CHAPTER 5

Socialization: The Process of Becoming Human

READING PREVIEW

Terms to Know

anticipatory socialization
apprenticeship in thinking
"bad blood" theory
bonding
cognitive development theory
concrete operations
cultural mediation
didactic teaching
dramaturgical analysis
ego
formal operations
game stage
generalized other
guided participation
id
imitative (preparatory) stage
inner directed
instinct theory
looking-glass self
mass media
other directed
peer groups
personality
play stage
preoperations
resocialization
rites of passage
role taking
self-concept
self-fulfilling prophesy
sensorimotor stage
significant others
social Darwinism
social isolates
socialization
sociobiology
sociocultural theory
superego
Thomas theorem
youth subculture
zone of proximal development (ZPD)

In Chapter 4, we began our survey of key topics in sociology by examining culture, the way of life we acquire as members of society. Through exposure to a culture, we are provided with a set of socially accepted patterns for thinking and acting that gives our lives order and predictability. In Chapter 5, we will focus on **socialization**, the process through which culture is transmitted to the individual and the personality and self-concept are developed. To begin, we will first examine the nature–nurture debate.

THE NATURE VERSUS NURTURE DEBATE

The crux of this debate is the question of how personality is determined and self-concept is formed. **Personality** refers to the sum total of a person's unique yet consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Are humans equipped at birth with a set of traits that largely direct and shape their personality development? Or are they instead shaped and influenced primarily by their experiences with the social environment that surrounds them? Proponents on both sides of this issue have argued vigorously for their respective viewpoints for well over a century. While each of us most likely possesses a genetic predisposition for being introverted or extraverted as demonstrated through neuroscience (Canli, 2004; Canli et al., 2002, 2004), much of what determines who we are and who we become depends on our cumulative experiences with others and society as we move through our life experience.

Socialization also provides the individual with a sense of identity in terms of "Who am I?," "What am I worth?," and "Where am I going?" This identity or self-image we each possess sociologists call the **self-concept**, the personal assessment people have of their own identity and self-worth and how they fit into the larger community and society. Our self-image forms much of the foundation for our personality. It is a complex area of study for the sociologist because (1) it has several dimensions and (2) it is constantly evolving due to a continuous, dynamic interplay that occurs between individuals and their social environment.

The Nature Argument

Those who subscribe to the nature position maintain that human beings possess a definite set of qualities determined largely by inborn traits. One's environment, therefore, represents only the background against which these inherited characteristics are played out (Adams, 1974). The notion of an "innate human nature" was proposed by social contract theorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Some, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, argued that humans are basically good but tend to become corrupted by modern civilized society. Others, such as Thomas Hobbes, argued that humans by nature are untrustworthy and selfish, characteristics that necessitated the formation of society with rules to keep people under control.

Social Darwinism

In 1859, Charles Darwin published his *On the Origin of Species,* which gave the nature argument a great deal of scientific legitimacy. He argued that human beings, like lower animals, are products not of divine creation but of evolution through natural selection. Those with the ability to adapt to changes in their environment survive, while those without such adaptability perish. Consequently, environment affects the genetic makeup present in all species and biological traits that are most adaptable emerge through natural selection.

The social Darwinists, led by Herbert Spencer, expanded this argument to include the nature of human societies. **Social Darwinism** was the argument that governments should not interfere in the lives of individuals or the operation of organizations so that the fittest can survive. Spencer and his followers asserted that European societies and the United States were more dominant in the world than other societies because they were more highly evolved. Other, less-advanced social systems were biologically and socially inferior because they occupied an earlier, and thus more primitive, stage of evolution (Spencer, 1860, 1874). The social Darwinists also used the natural selection argument to explain why certain individuals within modern societies were affluent, successful, and more "fit," while others, struggling in the throes of poverty were, therefore, "unfit." The glaring flaw in this argument soon became clear as the behavioral sciences developed substantively during the early part of the twentieth century: In the biological world, each member of a species—lions, for example—are born with essentially the same attributes and are exposed to the same environmental circumstances. However, humans are distributed throughout each society with diverse characteristics that are treated quite differently according to how each society is structured.

"Bad Blood" Theory

Other scientists during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries attributed human behavior to other inherited predispositions. Some subscribed to the "bad seed" or **"bad blood" theory**, the view that deviant behavior (such as crime and drug addiction) occurred because of a person's biological makeup and whether they

possessed "bad blood" or was a "bad seed." In a 1994 motion picture titled *Natural Born Killers,* Woody Harrelson and Juliet Lewis played "bad seeds" who went on a random killing spree beginning with the massacre of the customers and staff at a diner. While this makes for an interesting movie plot, criminologists and other behavioral scientists have found little evidence to support the "bad blood" notion. The modern view by sociologists is that most criminal behavior, in large part, results from dysfunctional structural conditions impacting on individuals that lie within the fabric of the family, government, education, and other social institutions.

Instinct Theory Another popular approach used by nature proponents during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was that human behavior is determined mainly by "instincts." **Instinct theory** argued that human behavior was shaped largely by genetically inherited predispositions called instincts. Some proponents of this perspective held that such "instincts" caused specific types of behavior. Thus, people got married because of a "mating" instinct, fought wars due to a "killing" instinct, lived in homes and societies as a result of "nesting" and "herding" instincts, and birthed and raised children guided by "maternal" and "parenting" instincts. One researcher documented the increasing popularity of instinct theory during this period and, in reviewing academic and popular literature, found that over ten thousand alleged instincts had been claimed to exist (Bernard, 1924). However, by the 1930s researchers like anthropologist Margaret Mead and others were finding that, while some individuals and cultures had traits some called "instinctive," others did not. Therefore, *instinct* by this time had become a useless concept in science with which to explain human behavior in a meaningful way.

Sociobiology Although most of the thinking of the twentieth century was dominated by "nurture" or environmental explanations of human behavior, a new discipline called sociobiology emerged during the late 1970s and 1980s that gave nature proponents renewed vigor. **Sociobiology** is the study of the biological aspects of social behavior in all species including humans (Wilson, 1978). The founder of this perspective is Edward O. Wilson, an entomologist (one who studies insects) who originated the term *sociobiology.* Wilson and his followers attempted to integrate or synthesize the research results of both the biological and social sciences. They argue that although culture rather than genetics is the prime cause of specific human behavior (Wilson, 1975), some forms of social behavior in general have a genetic foundation. They claim, for instance, that there are tendencies toward the exhibition of male dominance, territoriality, the incest taboo, the eating of meat, and religion that are genetically encoded in humans at birth.

This biological explanation has come under a barrage of criticism. In a debate with Wilson over three decades ago, Marvin Harris, an anthropologist, categorically rejected the idea that traits such as aggressiveness, territoriality, and male dominance were inherited by humans. He argued that there is tremendous variability in all these traits from culture to culture, and that even if there are certain biological tendencies for behavior, they are so weak and general as to be meaningless because they are so easily overridden by culture (Harris, 1980). Others argue that even some human behaviors long thought to be primarily biological—such as sexuality—are now being shown to be greatly influenced by cultural factors (Lauer and Handel, 1983). In short, there is little, if any, hard evidence to support the contention that most behaviors specific to humans as individuals are determined wholly or even significantly by genetic factors.

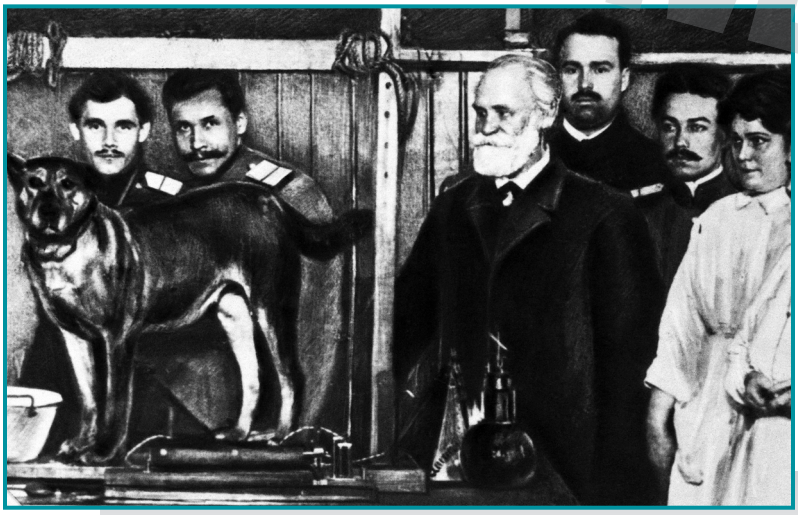
The Nurture Argument

While biology does play a role in affecting who we are as humans and our actions, available research indicates that we are impacted at least as much by environmental or "nurture" factors. We will begin a brief overview of this research with examples of findings on complex lower animals that are also capable of learning and that also need satisfying social contact with others of their kind.

Animal Studies: Examples by Pavlov and Harlow A little over a century ago, researchers began to discover the impact of learning on behavior that previously was thought to be purely instinctive or otherwise inherited. At that time, the Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov (1849–1935) demonstrated that, even among dogs, much behavior is subject to environmental conditions. Pavlov observed that dogs salivated any time food was present, a condition that appeared instinctive or reflexive. Through a process later referred to as *classical conditioning,* he conducted experiments with dogs in which, each time they were presented with food, a bell was rung. Gradually, he taught the dogs to salivate at the sound of the bell alone even when food was not present.

During the second half of the twentieth century, psychologist Harry Harlow and associates conducted experimental research to study the effects of social deprivation on rhesus monkeys (Harlow and Zimmerman, 1959; Harlow and Harlow, 1966; Novak, 1979). The researchers reared baby monkeys in total isolation from other monkeys, including their mothers. Instead, each monkey was given two artificial surrogate mothers made of wire. One "mother" was constructed of plain wire and was equipped with a bottle for feeding. The other "mother" was covered in terry cloth but contained no bottle. The monkeys became attached to the terry cloth mother and would cling to it most of the time, and went to the plain wire mother with the bottle only for food.

