrangements become less stable. In sum, he argues that the “role-making” activities of self-involvements are limited by the social positions a person occupies in organized social structure and his/her accompanying role expectations (Turner, 1962). Not surprisingly, Turner (1918) conceptualizes the self as an organized hierarchy of roles.

#### SELF IN ROLE/IDENTITIES

Every person is born into an ongoing “social system” – viz., society. Hence, all social roles – involving their social expectations about appropriate behavior – exist prior to any individual who assumes those roles. Nevertheless, roles do not result in immutable, rigidly standardized behavior. Instead role behavior is both standardized and variable in its qualitative forms. The quality of variability in role behavior is rooted in at least five factors. First, the behavioral expectations virtually always involve some flexibility. Second, roles may be conventional or interpersonal (i.e., informally structured). Third, roles involve interaction, processes of cooperative behavior, and ongoing modifications. Fourth, the relationship between the role and the individual who assumes the role varies. Finally, there is the problem of role conflict (Lauer & Handel, 1977, p. 79).

The standardized quality of roles, on the other hand, provides an initial framework for interaction. By definition, certain relatively stable expectations are associated with all social roles. These expectations, as indicated earlier, provide the bases for interaction. Once the interaction has begun, however, it becomes a modifying factor in shaping the resulting behavior. Yet, most importantly, roles are significant in their effects upon the individual’s selfhood. It was noted earlier herein that when an individual plays at a role s/he may appropriate that role or certain attitudes toward it. Hence, whenever a person appropriates attitudes of an other for one’s self, subject actor is modifying his/ her selfhood. Self definitional activities are held to be largely – but not exclusively – the consequences of occupying social positions and interacting in terms of the corresponding roles that structure those positions. Roles necessarily imply counter-roles, which structure social relationships with others in

## 102 INTEGRATING SOCIAL STRUCTURE INTO SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

a social process. According to Stryker (1964, p. 138) “one’s self is the way one describes to himself his relationships to others in a social process.” This line of reasoning has led to the introduction of a new set of concepts: role/identity (or self-in-role); identity salience, and situated identities – each of which will be discussed, at length, herein. Role/identities are internalized positional designations incorporated in the self, and such role/identities exist insofar as a person is a participant in structured role relationships (Stryker, 1981; cf., Burke & Tully, 1977). A person’s repertoire of role/identities is limited only by the number of structured role relationships in which one is involved.

Burke (1980, pp. 18-23) has convincingly analyzed role/identities in terms of four principal properties of the self:<sup>3</sup>

1. Role/identities are organized as “sets of meanings” a person attributes to the self as an object in his/her performance of social roles. The person, in turn, comes to understand these internalized meanings through interaction with others in situations, in which those others respond to the person as the performer of a particular role. Thus, the others respond to the person as if he/she had an identity appropriate to the particular role performance, in question, thereby conveying to the subject actor that meaning of his/her self. In Burke’s own words, “Such responses provide cues to appropriate role performance and, by implication, to an appropriate identity for one who performs in appropriate ways” (Burke, 1980, p. 19). Hence, it is during such interactions that one’s actions develop meaning through the reactions of the interacting others and, over time, gradually call up in subject actor the responses that are called up in the others. “Thus one’s actions, words, and appearances become significant symbols” (Burke, 1980, p. 19; cf. Mead, 1934). These significant symbols, in question, constitute self meanings - viz, role/identities (or self-in-roles).

2. Role/identities are relational in, at least, two respects. First, these identities, as roles, both give and derive meaning from counter-roles, while the corresponding identities – i.e., the sociopsychological (internalized) component of roles – both give and receive meanings in relation to counter-identities. Secondly, role/identities relate to each other in the hierarchy salience (cf. McCall & Simmons, 1978; Stryker, 1968, 1980). In this sense, each identity is more or less likely to be enacted or taken into account – depending upon its ranked position in subject actor’s salience hierarchy – relative to the ranked positions of his other identities composing the hierarchy of salience.

