



Social Psychology

Fall 2003

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CHAIR'S REMARKS*

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From the Chair's Desk: A Color-Coding Tool

All day, every day, we study the sociobehavioral mechanisms and processes that lie at the heart of the human experience. Their unfolding touches vast domains, from the most micro to the most macro. Whether on the ballfield or the battlefield, at work or at play, humans are under the influence of **status** and **power** and **justice**, to name only three of the more pervasive processes.

There are many ways – theoretical and empirical – that the Section can advance knowledge. Two complementary theoretical ways with radically different starting points are: (1) to trace deductively the far-flung social consequences of basic sociobehavioral processes, and (2) to search full-blooded accounts of large-scale phenomena for fingerprints of the sociobehavioral mechanisms.

Both these ways of working require minute attention to the actors involved as well as to the basic factors and the relations between them.

A useful tool is to color-code all the basic terms employed in a given paper and then list the terms and all the relations between them. For example, one may color all **status** words red (including synonyms like **prestige**), all **justice** words blue, all **power** words green, and so on.

Compiling the list of relations quickly makes transparent the structure of the implicit vision and often signals the need for next steps. For example, if two terms are found to have inconsistent relations with each other, it may be that one or both of the terms in fact comprise a family of terms, which must then be distinguished and given their own labels (for example, S1, S2, and S3 in the realm of status); alternatively, it may be that there is feedback over time, in which case the remedy is to affix temporal subscripts. Other times this procedure may uncover an intractable tautology, which was not visible before the color-coding and which pinpoints areas for repair.

There will be many further steps – specifying the functional relations, designing empirical tests, assessing the magnitudes of effects, and so on. But this color-coding tool provides a simple way to get started.

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GRADUATE STUDENT PROFILE

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I want to first thank Carmi Schooler for his leadership this past year. Carmi prompted us to consider the relationships between psychology and sociology AND between psychologists and sociologists and to examine the impasses and opportunities. Also thanks to all the committees who cheerfully and competently finished all our various annual duties. While we do not yet have a list of the committees for this year finalized, please watch for the announcements of those committees on the listserv and the website. In particular, I would like to encourage graduate students to submit their research for consideration for the section graduate student award.

In this newsletter our new Chair, Guillermina Jasso, invites us to consider a strategy for thinking through different issues and developing theoretical connections.

We feature Richard Serpe's discussion (page 4) of evaluation research and issues in outcome measurement. (Richard really deserves the some sort of superhero-social psychologist award. He managed to write his article in spite of illness and the terrible fires in California.) Following an applied theme, Lisa Rashotte discusses service learning in her teaching column. She argues for the advantages offered by coupling theory and methods with practice in the field. We also feature Will Tyson from Duke University (this page) who discusses his research on interracial friendship.

On pages 7 and 8, we present the Call for papers for the Couch-Stone Symposium of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction. For any further information, contact Phillip Vannini at Washington State University.

Of course, we highlight the activities at our ASA meetings. Kevin Vryan from Indiana University took most of the pictures on page 6 and I very much appreciate his sharing them. Peter Burke, our Cooley-Mead Award recipient for 2003, kindly allowed me to interview him and this discussion is featured on page 3.

This is my last newsletter, and I certainly have mixed feelings about passing the editor duties to Gretchen Peterson. On the one hand, I have really enjoyed putting together the newsletter and meeting different folks in the section. On the other hand, I have often wanted to throw PageMaker (our valued software) out the window. (In fact, I was finishing up this very newsletter when I tried to import a new jpg file. Suddenly, the whole screen disappeared—I had brought in a foreign presence with the jpg. Apparently when you import, it is like transporting on Star Trek or going into the Matrix; you have to know what/who is going with you!) Thanks to the many of you who were so gracious with your time and help with the newsletter.

Many thanks to Gretchen for agreeing to become the newsletter editor. Please reward her with your cooperation. Her email is gpeters@exchange.calstatela.edu

Will Tyson is completing his dissertation at Duke University and pursuing academic job opportunities for the fall. His primary interests are race and ethnicity, gender, higher education, and social networks. Will's dissertation is entitled, "Structural and Individual Level Influences on Interracial Friendship in the Freshman Year of College." While friendship plays a crucial role in social integration and individual outcomes throughout various areas of sociology, friendship is often dismissed as a purely personal process.