Invariably, these animals grew up extremely maladjusted. When approached, they would bite themselves repeatedly and cower in corners. They exhibited fear and hostility



In his experiments with classical conditioning, Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov demonstrated that, even among lower animals such as dogs, much of their behavior is learned.

when exposed to others of their kind. The females, after reaching maturity, would not mate and, when artificially inseminated, refused to care for or nurse their offspring. In a few cases, they even killed their babies before their caretakers could save them. Although one must be careful in generalizing from the behavior of lower primates to that of humans, it is clear that even with these animals, both sexual and maternal behavior are learned to a remarkable degree. Perhaps more important is the fact that monkeys, like humans, need love and nurturance in order to grow into functioning adults. Also, like humans, they may grow into neglectful and abusive parents if they themselves are neglected and abused while growing up (Kempe and Kempe, 1978; Polansky et al., 1981).

Even before the modern findings of Harlow and others, experimental animal studies cast such a serious shadow on biological explanations of human behavior that, by the 1920s and 1930s, the idea of human instincts ceased to be a meaningful concept in mainstream social science. The dominance of the nurture argument became fully established in the scientific community during the 1930s where it has remained to the present day.

Social Isolates In 1924, psychologist James B. Watson (1878–1958) made his famous statement about the primacy of "nurture" over "nature" in human behavior:

> Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specific world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one of them at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select—a doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant, chief, yes even a beggarman and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and the race of his ancestors (p. 104).

While Watson perhaps overstated the case, instances of children suffering extreme isolation from social contact with others provide a good illustration of the importance of socialization. Consider, for example, an experiment in which children were systematically isolated from certain socialization experiences and then observed to see how they developed. Such research, of course, would be condemned by present-day social scientists because of humane and ethical considerations. Nonetheless, this type of experiment was ordered by Emperor Frederick II during the thirteenth century. The emperor wanted to find out what types of speech patterns children would exhibit as adults if they had no interaction with others growing up.

> So he bade foster mothers and nurses to suckle the children, to bathe and wash them,but in no way to prattle with them or to speak to them, for he wanted to learn whether they would speak the the Hebrew language, the oldest, or Greek, or Latin, or Arabic, or perhaps the language of their parents, of whom they had been born. But he labored in vain because the children all died. For they could not live without the petting and joyful faces and loving words of their foster mothers (Ross and McLaughlin, 1949).

The twentieth-century cases of Anna, Isabelle, and Genie in the United States during the twentieth century all serve to illustrate clearly that children deprived of adequate social contact and stimulation in their early years do not develop into functional adults as a result. Sociologists refer to such deprived children as **social isolates**.

First, the cases of Anna and Isabelle reported by Kingsley Davis (1940, 1947, 1948) provide prominent early twentieth-century examples. Both were illegitimate children discovered and rescued by the authorities during the 1930s when they were about six years

old. They both had been hidden from view in small attic rooms by their mothers because they were unwanted. Although the cases of these two little girls were unrelated and they were found nine months apart, their lack of socialization and states of physical condition were similar. Neither showed any human characteristics; they could only grunt and groan and were extremely ill from poor diet and lack of exercise. Anna could not walk, and Isabelle could only shuffle around because her legs were so bowed. Anna was placed in a county home and later in a school for the retarded where, by the time she was seven, she had advanced to the level of an average two year old. When she died at age ten from an extreme case of jaundice, she was toilet trained, could dress herself, and was able to show affection for a doll. The girl known as Isabelle was more fortunate. She had experienced greater social contact with her mother and, in contrast to Anna's limpness and total lack of expression when found, was often fearful and hostile around strangers. Her care and treatment were supervised by specialists who provided her with a much more intensive learning environment than Anna. Consequently, she made extremely fast progress so that by age eight and one-half years old, she was functioning almost at a normal level and eventually was able to enter school.

In a more recent case study involving a social isolate named Genie, the results were not so successful. Genie, a thirteen-year-old California girl, had been locked naked in a room and tied to an infant's toilet seat by her father since before her second birthday. When rescued in 1970 by the authorities, she could not utter a sound because her father had severely beaten her every time she tried to vocalize. In addition, she could not stand or straighten her arms and legs and could not chew because she had never been given solid food. When tested, she had the social development of a one year old. Placed in a special developmental program at UCLA, she made limited progress with speech over the course of four years, yet never learned to behave according to social norms. She learned to speak in short phrases but never learned to read. Her social behavior, however, was manifested by such acts as grabbing strangers she liked and refusing to let go, peering into people's faces from a distance of only a few inches, and near compulsive public masturbation (Curtiss, 1977).

Institutionalized Children Research conducted on groups of *institutionalized children*—socially deprived children in institutional settings such as state-sponsored orphanages—have yielded similar results. One groundbreaking study was conducted in Europe during and after World War II. Rene Spitz (1945), in a two-year study, compared populations of infants in two different types of institutions, an orphanage and women's prison. Both groups of children had their physical needs attended to adequately, including food, clothing, cleanliness, and room temperature. In addition, each child in the orphanage saw a physician daily. In the prison, the children's mothers were with them regularly and were allowed to play with their babies for hours at a time. The children at the orphanage never saw their mothers and were rarely given any affection or emotional support from anyone, largely because the staff was small and overworked. They were also kept socially isolated from one another, whereas the children in the prison were in a collective nursery. Consequently, all the children in the orphanage were deficient both emotionally and socially by age two, and some were retarded. Most startling of all was that by the age of four, slightly over one-third of the children in the orphanage had died. When examined over the same period, the children in the prison had developed normally and none had died.

More contemporary examples of abandoned and isolated children continue to shock those who live in postmodern societies. India today has many orphanages where children, warehoused with no one to interact with them, lie in bed all day in darkened rooms. Behavioral scientists recently have conducted experimental research on these children. Their findings show that regular, structured 90-minute play sessions with groups of these children resulted in significant increases in motor skills and improved IQ scores (Taneja et al., 2002). Recently, China has furnished some of the most glaring and pervasive examples of socially neglected children in the world. As a result of its one child per family policy, implemented during the 1980s to address dire overpopulation issues coupled with a largely village-focused agricultural economy, boys have been highly desired and prized. Girls, by contrast, were seen as worthless and have met an entirely different fate. Millions had been killed by their parents at birth, put out on the streets of large cities to beg from tourists, or abandoned outright and hidden in human warehouses away from the prying eyes of the world. Orphans who do survive to adulthood are often so developmentally deficient that they cannot live functional lives (Meese, 2005).

Feral Children A final perspective that underscores the importance of nurture is the notion of *feral children,* alleged children of nature isolated from social contact with others and supposedly raised by wild animals. Largely devoid of evidence of actual cases, such "stories" have retained their romantic fascination to many people. In Roman mythology, Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome, were suckled and raised by a wolf. During the twentieth and now the twenty-first century, several generations of Americans have been entertained by the fictional exploits of Tarzan the Ape Man, a boy from British nobility who, after his parents died in Africa when he was an infant, was reared by Kala, an ape. While these and other fictional accounts make interesting stories, it is unrealistic that a human being could actually survive with animals in early childhood, much less develop into a fully functional adult.

The fictional exploits of Tarzan the Ape Man have been enjoyed by generations of Americans. In reality, however, there is no evidence that a human child, virtually helpless as an infant, could be raised to maturity by animals.

Malson (1972), in reviewing the literature of fifty-three alleged cases of feral children between 1940s and early 1960s, found that almost all such persons who had spent significant periods in mid to late childhood living "in nature" had significant to severe problems of functioning and in adapting in a social environment. Most, for example, could not adequately work or communicate verbally with others. Therefore, real cases of so-called feral children are, in actuality, unfortunate children who are lost, abandoned, or cast out by their parents with very negative consequences to their emotional and social development (Ogburn, 1959).

Nature versus Nurture in Perspective Each of us represents a unique combination of biological heritage and environmental experiences. From our biological backgrounds, we each are born with a genetic blueprint that includes a wide range of inborn traits and predispositions. Genes contained in this blueprint determine our complexion, our eye and hair colors, our body build and general size, our sex and blood type, and a variety of other characteristics. They also contain certain biological triggers that govern the aging process by signaling the onset of puberty, young adulthood, middle age, and old age. Biological factors also influence our level of intelligence, our personality, and our native talents.

However, unlike the lower animals, we humans are provided by nature with only the platform or the foundation necessary to reach our potential as the most advanced and sophisticated creatures on this planet. To actually reach this potential, to become a person and develop into a fully functioning human being with a fully developed personality and self-concept, each of us must rely on the environmental influences provided by socialization.

FUNCTIONS (NEEDS) SERVED BY SOCIALIZATION

The human infant is virtually helpless at birth and is born *tabula rasa,* a social blank without any encoded experiences. Many lower animal species develop mainly in the womb and are fully capable of taking care of themselves within hours, weeks, or months after birth. The human infant, by contrast, cannot stand alone for the first year, is incapable of sexually reproducing for well over a decade beyond this, and may not be totally self-sufficient for still another ten or twelve years in many societies. Acquiring the skills and information necessary to get along with others and survive in society begins at birth and continues throughout the life cycle. How this process of acquiring culture and developing a personality takes place is one of the most fascinating topics within social science. To explore it, we begin with a brief examination of the basic needs served by socialization.

Bonding and Emotional Support

We humans are social creatures who require regular and satisfying contact with others. As we have already seen, the debilitating effects of social deprivation in small children can lead to dramatic maladjustment and, in some cases, even death. Although comprehensive studies to measure the effects of deprivation cannot be carried out on human subjects for obvious ethical reasons, research of this type has been conducted on some of the more sociable lower animals, most notably by Harry Harlow and others as previously discussed.

Bonding begins early in life and sets the stage for later emotional and social development.

In humans, emotional needs are met primarily through **bonding**, the process of forming close personal relationships with other people, such as the relationship between a parent and child. There are three major types of bonded relationships: (1) parent–child, (2) cross gender, such as a married couple, and (3) same gender, as typified by two close friends (Beach, 1973). Of these, the parent–child relationship is most crucial for the development of a well-adjusted child.

A growing body of research shows that the bonding that is important to the child's later social development may take place immediately after birth (Klaus et al., 1972; Kennell, Voos, and Klaus, 1979; Klaus and Kennell, 1982). Marshall Klaus and his associates, for instance, compared the bonding effects of two groups of women with their newborns. Those women in the control group had the typical level of contact with their newborns during the first few days after birth. Women in the experimental group had much more intensive contact with their newborns and, in addition to regular feeding times, spent at least one hour with their babies immediately after birth and an additional five hours each day with them during the first ten days. In longitudinal research conducted on these women over five years, it was found that children in the "extended contact" group developed more readily than the other children in several ways. As a result of more intensive bonding, these children were healthier physically; received more physical, emotional, and verbal contact from their mothers; and, at the age of five years, performed better on IQ and language exams than did the other children.