Those identities at the top of the hierarchy are more likely to be invoked than those at the bottom...to be invoked in more situations, and to be invoked together with other identities lower in the hierarchy; those identities at the top of the hierarchy act to organize and order identities lower in the hierarchy (Burke, 1980, p. 19). Thus, the

---

<sup>3</sup>Burke actually analyzed role/identities in terms of six theoretical properties of the self, rather than just the four properties discussed above. The two properties, which have been omitted are: (a) “identities are self-in-role meanings;” (b) “identities motivate behavior”. The above first stated property was not included in the discussion of Burke’s other properties, because it had been discussed and elaborated earlier in the section which, incidentally, is entitled “*Self in Role/Identities*.” The latter stated property was omitted, because it is implicitly implied in Burke’s fifth listed property of self: “Identities influence role performance indirectly through the construction on self-in-role images.”

meaning of an identity is derived through its commonalities with one class of persons similarly situated and its differences with other classes of persons, who are situated in counter-positions. To measure an identity, therefore, requires assessments of those similarities and differences and, likewise, requires assessment of each identity in relation to its counter-identities.

3. Role/identities are reflexive. Mead (1934) suggested that the individual experiences his or her self both indirectly – i.e., from the particular standpoints of other members of his/her social groups, and directly as when subject actor develops ideas of significant symbols as a means by which he/she responds to his or her self as others respond to him or her. The real importance of reflexivity at this point, however, is its consequences for the processes that are the self. Role/identities influence role performances and, in turn, those performances are assessed by the self in terms of the kind of identity that subject actor perceives as being relevant to his/her “generalized other,” i.e., the same categories of meaning and relevance which define the identity under consideration (cf., Burke, 1980; Powers, 1975).

4. Role/identities operate indirectly in their influence on performance. What is proposed here is the idea that role/identity (i.e., the “I-myself”) influences role performances only indirectly through the construction of self-images and that it is the self-image which then directly influences performance (Burke, 1980; cf. Schwartz, 1977). In sum, two steps are involved: (a) the step linking role/identity with self-image, and (b) the step linking self-image with performance. Burke (1980) conceptualizes the notion of image as the tentative “current working copy” of the identity. As such, it is subject to continual revision, updating and change, as a function of variations in situations and situational demands.

“While identities themselves are not unchanging, relative to an image, an identity can be represented as a point while the image is perhaps best represented as a probability density around that point” (Burke, 1980, p. 20). Hence, the image is conceptualized as the “current working copy” rather than “a copy” of the identity. By way of contrast, Foote (1951) suggested that an identity is an “idealized picture” of the self-in-role which provides the motivation for performance; yet Burke (1980, p. 21) believes, “It is the image, not the identity, which does the work in guiding moment-to-moment interaction.”

Stryker (1968, 1980) developed identity theory for the purpose of dealing with the reciprocity of self and society. Hence, role theory is introduced into symbolic interactionism – and identity theory – in recognition of the highly differentiated complexity of modern society. Identity theory is articulated by means of the concepts of identity, (or role/identity), identity salience, and commitment required to support interactional needs. Identities are conceptualized as internalized positional designations, which exist in so far as actors participate in structured role-status relationships, and appropriate the conditions of this placement for themselves (Stone, 1962). Persons have as many identities as they have different sets of structured relationships with others. Identities are conceived as organized in a salience hierarchy defined as the probability of various identities coming into play in a given situation or across situations; identity salience is the location of an identity in that hierarchy (Stryker & Statham, 1985, p. 345). Commitment is defined as the degree to which relationships of individuals

within and between groups are interdependent, thereby facilitating greater solidarity in social structure. "One is committed to a social role to the degree that extensive and intensive social relationships are built upon that role" (Stryker & Statham, 1985, p. 345). Hence, commitment facilitates identity salience which, in turn, influences behavioral choices.

Role/identity theory (McCall and Simmons, 1978) supplements identity theory. Role/identity, the central concept of the McCall and Simmons (1978) model, emphasizes the intimate relations of social roles to the self. Persons are held to identify others in terms of social positions. Typically, role/identities are idealized conceptions of self. McCall and Simmons (1978) conceptualize "salience" as the situational self. Stated more explicitly, salience is influenced by the prominence of performance and by the degree a role/identity requires support. The character and role that an actor intends to express in concrete performances reflect both the salience structure of one's self and the audience. Throughout, McCall and Simmons (1978) emphasize the interdependence of self and roles. Roles as normative expectations are held to structure status positions derived through cognitive process(es). In this section concerted efforts have been expended to establish the theoretical interdependence of self and social roles. In the section that follows, similar efforts will be devoted to arguments designed to emphasize the interdependence of situational identities and the structure of social situations.

