CHAPTER 6

Socialization and Social Interaction

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The Case of John/Joan

Janet was just 18 years old when she married 20 year-old Ron Reimer. Shortly after their marriage, Janet became pregnant with twins. On August 22, 1965, she gave birth to two healthy baby boys, a joy for both Ron and Janet. However, when the boys, Bruce and Brian, were 7 months old, Janet noticed the boys were having problems urinating and took them to the doctor. The doctor informed Janet and Ron that the boys were experiencing something not unusual for babies with uncircumcised penises. His recommendation was to have both the boys undergo circumcision—a minor, usually uneventful, surgical procedure. Unfortunately, for one of the boys, there would be nothing usual about his circumcision.

On the morning of April 27, 1966, the day of the boys' surgery, Janet and Ron were awakened by the phone ringing. They had checked the twins into the hospital for the procedure the day before. The nurse on the phone told the parents to get to the hospital as quickly as possible because there had been an accident. Upon arrival, Janet and Ron were met by the surgeon who informed them that Bruce had been burned during the circumcision. Instead of using a scalpel to perform the procedure, the doctor had used an electrical instrument that had proved faulty. The Reimers were lead to a room to see their baby.

Bruce had suffered a horrible burn to his entire penis. It was completely black, all the way to the base of his body. Over the next couple of days the dead tissue, once the baby's penis, dried up and fell off Bruce's body. A catheter was inserted in the opening to facilitate urination, and doctor

after doctor examined Bruce to determine how best to deal with his missing penis. In the end, they told Janet and Ron that little could be done except to provide Bruce with a makeshift penis that would only serve as a way for him to urinate. In 1966, very little was known about genital reconstruction, and everywhere Ron and Janet took their son they were told the same thing.

Seven months passed; Ron and Janet could barely talk about the horrible incident. One evening as they were watching television, they heard Dr. John Money, a psychologist, talking about gender reassignments taking place at John Hopkins Medical Center in Baltimore. On the program with him was a female who had undergone gender transformation—only one of two performed in the U.S. at that time. In addition, John Hopkins had opened the world's first Gender Identity Clinic.

Suddenly, a glimpse of hope appeared to Ron and Janet, especially when Dr. Money suggested that babies may be born neutral and their gender identities could be created. Janet wrote to him immediately, explaining what had happened to her son. Dr. Money answered back, giving Janet the news she had longed to hear. He was optimistic that Bruce could be helped, and he wanted her to bring him to John Hopkins as soon as possible.

The Reimers created a great opportunity for Dr. Money, too. Until they came along, the only cases of child gender reconstruction he oversaw were those born with abnormal sex organs. In addition, Bruce had an identical twin; Dr. Money could study both children and compare the differences between the two over time. Even though no child born with normal sex organs had ever undergone gender reassignment, Dr. Money explained to the Reimers that it was imperative they make a quick decision. He told Ron and Janet that a "gender identity gate" existed; but once it was closed, it would be difficult to insure the child would be sexually attracted to the opposite sex. Bruce was 17 months old at the time; and Dr. Money believed the gate closed when the child was around 2 years old. Ron and Janet were still uncertain. After five months of contemplating what to do, they agreed to allow Bruce to undergo castration and partial reconstruction. Bruce was 22 months of age.

On July 3, 1967, Bruce became Brenda, and the Reimers were instructed to never discuss, or doubt, their decision to have Bruce undergo gender reconstruction. Dr. Money told Ron and Janet to never tell Brenda the truth about her birth identity and to raise her from that moment forward as a girl. Janet made dresses and bonnets for the baby, and they began the process of changing Brenda's social identity to a girl. Through the years Dr. Money would write numerous articles about Bruce, but to protect the child's identity Bruce became known as the case of John and Joan. Unfortunately, much of what Money would report was based on his biases, which influenced greatly how others in the medical field saw the success of changing a child's gender identity.

Almost immediately Brenda proved difficult with accepting her change. She didn't like to wear dresses, and she wanted to do everything

her identical twin brother Brian did. At four, when Brian wanted to shave like dad, Ron put shaving cream on his face and gave him an empty razor. However, when Brenda wanted a razor to practice shaving like dad, Ron told her that little girls don't shave; instead girls wear make-up like mommy. Brenda's earliest memory is crying because she did not want to wear make-up, but wanted to shave—like her dad and Brian.

Over the next several years the Reimers struggled with Brenda's masculine behavior. She did not want to participate in any activities that were expected of girls. Instead, Brenda played with Brian's toys and ignored her own. At 6 or 7 years-old, when other young girls were combing their hair and playing with dolls, Brenda was talking about being a garbage man when she grew up. This immediately caused problems for her, not only with her classmates, but with the teachers, too. Brenda was ridiculed and ostracized on a daily basis. The children made fun of her because of the way she walked, talked, acted, and dressed.

After Brenda's reconstruction surgery, Dr. Money required that the Reimers bring both her and Brian in for annual visits. Brenda and Brian remember Dr. Money asking them both very odd questions. For example, he would ask Brenda if she ever dreamed of having sex with women and would show her and Brian pornographic pictures; Dr. Money believed this was necessary for gender socialization. Brenda began to resent the trips to the hospital and realized that she was not who her parents and Dr. Money wanted. As she grew older, she began to dress as a male and refused to participate in anything considered feminine.

Since Brenda had only undergone castration and partial reconstruction as a 2 year-old, she was required to finish the surgery when she was in her teens and to begin taking hormones. While her parents and Dr. Money tried to convince her that surgery was necessary for her to feel normal, Brenda continued to resent what was happening to her and her body. Convinced by Dr. Money that if she didn't take hormones her limbs would grow at different rates, Brenda started taking her hormone pills; but she continued to refuse surgery.

By age 11, Brenda was still rebelling at school and was referred to the Child Guidance Clinic for counseling. In her report, the teacher wrote that Brenda was more masculine and competitive in her behavior than her brother. During her first visit to a psychologist other than Dr. Money, Brenda told the counselor that she believed something had happened to her genitals when she was a child. In addition, she confessed that she was having suicidal thoughts. She was referred to the head of the psychiatric department for further guidance.

At age 13, Brenda began to see and feel the effects of the hormones she had been taking for two years. She was developing breasts and starting to see other changes occurring to her body. Regardless, she continued to act as a boy, including her refusal to sit on the toilet to urinate. This behavior continued to create conflict for her at school where both the girls and boys refused to let her use the bathrooms.

Brenda resorted to urinating outside, behind the building.

As Brenda continued her therapy and refusal to have the reassignment surgery, her doctors, except for Dr. Money, believed it was time she knew the truth about her life. On March 14, 1980, her father told her the story of what had happened to her at birth. Brenda immediately felt relieved because she knew something had been wrong all those years. From that moment forward, Brenda went back to being a male—Bruce. The only problem was she did not have a penis and had undergone castration as a child.

By his sixteenth birthday, Bruce had undergone a mastectomy to remove his breast, started male hormone therapy and had surgery to create a makeshift penis. When he was18 years of age, Bruce began dating a 16 year-old girl. Bruce knew that he would be limited to what he could do sexually, so he decided to tell her about his experience. Within the next few days everyone in their circle knew about his condition; and, once again, he had to face being ridiculed and ostracized by his peers. He went home, lay down on the couch and attempted suicide by overdosing on pills. Over the next couple of years, he would once again attempt suicide.

Bruce decided to change his name to David, and he eventually had a prosthesis surgically implanted. He met a woman named Jane who already had three children and didn't want anymore. She and David fell in love and married; he adopted her children as his own. It seemed that David's life was finally where it needed to be, and he could live happily ever after. Unfortunately, this was not the case for either David or his family.

David's experience had taken its toll on his entire family. His mother, Janet, suffered from clinical depression and was in and out of the hospital. His father, Ron, sank into alcoholism, and in 2002, his brother Kevin died of a drug overdose. David's marriage to Jane lasted for 14 years; but in 2004, when she could no longer take David's odd and often angry behavior, Jane asked for a separation. When David stormed out of the house, she notified police that he was missing and that he had a gun. The police contacted Jane and told her they had found David. He was okay, but he didn't want her to know where he was. Two hours later they called her back and said he had committed suicide. David had shot himself in the head with the shotgun in the parking lot of a grocery store.

WHAT IS SOCIALIZATION?

Socialization is the lifelong process through which people are prepared to participate in society (Johnson, 2000). This learning occurs in all interactions from the minute a baby is born. Individuals must learn about their culture, including the rules and expectations of the culture. In the United States, most people learn to speak the English language and to

eat with a fork. They learn that cereal, bacon, and eggs are breakfast foods and that sandwiches are appropriate for lunch. They find out that some people do work that is defined as important, and that those who do not or will not work are of less value. They discover that particular countries and people are friendly and others are hostile. Women learn to smile when they are tense and to cry at good news as a release of tension. Men learn that they should not cry, although some do so at times.

Sociologists are interested in socialization because by studying how people learn the rules of society, we hope to understand better why people think and act as they do. If we understand why we think and act as we do, we can change our values, our beliefs, our expectations, and our behavior in ways that might otherwise never occur to us. The study of socialization is a very liberating part of a liberal education. In order to understand socialization, however, we must look to our earliest social interaction.

Why do children develop so little when they are isolated from others? Sociologists believe that even physically healthy children cannot develop normal social behavior without social interaction. The controversy over the extent to which behavior results from predetermined biological characteristics or from socialization is known as the **nature–nurture debate**. This debate has continued for centuries, but it has drawn more interest recently as a result of the new science of sociobiology.

Socialization is a lifelong process that begins in the womb. Physically healthy children cannot develop normal social behavior, such as walking, without social interaction. (Akil Kokayi Khalfani)

Sociobiology and the Nature–Nurture Debate

Sociobiology is the study of the biological and genetic determinants of social behavior (Wilson, 1975). Sociobiologists are biologists by training, although some sociologists and other social scientists support their views. Sociobiologists believe that social behavior is determined by inborn genetic traits, which influence human behavior in much the same way that animals are influenced by their genetic inheritance. An example in sociology would be that sexual preference is determined genetically and that humans have a genetic tendency to have only one or a very few mates (Van den Berghe, 1979). Sociobiologists also think that homosexuality is genetically determined, although temporary homosexual behavior (occurring, for example, when opposite-sex partners are not available) may be environmental. They also believe, for example, that altruistic behavior (behavior performed to benefit others without regard for oneself) and warlike behavior are biologically based, although these and other behaviors may be modified by social experience.