The Establishment of Behavioral Boundaries

In addition to meeting emotional needs, socialization also teaches the individual how to behave in a disciplined manner by placing behavior within certain boundaries. Undisciplined behavior is self-centered behavior that operates for the most part on impulse. Small

children are self-centered or egocentric in orientation and, because they lack significant socialization, see the world as revolving around them. However, living in a society requires that each person learn to control impulses and act according to social rules. To do so, the child must learn to take the needs and wishes of others into consideration. Socialization, therefore, is a cultural process through which the developing child becomes equipped with guidelines for acceptable behavior. This in turn later will allow a mature person to survive and prosper as a member of society.

Goal Setting

Disciplined behavior simply for its own sake can be very unrewarding. Therefore, it is important for the individual to learn how to set and achieve meaningful goals so that disciplined behavior will have meaningful and beneficial results. Goals, therefore, act as rewards that reinforce disciplined behavior. To succeed as a society member, life essentially involves setting meaningful goals, achieving them, and then setting new ones. Some goals are short term, like getting out of bed in the morning, mowing the yard, or going out to dinner and a movie on Friday night. Others may be long-term goals, such as completing a college degree, reaching a certain career level, or raising a family. In any case, the nature of the socialization experiences one has significantly affects one's ability to set and achieve meaningful goals.

The Development of a Self-Concept

As discussed earlier, *self-concept* refers to the personal assessment people have of their own identity and self worth, and how they fit into their community and society. One way to describe self-concept is to say that it includes at least three key elements: *self-identity* ("Who am I?"), *self-worth* ("What am I worth?"), and *self-direction* ("Where am I going?") (Semones and Romero, 2007). Consequently, self-concept is much more multidimensional and complex than the overly simplistic "self-esteem," a term often used in the popular culture.

One way to assess self-concept is to make use of the concepts of *inner-directed* and *other-directed,* first developed by David Reisman (1961) and later refined by others such as Robert Merton (1964) and James Semones and Lilian Romero (2007). These two concepts represent a polar typology with inner-directed and other-directed representing *ideal types* placed on either end of a continuum. Most people, in regard to their own self-concepts and core personalities, would fall somewhere along this continuum as illustrated below:

Inner-Directed People and Their Characteristics

Individuals whom sociologists today might call **inner-directed** are adults with a positive self-concept and an internal moral compass formed mainly during childhood that guides them during their life course (Reisman, 1961; Semones and Romero, 2007). Those who are inner-directed possess at least four distinct characteristics.

- **In Charge of Basic Life Decisions** First, *they are in charge of their basic life decisions.* They do seek input and advice from others and often value such input.

But when key life decisions must be made, the inner-directed make such decisions based on their own appraisal of what they believe will be best for them. If others do not approve, the inner-directed have the ego strength to proceed regardless of "what others may think" because they understand that they alone will bear the consequences of such life decisions and be accountable for them. Therefore, such people operate out of their own "centers" and have the courage to be their own people. In doing so, they actively choose their own paths in life, which often lead to personal growth.

- ***A Sense of Positive Self-Worth.*** According to Semones and Romero (2007), what gives people the courage to "blaze their own trail" in life is this second characteristic: *They possess a sense of positive self-worth.* Inner-directed people feel comfortable in their own skin and see themselves as having dignity and value as human beings. This helps them avoid conformity for conformity's sake by simply "following the herd." When young people blindly succumb to peer pressure and follow the wrong crowd during the critical adolescent period of development, it can lead to very problematic consequences that include gang involvement, teenage pregnancy, criminal activity, incarceration, and sometimes even death from street crime.
- ***Optimism.*** Third, *they are optimists.* Inner-directed people look at their cups as half full rather than half empty, and consistently look on the positive side of most situations. When they experience failure, disappointment, or a life tragedy—loss of a loved one, financial failure, or serious accident or illness—they learn to put the best face they can on such things, play the cards they were dealt, turn the page, and move on. When they make mistakes, they take ownership by accepting responsibility for the mistakes. Only by doing so can they shape their destiny, set meaningful goals, and then take the corrective steps needed to achieve them.
- ***Ability to Take Calculated Risks.*** Finally, inner-directed people *take calculated risks to achieve personal growth.* From the world view of such people, living an authentic life requires that they *make* it happen by *doing* rather than by *wishing* for it. To use a recent popular expression, "They walk their talk." This action of getting out of their comfort zone to attempt new things and accept new challenges then reinforces their positive self-image when they are able to achieve new goals. When they sometimes fail, they muster the inner strength to engage in the introspection needed to determine why they failed, marshal their resources, and try again. By continually attempting new things, setting and achieving new goals, facing new challenges, making adjustments when they fail, and continually working to succeed, inner-directed people usually reach their goals.

The dynamic interplay of these four factors helps to foster and reinforce a positive self-concept in the process. This can then place inner-directed people on the path to what behavioral scientists call self-actualization.

Other-Directed People and Their Characteristics Those who might be called **other-directed** are adults with a negative self-concept who allow others to guide their basic life decisions and shape their actions. The other-directed also have at least four characteristics that are observable from their actions.

- ***Others Dominate Their Decisions.*** First, *they allow others to dominate their basic life decisions.* By allowing others to, in effect, make decisions for them, "they dance to someone else's tune" and let themselves be "pulled by someone else's strings." Why would any adult human being play the role of marionette and allow others to control their basic life decisions? Why can't they be authentic people and live life largely on their own terms?

- ***A Sense of Negative Self-Worth.*** Much of the answer to the preceding questions lies in this second other-directed characteristic: *They possess a sense of negative self-worth.* Those nearer the extreme end of the inner-directed/other-directed continuum sometimes are so afraid they will be rejected and emotionally abandoned if they fail to abide by the wishes of others that they play the role of victim. When things do not go well for them, they then blame others rather than take personal responsibility for their inaction or failure. When this happens, they quite literally can become incapacitated by the third characteristic, their own pessimism.

- ***Pessimism.*** As a third characteristic, *other-directed people are pessimists.* They see their cup as half empty rather than half full and habitually look on the negative side of most life situations. When they meet with failure or disappointment, they then tend to assign blame to everyone around them except themselves. By projecting responsibility for what happens to them outward onto others rather than inward toward themselves, they quite literally become victims . . . of their own poor choices and refusal or inability to take personal responsibility.

- ***Inability to Take Risks.*** A fourth pattern exhibited by those who are other-directed is that *they take few if any risks.* They are not able to move out of their comfort zones and tend to "play it safe" by staying in their comfortable, womb-like environment. By sometimes wishing for a "24-carat" guarantee before they will try much of anything, they stagnate and "spin their wheels" while the world and their lives pass them by. Through their inability to act and, in some cases, their inability to make decisions when time-sensitive opportunities become available, they fail by default. If this dynamic becomes an on-going pattern, they may indeed become life-long victims of themselves. As the years and decades slip by, a person trapped in such a dynamic without any corrective steps being taken can become a very embittered, cynical, and tormented individual (Semones and Romero, 2007).

Social Survival Skills

To succeed in society, each individual needs to acquire a variety of coping skills. Some are general and needed by everyone, such as the skill to communicate effectively through mastery of both spoken and written language and the ability to get along well with others. Other skills are more specialized, such as occupational skills acquired primarily through formal education, training, and experience. Some socialization skills are gradually acquired as we learn the role demands placed on us by the social positions we occupy. For instance, during the course of a day, a person may carry out obligations that are the result of being a family member, an employee, a college student, a neighbor, and a consumer. Given the limitations of time and energy, it can be quite challenging to develop and implement the skills needed to balance all of these demands.

CLASSICAL SOCIALIZATION THEORISTS

How the personality and self-concept are formed and how we acquire culture have been investigated by socialization theorists throughout the twentieth century and continues today. In the next section of this chapter, we will examine the pioneering work of several theorists who have greatly enlarged our understanding of the socialization process. We will begin by discussing the work of two pioneering interactionists in sociology, Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead. Then we will briefly examine some of the work of psychoanalytic theorist Sigmund Freud, one of the founding fathers of modern psychology.

Cooley: Interactionism and the Looking Glass Self

One early American theorist who did much to popularize the interactionist perspective in sociology was Charles H. Cooley (1864–1929). This quiet, unassuming scholar, who spent his academic life teaching sociology at the University of Michigan and the University of Chicago, was greatly influenced by the work of William James, the nineteenth-century psychologist. James (1890) developed a concept of social self, rooted in the idea that the way people see themselves is greatly influenced by how others interact with and see them. Cooley built on this foundation to argue that, just as we see a physical reflection when we look at ourselves in a mirror, we also see a social reflection of how we look to others as we interact with them. This image we see of ourselves as a result of interacting with others is the **looking glass self**.

The Three Components of the Looking Glass Self

Cooley (1902, 1909) asserted that our self-image is shaped largely by three constantly interacting elements within the personality: (1) *presentation:* how we think we are seen by others, which affects how we present ourselves in each interaction situation; (2) *identification:* how we think others judge or evaluate us each time we interact with them; and (3) *subjective interpretation:* how we feel about and deal with their evaluations. This process, which is largely unconscious, occurs as a result of our varied and constantly evolving relationships with individuals and groups. Therefore, our self-concept is continually being influenced by these interactions as we "take readings" (*identification*) on how we appear to others by examining the image we see reflected in our social mirror.

Two Applications: The Thomas Theorem and the Self-Fulfilling Prophesy

Think back to Chapter 2 when the interactionist perspective was first discussed. The basic premise of interactionism is that *perception drives behavior;* i.e., we act on our perceptions of reality. Let's now break this down by examining two applications of Cooley's looking glass self.

The Thomas Theorem Early in the twentieth century, American sociologist W. I. Thomas issued a simple yet profound statement known today as the **Thomas theorem**. When individuals "define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas and Thomas, 1928, p. 572). In other words, we socially construct (invent) how we see ourselves, the world around us, and our place in it based on our socialization experiences. If a child is loved, encouraged, and consistently shown approval and affection while growing up, this

will set the stage for how positively the child sees him- or herself and expects to be seen by others when he or she gazes into the social mirror. Abuse, neglect, and discouragement will tend to have an opposite impact. Therefore, if we then expect to be accepted or rejected, we often are. This theorem also has applications for specific areas of life and the roles we play including work, school, and relations with family and friends. What we invest in time and energy (behavior) in all these areas depends on how we see them (perception). In each instance, what we then receive (consequences) will depend on our priorities and what and how much, in terms of time and energy, we choose to invest or not invest in them.