This dissertation uses panel data from the Campus Life and Learning project at Duke University. Will has served as a research assistant for this project that examines the influence of race and precollege factors on campus life and achievement. Using surveys conducted before enrollment and during freshman year, he predicts that students form friendships with their classmates based on race, proximity, and within-race similarity.

All students in the sample live on an all-freshman residential campus in which the likelihood of interracial exposure is determined by residence hall and campus segregation. Will predicts that students who live around more members of their own race across multiple levels of campus space are more likely to have racially homogeneous social networks. Given this proximity, similarity governs the likelihood of friendship between proximate individuals of the same race. Will measures the similarity of expectations for college of each respondent to those of in-group others as the likelihood of friendship formation between a student and in-group others in this college setting. Will predicts that dissimilar students are less likely to have friends of their own race and more likely to make friends with freshmen from other races.

Will's interest in merging the structural and personal developed from his work as a sociology and psychology double major at Wake Forest University (NC) where he studied social psychology from both disciplines. His early work examined participation of girls in sport and how athletic women are portrayed in women's and teenage girl's magazines. In graduate school, Will developed an academic interest in higher education through his work as a residence hall director, campus leader, and graduate student representative on Board of Trustees and senior administration search committees. This experience has enriched his research on merging the social and personal in higher education. Will believes that his experience with issues surrounding undergraduate and graduate student life has enriched his research agenda in higher education and his understanding of the role of faculty in higher education. Will plans to continue his strong commitment to university service throughout as career as a professor.

A DISCUSSION WITH PETER J. BURKE: IDENTITY CONTROL THEORY

by Jane Sell



Peter Burke, currently chair at University of California-Riverside, was presented with the Cooley-Mead Award at the 2003 ASA meetings. His work focuses on and develops Identity Theory. In particular he considers how actors with particular identities interact with other actors and contexts. Burke also taught at Indiana University (where he served as chair for four years) and Washington State University before joining the faculty at UCR. Additionally, he was the editor of *Social Psychology Quarterly* from 1982 to 1987.

Peter began college at the University of Massachusetts, but not as sociology major. In fact, he started as a chemistry major. By his own admission, his advisor “went crazy filling out paperwork” because he changed his major six or seven times. He was very attracted to the natural sciences but had taken a sociology course in his sophomore year and had been reading about sociological issues on his own, so with one more set of paperwork, he became a sociology major at the end of his sophomore year. Before graduating in 1961, the chair of the sociology department brought him into his office and asked him, “You’re going to graduate school, right?” He was a little surprised, and remembers thinking that if the chairman was asking him then that was what he was supposed to do. And so he went to Yale.

At Yale, he worked with Tad Blalock. He enjoyed statistics and working with Blalock, and in fact, he taught undergraduate statistics when Blalock left. For his dissertation, he worked with Ted Mills (who was a Bales’ student). The dissertation concerned authority and disruptions in small groups. Burke conducted the groups and then coded audiotapes of the group interaction entirely by himself. Half of these six person groups were in a directive leadership condition and half were in a nondirective leadership condition to explore the impact of style of leadership on disruptive behavior. Burke received his Ph D in 1965 at a time when doctoral students were being quickly pushed through graduate programs because the demand was high. In the fall before he received his degree, Hollingshead, who was the chair of the department, called Burke in to tell him that the faculty would generate interviews, and that he should just get on with the business of getting his thesis done. The two universities that he was asked to consider were University of North Carolina (where Blalock was at the time), and Indiana University, where Hollingshead had been for eleven years. Hollingshead clearly had a preference that Burke go to Indiana, and that indeed is where he went. Burke mentioned that he was lucky to go to Indiana with so many good faculty and a department committed to encouraging interaction among the faculty. Here he started work on role differentiation. He also taught an incredible variety of courses—18

different courses in all including everything from statistics and formal theory to qualitative methods.