Most sociologists criticize the sociobiological viewpoint on the grounds that behavior varies greatly from culture to culture. Sexual behavior, for example, whether with the same sex or the opposite sex, varies enormously. Altruistic behavior also varies widely and is entirely lacking in humans and monkeys who have been raised in isolation. As for warlike behavior,

it is completely absent in many societies. According to Hoffman (1985), a specialist in the study of socialization, geneticists do not pay enough attention to environmental and socialization factors in their studies. Thus, when they draw conclusions from their studies, they do not know what effects the environment or socialization might have had.

In addition to the doubts of sociologists, many physiologists believe that there is no genetic basis for human behavior. Biological drives or **instincts**, which are patterns of reflexes that occur in animals, are very powerful. Insects and birds perform many complex behaviors even when they have been reared in isolation. Honeybees perform complicated dances to show other bees where food is located, and birds build intricate nests in the same manner as others of their species, each without having had any environmental opportunities for learning. So far no powerful, fixed drives or instincts have been discovered in human beings. Humans who have been raised in isolation do almost nothing, as the Spitz study indicated.

Sexual behavior in human beings, long thought to be a biological drive, varies so much from society to society and from time to time that researchers are now convinced that it is greatly shaped by social learning. Lauer and Handel (1983), for example, report some of the following variations: In the Victorian age, it was assumed that women did not enjoy sexual intercourse, and men were sometimes advised not to have intercourse more than 12 times per year. Today, women who were studied in an Irish community expressed no sexual desire and engaged in intercourse only as a duty. Men in the community avoided intercourse before hard work because they thought it sapped them of their energy. On the other hand, young men in some South Pacific cultures have intercourse several times a night. Appropriate sexual behavior, then, is learned in the context of a particular culture.

There is a resurgence of interest among a growing faction of sociologists in the sociobiological approach.

Researchers believe sexual behavior in humans is shaped by social learning. (iStock)

Arcaro (2002), for example, argues that incorporating sociobiology with traditional sociological perspectives is essential for developing a unified body of sociological theory. Sanderson (2001), a contemporary social theorist, feels that if sociologists ignore the importance of biology as an explanation of behavior, "they are going to look increasingly foolish both within the academy and to the larger educated public."

Money (1980), a physiologist and a psychologist, believes that the nature–nurture controversy is based on an illusion. He believes that environmental factors become part of our biology when we perceive them. When a piece of information enters our minds, it is translated into a biochemical form. Although we do not fully understand the workings of the brain, we do know both that the brain stores in-

formation permanently and that information in the brain can cause physiological changes in other parts of our bodies. Money contends that the information in our brains shapes our behavior and that distinctions between nature and nurture are irrelevant.

Although a few sociologists emphasize the sociobiological perspective, most believe that human behavior can be limited by our physiology. For example, we can tolerate just so much heat, cold, or hunger. However, the way in which we respond to our physical limits—or how we behave under any other circumstances—is learned from interacting with other people. This interaction occurs in a manner different from any other animals because humans use language and other symbols. But what happens if these things are missing from our environment?

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL ISOLATION

Normal human infants are born with all the muscles, bones, and biological organs needed to live. They are utterly helpless, however, and cannot survive without human interaction. Babies not only need food and warmth to survive physically, but they also need physical stimulation to grow. When an adult handles them physically, they are stimulated by touch, tones of voice, and facial expressions; these make them aware of their environment and stimulate them to respond to it. Observations of infants and children who were comparatively isolated from human contact have shown that a lack of social interaction can have very serious consequences.

Feral Children

The importance of social interaction is evident in studies of feral children, those who have grown up in the wild. Several feral children were reportedly found in Europe during the past few centuries. Probably the most famous was the wild boy of Aveyron, found in the wilderness in France in 1800

In addition to food and warmth, babies need physical contact and stimulation to grow. (iStock)

(Shattuck, 1980). It is not known when the boy was separated from other humans or how he survived in the wilderness until he reached puberty; however, he did not know any language, so he might have been separated from humans while very young.

The boy's behavior seemed very strange to those who found him. When given a choice of food to eat, he rejected most of it. He liked potatoes, which he threw into a fire and then picked out with his bare hands and ate while they were very hot. He could tolerate cold as well as heat, and he was happy to be outdoors in the winter without clothes. He could swing from tree to tree easily, and he was excited by the wind and the moon.

A young doctor took an interest in the boy and taught him to eat a wider variety of foods, to sleep at

regular hours, and to wear clothes. It was determined that he could hear noises and make sounds, so an effort was made to teach him to talk. He learned to say a word for milk, but only after he had been given milk—he never used the word to ask for it. After five years of training, he had not learned to talk. He did, however, learn to cry occasionally and to hug his teacher. He survived for 22 years after the training stopped, living a quiet life in a cottage with a housekeeper; but he never advanced his learning. Those who studied him were interested to note that he never showed any interest in sexual behavior.

A more recent case occurred in 2002 in Romania. Traian Caldarar was raised in an abusive family, and his mother eventually fled the abuse without him. Unable to get him back, the mother lost contact and believed he was adopted by another family. However, little four-year-old Traian had not been adopted but, instead, had fled from his abusive father as well. With nowhere to go, Traian lived with a large number of stray dogs roaming the Transylvanian countryside. When he was discovered at the age of seven, three years after he went missing, Traian was eating a dead dog and displaying animalistic behaviors. He suffered from many diseases, including rickets, which caused him to walk like a chimpanzee. His size was that of a three-year old; he could not speak, and he possessed no socialization skills necessary to communicate with humans.

While sociologists, researchers, and other specialists believe it is possible for children to live among wild animals, they are less likely to believe that children are raised by wild animals. Instead, it's more likely that children, such as the wild boy of Aveyron and Traian, somehow learn to adapt once abandoned by their families and denied human interaction.

Children in Institutions

In the early 1900's, children were often placed in orphanages when their parents died or were unable to care for them. While the children's basic needs were met within the institutions, staff usually had very little time for personal interaction beyond routine feedings, baths, and healthcare. When children showed signs of developmental delays, it was believed the cause was due to their family background—not the environment or the care they received at the orphanages. In the 1930s two psychologists, Harold Skeels and Harold Dye, began to suspect that lack of social interaction, rather than family, was the cause of developmental problems in the children. Skeels and Dye learned of two infant girls that had been placed in a women's mental ward due to the lack of space in the orphanage; both girls improved remarkably within the first six months of their replacement. Fascinated by this phenomenon, the two researchers convinced the state to allow them to conduct an experiment using other institutionalized children (Heward, 2000).

The researchers placed 13 children between the ages of 1 to 2, and with an average IQ score of 64 (indicating mental retardation), in with young women at the mental institution. The children were considered "unadoptable" by the state, and the women were labeled as "mentally retarded" by the institution. The women were given basic instructions on how to care for the infants and were provided with items such as books and toys. Skeels and Dye also left 12 infants in the orphanage as a control group. These children were under the age of three years and had an average IQ of 86, higher than that of the experimental group. The control group received normal treatment from the caregivers, with no individual attention (Heward, 2000). Because of the workload of the caregivers, children typically received minimal adult contact that generally included baths, diaper changes, and medicine. Feedings usually consisted of nourishment from a bottle being propped up in the crib for each baby.

During follow-up exams, Skeels and Dye discovered that while the experimental group steadily

gained IQ points, the control group was losing them. By the end of the first year, the children cared for by women in the mental institution had improved considerably. At a two and a half year follow-up, the children in the mental institution had gained on average 28 points while those in the orphanage lost an average of 30 points. Twenty-one years later, the researchers were able to track down all 24 participants in the study and found that most of the children in the mental institution had completed school (average of 12 years), while those left in the orphanage had completed an average of four years of schooling. In addition, 11 of the 13 who had been moved to the mental institution had married, and all were either employed or were housewives. In contrast, the control group had four participants that were still institutionalized; and while some were employed, their jobs were of a lower level status than those in the experimental group. Skeels and Dye contributed the improvement of the children moved to the mental institution to the increased attention and care they received from the women residing there.

A similar study was published by Rene Spitz in 1946. Spitz observed children who had apparently been healthy when they were born and who had been living in a foundling home for about two years. Nutrition, clothing, bedding, and room temperatures in the home were suitable, and every child was seen by a physician at least once a day. A small staff of nurses took care of the physical needs of the children, but other interaction was very limited.

Despite their excellent physical care, 34 percent of the 91 children in the home died within two years of the study, and 21 other children (23 percent) showed slow physical and social development. They were small, and some could not walk or even sit up. Those who could talk could say only a few words, and some could not talk at all.

Spitz compared these children with infants brought up in another institution, where their mothers were being held for delinquency. Physical care was basically the same as in the foundling home; but their mothers, who had little else to occupy them, enjoyed playing with their children for hours. The infants received a great deal of social stimulation, and their development was normal. Spitz concluded that the difference between the foundling home and the home for delinquent mothers was the amount of attention the children received. This further illustrates the crucial importance of social interactions in child development.

Abused and Neglected Children

Children who have been isolated from others in their own homes also show a lack of development. Kingsley Davis (1940, 1947) described two girls, Isabelle and Anna, found in the 1930s. They had been hidden in the attics of their family homes because they were illegitimate and unwanted.

One child, Isabelle, had been kept in seclusion until she was 6 1/2 years old. Her mother was deaf and mute; and because Isabelle had been confined in a dark room with her mother, she had no chance to develop speech. She communicated with her mother by gestures and could make only a strange croaking sound. Although it was established that Isabelle could hear, specialists working with her believed that she was retarded because she had not developed any social skills. They believed she could not be educated and that any attempt to teach her to speak would fail after so long a period of silence. Nevertheless, the people in charge of Isabelle launched a systematic and skillful program of training that involved pantomime and dramatization. After one week of intensive effort, Isabelle made her first attempt to speak, and in two months, she was putting sentences together. Eighteen months after her discovery, she spoke well, walked, ran, and sang with gusto. Once she learned speech, she developed rapidly; and at age 14, she had completed the sixth grade in public school.

