

SOCIAL INTERACTION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Chapter 6

SOCIAL INTERACTION

**THE PROCESS BY WHICH PEOPLE ACT
AND REACT IN RELATION TO OTHERS**

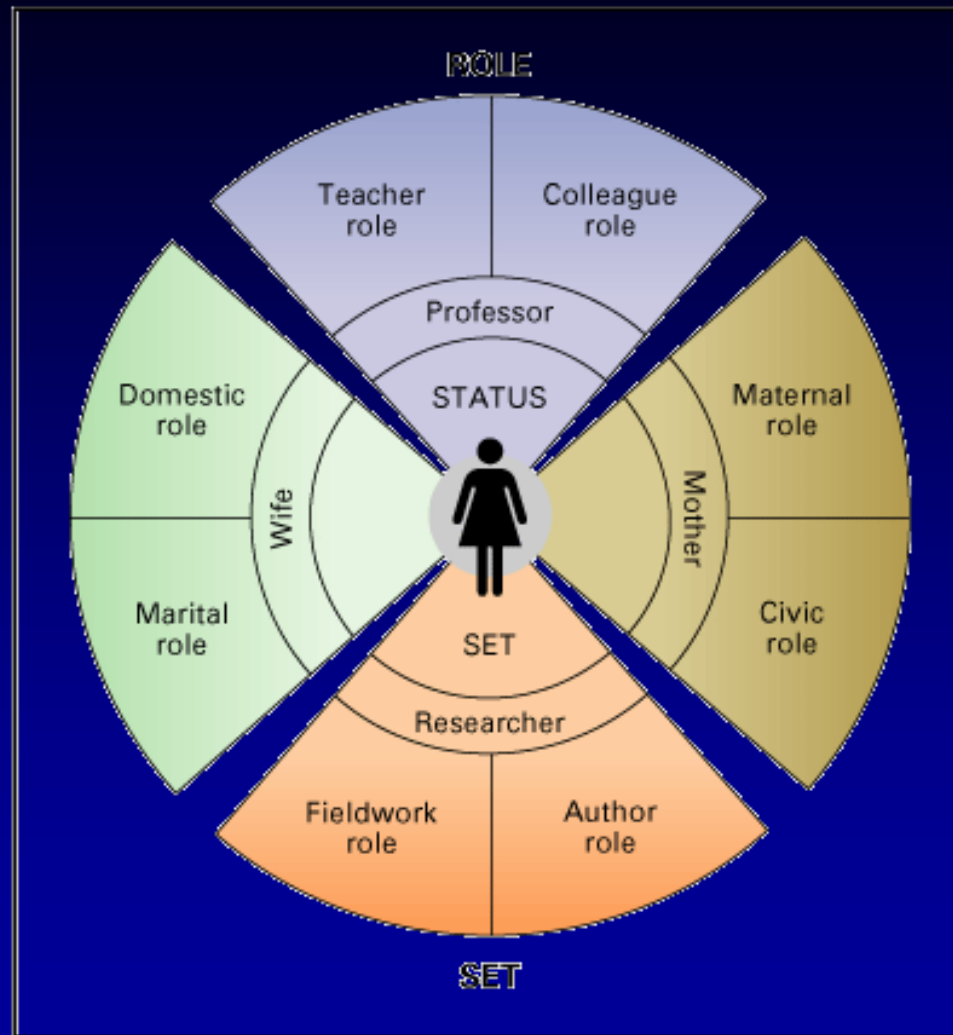
THE SYMBOLIC INTERACTION PARADIGM

**HUMANS RELY ON SOCIAL STRUCTURE TO
MAKE SENSE OUT OF EVERYDAY
SITUATIONS**

STATUS

- A SOCIAL POSITION THAT AN INDIVIDUAL OCCUPIES
- ***STATUS SET***
 - ALL THE STATUSES HELD AT ONE TIME
 - DANCE PARTNER
 - BOSS
 - FRIEND
 - HARLEY CLUB MEMBER
 - SPORTS PARTICIPANT
 - BUSINESSMAN

Status Set



TYPE OF STATUS

- **ASCRIBED: INVOLUNTARY POSITIONS**
- **ACHIEVED: VOLUNTARY POSITIONS**

OFTEN THE TWO TYPES WORK TOGETHER, WHAT WE ARE ASCRIBED OFTEN HELPS US ACHIEVE OTHER STATUSES

- **MASTER STATUS: SPECIAL IDENTITY**

ROLES

THE BEHAVIOR EXPECTED OF SOMEONE WHO HOLDS A PARTICULAR STATUS

- ROLE SET

- A NUMBER OF ROLES ATTACHED TO A SINGLE STATUS
- EXAMPLE: STATUS OF MOTHER
 - DISCIPLINARIAN
 - SPORTS AUTHORITY
 - DIETITIAN
 - DR. MOM
 - PRETTY MOM