Within a few years, Indiana developed two postdoctoral programs: quantitative methods and social psychology. There were weekly meetings and these meetings were important for generating ideas and enthusiasm. So, for example, Burke became interested in the methodological problem of measurement of self. This led to a research project with Judy Tully (which eventually led to the article, “The Measurement of Role/Identity,” *Social Forces*, 1977) and the beginning of an entire research program. Burke also credits much of his inspiration to the work of Sheldon Stryker at Indiana, and to William T. Powers’ book on perceptual control for control aspects of identity theory.

Another important influence on his research program was his association with Lee Freese at Washington State University (where Burke taught from 1988 to 2002). He and Lee team-taught a course on theory construction at Washington State and according to Burke, that experience really seemed “to make things click.” In particular, the idea of cumulative (not just additive) theory was an idea that impressed and influenced Burke.

Is Burke optimistic about the state of social psychology? Yes, generally speaking. Social psychology has always been the focus of interesting work. But what Burke sees as different and exciting at this point in time, is the emphasis that this interesting work needs to be embedded into a strong theoretical program. Centers of theoretical focus are growing and there is more integration of different theories and even different methodologies. In fact, that is how Burke sees his own program—identity control theory. He wishes to combine insights not just from different sociological areas, but from different disciplines entirely, such as complexity theory and artificial intelligence. He sees identity control theory as a fundamentally sociological (not psychological) because context and structure is absolutely critical for understanding the processes that occur.

I would like to add a note of tribute to this article. I interviewed Peter at a hotel bar during the ASA meetings. As we were talking Elijah Anderson stopped by to give his regards. Anderson was an undergraduate at Indiana University and took a course from Burke around 1967. “Wow,” he exclaimed. “That social psychology course and your research have been critical, absolutely important influences on my research and the way I think about things.” He wanted Peter to know how important Peter’s research and perspective had been for him. This is certainly a wonderful tribute—one that certainly indicates the power of Burke’s research. It has not just been influential for social psychology, but for the entire sociological arena.

RESEARCH COLUMN

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Social Psychological Concepts as Outcome Measures in Evaluation

For the past seventeen years, I have directed social science research facilities, which in addition to doing survey research, responds to California State University's mission of service to local community. As part of that mission the university enters into agreements with state agencies, county agencies, cities, school districts, and non-governmental non-profit organizations to assist them with evaluation and research. Over the last 15 years, funding sources have increasingly required that these programs be evaluated with measurement tools that capture change in the program's targeted outcomes. Many of these funding agencies are requiring the organization to develop theory of change and logic models. These models ask a basic "if-then" syllogism. If we do x, we expect outcome y.

For many of these evaluations, there are behavioral or performance outcomes that can be tracked. However, more often than not, one or more of the objectives of these programs include changes in how the participant or client sees themselves. Many of these programs have a goal to increase the participants' self-esteem, self-efficacy, independence, future orientation, personal control, etc. It is usual to see program objectives which state: "by participating in this program, young mothers will have higher self-esteem and develop a greater sense of personal control and efficacy." Or, "participants will experience greater levels of success in decision making, which will, in turn, increase their outlook for the future, their personal independence and their self-esteem."

Recently, I have begun to catalog my experiences in working with professionals who are very committed to their program and how they make sense out of social psychological concepts and issues. In this column, I share some of these observations from working on dozens of program/project evaluations. In doing so, I hope to characterize barriers that can be encountered and in many cases overcome and what seems to work. I am speaking about the use social psychological concepts in general, not which measure or measures seem to work best.

There are several issues that could become barriers to a successful evaluation and the successful use of social psychological measures. One of the primary barriers is the fact that evaluation/research about whether or not the program works are not high priority for the program staff. This takes too many forms to discuss in this column.

In general, this barrier is best addressed by getting involved in the evaluation of the program before it begins. My experience is that many of the barriers to success exist because the evaluator is contracted "after" the program has been funded and in most cases, the program is already in operation. In this situation, the evaluator is left with few good options and most of them are, at best ex post facto solutions.