Children who have been isolated in their own homes show a lack of development. (iStock)

The second child discovered around the same time was a girl named Anna. She was the second illegitimate child born to an unmarried woman. The mother lived on a farm with her widowed father who did not approve of his daughter's promiscuity and refused to allow her to keep the baby. Anna was moved to several locations but was repeatedly returned to the mother and labeled as unadoptable. Eventually, with nowhere else to go, the grandfather banished Anna to a storage room where she lived until she was discovered. Her mother fed her just enough to stay alive, but otherwise Anna had no other human contact. When authorities found her, Anna was unable to speak, smile, or perform basic tasks. After extensive therapy she eventually was able to brush her teeth and comb her hair. She could speak simple sentences and learned to feed herself. Anna's full potential would never be recognized because she died of a brain hemorrhage when she was ten and a half years-old.

Perhaps the most well known case of an abused and neglected child is that of Genie, a 13-year-old girl discovered in 1970 in Los Angeles, California. Like the previous two cases, Genie was locked in a room for the majority of her life. During the day she was strapped to a potty chair, and at night she was placed in a strait jacket type of contraption made from a sleeping bag and put into a crib that had a wire covering. When discovered, Genie could not talk and, as a result of severe beatings by her elderly father, made very little noise. She could not eat, constantly spat, sniffed like a dog, and clawed at things. She had a very strange bunny-like walk, and she kept her hands in a bent position at

the front of her body—like paws. As a result of being kept in the room, Genie's eyesight was extremely poor; she could only see a distance of 12 feet. After receiving extensive treatment by a team of specialists, Genie's language remained relatively primitive; she could only speak a few words and virtually no sentences. She was able to follow simple commands, but otherwise her development was poor. Eventually, Genie ended up in a series of foster care homes, and then she was sent to an adult group home.

The cases of Isabelle, Anna, and Genie provide a great deal of information about the development of children who experience severe abuse and neglect; however, the cases also leave many questions unanswered. Isabelle was able to overcome her early trauma, while Anna's progress would be left to speculation. Does this provide us with enough information to believe that children who are rescued from abusive situations by the age of six can overcome their developmental delays? Since Genie was unable to overcome her early problems, is there a critical age threshold for language development between the ages of six and thirteen?

Deprived Monkeys

Perhaps one last study will help us understand the effects of social isolation. Psychologist Harry Harlow conducted studies on rhesus monkeys raised in captivity to determine how maternal deprivation affected their development. Just a few hours after their birth, baby monkeys were separated from their mothers and placed in isolation cages. Each cage was equipped with a special feeding device to provide nourishment to the baby monkey. The devices were artificial mothers—made of wire frames, with a head and a device to dispense milk for feeding. The only difference would be that one artificial mother was covered in a soft terrycloth material, and the other remained bare wire mesh.

Harlow discovered that when nourishment was provided by the wire frame mothers, the monkeys would cling to their terrycloth mothers when they were not feeding. Later, Harlow removed the terrycloth mothers from some of the cages and conducted further experiments. He found that when he scared the monkeys, those in the cages with the terrycloth mothers would cling pathetically to them. Yet, when there were no terrycloth mothers, the monkeys would curl in the corner and rock back and forth to try and soothe themselves, rather than attempt consolation by their artificial mother. Harlow's experiments suggested that more than nourishment is needed for attachment to occur; a physical relationship with the mother was also necessary. The isolated monkeys were deprived of the emotional attachment received during mother-child interaction, which often involves cuddling and soothing during times of stress.

Harlow also discovered that monkeys kept in isolation for eight months or longer were, afterwards, unable to fit in with other monkeys. They did not know how to engage in interaction; and, as a result, the other monkeys often shunned those previously isolated. Behaviors such as pretend fighting and normal sexual behavior did not occur because the isolated monkeys were unaware of how to engage in behaviors found among other monkeys.

After many unsuccessful attempts to place the isolated female monkeys with male monkeys for the purpose of reproduction, Harlow designed a device to allow some of the females to become pregnant. After they gave birth, the mothers were either neglectful or abusive toward their babies. The neglectful mothers did not harm their babies; but they did not feed them, cuddle them or protect them from harm either. The abusive mothers were violent toward their young, often trying to bite, hit, or squash them against the cage floor. In the end, Harlow discovered that when baby monkeys were isolated for no more than 90 days, they could over-

come their isolation and live a normal monkey life; however, if isolated any longer, they would be permanently damaged.

What can we learn from studying the cases of feral, institutionalized, and abused and neglected children? Are there critical periods in a child's life that determine how they will ultimately develop? What about Harlow's monkeys? How much of what we learn about animals can we apply to humans? All animals interact, but we humans are unique in our ability to create societies, cultures, and social institutions. We are also unique in our capacity to use language. George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) was the first to describe why language makes humans different from all other animals.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SELF

How do we know who we are? If asked to describe yourself … what would you say? Are you pretty, smart, skinny, witty, funny? Perhaps you see yourself as just the opposite, ugly, dumb, fat, dull, or boring. What factors contribute to the development of our identities? Do we care what others think about us? Scholars such as George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley contributed to the study of the importance of early socialization on the individual.

George Herbert Mead: Mind, Self, and Society

The students of George Herbert Mead were so impressed with his insights about human interaction that after his death they compiled his lectures and published his book, *Mind, Self and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist* (1934). Mead demonstrated that the unique feature of the human mind is its capacity to use symbols, and he discussed how human development proceeds because of this ability. Through language and human interaction an individual develops a self. According to Mead (1934:135), "The **self** is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process." Language is the key to the development of self. Words in a language have meaning; and we use language symbols when we think or talk to ourselves and when we talk to other people. When we see another person in the street, we do not simply react to the person instinctively. We interpret the situation by giving meaning to the other person's behavior. We think, "Is this someone I know, or a stranger? Do I want to know this person, ignore her, say hello to her?" If we say "hello" to the other person, we are using a symbol that means, "I wish to greet you in a friendly manner." The other person knows the meaning of the symbol. This is an example of **symbolic interaction**, the social process that occurs within and among individuals as a result of the internalization of meanings and the use of language.

Mead recognized how important it is for people to interact with others in the development of the self. When infants are born, they cannot differentiate among all the objects they see. The world appears as a kaleidoscope of color and movement. Very soon, however, they learn to distinguish important objects, such as the source of nourishment and the parent who brings it. Infants also eventually learn to differentiate themselves from their surroundings and from other persons. For example, as a father repeatedly brings a bottle to his daughter, she becomes aware that she is the object of her father's attention. She learns to differentiate herself from the crib and other objects. She learns that she is a separate object receiving both the bottle and her father's attention. Infants also develop expectations about their parents' behaviors and about their parents' roles. They expect their parents to bring the bottle.

Role Taking: Significant Others and Generalized Others

Mead used the term **role taking** to describe the process of figuring out how others will act. The ability to take a role is extremely important to children. In fact, **play** is a way of practicing role-taking. Children often play "house" or "school," taking the role of **significant others**—mother, father, or any other person important to them. By taking the roles of these significant others, children can better understand their own roles as children, students, sons, or daughters.

Mead believed that children develop role-taking skills during play and ultimately learn to take the role of others through the process. He identified three stages in which the self emerges through play, and he labeled them: preparatory, play and game. In the ***preparatory stage***, children are only capable of imitating the people in their lives. They are not yet aware of their sense of self but are learning to become social through meaningful interaction with others. In Mead's second stage, the ***play stage***, children begin to take the role of others significant in their lives. Children enjoy playing dress up and may pretend to be mother, father, fireman, teacher, etc. In the ***game stage***, the child is older and is capable of understanding not merely one individual, but the roles of several others, simultaneously. The child now has the ability to put himself in the place of others and act accordingly. Once the child can do this, Mead contends he or she can "take the role of the generalized other".

In the play stage, children enjoy playing dress up and may pretend to be mother, father, etc. (iStock)

By practicing the roles of others in play, children learn to understand what others expect of them and how to behave to meet those expectations. As adults, when we take roles, we figure out what others are thinking and how others will act; and then we can act accordingly. Often, however, we do not have the opportunity to play out the role of others, except in our imagination.

APPLYING MEAD'S ROLE-TAKING

Although many of Mead's theories are useful in providing an understanding of how our self develops, his concept of role-taking is particularly helpful. Role-taking is important not only for self-development but also for our personal and professional relationships. For clinical sociologists, therapists, and other counselors who help people deal with problems, role-taking is an important *verstehen* technique. *Verstehen* is Max Weber's concept referring to a deep imagining of how things might be and feel for others. For example, a client undergoing drug counseling may explain his or her fears and feel-

ings of inadequacy to the therapist, but unless the therapist can see things from a drug user's point of view, the therapy might be cold and meaningless to the client.

Clinicians, counselors, and therapists may also ask their clients to engage in role-taking as part of their treatment. Marriage counselors sometimes help husbands and wives confront their marital problems by having them switch roles temporarily so that they can feel what it is like to be in the other's position. By having the husband take the role of wife and the wife take the role of husband, each spouse may learn to see himself or herself the way the other spouse does. Each spouse's role-taking might help in developing more sensitivity to the partner's needs.

How can you use role-taking in your career or occupation? By engaging in role-taking, you will probably improve how you relate to, organize, and lead other people. As a teacher, you might find examples that students can relate to better if you can imagine how the students see the subject matter. For example, teachers sometimes show movies explaining serious topics; however, if a particular movie is old, the students may find the fashions dated and the movie quaint, thus missing the point of the movie. As a physician, you might develop a better "bedside manner" if you can put yourself in the place of the cancer patient you are treating. Novels, movies, and even jokes make fun of doctors who become patients and are shocked because they had never previously understood how the patient felt. All of us find it difficult to understand the feelings, attitudes, and ideas of every person with whom we interact, so we find more efficient ways to deal with people. We develop a sense of self and a generalized other.