#### RELATIONS OF SITUATED IDENTITIES TO THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIAL SITUATIONS

Goffman (1964, 1971) and Lauer and Handel (1977), among others, have provided evidence, which strongly suggests that sociologists and social psychologists experience considerable theoretical and methodological difficulties in analyzing face-to-face interaction, principally because they have neglected to study the structure of interaction, itself. The concrete boundaries defining face-to-face interaction occur whenever persons are mutually accessible to one another's naked senses (Lauer & Handel, 1977; cf., Goffman, 1964). The interaction concept, of course, is best understood as referring to face-to-face interaction in social situations. The structure of social situations cannot be meaningfully understood, however, unless it is conceptualized in terms which recognize both physical objects and people as dimensions of the situation, in question. The concept "situated identities" is one attempt to accomplish that goal within the symbolic interactionist perspective.

A situated identity refers to the stereotyped self imputed by subject actor to others on the basis of roles they are performing in a given social situation. Furthermore, the situated identity concept incorporates both physical objects and depicted behavior of the participating actors composing the social structure (and physical boundaries) of the social situation, in question (Lauer & Handel, 1977). A fundamental theme recurring throughout the works of Goffman (especially 1959) is that individuals are inclined to impute entire selves to others on the basis of their personal attributes and role performances in interactional situations. More explicitly, there is a tendency for people to form stereotyped conceptions about the kind of person who is occupying a particular role. Those stereotypes often include a hypothetical personal history, characterized by certain assumed attitudes, personal attri-

butes and other role obligations. Hence, such stereotypical depictions of situated identities influence our definitions of them – as we define other aspects of the situation – before valid evidence is available (cf., Lauer & Handel, 1977). Rather rigorous stereotyped identities assigned to associated role expectancies can be especially pervasive in formal organizations. Those situated identities include not only expectations concerning the job-performing activities of the organization's members but, also, unduly exacting expectations as to the certain life style the members should lead, as well as the designated social relationships and kind of personalities they are expected to cultivate (Whyte, 1956). This same process operates, also, in more loosely structured situations, simply because all social relationships are forms of social organization and, therefore, share such structural characteristics in common. However, the situated identities associated with less-structured role relationships are typically much less rigorous in nature (McCall, 1970).

A situated identity, of course, is easily differentiated from one's self. The self, by definition – as conceptualized herein – is a relatively stable organization, which constitutes a dynamic, ever-changing symbolic integrating of structuring influences that articulate the actor's interactional experiences. Those experiences naturally are derived both from his/her magnitude of performance and participation in a great variety of social situations. By contrast, a situated identity is a stereotyped version that subject actor has of other people's selves, as well as their stereotypes of his or her self, associated more with situational role performance(s), rather than the particular person who is performing those "situational" role performance(s). Hence, for each participating actor in a given situation, the situated identity changes along with whatever role the individual is performing (Lauer & Handel, 1977). The situated identity, therefore, tends to appear paradoxical. It attempts to define, by means of stereotypes, the self of the person(s) involved. However, it changes as the role relationship(s) between the participating actors change. Accordingly, it is appropriate only for the situation(s) in which it is framed. Even so, defining situated identities can be an important tool in guiding the behavior of participants in interaction, due to the fact that those identities we assign to others affect our expectations concerning what roles they will assume, beyond the interactional context hind the level of performance we tend to expect (Weinstein, 1969). Stated otherwise, when a situated identity is inferred from a role relationship in which a person is involved, there is also the tendency to anticipate similarly stereotyped impressions about his/her performance in other social situations and with other persons. "This may be extremely important in trying to estimate a person's commitment to his or her role relationships with us; his or her competence to perform it properly, and his or her personal priorities among the roles the person must perform" (Lauer & Handel, 1977, p. 101). Moreover, the assignment of a situated identity may be predictive to the extent that the identity, in question, is accepted by the other person(s) to whom it is depicted. In accepting the identity assigned, that person obligates him/her self to perform the associated role in the expected manner. Hence the situated identity then assumes a normative character. "Further, it is the roles in terms of which behavior is defined, not the behavior itself, that provide the sense of obligation and commitment to a course of action" (Lauer & Handel, 1977, pp. 104-105). In sum, the situated identity concept holds promise as a