After you develop a good relationship with program staff, you now have to deal with the naive psychologist that lurks within all of us. Many of the people who direct or coordinate programs that are interested in social psychology outcomes are social workers, counselors or have some social science training. Therefore, they believe they know what the contents of each of the concepts they intend to measure consist of and they believe they know how to measure it. In general, they want short questionnaires that take only a few minutes to administer. They are looking for only a couple of questions to measure each concept. When presented with existing scales that have between seven and twenty items, they question why we need so many questions. They assume that the concepts they wish to measure are unidimensional and therefore do not need more a couple of queries. This is less of a problem if the evaluator has a strong relationship with the agency. You can discuss the efficacy of measuring the concept and often provide examples how different patterns may evidence differences is how the program works. When that is not the case, we have successfully in enlisting the funding agency's program staff to help give credibility to using full scales.

In most cases, these programs are concerned with change in a pre-post test scenario in which the program time period is often rather short (three months or less). So it is important to discuss how much change they can realistically expect, in say self-esteem, in three months. What has proven helpful in these discussions is to focus their attention on the specific area of change they which impact. For example discussing role-specific self-esteem or issue specific personal control has been successful. Specifically, if we can measure how the client/participant see themselves with respect to being a parent or in making decisions about their future, we have a chance to capture some change in the measurement of the concept. If we are looking at global self-esteem or personal control, it is highly unlikely we see much change in a short period of time.

Measurement issues must also be addressed. In the interest of a short questionnaire, most programs want the questions to be asked in a yes/no format. Their argument is that it is easy to answer. Of late, we have been suggesting a zero to 10 scale with semantic anchors to capture change, especially in short time periods. We have been successful in helping the program staff understand that we want the questions which illicit the maximum variability to enhance the chance of capturing change. When you discuss this as a strategy that is mostly likely to produce a measurable change, program staff usually will agree.

If the program is long enough, we always suggest measuring the concepts at three points in time to establish a stability estimate for the measure. Again the issue here is time away from the program. It is very difficult to convince program staff that you need three points in time to really change. They have a great deal of difficulty understanding the concept of measurement error and difference scores. To overcome this issue, we have constructed difference scores from baseline to Time 1 and used them as a "program monitoring" tool to help the program staff see if things are going well. In this way, they can see value in conducting more than a pre and post test.

These are just a few of the experiential observations of doing social psychologically informed program evaluations. I hope you found them interesting or at least confirming of your own experience.

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Service Learning

Service learning is the integration of community service activity into an academic curriculum. Service learning adds to traditional community service the advantage of providing a structured learning experience for the student. The benefit accrues to both the students *and* to the community. As students participate in structured service activities in the community, they become active, rather than passive, learners.

Service learning in the sociological classroom presents an opportunity to students who wish to see how their newly acquired sociological knowledge can be applied in the “real world.” It allows the instructor to purposefully construct classroom material toward more applied ends. I believe that the sociological study of Group Processes is an area ripe for the development of this type of learning strategy and will describe a project that does that.

Students in the Sociology of Small Groups are instructed to form groups of 4 or 5 who will work together on this project throughout the semester. No restrictions are placed on group membership (i.e., it does not matter if the students already know each other). The project requires students to perform at least 3 hours of community service *as a group*.

Information is provided on how to contact 3 or 4 various service organizations that are most conducive to group service projects (e.g., Habitat for Humanity, community food banks, Ronald McDonald House). However, groups are free to choose to work with any service organization, pending the approval of the instructor. In the past, groups have worked with Veteran’s Administration hospitals, Easter Seals, soup kitchens, adult day care centers and other organizations. The activities performed by the students varied according the service organization’s needs. Students have bagged food for food banks, helped administer 5k fund-raising races for medical research organizations, provided entertainment for seniors, distributed meals for soup kitchens, and many other activities.

Students are instructed to take notes during all group meetings and both before and after the group activity. Their notes cover both the internal group processes (the student group) and the external group processes (the service organization). At first, these notes are primarily descriptive in nature (identifying behaviors that occur). As the term progresses, students are told to look for particular processes (e.g., leadership, decision making), having gotten the theoretical basis for such topics from reading and lecture materials. These notes are then used in both the learning activities that are on going throughout the semester and in the two major learning activities that take place at the end of the semester.