A child who responds differently to each person in his or her life would never develop a sense of self. In order to develop a sense of self, the child learns to see others not as individuals but as **generalized others**, the organized community or social group that provides reference for his own conduct. Mead used the example of a baseball game to illustrate the concept of generalized other. A child playing baseball develops generalized expectations of each position on the team; pitchers throw, fielders catch, batters hit and run, regardless of the individuals playing those positions. These generalized expectations become incorporated into the child's sense of self.

The "I" and the "Me"

Once a child has an idea of the generalized other, he or she can begin to develop a personality, an individual way of behaving. The child learns to meet the expectation of the group in some situations but may argue with the group on other occasions. The child interprets the situation and then decides how to act. That is what makes each person unique.

To analyze each person's unique ability to respond to the generalized other, Mead theoretically divided the person into two parts—the **I** and the **me**. The *I* represents the acting person, as in "I attend class." The *I* is not self-conscious. When taking a test in class, the *I* concentrates on the test, not on the self.

The *me* represents the part of self that sees self as object, the part that is concerned with society's expectations of self, such as, "Society expects me to go to class." It is the *me*, seeing self as an object, who says after class, "You really did great on the exam!" or after the party says, "You really made a fool of yourself!" The socially constructed *me* spends a good deal of time talking to the I.

We use the generalized other to shape our own personality throughout life. We may decide, for

example, that attending class is a waste of time or that multiple-choice tests are unfair. We may choose to go along with the norms, or we may choose to argue against them. To do either, however, we must understand the expectations of the generalized other—the school, in this case. We develop our own **mind**, our own ability to think, based on the expectations of the generalized other.

Mead believed that the human mind is entirely social and develops in interaction. Although we are born with a brain, Mead argued, we do not learn to use our mind to think and develop ideas until we have learned the expectations of our society. We learn these expectations mostly through language, and then we use language to talk to ourselves and to develop our own ideas. We get ideas about the usefulness of class attendance and multiple-choice tests. We also get ideas about what we are like, what we want to become in the future, or the relative attractiveness of the persons sitting next to us. It is easy to understand that we would not think about class attendance if there were no classes to attend. It is not as obvious, but just as true, that the relative attractiveness of the persons sitting next to us is based on what we have learned from society about attractiveness. We have learned what color of hair and skin, what size of nose, and what height and weight are valued by society. Based on this, we establish our own definition of attractiveness in others and in ourselves.

Charles Horton Cooley: The Looking-Glass Self

Charles Horton Cooley (1864–1929), like Mead, theorized that the idea of the self develops in a process that requires reference to other people, a process he called the **looking-glass self**. According to Cooley, the looking-glass self has three components: (1) how we think our behavior appears to others, (2) how we think others judge our behavior, and (3) how we feel about their judgments. We know that we exist, that we are beautiful or ugly, serious or funny, lively or dull, intelligent or stupid, through the way other people treat us. We never know exactly what other people think of us, of course, but we can imagine how we appear to them and how they evaluate our appearance. Ultimately, the looking-glass concept self is based on perception and effect—the perception we believe others have of us, and the effect those perceptions have on our self-image.

Our imagination about our own looking-glass self may or may not be accurate. If it is not accurate, we may think we are clumsy when other people think we move very gracefully. We may think we speak clearly when others think we mumble. We may think we are shy even when others admire our confidence. Whether our ideas about ourselves are accurate or not, we believe them; and we often respond to these imagined evaluations with some feeling, such as pride, mortification, or humiliation.

Cooley noted that when we refer to ourselves, we are usually referring to our looking-glass self, not to our physical being, our heart, lungs, arms, and legs. We usually refer to our opinions, desires, ideas, or feelings (I think, I feel, I want), or we associate the idea of the self with roles (I am a student, an athlete, a friend). This sense of self exists in relation to other people. We compare and contrast ourselves with others; our own sense of uniqueness is based on that comparison. Even the language we use to refer to ourselves must be learned from other people.

In sum, both Mead and Cooley pointed out that the major difference between social theories of the self and psychological theories of the self is that social theories emphasize that society exists first and that the individual is shaped by society. Psychological theories emphasize individual development apart from social processes; that is, the individual develops and then responds to society based on preexisting tendencies to behave in particular ways. (See Jean Piaget, Sigmund Freud, Lawrence Kohlberg.)

APPLYING COOLEY'S "LOOKING-GLASS SELF"

One common manifestation of Cooley's theory is the **self-fulfilling prophecy**, a concept developed by Robert Merton. A self-fulfilling prophecy is a prediction that causes us to act as if a particular definition of ourselves, others, or a situation were true (even if it is not true); and as a result, it becomes true because of our actions. A classic example of a self-fulfilling prophecy is a bank failure. Banks operate under the reasonable assumption that all the depositors will not want all of their money back at the same time. Banks do not merely keep our money in a vault; rather, they invest it so that they can pay us interest and also make a profit. However, if all the depositors at the First International Bank believe a rumor (or a prediction) that the bank does not have enough money to give back to them, they might all rush to get their money from the bank at the same time. The resultant bank failure would not be due to any economic or management problems, but solely to a sociological self-fulfilling prophecy.

We now look at the self-fulfilling prophecy and see how it relates to the looking-glass self. If we imagine that others think we are a particular kind of person or have a particular characteristic (even if we are not), we may believe that their perceptions are true; and as a result, we may act in a manner that results in our becoming that way. Suppose, for example, that you imagine that others think you are a funny person. (It does not matter whether they really think you are funny; what matters is that you imagine that they think you are funny.) Because you believe that you are a funny person, you may make an extra effort to become funny by learning and telling new jokes, doing amusing things at parties, and generally cultivating your sense of humor. ("Because I am a funny person, I am the kind of person who knows a lot of good jokes, so I had better be prepared.")

The knowledge that the looking-glass self often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy may be useful in a variety of ways. First, it might be applied in some occupational settings. How, for example, could this knowledge improve your effectiveness as a teacher? If you are aware that people see themselves as they think others (especially significant others) see them, you might try to be especially sensitive to how you react to students when they ask questions in class, when you speak to them in your office, or when you make comments on their papers. If students think that they are being put down or are perceived as unintelligent, they may prematurely give up on learning a subject. Conversely, if students develop positive views of themselves because they think you as the teacher see them as intuitive, creative, and interesting, they may strive to cultivate those qualities even further; and it may play an important part in their interaction with others.

Erving Goffman: The Presentation of Self

Throughout life, our socialization influences the way we interact with each other. Erving Goffman (1959) was interested in the process of interaction once a self has been developed. Every interaction, Goffman believed, begins with a **presentation of self**. The way we present ourselves gives other people cues about the type of interaction we expect. In formal situations, we usually greet friends with a handshake or a remark, whereas in informal situations, we may greet friends with a hug or a kiss. If we are with friends, we talk and laugh; but on a bus or in an elevator, we do not speak to strangers, and we

keep a social distance even when space is crowded and we cannot keep physically distant. Psychologists refer to our manner of presentation as "body language." We give cues about ourselves in the way we present and use our bodies in interaction.

In an attempt to analyze how interaction takes place, Goffman (1959) compared social interaction to a drama on stage—a comparison known as the **dramaturgical approach**. Whenever we interact, we prepare ourselves backstage and then present ourselves as if onstage, according to what we have learned in the socialization process. Goffman believed that all behavior, even the most routine, is neither instinctual nor habitual; it is a presentation. Most Americans prepare to present themselves by showering, washing their hair, and using deodorant—in our society, cleanliness and a lack of odor are important. Complexions must be smooth, so men shave, women put on makeup, and adolescents use cosmetics to cover up acne. Suitable clothing is selected so that we can present ourselves formally in formal situations and casually in casual situations. A formal setting such as a church, a more informal setting such as a classroom, and a casual setting such as a basketball arena require very different presentations. In some settings, one can race for a front-row seat, talk loudly, wave to friends, and eat and drink. In other settings, these behaviors would be quite inappropriate.

In illustrating the dramaturgical approach, Goffman described a character, called "Preedy," as he presented himself on a beach on the Riviera. Preedy very consciously tried to make an impression on the people around him. It was his first day on vacation, and he knew no one. He wanted to meet some people, but he did not want to appear too lonely or too eager; so he presented himself as perfectly content in his solitary state.

The following excerpt from Goffman (1959) describes Preedy's behavior:

> If by chance a ball was thrown his way, he looked surprised; then let a smile of amusement lighten his face (Kindly Preedy), looked round dazed to see that there were people on the beach, tossed it back with a smile to himself and not a smile at the people, and then resumed carelessly his nonchalant survey of space.
>
> But it was time to institute a little parade, the parade of the Ideal Preedy. By devious handlings he gave any who wanted to look a chance to see the title of his book—a Spanish translation of Homer, classic thus, but not daring, cosmopolitan too—and then gathered together his beach-wrap and

Erving Goffman believed every interaction, such as the greeting of friends, begins with a presentation of self. (iStock)

bag into a neat sand-resistant pile (Methodical and Sensible Preedy), rose slowly to stretch at ease his huge frame (Big-Cat Preedy), and tossed aside his sandals (Carefree Preedy, after all).

The marriage of Preedy and the sea! There were alternative rituals. The first involved the stroll that turns into a run and a dive straight into the water, thereafter smoothing into a strong splashless crawl towards the horizon. But of course not really on the horizon. Quite suddenly he would turn on to his back and thrash great white splashes with his legs, somehow thus showing that he could have swum further had he wanted to, and then would stand up a quarter out of water for all to see who it was.

The alternative course was simpler, it avoided the cold-water shock and it avoided the risk of appearing too high-spirited. The point was to appear to be so used to the sea, the Mediterranean, and this particular beach, that one might as well be in the sea as out of it. It involved a slow stroll down and into the edge of the water—not even noticing his toes were wet, land and water all the same to him—with his eyes up at the sky gravely surveying portents, invisible to others, of the weather (Local Fisherman Preedy). (p. 5)

Notice how much Preedy could tell about himself without saying a word. Whether anyone enters the water in as calculated a manner as Preedy is questionable, but whoever watches someone like Preedy will form an opinion of him from his presentation. The dramaturgical approach helps us understand that how one appears is at least as important as what one actually does or says—and often, it is more important.