useful tool for more precisely analyzing interpersonal interactions in social situations. However, much research remains to be done in more clearly delimiting and precisely conceptualizing the numerous dimensions of this generic concept of situated identity. Likewise, similar amounts of research are needed to clearly delimit and more precisely define the other concepts analyzed herein.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Recent research evidence developed, for the most part during the past 10 years – by several of our more innovative symbolic interactionists – provides basic assumptions and concepts needed for the eventual integration of social structure into a unified theory of symbolic interactionism. Those basic assumptions and concepts contributed include: social behavior is the product of both social expectations, structured through socialized roles and, also, a “rolemaking” (negotiated) process – requiring role-taking (as well as “role-making”), which set the stage for the development of role-status relationships. Thus, in the context of social process, social structure influences conceptions of self, differential definitions of situations and behavioral opportunities that bind and guide the interaction process.

The standardized quality of roles provides the basis for interaction. However, once the interaction has begun, it becomes a modifying factor in shaping the resulting behavior. Most importantly, the research evidence, developed herein, convincingly supports our position that roles are significant in their effects upon the individual’s selfhood. Self-definitional activities are held to be largely the consequences of occupying social positions and interacting in terms of the corresponding roles that structure those positions. Roles, of course, imply counter-roles, which through reciprocal interaction structure social relationships. Accordingly, each individual tends to perceive him/her self in terms of his/her relationships with one another.

Three major, “new” concepts are advanced for the purpose of supporting the above line of reasoning: (a) role/identity; (b) identity salience; (c) situated identity. Role/identities are conceptualized as internalized positional designations incorporated in the self, and exist insofar as a person is a participant in (formally or informally) structured role relationships. The resulting selfidentities, in turn, are held to be organized in a salience hierarchy defined as the probability of various identities coming into play in a given situation or across situations. Hence, the salience of a given identity affects its threshold of invocation, when interacting with other defining characteristics of situations and other self characteristics.

Situated identities refer to the stereotyped self imputed by subject actor to others on the basis of roles they are performing in a given social situation. Both physical objects and depicted behavior of the participating actors, composing the social situation(s), are incorporated in the situated identity. In general, people tend to form stereotyped conceptions about the kind of actor, who is occupying any particular role. Such stereotypical depictions of situated identities provide faulty “definitions of the situation,” in which those stereotyped actors participate. In sum, situated identities are a stereotyped version that subject actor has of other people’s selves – as well as his/her stereotypes of his or her own self.

Systematic adaptations and integration of the concepts analyzed in this paper constitute unfinished problems yet to be solved by innovative structural symbolic

interactionists. Too, the hypothetical assumptions positing interdependent relationships among those conceptual variables must be operationalized and empirically verified before a reliable, valid theory of structured symbolic interactionism can be formulated. Ultimately, explicit, deductive specification of macro processes – which are ordered by and, in turn, modify societal structure – must provide predictable evidence as to how society relates to individual selves. Similarly, valid, inductive specification as to how individual selves relate to social interaction and develop as structured, social relationships must be scientifically predictable (cf., Clagett, 1988). Implicit concepts, such as motivation, internalization, must give way to more explicit terminology. For example, we need to understand exactly why, when, and to what extent social roles assume characteristic qualities of self identities. Precisely how do self-identities facilitate “influences” that “self-images” are thought to have on behavioral performance(s)? What are the specified causes – predictable in advance – for explaining quantitative as well as qualitative organization of identity salience hierarchies? What are the reactive consequences of positive VS negative stereotyping of situational identities – e.g., halo effects VS scapegoating – on both role performance(s) and self-identities? Then, of course, there is the continual need to identify differential effects of multiple causality resulting from simultaneous influences of interdependent cause-effect variables. These problems, alone, require more productive research, for their satisfactory solution, than is likely to be accomplished during the lifetimes of a single generation of creative researchers.