On-going Learning Activities

Throughout the term, in-class activities are designed to utilize the information students are gathering in their service learning project and to connect that information to material

being presented in class. These activities follow along with reading material on theories of group processes and with lecture material being presented in class on a particular day. They require that students use observations they have made about their own and other group members’ behavior to explore a sociological topic of interest in understanding group processes.

End-of-semester Learning Activities

There are two substantial end-of-semester learning activities associated with the Group Processes service learning project. The first is an in-class oral presentation made by the entire student group. Each group member is required to speak for roughly the same length of time during the presentation. The talks all begin with a description of what the student group actually did for their community service and end with an overall evaluation of how both the student group and the service organization performed. All group members receive the same grade on this presentation.

The second end-of-semester learning activity is an individual paper written by each student. These papers examine the group processes that occur within the student group in more detail than the group presentations. These papers are confidential to ensure that students can honestly discuss the group dynamics they witnessed without worrying that a fellow student could know what was said.

It has become generally accepted that community service and service learning can be important aspects of sociology courses. This has primarily been true for sociology courses in which the application of the material to the “real world” is readily apparent – social problems, social class inequality, gender and crime. The Group Processes service learning program outlined in this article represents a good start toward expanding the course base from which service learning can occur in the discipline of sociology.

* A fuller description of this project is available: Rashotte, Lisa Slattery. 2002. “Service Learning in a Small Groups Course.” *Sociological Practice*. 4(1): 79-87.

ASA Meetings--2004

August 14-17
San Francisco, California

SCENES FROM ASA 2003

Peter Burke and Sheldon Stryker



Peggy Thoits and Lynn Smith-Lovin



Brian Powell and Kathryn Lively

Dawn Robinson and Peter Burke



Jan Stets and Bill Corsaro



Steve Hitlin receives his award



Blane DaSilva and Gretchen Peterson



Lynn Smith-Lovin and Sheldon Stryker

**Couch-Stone Winter Symposium Of the Society for the Study of
Symbolic Interaction
Hotel Regency Hyatt, Vancouver, BC: February 26-28, 2004
“Symbolic Interaction Crossing Boundaries”**

Submissions from faculty and students are invited to the 2004 Couch-Stone Symposium of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction. This year's meeting will take place at the Hotel Regency Hyatt in beautiful Vancouver, British Columbia, on February 26 through February 28.

This year's meeting theme is "Symbolic Interaction Crossing Boundaries" (Epistemological, Theoretical, Substantive, Political, Ideological, etc.). This event marks the first time that the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction crosses the USA-Canada boundary, and thus submissions dealing with Canadian Studies issues examined from an interactionist perspective are particularly welcomed. Clearly, however, there are no thematic limitations imposed on presentations. The conference attendance fee is USD 25- or CAD 35- for all faculty members and free for graduate students. Attendance fee will be paid by mailing a check (either in US or Canadian funds) before the conference to the organizer. Make the check payable to Phillip Vannini:

Department of Sociology
Washington State University
Pullman WA 99164-4020 USA
(Email: vannini@lycos.com)

Please mail the check upon hearing back from the session organizer that you contacted. Whether you are a paying faculty member or a graduate student, as you finalize your travel plans please also send a note (either email or snail mail) to let the organizer know whether you intend to join us on our trip to the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia. Said trip departure is set for 1.00PM on Thursday the 26th.

We strongly encourage submission by email. Submissions should include a title and a brief (1 page) abstract. To submit, find

the session most appropriate for your presentation and email a MS word or similar program document as an attachment to one session organizer (listed below). Please submit to only one organizer and you will receive a prompt response.

Submissions of creative ideas for non-traditional presentations (possible ideas include debates, short films, performance-based presentations, artwork, etc.) are also especially welcomed.