Maintaining the Self

Once we have presented ourselves in a particular role and have begun to interact, we must maintain our presentation. In class, students cannot begin to shake hands with fellow students, wander around the room, or write on the blackboard. It would not only disrupt the class, but it would also spoil the presentation of the student, who would be considered disruptive, strange, or worse. If students or others want to maintain the definitions others have of them, they must maintain a performance in accord with the definition.

Sometimes we inadvertently do not maintain our performance, so we try to **account** for or to **excuse** our behavior (Scott and Lyman, 1968; Simon and Manstead, 1983). If we are late and want to avoid giving the impression that we are always late, we make excuses: "I am usually very prompt, but my car ran out of gas," or "I thought the meeting was at eight o'clock, not seven o'clock."

We also try to maintain our presentations by **disclaimers**—that is, disclaiming a role even while we are acting in that role. "I usually don't drink, but this punch is so good" disclaims the role of drinker. "I'm not prejudiced, but …," followed by a racist remark, or "I'm no expert, but …," followed by a remark only an expert could make, are phrases that tell the audience that the self is not what it appears to be.

Often, the audience accepts a person's accounts or disclaimers, and the interaction proceeds smoothly; but sometimes, the drama does not work out so well. We may present ourselves in the role of someone who knows how to act in social situations but not live up to those claims. We may fall down a flight of stairs as we make our grand entrance. We may stand up at a meeting to give a report, claiming to be an expert, but our trembling hands and factual errors will not support these claims. The speaker and those in the audience may attempt to ignore the errors, but at some point, the speaker may get too flustered to continue the pretense of living up to the role or may become embarrassed and laugh, cry, faint, or blush. When a group can no longer support the claims made by an individual, the whole group may become embarrassed or angry (Goffman, 1967).

Implicit in interactions is the assumption that presentations will be maintained. Each person

agrees to maintain the self and to support the presentations of others. If people's presentations are not supported by the people themselves or by others, they may be followed by an emotional response. For example, in some situations, I may become embarrassed; and if my presentation is ridiculed, I may get angry. In another situation, if someone seems to fill your image of the ideal romantic love, you may fall in love with that individual. If the person then is cruel, unfaithful, or behaves in some other way that tarnishes your image of him or her, you may grow angry and eventually fall out of love.

Not only do we learn behavior in the process of socialization and interaction, but we also learn appropriate feelings about ourselves and others. We learn self-esteem by understanding how others evaluate us; we learn when to be embarrassed, when to be angry, and both when to fall in love and with what type of person. If we are angry at someone who deserves our respect, we feel guilty about our feelings. If we love someone whom others define as entirely inappropriate, we become confused. Again, we have expectations about maintaining these performances of self—both our own and others'—and we respond emotionally when these expectations are not met. This happens in all of our roles and in whatever groups we act.

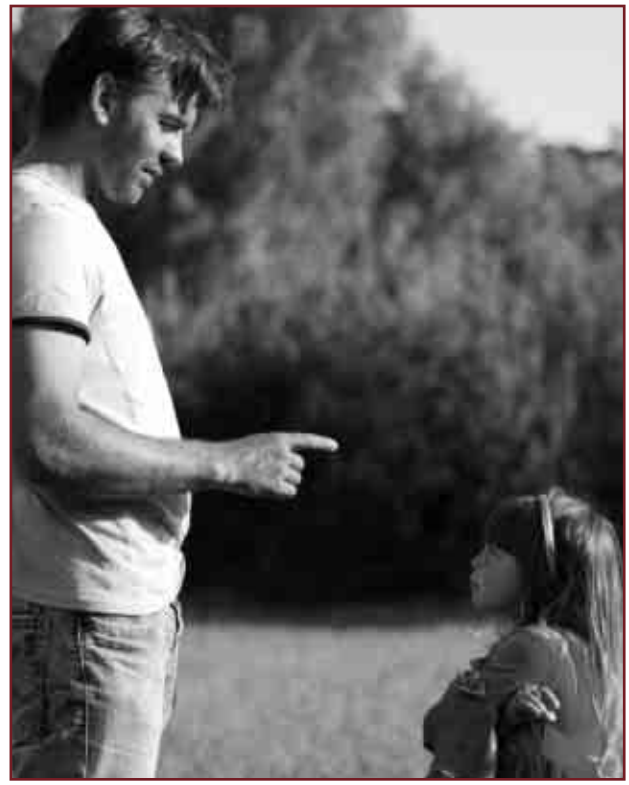
Thinking Sociologically

1. What is required for babies to develop into full human beings? What are the components that make us human?
2. Think of times you have seen your looking-glass self inaccurately. How has this shaped your actions?
3. Think of a time when your presentation of self was not maintained. How did you respond emotionally?

Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

As very young children, we begin the process of moral development—or learning the difference between right and wrong. Psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg spent many years studying children and the process of moral development. He proposed a number of stages which people pass through in their moral development:

- **Pre-conventional Stage (Elementary School Aged)** During this stage of moral development, Kohlberg argued that children act according to what is expected from them by authoritative figures. They view right or wrong as what pleases those in authority, such as their parents and teachers. Morality



Children begin the process of learning the difference between right and wrong at a very young age. (iStock)

is external and children are simply trying to avoid punishment.

- **Conventional Stage** At this stage children have internalized what has been taught to them. They began to view right and wrong in terms of what is socially acceptable. Instead of avoiding punishment, they want to be a good person and do what is right, such as obeying the law.
- **Post-conventional Stage (Teen Years)** In this stage, individuals are more concerned with the rights of others rather than the laws of society. A person's basic rights to life, liberty, etc., are more important from a moral standpoint than laws that would deprive individuals or groups of these things.

Kohlberg argued that individuals could only pass through one stage at a time and in the order listed. They did not skip stages, nor could they jump back and forth between stages. Kohlberg believed that moral development occurred through the process of social interaction.

Development of a Personality

Sigmund Freud believed that personality consists of three elements: id, ego and superego. When a child is born, we first come into contact with the id, or the inborn drives for self-gratification. For example, when the child senses hunger, he will cry if his needs are not immediately met. Freud referred to the id as the pleasure-seeking component which demands immediate fulfillment of basic instinctual needs that remain unconscious most of the time. The second component is the superego, or our conscience. The superego has internalized the norms, values, and beliefs of our culture or society. Unlike the id, the superego is not inherent but, rather, is learned from our social interactions with others. The third component is the ego, or balancing principle. The ego's job is to act as a mediator between the id and the superego and to prevent one or the other from becoming too dominant.

MAJOR AGENTS OF SOCIALIZATION

Socialization is found in all interaction, but the most influential interaction occurs in particular groups referred to as "agencies of socialization." Among the most important are the family, the schools, peer groups, and the mass media.

The Family

The family is considered the primary agency of socialization. It is within the family that the first socializing influence is encountered by most children, and this influence affects them for the rest of their lives. For example, families give children their geographical location, as easterners or westerners, and their urban or rural background. The family also determines the child's social class, race, religious background, and ethnic group. Each of these factors can have a profound influence on children. They may learn to speak a particular dialect, to prefer particular foods, and to pursue some types of leisure activities.

Families also teach children values that they will hold throughout life. Children frequently adopt their parents' attitudes about the importance of education, work, patriotism, and religion. Even a child's sense of self-worth is determined, at least in part, by the child's parents.

One of the values instilled in the children of most American families concerns the worth of the unique individual. We are taught that we possess a set of talents, personality characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses peculiar to ourselves, and that we are responsible for developing these traits. Our parents tell us that we can be all that we want to be, as long as we work hard and want something badly enough. Ul-

timately, we are responsible for our successes and failures. This view of the value of the individual is not found in all cultures, however. Many people who emigrated from southern Europe, for example, believe that one's primary responsibility is to the family, not to oneself. The son of a European farm family, for example, is expected to be loyal and obedient to the family, to work for its benefit, and eventually, to take over the management of the farm when the parents are old. In our culture, however, staying with the family is often regarded as a sign of weakness or of lack of ambition on the part of young adults; and when adult children return home to live, both they and their parents often feel uncomfortable (Clemens and Axelsen, 1985; Schnaiberg and Goldenberg, 1989). These beliefs are just two of the many values that people learn primarily through the family.

As more and more children spend time in child care instead of in the family, the question of what type of socialization will take place in these organizations is of major concern. Can nonfamilial child care really replace family care, and will the quality of socialization be maintained in these organizations? Note the Policy Debate in this chapter and its discussion on child care.

The Schools

In some societies, socialization takes place almost entirely within the family, but in highly technical societies, children are also socialized by the educational system. Schools in the United States teach more than reading, writing, arithmetic, and other basic academic skills. They also teach students to develop themselves, to test their achievements through competition, to discipline themselves, to cooperate with others, and to obey rules—all of which are necessary if a youngster is to achieve success in a society dominated by large organizations.

Schools teach sets of expectations about the work children will do when they mature. The children begin by learning about the work roles of community helpers such as firefighters and doctors, and later, they learn about occupations more formally. They take aptitude tests to discover their unique talents, and with the help of teachers and guidance counselors, they set occupational goals.

Schools also teach citizenship in countless ways. They encourage children to take pride in their communities; to feel patriotic about their nation; to learn about their country's geography, history, and

The family is considered the primary agency of socialization. It can determine their social class, religious belief, language, and how they view themselves. This influence will affect them for the rest of their lives. (iStock)

national holidays; to study government, explain the role of good citizens, urge their parents to vote, and pledge allegiance to the U.S. flag; to become informed about community and school leaders; and to respect school property. At times what a child is taught in school may conflict with the values taught within the home. For example, a child who is taught to believe that religion is central to his or her life will find it difficult to understand the separation of church and state in public education. Schools can provide the first time children are challenged to question their family's beliefs.