The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Second, adults can chose the types of social looking-glass they peer into, although children, because of the accidents of birth, are limited in their early years by the influences of family socialization. Those with positive self-concepts are conditioned to seek out positive people, and those with negative self-images often become caught up in the "misery loves company" syndrome. This often results in what sociologist Robert Merton has called the **self-fulfilling prophecy**, a prediction by a person that something will occur—their perception—which is then caused by that person to become true because of his or her actions (Merton, 1957). Therefore, if we believe in ourselves, we often make success happen, while if we expect to fail, we often do so and then blame our shortcomings on the situation or on others. Our inner realities—perceptions of reality based on what we think is true—become our outer realities—behaviors and actions—which then cause our perceptions to become true with very real positive or negative consequences.

Mead: Interactionism and Role Taking Theory

A contemporary of Cooley's who also viewed social behavior from an interactionist perspective was George Herbert Mead (1863–1931). Mead, a philosopher and early social psychologist, served on the faculty at the University of Chicago. Regarded as the Father of Social Psychology and a founder of symbolic interactionism, he disagreed strongly with the atomistic view of humans popularized by the social contract theorists and other "scientific" philosophers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These views assumed that humans could have a self-concept and reason in nature apart from the influences of society.

Mead noted that while we have many potentialities at birth, it is only through contact with society that we develop our humanity as manifested in the personality and self-concept. He felt that the important thing to be studied and understood is how society gets into the individual, shapes the personality or "self-hood," and determines to a great degree a person's social behavior. This takes place essentially during childhood as we acquire the norms of society and learn to engage in **role taking**, the ability to imagine ourselves in the social roles of others and act them out in order to learn the social standards that will be applied to our behavior.

The Three Stages of Role Taking

In Mead's view, we learn to take on the roles of others and become social beings in three general stages—the imitative (preparatory) stage, the play stage, and the game stage (Mead, 1934).

In the **imitative stage** (the first three years), children learn to imitate the behavior of others in their immediate environment such as parents and other close family members. Small children will indiscriminately imitate the behavior of parents, for instance, some attempting to read the paper, dress up, shave, or talk like Mom or Dad.

As children become older, they move into the **play stage** in which they begin seriously to act out the roles of adults. Children from three through seven or eight years of age typically go through periods of wanting to be a parent or a nurse, a doctor or astronaut, or any one of the myriad of fantasy figures like cowboys, Indians, Tarzan, Wonder Woman, Spiderman, and so forth. Although children at this stage do not understand the obligations that go with certain roles, the role taking itself facilitates social development.

Finally, in middle to late childhood and early adolescence, children enter the **game stage** in which they learn to play the game of society according to the rules or role obligations. As part of this process, children typically become significantly aware of the impersonal sanctions that increasingly will be applied to their behavior by the larger society as they grow to maturity.

The Emergence of Self: The "I and "Me" As children progress through these three stages of role taking, two components of the self emerge, which Mead called the "I" and the "Me." The "*I*" is the acting self as represented by one's natural drives and impulses, talents, and creative energies. The "*me*," by contrast, represents the socialized self that acts in response to the demands of society. The small child, undersocialized and dominated by the "I," acts on selfish whim and impulse. Older children and adolescents, because of the role-taking influences of socialization, become increasingly dominated by the "me."

For most of us as adults, Mead argued, the "me" normally keeps the "I" in check except in certain circumstances where it is acceptable, if not desirable, to allow the "I" to express itself. Although the "me" as the social component of the self is necessary for the purposes of conformity and social order, we must guard against the other extreme in which we become oversocialized automatons who have lost the spark and spontaneity of the "I" that we need in order to reach our creative potential as unique human beings.

Significant Others and the Generalized Other As the self develops, it is most influenced by **significant others**, people with whom the individual has close personal ties. Parents and siblings are our first sources of intimate, personal relationships, followed by the friendship circles formed within our peer groups and important role models outside the family (e.g., a favorite teacher, a coach, or a public figure). Later, as adults, most of us typically form additional bonds with significant others such as best friends, lovers, and/or spouses. In addition to the specific demands placed on us by our loved ones, our social behavior is also subject to universally and applied norms in the form of community and societal standards for behavior. Thus, each of us is expected to conform to the requirements of the **generalized other**, standards of community behavior expected of anyone placed in a given social position. If a child is socialized by parents and other significant others to develop pro-social values and skills, the child will tend to "fit in" with the demands and expectations of the larger community and society (generalized other).

Freud: Elements of the Self in Conflict

Unlike interactionist theorists in sociology such as Cooley and Mead who saw socialization as largely a smooth, relatively uneventful process (in most cases) of merging the individual with society, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) saw childhood socialization quite differently. Freud, an Austrian physician and the founder of the psychoanalytic school in psychology,

viewed socialization as a process of coercion in which the child's freely expressed feelings and urges came under the force and control of parents and the norms of society.

Freud's Components of the Personality According to Freud (1930), the personality (psyche) consists of three components—the id, the ego, and the superego—that develop in the child in stages and interact together in a dynamic mental process, which he termed the *psyche*. The first to develop is the **id**, a person's natural urges and "instincts" such as sex and aggression. Children under two years of age are thereby dominated by the "pleasure principle," are completely self-centered and obsessed with doing whatever feels good.

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Sigmund Freud. The psychoanalytic approach.

During the ages of two, three, or four years, the rational part of the self called the **ego**—the governor or manager of the personality—begins to emerge. The child's ego, governed by the "reality principle," consciously thinks through the consequences of acting before doing so. In a small child, the ego is aware of the power of parents to sanction behavior and, thus, learns to do what is rewarding and avoid what is punishing. The **superego**, an inner voice or conscience that makes us feel proud when we act properly and guilty when we do wrong, develops in middle childhood. Ruled by the "principle of ideals," it represents the ideal standards of behavior we live by in the form of internalized ethics or morality.

The Relationship between Components of the Psyche (Personality) According to Freud, the ego comprises the most important component of our self-concept. It represents the governor or the main control mechanism in the psyche or personality. As mediator between the conflicting demands of the id and superego, it channels selfish id impulses into socially desired forms of behavior while, at the same time, reduces ideal expectations of the superego into realistic and manageable modes of behavior that conform to societal standards. If, however, the ego becomes weakened or destroyed, and either the id or superego becomes dominant in the personality, then maladjustment may set in, the result being deviant or antisocial behavior. Id-dominated individuals, in extreme cases, might commit a violent crime such as murder, assault, or rape. Likewise, people whose superegos have taken over could, in the extreme, become religious fanatics or political terrorists who become so obsessed with ideals that they lose their perspective. Freud might have interpreted the events of September 11, 2001, as having resulted from superego-dominated, personality maladjustment in the nineteen young Saudi men who—as functionaries for Osama Bin Laden—sacrificed themselves to kill over twenty-eight hundred innocent Americans. In this view, superego driven fanaticism drove this "mission from god."

Freud's Elements of the Psyche

Id	Ego	Superego
(Pleasure)	(Reality)	(Ideals)

LATER SOCIALIZATION THEORISTS

While Cooley, Mead, and Freud were among the most prominent pioneers, others have greatly refined and extended our modern understanding of the socialization process. Among those who stand out in this respect are Erving Goffman, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky.

Goffman: Interactionism and Dramaturgical Analysis

One sociologist who sought to extend the work of interactionists such as Cooley and Mead was Erving Goffman (1922–1982), who used a somewhat novel and provocative approach. As discussed previously, Cooley sought to explain how the interacting self is created in a constant intermeshing of personality elements—*presentation, identification,* and *subjective interpretation.* His colleague and mentor, Mead, stressed how the self develops during three stages of role taking as we interact with others. Goffman's approach, however, perhaps could best be introduced with a brief quote from the great bard of English literature:

> All the world's a stage,
> and all the men and women merely players:
> They have their exits and entrances;
> And one man in his time plays many parts . . .
> —William Shakespeare, *As You Like It,* Act 2, Scene 7

Interaction as Dramaturgy: The Calculated Presentation of Self In Goffman's view, our day-to-day, face-to-face interactions with others are the central ingredients or "stuff" that society is built from. This micro to macro perspective he called **dramaturgical analysis**, the study of how and why people intentionally interact with each other like actors in a play titled "society." Society, in this sense represents a continuous theatrical performance that, like the daily episodes of television daytime soap operas, go on for decades or a lifetime without end. In Goffman's view, each of us socially constructs how we will play each role that we take on according to socially agreed to scripts that we then often embellish with our own style and carry out according to our own purposes (Goffman, 1959, 1967).

Life as Theater: The Role of Impression Management and Face Work As we carry out our roles or play our parts in this theatrical production called society, Goffman argues that it is not just what we do that matters but how we do it, and not just what we say but how we say it as well. And there is also the possibility, Goffman implies, that what we mean to do or what we mean to say may be misinterpreted by others or used against us in some way. Politicians, for example, must be very careful in what they say and do because those competing with them for political office may use their utterances and actions, often taken out of context, to discredit them.

Impression management refers to the conscious efforts we make to present ourselves to others in a way they will see as favorable. In doing so, we devote energy to studying for and practicing the role we will play so that we will give a good performance. Our role preparation includes the proper costuming or dress we should wear like the uniforms worn by nurses, police officers, and airline pilots or the "proper" attire for business professionals or

exotic dancers. We also use what Goffman calls "expressions given," that is, our intentional use of language as a script we verbalize, and our "expressions given off," which are the nonverbal messages we convey with our facial expressions and eye movements, our mannerisms, and our body language usually aimed at creating a certain impression in our audience. In this regard, the verbal and nonverbal cues intentionally given off by politicians, professors, professional boxers, prostitutes, and bus drivers are all very distinct and different because they involve different scripted roles. In addition, each player needs the proper setting or *set* and the correct *props* in order to give a convincing performance. Examples would include soldiers in a battle formation with tanks, automatic weapons, and air support; professors with classrooms, lecterns, and media equipment for PowerPoint presentations; and physicians with examining rooms, white coats, thermometers, and stethoscopes (Goffman, 1959).