In the process of accomplishing those tasks, listed above, additional concepts and assumptions undoubtedly will be introduced, or substituted for existing ones, as new problems emerge and are recognized through time. Those problems, likewise, must be solved – as well as any other conceptual difficulties brought about by the exigencies of changing conditions. Hence, it should be anticipated that several generations will be required before this, or any other, “budding” theory can accurately predict behavior scientifically. Even so, the gathering and explication of data analyzed herein may be regarded as a helpful beginning.

## REFERENCES

- Burke P. J. (1980). The self: Measurement requirements from an interactionist perspective. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 43, 18-29.
- Burke, P. J., & Tully, J. (1977). The measurement of role/identity. *Social Forces*, 55, 881-897.
- Clagett, A. F. (1983). Theories of self: William James, George Herbert Mead and Manford Kuhn. *Quarterly Journal of Ideology*, 7, 9-19.
- Clagett, A. F. (1988). Theoretical consideration of forcible rape: A critical analysis. *Psychology: A Journal of Human Behavior*, (in press).
- Dahrendorf, R. (1958). Toward a theory of social conflict. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 9, 170-183.
- Foote, N. (1951). Identification as the basis for a theory of motivation. *American Sociological Review*, 26, 14-21.
- Goffman, E. (1971). *Relations in public*. New York: Basic Books.
- Goffman, E. (1964). The neglected situation. *American Anthropologist*, 66, 133-136.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

- Lauer, R. H., & Boardman, L. (1971). Role-taking: Theory, typology, and propositions. *Sociology and Social Research*, 55, 137-148.
- Lauer, R. H., & Handel, H. (1977). *Social psychology: The theory and application of symbolic interactionism*. Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin.
- McCall, G. J. (1970). The social organization of relationships. In G. McCall, M. McCall, N. Denzin, G. Suttles, & S. Kurch (Eds.), *Social relationships*. Chicago: Aldine.
- McCall, G. J., & Simmons, J. (1978). *Identities and interaction* (2nd ed.). New York: Free Press.
- Mead, G. H. (1938). The philosophy of the act. In C. Morris (Ed.), *Chicago: The University of Chicago Press*.
- Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mills, C. W. (1956). *The power elite*. New York: Oxford Press.
- Moore, W. E. (1963). *Social change*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Powers, W. T. (1975). *Behavior: The control of perception*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1977). Normative influences on altruism. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*. New York: Academic Press.
- Stone, G. P. (1962). Appearance and the self. In A. M. Rose (Ed.), *Human behavior and social process*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Stryker, S. (1981). Symbolic interactionism: Themes and variations. In M. Rosenberg & R. H. Turner (Eds.), *Sociological perspectives in social psychology*. New York: Basic Books.
- Stryker, S. (1980). Symbolic interactionism: A social structural version. Menlo Park, CA: Cummings.
- Stryker, S. (1968). Identity salience and role performance. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 30, 558-564.
- Stryker, S. (1964). The interactional and situational approaches. In H. Christianson (Ed.), *Handbook of marriage and the family*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Stryker, S., & Statham, A. (1985). Symbolic interaction and role theory. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 311-378).
- Theodorson, G. A., & Theodorson, A. G. (1969). *A modern dictionary of sociology*. New York: Barnes & Noble.
- Thomas, D. L., Franks, D. D., & Calonico, J. M. (1972). Role-taking and power in social psychology. *American Sociological Review*, 37, 605-614.
- Turner, R. H. (1978). The role and the person. *American Journal of Sociology*, 84, 1-23.
- Turner, R. H. (1970). *Family interaction*. New York: Wiley.
- Turner, R. H. (1962). Role-taking: Process versus conformity. In A. Rose (Ed.), *Human behavior and social process*. Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Turner, R. H. (1956). Role-taking, role standpoint, and reference group behavior. *American Journal of Sociology*, 61, 316-28.
- Weinstein, E. (1969). The development of interpersonal competence. In D. Goslin (Ed.), *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research*. Chicago: Rand McNally.
- Whyte, W. H., Jr. (1956). *The organization man*. New York: Simon & Schuster.