Most school administrators and teachers reinforce our cultural emphasis on the uniqueness of individuals. Thus, they try to identify the unique talents of students through comparison and competition with other students and then attempt to develop these talents so that they will become useful to the larger society. Japanese schools, operating in a less individualistic society, assume that all students will be able to meet whatever standards the schools set.

Peer groups are an important influence on young people's socialization. (iStock)

Peer Groups

Young people spend considerable time in school, and their **peer group** of people their own age is an important influence on their socialization. Peer-group socialization has been increasing in this century because young people have been attending school for longer periods of time. They no longer drop out at age 14 years—most finish high school, and 61.9 percent go on to college (EVS Beyond Test Scores; Kevin Bushweller 1995).

Young people today also spend more time with one another outside of school. Unlike young people of earlier decades, few are isolated on farms. Most live in cities or suburbs, and increasingly, they have access to automobiles so that they can spend time together away from their families. Teenagers' most intimate relationships are often those they have with their peers, not with parents or siblings, and they influence one another greatly. In fact, some young people create their own unique subcultures. Coleman et al. (1974), who refer to these groups simply as "cultures," list as examples the culture of athletic groups in high schools, the college campus culture, the drug culture, motorcycle cultures, the culture of surfers, and religious cultures. In part because teenagers are often unsure of themselves, they may prize the sense of belonging that they get from their subculture, although the pressures to conform to group expectations can be quite severe.

Peer groups can be a strong influence on a young person's life. A sense of belonging is important to school-aged children and can influence how they react toward themselves. Clothing styles, music, and dating habit preferences are beginning to form during the teen years; and those teens who

fail to conform to their group's behavior may be seen as an "outsider", which in turn can lead to feelings of rejection.

Religion

All societies have some form of religion, and how one practices or doesn't practice religion is dependent upon their social interaction with others. Religion can be an extremely powerful influence on a person's social self. Children whose parents encouraged them to attend church early in life are more likely to rely on faith and prayer in much of their adult life, as well. Children learn the language of their religion and the ideas about what is and is not acceptable behavior, particularly regarding morality.

The Mass Media

The American **mass media**—television, popular magazines, and other forms of communication intended for a large audience—play a major role in teaching Americans to consume goods. They devise programs that attract a particular audience and then sell products to that audience. American children watch 1500 hours per year of television by the time they are 18 years old (Source Book for Teaching Science, 2001). Thus, younger children, who watch an average of almost four hours of television a day, urge their parents to buy the cereals, snack foods, and toys they see advertised. An average of 200 junk food ads are shown in four hours of children's Saturday morning cartoon programming (Source Book for Teaching Science 2001). Teenagers listen to their favorite music on radio or MTV and buy the products advertised there. At the very least, the mass media teach people what products are available. In addition, by the age of 18 the average American has seen 200,000 acts of violence on television, 40,000 of these being murders (Source Book for Teaching Science 2001).

The mass media also teach values and needs. An advertisement may teach you, for example, that thoughtful, sensitive children send their parents Hallmark cards on special occasions or just to say "I love you." You may learn that "people on the go," like you, drink Pepsi "uh-huh;" or you may learn that intelligent, frequent travelers should not leave home without their American Express cards.

The mass media also teach viewers something about what life is like, although the view presented may be an idealized version. For example, people learn from television comedy shows that the American family is very happy. Everyday problems of living, such as dented automobiles, lackluster sex lives, occupational failures, trouble juggling two careers and childcare, or a shortage of money—all are treated as abnormalities on television. In these media, rich people are often miserable; and poor people, who usually appear in comedies, have a wonderful time and never seem to worry about money. After watching this, viewers may develop unrealistic expectations about the quality of their own lives, becoming unnecessarily frustrated and discontent. If we can understand that our conception of what is normal is one that we have been socialized to accept by the media, perhaps we would not have such unrealistic expectations of our spouses, our children, and ourselves. With more realistic expectations, perhaps we could become more tolerant of ourselves and of others.

Researchers now believe that television shapes not only what we think, but how we think. Healy (1990) believes that television prevents thinking, at least in characteristic ways. Before television, children spent much more time learning about things by talking or reading. This required more use of the imagination. When learning through conversation, a person has to formulate ideas and respond to what is being said in order to maintain the conversation. When learning through reading, a child has to imagine what things look like and how things sound

in order to grasp the meaning of the written word. When watching television, children are provided with pictures and sounds and are not required to formulate ideas and respond. As a result, Healy (1990) argues that children who have grown up watching a great deal of television do not think unless the pictures and sounds are provided for them.

Undoubtedly, many more theories about how the mass media shape our thoughts will be forthcoming. Nevertheless, the fact that the mass media play a part in socialization is widely accepted.

Thinking Sociologically

1. How have your parents influenced your development of a self? What are some of the values and beliefs taught to you that remain an important component of your life today?
2. Discuss the importance of education on the development of a self. How did education either enhance or contradict what was taught to you by your parents?

SOCIALIZATION OF GENDER ROLES

Socialization plays an especially important part in determining what children believe to be acceptable behaviors for members of their own sex. Even though the situation has begun to change, our environment bombards both men and women with subtle and not-so-subtle suggestions that some types of behavior are acceptable for women and other types of behavior are acceptable for men. People who diverge significantly from expected gender roles often meet with resistance from individuals and from the social system. The same sources of socialization that influence people in other areas of their lives—home, school, the mass media, and interactions with others—also affect the socialization of gender roles.

Infant and Childhood Experiences

Gender-role socialization in our society begins at birth. When a baby is born, he or she is wrapped in a blue or a pink blanket; and from that moment on, parents respond to the infant on the basis of its gender (Bem and Bem, 1976). In decades past, parents could predict the future role expectations of their infants. Boys were expected to grow up to play **instrumental roles**, performing tasks that lead to goals they have set for themselves. Girls were expected to be more verbal, more expressive, more emotional, and when they grew up, more interested in interpersonal relationships, characteristics that have been labeled the **expressive role** by sociologists (Zelditch, 1955).

Research has shown that infants are viewed differently, depending on these future role expectations. Infant boys are often described as big, athletic, strong, or alert, but girls are usually described as tiny, dainty, sweet, pretty, delicate, inattentive, or weak. Parents tend to notice the dainty fingernails of the baby girl, even though those of the baby boy look identical. Boy and girl infants are also treated differently. Boys are handled roughly and tossed around playfully, but girls are held more, cuddled, talked to, and treated as if they were very fragile. Even the tone of voice used is different. Boys are talked to in loud voices, whereas girls are spoken to gently. Parents also give their children different surroundings, toys, and games, based on gender.

Infants respond differently to these very early variations in treatment (Pridham, Becker, and Brown, 2000). Children who are touched and talked to cling to their mothers and talk to them more, regardless of their gender; and because girls are held and talked to more than boys, they tend to reciprocate with this kind of behavior (Goldberg and Lewis, 1969; Moss, 1967).

Parents teach their boys and girls different techniques for solving problems. When doing a puzzle, for example, parents give girls specific advice, but they try to help boys learn problem-solving tech-

niques (Frankel and Rollins, 1983). Toys selected for boys are either constructive (pieces are added to build or change the toy, such as railroads) or aggressive (such as guns), while toys for girls are more nurturant or attractive (such as dolls) (Lorber, 2003).

Today, parents are beginning to have different role expectations for their daughters. More and more parents realize that their daughters will have to compete in the work force. In Sweden, where the government has long been active in discouraging differential treatment of boys and girls, Lamb et al. (1982) found that parents treated their infant sons and daughters alike. However, the two parents differed from one another. They treated their children the way they were treated as children. Mothers smiled, cooed, and cuddled their infants more than fathers did, and fathers were more playful. These children experienced both types of socialization.

Gender-Role Socialization in Schools

Children continue to learn gender-role behavior in nursery school (Ornstein, 1994). Classroom observations of 15 nursery schools showed that the teachers (all women) treated boys and girls differently. Teachers responded three times more often to disruptive behavior by boys than by girls. The boys usually got a loud public reprimand, whereas the girls were given a quiet rebuke that others could not hear. Disruptive behavior is often an attempt to gain attention, and because the boys received the attention they were seeking, they continued to behave disruptively. When the teacher paid less attention to the boys, this behavior diminished. Teachers were also more willing to help the boys find something to do. The girls who were not doing anything were ignored and received attention only when they were literally clinging to the teacher's skirts.

The teachers spent more time teaching boys. In one instance, the teacher showed boys how to use a stapler, but when a girl did not know how to use it, the teacher took the materials, stapled them herself, and handed them back to the girl. Both problem-solving and analytical abilities are related to active participation, but girls were not given the opportunity to try things as often as boys were. Boys are also praised more for good work and are encouraged to keep trying. Girls are praised for appearance but left in the dark about their academic performance (Sadker and Sadker, 1994).

Teachers also evaluate boys differently from girls. If the preschool child is a boy, the teacher evaluates him no differently whether he is compliant or not. However, compliance is a significant factor in evaluating girls. Less compliant girls are viewed as less intellectually competent (Gold, Crombie, and Noble, 1987).

Schools teach gender roles in other ways as well. Most teachers are women, but principals and superintendents are men. Women teachers are more likely to teach young children, but as subject matter becomes more sophisticated and specialized, more men are found teaching. Children receive subtle messages about the capability of men and women as they observe the jobs they hold. School counselors also encourage children to follow expected gender roles. Girls who want to enter masculine occupations or boys who want to enter traditionally feminine occupations will be defined by career counselors as in need of more extensive guidance. Efforts are sometimes made to steer them into more "appropriate" occupations.

Gender-Role Socialization in Peer Groups

Children play mainly in same-sex groups, and this contributes to their socialization. Maccoby (1998) notes that children segregate themselves into same-sex play groups whenever they have a choice of playmates. This tendency begins at the preschool ages and increases until the children reach puberty. Fur-

POLICY DEBATE

Childcare

The use of substitute childcare has increased so quickly that its long-term effects on children when they become adults cannot be known yet. Most of the research to date suggests that extensive non-parental care in the first year of life does have an impact on a child's development. However, the results are contradictory about what the overall effects are, how long they last, and whether they are beneficial or detrimental to the child (cf., e.g., Belsky, 1990; Clarke-Stewart, 1989; Leavitt and Power, 1989; Phillips et al., 1987).