Face work is Goffman's term for efforts made by people to present themselves to others in a favorable light in order to avoid public embarrassment or "losing face" (Ibid.). In some places like Tokyo, Japan, for example, it is not uncommon for unemployed business executives to dress up in suits and ties, go downtown as if going to work, pass the day by frequenting movie theaters, museums, or libraries, and then go home. They do this because they want to "save face" in the eyes of their families and friends who are unaware they are unemployed (French, 2000). Other people use a variety of face work techniques as verbal rationalizations or "spin" when they feel ignored, embarrassed, marginalized, or rejected in social situations. For example, a student failing a particular course might say to his or her friends "That professor was such a lousy teacher that I dropped his course."

Piaget: Cognitive Development Theory

What is "cognitive development"? Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896–1980) focused his socialization studies on how children develop intellectual abilities and moral judgments. He argued that children think and set priorities differently from adults, primarily because their intellectual capacities are limited and, therefore, must develop gradually in a series of observable stages. In a career encompassing more than forty years, Piaget developed and refined his **cognitive development theory**, which examined changes in thought processes and intellectual abilities that occur in four stages as children mature.

Piaget spent several decades observing thousands of children and talking to them about their thoughts, feelings, and actions. He concluded that children develop cognitively in four general stages—sensorimotor, preoperations, concrete operations, and formal operations. His work acted to reinforce and add a new dimension (namely cognition) to the socialization theories of Cooley and Mead (Piaget, 1929; Piaget and Inhelder, 1969) (Table 5-1).

The Sensorimotor Stage

During the **sensorimotor stage** (birth to two years), children develop motor intelligence and learn to distinguish different objects. *Motor intelligence,* Piaget argued, is the acquired ability by children to perceive their bodies as separate from the rest of their external environment. Small infants do not realize this or understand that they can use their bodies to make things happen in their environment. For instance, small babies do not realize that when they shake a rattle, they cause it to make a sound. Also during this period *object permanence* develops, in which children come to realize that people or objects, such as parents and toys, do not cease to exist when they leave one's

TABLE 5-1 Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE	CHARACTERISTICS (COGNITIVE ABILITIES)
1. Sensorimotor (birth–2 years)	Motor skills development, perception of close surroundings, and object permanence (objects have their own reality apart from one's ability to see or experience them directly).
2. Preoperations (2–7 years)	Development of symbolic functions: Language ability emerges steadily along with ability to picture things in one's mind, the ability to take the role of another (although usually only one person at a time). Nonetheless, egocentrism remains.
3. Concrete Operations (7–12 years)	Logical thinking begins to develop: Child acquires ability to rank objects by size and class and understand their relations to one another by weight, mass, and volume. The ability to consider several points of view at once also develops.
4. Formal Operations (12 years–adulthood)	Abstract and hypothetical thinking is developed: individual learns to consider several options or hypothetical solutions to a problem before acting. The maturing person thus is free from the limitations of immediate and past experiences, can operate in the world of ideas, and consider future goals.

SOURCE: Adapted from Ginsburg, H., and Opper, S. 1969. *Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

sight. Perhaps you have played "peek-a-boo" with a two year old who has recently acquired the object permanence. The child knows you will reappear, but is still mystified at how it all works and greatly enjoys the game.

Preoperations During the stage of **preoperations** (from two to about six or seven years), children develop the ability to think symbolically and use language to communicate with others. At this stage, children imitate the use of words with little understanding of what they mean. They also live to some extent in the world of "pretend" and "make believe" and usually perceive fantasy characters as real to some degree. Because they do not understand concepts like weight, size, category, and cause and effect during the early part of this period, they are not capable of many simple intellectual operations. If the same amount of water or milk is placed in two glasses, one short and the other tall, most children at this level of development will tend to choose the tall glass because they think it contains more. Likewise, "preoperational" children are likely to think large objects weigh more than small ones. By the time a child is six or seven, he or she has learned how to sort objects by size, weight, and class, and has developed to some extent the ability to see reality through the eyes of another person, although he or she typically can consider only one viewpoint at a time.

Concrete Operations From seven to about twelve years of age, children move into and through the stage of **concrete operations** in which cause-and-effect relationships in the real world become understood and concrete reasoning ability is developed. As children move from preoperations to concrete operations, they learn to "factor in" several points

of view simultaneously, and by age seven or eight, begin to largely abandon the world of intuition and fantasy (e.g., they learn the truth about Santa Claus, the tooth fairy, and the Easter bunny). At this stage, they can now test relationships between objects in a concrete way by weighing two objects in a literal manner or by measuring the quantity of liquid in two glasses. However, at this point in their intellectual development, they are still largely limited in their perceptions to their own life experiences and what they can and have experienced directly.

Formal Operations According to Piaget, the stage of **formal operations** (from about twelve years to adulthood) represents the last and most advanced stage of cognitive development characterized by the development of higher order or abstract thinking abilities. During this period, adolescents develop the capability to hypothesize about possible cause-and-effect relationships and possible courses of action without the necessity of having experienced them directly. They can see the potential consequences of behavior in their "mind's eye." In terms of moral behavior, most individuals are no longer egocentric and selfish in their attitudes and behavior, but have internalized the concept of duty in regard to obeying social norms and the need to act for the greater good of the larger group or of society.

Piaget in Perspective Piaget's central idea that children of different ages (corresponding roughly to his four stages) use different cognitive abilities and strategies to make sense of the world and operate successfully in it appears to be widely accepted by most researchers as a result of numerous studies (Kessen, 1996). His research seems particularly insightful regarding general cognitive development patterns among children in the United States and other Western societies.

However, his work has come under criticism for being too limiting in term of ages at which children develop certain abilities and somewhat culture bound by time and place. For example, Piaget and his colleagues, in their research on infants in Europe and the United States, found that *object permanence* (sensorimotor stage) did not occur until the baby was about nine months old. However, recent research has found that, given certain environments and learning opportunities, infants show mastery of object permanence as young as two and one-half months after birth (Aguilar and Baillargeon, 1999; Luo, et al., 2003). In addition, cross-cultural studies have shown that American children, particularly those from the middle class, follow Piaget's stages fairly closely in their development while children from lower classes and those from less-developed societies sometimes do not. Some American adolescents appear to reach the formal stage of development by age fourteen to sixteen years, while some adults never master this last stage.

Vygotsky: Sociocultural Theory

One important theorist whose ideas regarding socialization were largely unknown by Western scholars until recently was the Russian social-psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934). Largely because he lived in Russia during the totalitarian regime of Joseph Stalin and died prematurely at age 38 from tuberculosis, his writings have only become well-known since the 1960s and only in the past twenty years have they been recognized by behavioral scientists worldwide.

Sociocultural Context and Cognitive Development Vygotsky's **sociocultural theory** represents a socialization perspective that focuses on the dynamic interplay between developing children and their guided participation in society by competent adults. In his view, cognitive development requires dynamic interaction between developing children and their guidance by competent adults within a particular sociocultural context. Vygotsky lived in Russia, a culturally diverse society, that covered a huge expanse of geographically varied territory. Its people were equally diverse with different ethnic backgrounds and occupations. They had economies that ranged from rural agricultural regions where farmers and herdsmen had to master the tools and techniques necessary to earn their livelihoods, to the very different life styles and occupations found among factory workers, trades people, and merchants in the large cities. Although *how* they learned to master their particular life situations remained the same, *what* they learned—as a farmer or factory worker, rancher or restauranteur, miller or merchant—depended on the particular requirements or contexts of their culture.

Premise 1: The Impact of Cultural Mediation The key premise of Vygotsky's theory focuses on **cultural mediation**, the process by which children learn or internalize the ways of their culture and how to use them as tools to succeed both as a society member and as an individual. For example, milking a cow, using a computer, driving a car, and writing with a pen all represent cultural skills people learn to master to succeed as members of society. However, people, through the development of higher-order cognitive processes, can also learn to use these skills as tools for their own individual use that transcend the typical practical ways they are utilized within one's culture. So, while most people learn to drive cars as a means of transportation, the child who grows up to be a race car driver may use this skill at a higher level later in life to participate in a highly select and lucrative profession. Likewise, most people learn as children to use computers and pens for utilitarian purposes related to work, school, shopping, communicating with others, and recreation. However, for the child who grows up to be a professional writer and author—like J. K. Rowling who authored the Harry Potter series of books—he or she may learn to use them in ways that are unique to them (Vygotsky, 1978). In speaking to this, Vygotsky (1978) summarizes the powerful impact that socialization has on a person's development as follows:

> Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals (p. 57).

Premise 2: Use of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) According to Vygotsky, the **zone of proximal development** (ZPD) is the potential for learning that a child possesses that can be developed with help from skilled mentors as compared to what the child already knows or can learn on his or her own. Reaching one's human potential depends largely on what happens developmentally in childhood. The relationships developed with competent, skilled adults—or lack thereof—determines, in large part, how children develop and what they will or will not be able to accomplish.

Apprenticeship in Thinking In Vygotsky's view, a crucial element in how children develop cognitively is an **apprenticeship in thinking**, a process in which an unskilled person (novice learner) develops mastery of a cognitive competency through involvement with one or more engaged, skilled mentors. Children need these socialization apprenticeships with competent adults in order to reach their potential as human beings (Rogoff, 1990).

The Role of Guided Participation Regardless of *what* we need to learn, Vkgotsky asserted, *how* we learn depends on **guided participation**. This, he defined as the process by which a skilled member of society serving as mentor—a parent or teacher, for example—actively assists an unskilled learner in mastering a particular cognitive competency. Consequently, learners, particularly children in their critical years of development, need and depend on the active assistance of dedicated, skilled mentors to help guide them to achieve mastery of a particular skill or activity (Karpov and HayWood, 1998). Without active intervention by competent and dedicated adults, a specific cognitive competency, whatever it might be, may not be achieved.

AGENTS OF SOCIALIZATION

Children are influenced in their individual and social development by a variety of factors. The family, peers, school, church, media, and the larger community and society all play an integral part in shaping our personalities and equipping us with skills for social survival and prosperity. In this portion of the chapter, we will focus on three of the most important agents of socialization—the family, the peer group, and the mass media—which, in the case of family and close friends, represent our primary sources of significant others and continue throughout our lives to play a significant role in shaping our attitudes and behaviors.

The Family

Of all sources of childhood socialization, the family is the most important. As mentioned earlier, the human infant is virtually helpless at birth and must rely on parents and other family members for physical care and protection during the many years required for maturation. More important for humans, however, is that our experiences with our families shape the way we see ourselves, the larger world, and our place in it. An American child grows up with a very different culture, language, and worldview than a child reared in Peru, India, or Japan. Likewise, family socialization patterns within pluralistic societies like the United States are quite diverse. For example, children reared in a rural farming community in the Midwest come to look at the world through a different filter than those brought up in a large industrial city in the Northeast. Likewise, children whose parents practice religious fundamentalism tend to grow up with different values and life priorities than those reared as Presbyterians, Catholics, or Jews.