We have a VERY special deal with the Regency Hyatt in downtown Vancouver (<http://vancouver.hyatt.com/property/index.jhtml> Phone: 604-683-1234), so please reserve by January 26 to qualify for discounted rates, and PLEASE STAY at the Hyatt to benefit from a very competitive rate for downtown Vancouver (CAD 146 or about US\$ 100) and HELP SSSI by doing so. Conference room is free to SSSI provided that a certain number of hotel rooms are occupied. But be sure to mention you are with the SSSI Couch-Stone Symposium when you call. If you are interested in saving funds by finding a roommate and sharing a room at the Hyatt with a fellow interactionist do let conference organizer Phillip Vannini know. Room rates based on multiple occupancy are quite convenient.

Graduate students presenting papers are eligible to receive a \$100 travel scholarship from SSSI. To apply, send a photocopy of your student ID and proof of your name on the program to Leslie Wasson, Social Sciences, Chapman University, 520 Kings County Drive, Suite 102, Hanford, CA 93230 (Email: lesliewasson@usa.net).

We have appointed Air Canada as the official airline of the 2004 Couch-Stone Symposium in Vancouver. If you wish, simply contact Air Canada's North America toll free number at 1-800-361-7585 or local number 514-393-9494 or your travel agent and take advantage of special discounted airfares. When calling Air Canada do mention our convention code CV041964

Media and Popular Culture

David Altheide: Arizona State University
David.Altheide@asu.edu

Semiotics and Symbolic Interactionist Sociology

Hans Bakker: University of Guelph
hbakker@uoguelph.ca

Crossing Biographical Boundaries: Childhood, Adolescence and Beyond

Spencer Cahill: University of South Florida
scahill@cas.usf.edu

Health, Illness, and Disability

(Submit to both):

Kathy Charmaz: Sonoma State University
charmaz@SONOMA.EDU

Carol Gardner: Indiana University-Purdue University
Indianapolis
cgardne@iupui.edu

Self and Identity: The Symbolic Interactionist Tradition and Beyond

Viktor Gecas: Purdue University
vgecas@soc.purdue.edu

**From Symbolic to Natural Environments:
Crossing the Green Divide**

Simon Gottschalk: University of Nevada,
Las Vegas
karma@unlv.nevada.edu

Institutions, Organizations, and Social Processes

Peter M. Hall: University of Missouri
HallPM@missouri.edu

Emotions

Lori Holyfield: University of Arkansas
Email only: lholyfie@uark.edu

More listings for the Crouch-Stone Sessions next page

Existentialism and Pragmatism: From Theory to Justice in Symbolic Interactionism
 John Johnson: Arizona State University
 John.Johnson@asu.edu
Applied Sociology: Interactionism and Practice
 David Maines: Oakland University
 maines@oakland.edu
Feminism and Symbolic Interactionism
 Martha McMahon: University of Victoria
 mcmahon@uvic.ca
Goffman for the 21st Century
 Dan Miller: University of Dayton
 Dan.Miller@notes.udayton.edu

Studying Listserv Communication: Virtual Interaction on SSSI Talk
 Erica Owens: Marquette University
 erica.owens@marquette.edu
Deviance: Settings, Interactions, and Reactions
 Clinton Sanders: University of Connecticut
 clintonsanders@hotmail.com
New Empirical Studies
 Angus Vail: Willamette University
 d_a_vail@hotmail.com

Cultural Studies
 Phillip Vannini: Washington State University
 vannini@lycos.com
Sexuality
 Dennis Waskul: Southern Utah University
 waskul@suu.edu
Symbolic Spaces in Canadian Cultures
 Elvi Whittaker: University of British Columbia
 Email only: ewhitt@interchange.ubc.ca

New Book!

Generating Images of Stratification

A Formal Theory

by

Thomas J. Fararo

University of Pittsburgh, PA, USA

Kenji Kosaka

Kluwer Publishing Company

The Social Psychology Section Homepage: <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~towens/socialpsych/>



Name: _____ Address: _____

e-mail _____

____ I am an ASA member and want to join the Social Psychology Section. Enclosed is a check for \$12.00 for section dues this year (\$5.00 for students). Make checks payable to the **American Sociological Association**.

____ I am not an ASA member but am interested in joining the Section. Please send me information about membership in the ASA.
Mail to: Membership Services, American Sociological Association, 1307 New York Avenue NW, Suite 700 Washington DC 20005-4701