During the past few decades, childcare has become a major issue in American society for a number of reasons:

- Half of the children born in 2001 were in some kind of non-parental childcare arrangement at 9 months of age.
- In 2002, of children under the age of 3 with working mothers, 38 percent spent 35 hours or more in care; 17 percent spent 15 to 34 hours; 17 percent spent 1 to 14 hours; and 28 percent spent no hours in non-parental care (Kreader, Ferguson, & Lawrence, 2005).
- 23.8 million mothers with school-age children are employed. 9.8 million mothers of preschool age children are also employed. (US Census Bureau, October 2005)
- 68 percent of school-aged children are in one non-parental arrangement before and/or after school and 20 percent of them are in center-based facilities (Lawrence & Kreader, 2006).
- Children with regularly scheduled before- and/or after-school non-parental arrangements spend about 10.4 hours per week in these arrangements (Lawrence & Kreader, 2006).
- Surveys indicate that more than 50 percent of working parents think that their children suffer from lack of quality care (Browne-Miller, 1990).
- Employers now accept that a lack of adequate substitute childcare can lead to greater employee absenteeism and less productivity (Browne-Miller, 1990).
- Additionally, the prevalence of social problems such as domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, and alcohol and other drug abuse has engendered an increased public interest in strengthening the family (Browne-Miller, 1990). Clearly, the impact of non-parental childcare on children has become an issue of much concern for many Americans.

Referring to the widespread use of substitute childcare, social critic Charles Siegel (1990) writes, "An entire generation of children is the subject of a risky experi-

thermore, this tendency to segregate is stronger when adults do not interfere—in other words, children are more segregated in the cafeteria than they are in the classroom.

Although it is not clear why children segregate themselves in play groups, at least part of the explanation is that children in mixed groups will be teased for liking or loving a member of the opposite sex (Maccoby, 1998). Children who have ongoing friendships with members of the opposite sex often go into hiding about these friendships by age 7 years. They will not acknowledge each other in public but only play together in the privacy of their own homes. To the extent that children segregate them-

Chidcare , *continued*

ment" (p. 37). While the related political debates focus mostly on who should be responsible for ensuring that there is adequate childcare—government, business, or family—the heart of the matter is socialization. How well are children learning to function in society? Is the socialization of children with parental care different than with non-parental care? If so, what are the differences, and are they detrimental or beneficial to the development of the child? Answers to questions such as these will probably have an impact on any national childcare policies that are developed.

(iStock)

Public and political debates about childcare policies have drawn a great deal of attention to the needs of working parents regarding quality placements for their children. Little (2007) argues that there is a growing recognition that quality programs for school-aged children can enhance the learning achievements obtained at school. In addition, federal funding for childcare programs is at an all time high due to the need for stimulating before and after school activities that will expand the knowledge of children both academically and socially.

Research findings for infants and preschoolers are not as positive as they are for school-aged children. Kreader, Ferguson, and Lawrence (2005) argue that efforts need to be made to enhance the quality of childcare for this age group. Infants and preschoolers should have care from individuals properly trained and educated in child development. The ratio of caregivers to children is particularly important at this age. Children at the greatest risk are those from low-income families who may receive less than adequate care from facilities that are often overcrowded and staffed with persons with little knowledge about the socialization process.

The child-care issue is no longer whether American society needs alternative methods of child-care; it is how we devise child-care policies that can ensure the best possible socialization of children, while addressing the realities of American families as they exist today.

selves to avoid teasing, they are responding to the behavior of older members of the society. They are being socialized to play in same-sex groups.

The result of playing in same-sex groups is that girls are socialized to act like girls and boys are socialized to act like boys (Greenwald, 1996; Lawson, 1992). Maccoby (1998) found that the children did not form groups based on like interests. Whether the girls were passive or aggressive, they played with other girls, and the same was true of boys. Once in the play group, however, girls learn to act in socially binding ways while boys act competitively. In conversation, for example, girls acknowledge each other, agree with each other, and pause frequently to

give others a chance to speak. Boys more often use commands, interrupt, boast, heckle each other, tell jokes, and engage in name-calling. When engaged in taking turns, boys use physical means to get a turn, such as pushing and shoving, while girls use conversational means, persuading others to let them have a turn. As they learn how to get along with others of the same sex, girls especially are less interested in playing with those of the opposite sex because their socially binding norms are less influential and powerful than the competitive norms of boys (Maccoby, 1988), and when girls do play with boys, girls become passive.

Psychologist Carol Gilligan argues that as young girls progress through early socialization they end up "hitting the wall". In other words, all the negative messages they have received from society about their image, abilities, worth, etc., come flooding back to influence their perceptions of themselves. The gender socialization that begins at birth and continues throughout life has consistently emphasized a male dominated society where power is less likely to be in the hands of females. When girls fail to conform to the standards set for them by society, the blame will fall on their shoulders. They will be viewed as "tomboy", "oddball", "manly" or some other term situated on their unwillingness to act the way they are suppose to. Gilligan suggests that gender related stereotypes are harmful to the socialization of girls. For example, the words of former Harvard President Lawrence Summers in 2005 drew enormous criticism when he suggested at an academic conference on economics that innate differences between men and women might be one reason fewer women succeed in science and math careers. Summers also suggested that discrimination and socialization are not what creates the low number of female professors in science and engineering. He argued that "the real issue is the overall size of the pool", not the size of the pool that was "held down by discrimination".

Mass Media and Socialization of Gender Roles

From childhood on, Americans spend thousands of hours watching television, which has a strong tendency to portray gender-role stereotypes. In children's television programming, male characters are more often portrayed as aggressive, constructive, and helpful, whereas female characters are more often

Television programs, such as I Love Lucy, tend to portray gender-role stereotypes. Lucille Ball's character was portrayed as an inept housewife who had to be rescued by her harassed but tolerant husband. (AP)

As was seen in the treatment of Supreme Court Justice Sotomayor (above), or Sarah Palin and Hillary Clinton during the 2008 presidential election, news reporting generally follows established gender stereotypes. (U.S. federal government, public domain)

passive and defer to males. Adult programs, especially the situation comedies, are watched by many children and adults. *I Love Lucy*, which was originally produced in the 1950s and is still seen in reruns, featured Lucille Ball as a consistently inept housewife who had to be rescued by her harassed but tolerant husband. Every episode revolved around Lucy's getting into some sort of trouble. Current situation comedies are a little more subtle.

Music videos, however, are usually not at all subtle. They show men acting rough, tough, and even violent. "Their" women follow or even crawl after the men—waiting, competing, and even suffering for a bit of attention. The focus of the women is usually on their appearance; they wear provocative clothing that suggests they are waiting on men to sexually seduce them.

Advertising on television and in the press also tends to stereotype both men and women or to portray roles that are impossible to live up to. Career women are portrayed as superwomen who combine a successful career, motherhood, and a terrific marriage while cooking a gourmet meal for a small dinner party of ten. At the other extreme, women are portrayed as beautiful, bewildered homemakers, even when they work outside the home. These ads show the woman arriving home from work to cook the family meal or do the family wash but apparently overwhelmed by indecision about what to serve or how to get shirt collars really clean. A male voice heard in the background tells the woman how to solve her problem. Men in ads are stereotyped as forceful, athletic, involved in business of some kind, or at least actively watching a ball game, but always knowing exactly what they want or which beer has more gusto.

News reporting has generally followed the stereotypes established by society when discussing issues related to women. During the 2008 presidential election the focus was on women, particularly with Hillary Clinton as a presidential candidate, Sarah Palin as a vice-presidential candidate, and Nancy Pelosi, as the Speaker of the House. For example, the New York, journalist Amanda Fortini wrote, "In the grand Passion play that was this election, both Clinton and Palin came to represent—and, at times, reinforce—two of the most pernicious stereotypes that are applied to women: the bitch and the ditz." Another example came from a female anchor for *MSNBC Live*, who wondered on air if Pelosi's "personal feelings [were] getting in the way of effective leadership"—a problem she suggested would not surface in "men-run leadership posts"—and whether men were "more capable of taking personality clashes." (Boehlert and Foser, 2006).

APPLYING GENDER-ROLE SOCIALIZATION

Understanding that gender-role stereotypes are a product of socialization is important for you in your work life and in your personal life. One important problem in the workplace that results from gender-role stereotypes is discrimination against women. This has taken a variety of forms, including unfair hiring practices, lower wages, sexual harassment, and many others.

Some companies hire consultants to develop training programs to help employees at all levels understand the sources of these gender-related tensions in the workplace. Employees can be made aware of how stereotypes are generated through media and other agents of so-

cialization. Also, exercises may be used to help men and women employees understand each other's work experience a little better. One way is to have the men and women engage in role-reversal role-playing. This can help them to see situations from the other gender's point of view and to become more sensitive to each other's needs and attitudes. The key theme that runs through the training is to get beyond the gender stereotypes that people have learned in their previous socialization.

Stereotypes generated through gender-role socialization may also create problems in your intimate relationships. In her book Intimate Strangers, Lillian Rubin (1983) discusses how our gender identity as males or females often prevents people of the opposite sex (husbands and wives, boyfriends and girlfriends, or just close friends) from developing true intimacy. That is, as a result of gender-role socialization, males often learn to see themselves in terms of stereotypical instrumental traits (aggressive, unemotional, dominant, career-oriented, and so forth), and females often learn to see themselves in terms of stereotypical expressive traits (passive, emotional, subordinate, relationship-oriented, and so forth). Think of how these perceptions of ourselves might interfere with the ability of men and women to develop close emotional bonds. Because you see yourself as a "real man," for example, you may find it difficult to express your emotions openly, to cry in front of others, or to be sensitive, even if these feelings tend to emerge. Because you see yourself as a "real woman," you may find it difficult or confusing to have an equal say in your relationship, to take charge of a situation, or to be aggressive, even though you may want to. The realization that gender roles and gender identities are learned through socialization and are not an inherent part of our biological makeup can help both sexes to overcome many barriers to intimacy and to relate to each other as whole individuals.