Class as a Socialization Factor One important factor involved in the transmission of culture to a child is social class. A family's socioeconomic level is important because different class levels represent distinct subcultures. Children's class backgrounds shape to a significant degree the values and beliefs they hold, their self-concepts, and how they come to

relate to the rest of the world. These class subcultures are further reinforced by other factors, which include region, rural or urban residence, race and ethnicity, and religion. Children reared in lower socioeconomic circumstances, for instance, may tend to be fatalistic and see success as determined largely by luck. Those reared in more affluent circumstances, by contrast, tend to have an achievement orientation and see success in terms of individual effort and hard work.

Sociologist Melvin Kohn (1963, 1977) conducted studies that show distinct differences in how children are raised in working-class versus middle-class families. Working-class parents tend to stress strict conformity to traditional standards, punish the consequences of unacceptable behavior (what children do), and are more likely to use physical punishment. They stress to their children the importance of obeying the rules and keeping out of trouble. This parenting style, according to Kohn, is at least partially influenced by the fact that working-class parents typically have blue-collar jobs. In such occupations, they are given little, if any, discretion in how they do their own work and are expected to follow instructions precisely.

Middle-class parents, by contrast, tend to have white-collar jobs that, due to their complexity, require more independent thought and discretion. This is then reflected in how they socialize their children. Middle-class parents tend to stress and reward their children's initiative and creativity. When punishment is given, it is for the motives behind behavior instead of what the children did. Children in middle-class families are taught the importance of self-control rather than strict obedience and are less likely to be physically disciplined.

The impact of the family on the formation of self-concept is also important. As we saw with the cases of Anna, Isabelle, and Genie, and in Harry Harlow's deprivation research on monkeys, the lack of adequate emotional support during the formative developmental years can be devastating. Small children need consistent love, affection, support, and encouragement in order to develop positive self-images and the confidence required to deal effectively with life's adversities and challenges (Mortimer and Simmons, 1978). The family is the first social group to which they become members, and parents represent their first teachers, guides, and role models.

Birth Order Even so, parents tend to treat their first-born and later-born children differently. Some research indicates that the first-born children tend to receive more attention, affection, and discipline than later-borns. These first-borns then tend to become higher achievers than their younger siblings, who tend to be more relaxed and sociable (Forer, 1976; Dunn and Kendrick, 1983). For instance, first-born children tend to earn better grades in school, score higher on IQ tests, and appear more likely to go to college. In addition, they are overrepresented among Rhodes scholars, those in *Who's Who in America,* and even presidents (52 percent) of the United States (Vander Zanden, 1985).

Methods of Family Socialization

There are three key methods of family socialization: reward and punishment, imitation and modeling, and didactic teaching. A combination of each of these methods occurs to some degree in almost all families as children progress through infancy into childhood, and then move into and through the years of adolescence. We will consider each briefly here.

Reward and Punishment: Three Parental Approaches The dominant method of family socialization is **reward and punishment**, the primary tool used by parents to establish and enforce behavioral boundaries and standards for their children. There are three broad yet distinct parenting styles: the authoritarian approach, the permissive approach, and the authoritative approach (Baumrind, 1968, 1989). Each is practiced to a larger degree in some cultures or socioeconomic levels than others. In examining mothers cross-culturally, for example, German mothers are the most authoritarian, American mothers the most permissive, and Japanese mothers the most authoritative. In the discussion to follow, we will examine the viability of each approach as a parenting approach in America. In this brief narrative, each parenting strategy will be explained in terms of a definition, the primary parental tool used by such a parent, and their chief parental role. As you read the brief explanation to follow, keep in mind that each parent or set of parents tends to fall somewhere on the continuum that appears below in terms of parenting style.

The Continuum of Parenting (Use of Reward and Punishment)

Authoritarian	Authoritative	Permissive
(Mainly punishments)	(Balance: Rewards and Punishment	(Mainly rewards)

Authoritarian Parenting The **authoritarian approach** is one in which the parent uses mainly punishments and few if any rewards, and makes most if not all decisions concerning the child's behavior. With this strategy, *the parent's chief role is that of traffic cop or drill sergeant,* while *the primary parental tool used is coercion or intimidation.* While this strategy may be effective in village-focused, agricultural societies where children work shoulder to shoulder with their parents in the fields, participate directly in the economy as producers, and learn responsibility hands-on at a very young age, the authoritarian approach is very ineffective in modern and post-modern societies. Even with the best of intentions by such parents who love their children, this approach often spells disaster because it infantilizes children and shelter's them from the reality-testing experiences they will need to become full-functioning and responsible adults. While it is not difficult to intimidate small children, they do eventually mature into teenagers, physically as large or larger than their parents. Teenagers then often rebel against their parents and do wild and often destructive things to themselves and others because they have not been allowed to grow up.

Permissive Parenting The second strategy, the **permissive approach**, is one in which the parent uses mainly rewards and few if any punishments and makes few if any decisions concerning the child's behavior. The *parent's chief role* with this approach *tends to be the parent as pal when children are young and the parent as martyr as they mature.* Like the authoritarian approach previously discussed, the permissive strategy represents an expedient, a parental shortcut, used by unprepared, ill-informed, and often overwhelmed adults. Usually they have not given parenting much thought or preparation beforehand and often are distracted by other demands placed on their time. As such, *this parent's primary parental tool is bribery,* which is every ineffective. Such parents often do not understand

that small children are children, not miniature adults. As such, they are egocentric, extremely astute observers, and are and will continue to be very selfish and manipulative unless parents exert consistent and competent control and guidance very early on. In order for children to grow into competent adults, they must learn and appreciate that they are not the centers of the universe and that the world is not going to cater to them. Permissively raised children grow into immature, selfish, and incompetent adults who, even into their thirties and forties, sometimes are dependent on their parents to rescue them or "bail them out" when they prove incapable of being autonomous, self-reliant adults.

Authoritative Parenting Finally, the **authoritative approach** is a parenting strategy in which the parent uses a balance of rewards and punishments, sets clear and consistent boundaries for the child's behavior, and gradually allows the child to participate in personal decision making. Behavioral research has clearly established that authoritative parenting is the most effective approach (Dorius et Al., 2004; Eisenburg et al., 2005). The *chief parental role* employed by such parents *tends to consist of five dimensions: teacher, counselor, coach, facilitator, and guide.*

Authoritative parents tailor which parental role dimension or combination is appropriate in a given circumstance with each child and parenting situation. How do they know which one or combination to use? They know their child. How do parents come to know their children? This can only be accomplished by investing large amounts of time and energy in them. By doing this and implementing the *primary parental tool of patience,* these parents tend to gradually guide their children, over an eighteen- to twenty-year period, into becoming competent, autonomous, and well-adjusted adults with the tools and strategies needed to survive and prosper in an increasingly complex and ever-changing world.

Imitation and Modeling A second method of family socialization is **imitation and modeling**, a process in which, by imitating the behaviors and methods employed by parents, children use them as models for their own lives. Parents often may be unaware of the power

The family is the primary agent of socialization.

they as role models have over their children. For small children, parents usually are the first and most important adults in their lives and they usually want to be just like them. It is important to note that children will imitate their parent's bad habits and behaviors, as well as those seen as positive and adaptive. From a child's perspective "If mom and dad do it, it must be great. I want to do it too and be just like them." Consequently, parents should take care to model pro-social behaviors that, should the child employ them later as a life habit, will facilitate adjustment to the social demands of the larger community and society.

Didactic Teaching

The third and last method of family socialization to be discussed is **didactic teaching**, the actual hands-on instruction of a child by a parent in some skill or activity. Parents instruct their children in a variety of behavioral techniques they will need to acquire the skills to carry out a wide variety of behaviors and social habits necessary as adults. This instruction begins early in infancy as small children learn how to eat without being spoon fed, and dress themselves, tie their shoes, wash their hands, brush their teeth, and pick up their toys and clothes. Later they can be taught and required to make their beds, keep their rooms neat and tidy, and do a variety of household chores (e.g., washing, folding, and putting away their own clothes, mowing lawns, helping with cooking and washing dishes, etc.) as responsible members of a household. Recreational pursuits are also commonly taught by parents such as riding bicycles, playing ball, swimming, and playing a variety of games. Finally, beginning early in childhood, parents can teach their children how to talk properly, read, learn their numbers, and later, how to manage money, use their time wisely, etc.

The Peer Group

By the time children are five or six years old (and younger for the many children in daycare situations), their relationships with peers begin to play an important and integral role in their emotional and social development. **Peer groups** are groups of people of about the same age and social position whose members have significant influence on one another. Children are fascinated with one another because of the special standing of equality they share. This sets their relationships with each other apart from the inequality inherent in their dealings with adults. Because their states of physical, emotional, and intellectual development are about the same, they have experiences in common that are not applicable in their relationships with adults.

The Youth Subculture

In today's fast-changing modern society, children grow up in a very different world from the one their parents knew as children. This, among other things, has resulted in a gap between generations in several respects. Most notably, the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a **youth subculture** consisting of life-style characteristics and preferences among children and adolescents very distinct from those of their parents. This is readily seen today in their use of "pop slang," distinct modes of dress, hairstyles, music, and other special consumer preferences.

The youth subculture acts to reinforce the impact of peer group socialization and can have both functional and dysfunctional consequences. On the positive side, it supports development of interpersonal communication skills and relationships outside the home, which become very important during adulthood in both career and recreational settings. Overidentification with the more superficial aspects of the youth subculture, however, can

Peer groups influence our behavior throughout the life cycle.

retard the development of an adult sense of responsibility. Involvement by children and adolescents with deviant elements such as the "drug scene" or delinquent groups can also have pronounced negative results.

Characteristics of Peer Groups Peer groups function in several ways. First, *they introduce children to the impersonality of social rules.* In the home, rewards and punishments are administered by parents in a very personal manner, while in the peer group rules are impersonally set and sanctioned, and few if any people are given "special" consideration. Second, *they test the limits of adult tolerance.* Children will attempt things in peer settings that they would not dream of doing on their own in order to test adult authority and the strength of peer support and influence. In addition, *children's peer groups may or may not reinforce adult values.* For instance, one group of twelve year olds may have a lawn-mowing service to make money in the summertime, while another forms a burglary ring to rob the community (Broom and Selznick, 1968). Finally, *they teach children some of the more informal aspects of the larger culture that they often are not taught at home.* These may be adaptive or maladaptive in preparing a child for life success as an adult: Getting along with others, acquiring the etiquette of male–female social relations, learning about sex, the use of profanity, and the use of drugs are often reinforced or acquired in peer groups.