ROLE CONFLICT AND ROLE STRAIN

- **ROLE CONFLICT**

- **INVOLVES TWO OR MORE STATUSES**

- **EXAMPLE: CONFLICT BETWEEN ROLE EXPECTATIONS OF A POLICE OFFICER WHO CATCHES HER OWN SON USING DRUGS AT HOME – MOTHER AND POLICE OFFICER**

- **ROLE STRAIN**

- **INVOLVES A SINGLE STATUS**

- **EXAMPLE: MANAGER WHO TRIES TO BALANCE CONCERN FOR WORKERS WITH TASK REQUIREMENTS – OFFICE MANAGER**

ROLE EXIT

- **ROLE EXIT - BECOMING AN “EX”**
 - **DISENGAGING FROM SOCIAL ROLES CAN BE VERY TRAUMATIC IF NOT PROPERLY PREPARED**
 - **THE PROCESS OF BECOMING AN “EX”**
 - **DOUBTS FORM ABOUT ABILITY TO CONTINUE WITH A CERTAIN ROLE**
 - **EXAMINATION OF NEW ROLES LEADS TO A TURNING POINT AT WHICH TIME ONE DECIDES TO PURSUE A NEW DIRECTION**
 - **LEARNING NEW EXPECTATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH NEW ROLE**
 - **PAST ROLE MAY INFLUENCE NEW SELF**

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY

- THE PROCESS BY WHICH PEOPLE CREATIVELY SHAPE REALITY THROUGH SOCIAL INTERACTION
- “STREET SMARTS”
- THE THOMAS THEOREM
 - SITUATIONS THAT ARE DEFINED AS REAL ARE REAL IN THEIR CONSEQUENCES
- ETHNOMETHODOLOGY
 - EXPLORES THE PROCESS OF MAKING SENSE OF SOCIAL ENCOUNTERS

Fun with Ethnomethodology

- Breaking the Rules
 - If someone asks “How are you?” or “How are you doing?” TELL THEM
 - Tell good or bad things that have happen to you during the course of the day
 - Tell them about your physical health
 - Slowly move closer to the person during the conversation
 - These actions violate the “rules” of everyday interaction

Goffman's Dramaturgical Analysis

Examining social interaction in terms of theatrical performances

- *Presentation of self*
 - Key is impression management or making oneself appear in the best light possible
- *Role performance includes*
 - Stage setting
 - Use of props: costume, tone of voice, gesture
- *Example:*
 - Going to the doctor and playing the patient role as expected

NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

- WORDS
- VOICE
- BODY LANGUAGE
- FACIAL EXPRESSIONS
- DEAMEANOR
- PERSONAL SPACE

IDEALIZATION IS PART OF CIVILITY

Emotions: The Social Construction of Feeling

- The biological side of emotions
- The cultural side of emotions
- Emotions on the job

GENDER & LANGUAGE

- **LANGUAGE**
 - **CONVEYS MEANING ON MORE THAN ONE LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING**
 - **POWER**
 - FEMALE PRONOUNS AND OWNERSHIP
 - WOMEN OFTEN ADOPT THE HUSBAND'S NAME
 - **VALUES**
 - TRADITIONALLY FEMININE TERMS ARE MORE LIKELY TO CHANGE TO NEGATIVE MEANINGS THAN THEIR MASCULINE COUNTERPARTS
 - **ATTENTION**
 - CHOOSING THE "HE" WORD TO REPRESENT "ALL" PERSONS
 - ENGLISH HAS NO GENDER NEUTRAL THIRD PERSON SINGULAR PERSONAL PRONOUN

HUMOR

- **HUMOR IS UNCONVENTIONAL**
 - IT IS A VIOLATION OF CULTURAL NORMS
- **HUMOR IS TIED TO A COMMON CULTURE AND DOES NOT TRANSLATE EASILY**
 - “NOT GETTING IT” MEANS THAT A PERSON DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE CONVENTIONAL AND UNCONVENTIONAL REALITIES EMBEDDED IN THE JOKE
- **HUMOR ACTS AS A SAFETY VALVE BY EXPRESSING OPINIONS ON A SENSITIVE TOPIC**
- **HUMOR AND CONFLICT**
 - “PUT DOWN” WITH JOKES ABOUT RACE, SEX, GENDER, AND THE DISABLED