Thinking Sociologically

In the discussion of how the news media portrays female candidates, both journalists were themselves female. Explain why women are likely to criticize other women and to reinforce gender stereotypes?

SOCIALIZATION IN ADULTHOOD

The knowledge we acquire as children shapes the meanings we give to ourselves and to the world, and it can continue to influence us for the rest of our lives. We never stop learning new things, however; every day, we have new experiences, learn new information, and add the meanings of these new facts to what we already know. Adult socialization occurs when we learn new roles that are expected from us as we get older. Although new knowledge may be different from knowledge acquired as children, the same agencies of socialization are at work.

College and Marriage

Like children, adults are socialized by their families. Adult socialization also occurs in schools. Colleges teach adults of all ages, and the move from home to college can be a period of intense socialization. College freshmen must adapt to their new independence from the family and make their own decisions about health, food, sleep, class attendance, study habits, exercise, and social relationships. They must learn to live in crowded situations and to compete with peers. Some avoid these decisions by going along with the crowd. Others drop the values they learned in the family and adopt a new set of values, whereas some

continue to maintain family values in the new setting. Each choice entails some socialization.

Single people must be socialized when they marry in order to live intimately with their spouses and to share living arrangements. Each person is socialized toward marriage based on their own set of experiences and social interactions growing up. Once married, a young couple must decide how to define their marriage based on their own expectations rather than those of others.

Parenthood

When a couple has children, they learn the role of parent and will probably rely on the knowledge of childcare they acquired from their own parents. Because the two parents were themselves brought up by different sets of parents, they will have learned different child-rearing techniques and therefore will have to socialize each other to reach agreement about child-care practices. As the children grow up, the parents must be socialized to allow their children to become independent after years of dependency. All of this learning is a part of adult socialization.

Children themselves are often very active socializers of their parents. As infants, they let their parents know when they need attention. Beginning at about age 2 years, they become aware of themselves, learn to say "no," and begin to let their parents know when they need some independence. This process of demanding both attention and independence continues as long as the children are at home. It can result in serious conflicts in some youths, particularly those who rebel, fight, take drugs, or run away from home. The socialization of parents can be quite dramatic, but it is often successful. A questionnaire given to mothers and fathers of college students (Peters, 1985) found that the parents had learned different attitudes and behaviors about sports, leisure, minority groups, drug use, and sexuality from their children.

Career

Another type of adult socialization is occupational training, which teaches the attitudes and values associated with an occupation, as well as the skills. Acquiring a new job involves taking on new statuses and roles. A new employee in an office has to learn how to conform to the expectations of the other workers and to the business's written and unwritten rules. During this socialization, the employee will discover the answers to questions such as these: Are men and women expected to wear suits, or is less formal clothing acceptable? Do employees address one another by their first names? Is rigid adherence to established procedures expected? Are some department heads more accommodating than others?

Resocialization

Major adaptations to new situations in adulthood may sometimes require **resocialization**. The changes people undergo during this period are much more pervasive than the gradual adaptations characteristic of regular socialization. Resocialization usually follows a major break in a person's customary life; this break requires that the person adopt an entirely new set of meanings to understand his or her new life. Divorce, retirement, or the death of a loved one usually involves the process of resocialization. Retirement from work is sometimes an easy process of socialization to a new situation, but it often requires a great deal of resocialization. Retired people often lose at least part of their income, so they may have to adapt to a new standard of living. With the loss of work, new sources of self-esteem may have to be developed, but society may help in this process by providing education on financial management, health, and housing. Counseling services and support groups for retired persons may also be provided, often by employers, especially when they want employees to retire.

Besides loss of income and self-esteem, retirement creates another resocialization problem. Most roles involve social expectations and provide rewards for meeting those expectations. However, there are few social expectations associated with retirement other than the loss of a previous role; as a result, the satisfactory performance of the retirement role goes unrecognized. To compound the problem, the retired person's spouse often dies during this period, so he or she must relinquish the family role, as well as the work role. Nonetheless, if the retired person has enough money to buy nice clothes, enjoy hobbies, and afford travel for social events or volunteer work, then he or she can create a new role that is rewarding.

Mortification of self (Goffman, 1961), the most dramatic type of resocialization, occurs in such institutions as the armed forces, prisons, and mental hospitals. People entering these institutions are totally stripped of their old selves. Physically, they are required to strip, shower, and don institutional clothing. All personal possessions are taken away, and they must leave behind family, friends, and work roles. They must live in a new environment under a new set of rules and adopt a new role as a military person, prisoner, or mental patient. Their previous learning must be completely reorganized.

Whether dealing with socialization or with resocialization, the human mind is very complex. People learn a varied set of meanings during their lives, and they interpret each situation on the basis of their own biography and their own definition of the situation. How a person presents the self and maintains interactions depends on his or her unique interpretation of self, others, and the situation. It is this ability to interpret that makes socialization and social interaction such a varied, interesting, and challenging area of study.

SUMMARY

1. Socialization is the process of learning how to interact in society. Infants must interact in order to survive; and, as they interact, they learn about society.
2. Children who have been isolated, abused, or received little attention when very young do not learn to walk, talk, or otherwise respond to people because early social interactions are crucial to development.
3. Sociobiologists believe that inborn genetic traits direct human behavior just as they direct the behavior of animals. They contend that sexual, altruistic, and warlike behaviors occur in humans because we are predisposed to them in our genetic makeup. Most biologists and social scientists, however, sidestep the nature–nurture debate by believing that people's behavior is determined by their biological capacity to learn socially.
4. Human beings are unique because they learn a symbol system—language. Through linguistic interaction, we develop a self—an idea of who we are.
5. Mead used the term *role-taking* to describe the process of figuring out how others think and perceive us. According to Mead, children take the role of only one other person at a time at first. Children *practice* role-taking in play and learn to generalize in team games. The *I* acts,

but the *me* sees the self as an object. The interplay between the two allows the self to act freely while aware of social reactions.

6. Charles Horton Cooley used the term *looking-glass self* to describe how people learn about themselves; he argued that our identities are heavily influenced by our perceptions of how others view us. We see ourselves not as we are, and not as others see us, but as we think others see us.

7. Goffman compared interaction to a drama on stage. We present ourselves as we want other people to define us. Once we have presented ourselves, everyone involved in the interaction is expected to maintain that presentation. We justify our discrepant behavior by making excuses or disclaimers. If we cannot maintain our presentations, we will respond to our failure with emotion, often embarrassment or anger.

8. Kohlberg provided us with the foundation on which to understand moral development in children.

9. Freud believed that personality consisted of three components: the id, superego, and ego.

10. Some of the important agencies of socialization are the family, schools, peer groups, and mass media.

11. From birth, males and females are socialized differently. Men are expected to be instrumental, active, and task-oriented, whereas women are expected to be expressive, nurturing, and people-oriented.

12. Resocialization may be necessary when a person's life changes dramatically and abruptly, such as when he or she goes to prison or retires.

KEY TERMS

account of behavior An effort at maintaining the self by explaining the reasons for or facts surrounding the behavior

disclaimers An aspect of maintaining our presentation of self in which we deny behavior that contradicts how we wish to be viewed

dramaturgical approach An approach to the study of interaction in which interaction is compared to a drama on stage; the importance of setting and presentation of self are emphasized

excuse of behavior An effort at maintaining the self by justifying or making an apology for the behavior

expressive role A role that emphasizes warmth and understanding rather than action or leadership; traditionally associated more with women than with men

gender identity The social construction of boys and girls, men and women, as opposed to their biological characteristics

generalized other The assumption that other people have similar attitudes, values, beliefs, and expectations, making it, therefore, not necessary to know a specific individual in order to know how to behave toward that individual

I The acting, unselfconscious person

instinct Biological or hereditary impulses, drives, or behaviors that require no learning or reasoning

instrumental role A role that emphasizes accomplishment of tasks, such as earning a living to provide food and shelter; traditionally associated more with men than with women

looking-glass self A process occurring in social interaction and having three components: (1) how we think our behavior appears to others, (2) how we think others judge our behavior, and (3) how we feel about their judgments

mass media Forms of communication, such as television, popular magazines, and radio, intended for a large audience

me The part of self that sees self as object, evaluates self, and is aware of society's expectations of self

mind The process of using a language and thinking

mortification of self Stripping the self of all the characteristics of a past identity, including clothing, personal possessions, friends, roles and routines, and so on

nature–nurture debate A longstanding debate over whether behavior results from predetermined biological characteristics or from socialization

peer group An informal primary group of people who share a similar or equal status and who are usually of roughly the same age

play According to Mead, a way of practicing role taking

presentation of self The way we present ourselves to others and how our presentation influences others

resocialization Socialization to a new role or position in life that requires a dramatic shift in the attitudes, values, behaviors, and expectations learned in the past

role taking Assuming the roles of others and seeing the world from their perspective

self The sense of one's own identity as a person

self-fulfilling prophecy A prediction that comes true because people believe it and act as though it were true

significant others Persons that one identifies with psychologically and whose opinions are considered important

socialization The process of learning how to interact in society by learning the rules and expectations of society

sociobiology The study of the biological and genetic determinants of social behavior

symbolic interaction theory The social theory stressing interactions between people and the social processes that occur within the individual that are made possible by language and internalized meanings

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How could the ideas of Mead and Cooley be used to discuss your own gender-role socialization?
2. Using Cooley's looking-glass self concept, discuss how your perception of how others see you influences the way you think about yourself. What effect does this have on your self?
3. Discuss things you do in college that you believe are important because your peers tell you they are important. Are these messages from your peers making you a better student?
4. Discuss things you do in college that you believe are important because the mass media tell you they are important. Are these messages from the mass media making you a better student?

5. Imagine that you are putting on a skit about getting ready to go to class (or put on such a skit, if possible). What impression are you going to make on professors? On classmates?
6. How does your backstage preparation for class differ from your performance onstage?
7. Think back to your most recent casual conversation, perhaps at lunch. What disclaimers were used in the course of this conversation?
8. Use Goffman's ideas about social interaction to develop an explanation of socialization.