Mass Media: Its Impact on Child Development

Mass media consist of the various methods used to transmit information to large numbers of people in an organized manner. Through its many sources—including books, magazines, newspapers, television, movies, the internet—both children and adults are exposed to a vast array of images and topics.

Parents, in most cases, represent the most important source in guiding socialization for the developing child. There is an established and growing body of behavioral research on cognitive development—as related to the use and misuse of media—that parents can utilize to maximize the cognitive development of their children. Based on dozens of studies conducted over the past fifty years, cognitive research findings can perhaps best be summarized in the form of two key recommendations for parents who wish to foster intellectual development in their children.

Read to Your Child A common characteristic of high school students who score in the top ten percent on college entrance exams is that they were consistently read to by their parents when they were small children. It is well established in the scientific literature that children who are read to each week from twelve months of age until they begin reading on their own typically are reading by age four and one-half years and, upon entering first grade, often read at the third to fourth grade level. Through such socialization, these children learn to love to reading and are intellectually curious and thirsty for knowledge. Parents who make an investment of their time and energy in fostering the development of their children's minds in this manner help to prepare their children for success rather than failure. The degree to which a child's mind is nourished by learning how to read as soon as possible provides a firm foundation for later development and self-actualization as an adult.

The following are key reasons why children benefit from being read to by their parents:

1. It activates listening skills.
2. It activates the imagination.
3. It provides interesting conversation topics.
4. It provides important language modeling.
5. It develops the ability to think critically.
6. It enhances the ability to think symbolically.
7. It stimulates writing abilities.
8. It's fun.
9. It's an affordable source of entertainment.
10. It increases a child's attention span.
11. It provides a peaceful family activity.
12. It develops a child's desire to read.
13. It models a rewarding lifelong habit.
14. It gives a child a sense of language rhythm.
15. It helps to pattern neural pathways.
16. It expands a child's vocabulary.
17. It increases a child ability to concentrate.
18. It gives a child needed practice in predicting information.
19. It expands a child's world view.
20. It's the single most important thing a parent can do to help a child succeed in school.

(SOURCE: "Television, Computers, and Brain Development," Speechgoals.org 2004)

Set Quality Standards for a Child's Access to Television and Other Multimedia Depending on which study is consulted, American school-age children spend an average of twenty-two to twenty-eight hours each week watching television. Do the math. There are twenty-four hours in a day. A minimum of eight hours are needed by children for nightly sleep. Two to four additional hours a day are required for getting dressed and undressed,

bathing, eating meals, and taking care of physical hygiene and elimination needs. Subtract these hours from twenty-four and you get twelve to fourteen hours of functional living time each day. If a child watches twenty-two to twenty-eight hours of TV per week, this means that up to two-sevenths of a child's functional waking life may be spent sitting passively in front of a glowing screen. This is passive learning. By contrast, reading is active learning. Children being read to or reading on their own conjure up in their mind's eye what the characters in a story look like and how they relate to each other. In addition, they can determine the pace of their reading and stop to reflect on and think about what they just read. With television, everything is done for the viewer who is simply a passive receiver.

Too much television and other media with no quality controls can pose serious implications for cognitive development. If parents do not impose quality and quantity boundaries and limits on the television programming to which their children are exposed, the results, in extreme cases, can result in a variety of maladaptive consequences. These include impaired cognitive ability, deficiencies in reading skills, symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), poor social interaction and communication skills, social isolation, a negative self-concept, depression, a propensity toward aggressive and violent behavior, and poor performance in school. How much television should my child be exposed to? Of course, television is a wonderful medium for educational enrichment and entertainment. Used in moderation, it can enrich people's lives. Yet, like many things, including fat- and salt-laden fast foods, too much of it can have harmful effects particularly for young children. According to Jane M. Healy (1998) in "Understanding TV's Effects on the Developing Brain," too much television—particularly at ages critical for language development and manipulative play—can impact negatively on young minds in several different ways including the following:

Higher levels of television viewing correlate with lowered academic performance, especially reading scores. This may be because television substitutes for reading practice, partially because the compelling visual nature of the stimulus blocks development of left-hemisphere language circuitry. A young brain manipulated by jazzy visual effects cannot divide attention to listen carefully to language. Moreover, the "two-minute mind" easily becomes impatient with any material requiring depth of processing.

The nature of the stimulus may predispose some children to attention problems. Even aside from violent or overly stimulating sexual content, the fast-paced, attention grabbing "features" of children's programming (e.g., rapid zooms and pans, flashes of color, quick movement in the peripheral vision field, sudden loud noises) were modeled after advertising research, which determined that this technique is the best way to engage the brain involuntarily. Such experiences deprive the child of practice in using his or her own brain independently, as in games, hobbies, social interaction, or just "fussing around." I have talked to many parents of children diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder who found the difficulty markedly improved after they took away television viewing privileges.

The brain's executive control system, or pre-frontal cortex, is responsible for planning, organizing and sequencing behavior for self-control, moral judgment and attention. These centers develop throughout childhood and adolescence, but some research has suggested that "mindless" television video games may idle this particular part of the brain and impoverish its development. Until we know more about the interaction of environmental stimulation and the stages of pre-frontal development, it seems a grave error to expose children to a stimulus that may short-change this critical system.

Excerpt from "Understanding TV's Effects on the Developing Brain" by Jane M. Healy from *American Journal of Pediatrics* (May 1998). Copyright © 1998 by American Academy of Pediatrics. Reprinted with permission.

A fair consensus among scientists who research learning would strongly suggest the following guidelines for parents: Infants and toddlers under two years should be discouraged from having little if any television exposure; for preschool children, one to five hours per week is recommended but no more than eight to ten; school-age children should have no more than ten to fifteen hours per week (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2001). Yet by age seventy, the average American will have spent seven to ten years of their waking life sitting passively in front of a television set (Strasburger, 1993). The foundation for such a lifestyle as a spectator rather than engaged participant is established early in childhood. One study found that one-third (32 percent) of children two to seven years old and nearly two-thirds of children and adolescents aged eight to eighteen years of age had a television set placed in their bedrooms (Gerbner, et al., 1994). In a policy statement issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics in February, 2001, it was recommended that parents "remove television sets from children's bedrooms" (American Academic of Pediatrics, p. 424.)

However, there is a huge disconnect between what experts (behavioral scientists, neuroscientists, and pediatricians) recommend regarding TV and other media exposure by children and what children actually experience in their socialization. According to research reported by the Nielson company, American children age 2-11 were watching an average of 24 hours of TV per week in 2012, down from 28 weekly hours in 1997 (Derusha, 2013). Yet if one looks at TV exposure from all social media sources on line, the figure rises again to over 28 hours per week. If we add to that the total weekly exposure to media that children experience from all sources—TV, ever changing and proliferating social media (e.g. facebook, twitter, YouTube, Skype), and the thousands of applications (apps) now available on so-called "smart phones," total exposure to media, according to recent research by the Kaiser Family Foundation, is nearly 55 hours per week or 7 hours and 38 minutes a day (Shapely, 2010).

Effective childhood socialization requires that parents be engaged with their children by spending significant periods of time each week interacting with them one-on-one and in family activities. Too many uninformed and disengaged parents use television and other forms of information technology at potentially harmful levels as surrogate baby sitters to distract and entertain their children while they engage in things they consider more important. One price the child pays for too few restrictions on television and exposure to other media (e.g., movies, video games, internet) is impaired literacy development, which, according to recent research, is associated with poor performance in school (Sharif and Sargent, 2006; Moses, 2008). By contrast, children whose parents take the time and expend the energy to actively parent and guide them experience quite a different set of socialization experiences than "overstimulated children" whose minds are constantly bombarded and distracted by relatively unrestricted levels of "useless" information a mile wide and an inch deep. Children who are the recipients of competent parenting grow up learning how to concentrate for extended periods on key cognitive tasks, engage in introspection and critical thinking, and are able to stay task-oriented and focused in order to complete complex tasks and achieve meaningful life goals.

ADULT SOCIALIZATION

As behavioral theorists and researchers have known for quite some time, socialization does not end with adulthood but continues throughout the life cycle. Upon leaving childhood, we experience the transition to the world of adult responsibility and make various

adaptations as we grow older and mature. These adaptations take several forms. Some have to do with the role transitions we make as we leave or continue school, obtain a job, and perhaps get married and start a family. Others involve how we adjust to our own aging process as we adapt first to being a young adult, then a middle-aged person, and finally a senior citizen.

Rites of Passage

Adult socialization is often reinforced by **rites of passage**, formal events that signal the end of one position or stage in life and the beginning of another. These key life events often take the form of ceremonies or rituals such as school graduation, marriage, completion of military training, and promotions or awards. These events, often involving the taking of photographs and attendance by close family and friends, are very special occasions that are remembered for years. But most important, they serve as benchmarks that mark our journey from one stage or period of life to another as we progress through our life cycle.

Anticipatory Socialization

The informal preparation for future life stages and life responsibilities is what Robert Merton and Alice Rossi (1968) have called **anticipatory socialization**. As George Herbert Mead found in his observations, this process of social preparation for the future actually begins in early childhood as children first imitate and then play out social roles they see enacted by parents and other adults. Children, for example, often look forward with eager anticipation to becoming a "teenager." Teenagers then prepare for entering the adult world. These mental rehearsals for the future, however, have their greatest impact during adulthood when we experience the greatest number of life transitions.

Anticipatory socialization is also evident in our personal relationships. Going steady prepares a couple to see if they are sufficiently compatible to carry it further. If the relationship endures and intensifies, a couple may become engaged. This, in turn, is a special period that allows two people to prepare for a married life together. If they do get married, the first year or two of marriage may be needed to decide about children and prepare for the responsibilities of parenthood. Life involves a series of these transitions that, if planned carefully, soften and make easier the changes and adjustments we all make as we grow older.

Resocialization

Role transitions made in adulthood often involve **resocialization**, an abrupt and often basic change in life style and life priorities. It involves, in most cases, the abandonment of one way of life for another. Being married, for example, involves a significant shift in priorities and a very different life style as compared to being single. A much more dramatic example is that of a person who experiences a religious conversion or joins the priesthood. The convert will sometimes claim a feeling of being cleansed or "born again," and essentially begins a new life as a believer. Resocialization is also in evidence when one joins the military. Other examples of resocialization would include becoming a parent, going to prison, getting divorced, losing one's job, winning the lottery, inheriting a fortune, or entering retirement from one's profession.

Resocialization tends to take two forms—voluntary and involuntary. *Voluntary resocialization* involves an independent and conscious choice by a person to undergo a fundamental change in his or her social identity and lifestyle. Sometimes, however, resocialization is imposed on people by virtue of the type of society in which they live or particular life circumstances. In this regard, *involuntary resocialization* is a basic life change imposed on a person by others or society. In rural areas of countries such as Indonesia, India, and China, for example, children are essentially forced by circumstances and parental pressure to become farmers or herds people. In several cultures, marriage is involuntary because it is arranged by parents who often give their children little or no choice in the matter.

The Middle Years and Becoming Elderly

As we become older, both anticipatory socialization and resocialization experiences play an important role in shaping our life course. During the middle years of the forties, fifties, and sixties, people look back introspectively at their previous accomplishments and examine their current life situations. "Have I used my life productively?" "Am I successful?" "Have I made a difference in the lives of others and in society?" The way such questions are answered affects how people see middle age and the future.

Resocialization carries with it a fundamental change in both life style and the norms one is expected to obey.

The middle years can be fulfilling and productive, or fraught with stress and crisis. Many mid-lifers experience some of the positives and the negatives both. This is a time in which income is highest, free time is often the greatest, and parental responsibilities are being phased out as children become adults and ultimately leave home. Although middle-aged people do not have the physical appearance of their youth, health and vitality are usually good and, combined with greater maturity and affluence, often provide them with very fulfilling lives. In fact, for many, the middle years are among the best.

Others in middle age, however, may experience crises in a variety of forms. Some feel they are caught in a "sandwich generation" between responsibilities to their adolescent and young adult children, and to elderly parents in poor economic circumstances or failing health. Others may have a mid-life crisis in which they feel trapped in a boring and unfulfilled life with no excitement or challenge. In any case, the middle years are a period of consolidation and reflection. For most, the majority of life decisions and accomplishments have been made, time is getting short, and the challenge is to make the most of what time they have left and to use it most productively to build the best future possible. Becoming elderly usually begins at about retirement. Because thirteen percent of Americans are now over sixty-five years of age or older (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a), the elderly population is now much more visible than it once was.

Senior citizens face many challenges and problems. First, they live in a society that, during most of the twentieth century, had a "youth orientation," which viewed and treated many of the elderly as second-class citizens. The trend now, however, is shifting toward

a much more positive view regarding the elderly and their capabilities, as evidenced by an increased use of elderly role models in the media and the abolition or extension of the mandatory retirement age formerly set at sixty-five. Second, the elderly often live on fixed retirement incomes that average only about one-half the earnings they had while working. Combined with increasing health problems and the difficulty in obtaining and paying for health insurance, senior citizens often face significant financial problems. Finally, retirement often brings reduced self-esteem, and the elderly must face grief crises when friends and spouses die.

Despite these problems, those over sixty-five often live healthy and productive lives for an additional fifteen years or so, and for some, much longer. As the ranks of the elderly continue to swell, with the numbers of those eighty-five and older increasing the fastest, positive role models are also becoming more common. At the age of seventy-eight, Ronald Reagan completed his second term as president of the United States in 1988; Senator John McCain was nominated for the presidency in 2008 at age seventy-one. Comedian and actor George Burns, who lived to be one hundred years old and made movies until he was 94, once said that people get old and feeble because of their attitudes. They "practice to get old. The minute they get to be sixty-five or seventy, they sit down slow, they get into a car with trouble. They start taking small steps." His approach was to attack life with "moxie" (Toufexis et al., 1988).

Evidently, an increasing number of senior citizens agree. Hulda Crooks, age ninety-one, climbed ninety-seven mountains between the ages of sixty and ninety, including Japan's Mt. Fuji . Other examples include seventy-four-year-old Dr. James Jay who, along with fifty-five others over the age of seventy, completed the New York City Marathon, and author Jane Stovall, one hundred three, who became a senior golf champion in her eighties and a student pilot at eighty-nine (Gibbs, et al., 1988). And more recently in 2013, sixty-four year old American Diana Nyad became the first person to swim from Cuba to the United States without a shark cage (Sloane, et. al, 2013) and Yuichiro Miuro from Japan became the oldest person ever to reach the summit of Mount Everest at age seventy-six. (Associated Press, May 23, 2013).

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. The human personality is the product of two basic factors: nature (inherited characteristics) and nurture (social environment and experiences). Theories about the inherent nature of humans have varied from the social contract theories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and social Darwinism during the nineteenth century, to the notion of human instincts in the early twentieth century. More recently, sociobiology has emerged as an attempt to study the biological origins of social behavior, although it has been widely criticized. The "environmental" or nurture explanation of behavior began to emerge in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries with the work of researchers like Ivan Pavlov and James Watson. Recent case studies of children isolated from normal social contact and related research have demonstrated clearly that human development is significantly, if not largely, determined by socialization.

2. Because human infants are virtually helpless at birth and depend on others for a large portion of their lifespan, socialization serves several basic needs. Chief among these are bonding and emotional support, the establishment of behavioral boundaries, goal setting, social survival skills, and the formation and maintenance of the self-concept.

3. Three classical socialization theorists—Charles Horton Cooley, George Herbert Mead, and Sigmund Freud—laid much of the foundation for our modern understanding of human development. Cooley and Mead were interactionists who saw socialization as a gradual developmental process that resulted in the smooth merging of the needs and wants of the individual with those of society. Cooley stressed how our interactions with others influence our self-concept and behavior through his concept of the looking glass self. Mead stated that children learn the role-taking behavior necessary to conform to the demands of society in three stages: the preparatory (imitation) stage, the play stage, and the game stage. Freud disagreed with the interactionist view and maintained that socialization is an abrupt often coercive experience for small children in which the expression of their natural urges is severely restricted by parents and the larger society. Freud's theory of personality development stressed three interactive components of the psyche—the id, the ego, and the superego—that develop in stages.

4. Recent socialization theorists have concentrated on specific aspects of socialization as illustrated by the work of Erving Goffman (dramaturgy), Jean Piaget (cognitive development), and Lev Vygotsky (sociocultural theory). Goffman, in building on the work of Mead and other interactionists, focused his work on the social scripts that people learn and play out in their everyday lives, using such devices as impression management and face work. Piaget devoted his career to examining how children develop intellectually in four stages—sensorimotor, preoperations, concrete operations, and formal operations. Vygotsky, the Russian social psychologist whose work has only been fully discovered and appreciated recently by Western scholars, concentrated his analysis on how the sociocultural context shapes who children become as adults, which depends on consistent mentoring by competent adults.

5. Of the many agents of childhood socialization, three are stressed in this chapter—the family, peer groups, and mass media. The family is the most important agent of early socialization. Through exposure to parents and other family members, children

acquire a set of basic values and learn the norms of acceptable behavior. In peer groups (groups of those about the same age and social position), children, among other things, learn about impersonal social rules and some of the more informal aspects of culture not acquired at home. Mass media and information technology provides another source for socialization in which the developing child may be exposed to images and content that reinforce dominant societal values. On the other hand, the child with unguided exposure, may become desensitized to the richness of face-to-face interaction and relationships that are possible and to the potentially harmful effects of violence as portrayed in the media and on the internet.

6. Socialization does not end with the onset of adulthood but, instead, continues throughout the life cycle. As adults, we mature and adapt in two basic ways. First, we engage in anticipatory socialization by mentally rehearsing for upcoming life events and stages. This acts to soften and make easier the changes and adjustments we all make as we get older. In addition, most of us have one or two to several resocialization experiences as we move through our life course in which abrupt and fundamental adjustments in life style and priorities occur. Common examples include marriage, parenthood, entering the military, and religious conversion. Through these processes of anticipatory socialization and resocialization, we also adapt not only to continuing changes in our society but also to our own chronological aging process as we first experience middle-age and then the retirement years later to come.

TERMS TO KNOW

anticipatory socialization: the informal preparation for future life stages and life responsibilities.

apprenticeship in thinking: a process in which an unskilled person (novice learner) develops mastery of a cognitive competency through active involvement with one or more skilled mentors.

"bad blood" theory: the early view that deviant behavior (such as crime and drug addiction) was caused by the biological makeup of a person who had "bad blood or who was a bad seed."

bonding: the process of forming close personal relationships with other people, such as the relationship between a parent and child.

cognitive development theory: Piaget's perspective that examined changes in thought processes and intellectual abilities that occur in four stages as children mature.

concrete operations: the third stage of cognitive development (Piaget) in which cause-and-effect relationships in the real world become understood and concrete reasoning ability is developed.

cultural mediation: the process by which children learn or internalize the ways of their culture and how to use them as tools to succeed both as a society member and as an individual

didactic teaching: the actual hands-on instruction of a child by a parent in some skill or activity.

dramaturgical analysis: Goffman's approach to socialization which studies how and why people intentionally interact with each others like actors in a play titled "society."

ego: Freud's term for the rational part of the self which acts as the governor or manager of the personality.

formal operations: the last and most advanced stage of cognitive development (Piaget) characterized by the development of higher order or abstract thinking abilities.

game stage: Mead's term for middle to late childhood and early adolescence, during which the individual learns to play the game of society according to the rules, in terms of role obligations.

generalized other: Mead's term for the standards of community behavior expected of anyone placed in a given social position.

guided participation: Vygotsky's definition of the process by which a skilled member of society serving as mentor—a parent or teacher, for example—actively assists an unskilled learner in mastering a particular cognitive competency.

id: Freud's term for a person's natural urges and "instincts," such as sex and aggression.

imitative stage: Mead's term for infancy and early childhood (0–3 years), during which children learn to imitate the behavior of parents and others in their immediate environment.

inner-directed: adults with a positive self-concept and an internal moral compass formed mainly during childhood which guides them during their life course.

instinct theory: the argument that human behavior was shaped largely by genetically inherited predispositions that were called instincts.

looking-glass self: Cooley's term for how people see themselves based on their assessment of how others see them.

mass media: the various methods used to transmit information to large numbers of people in an organized manner.

other-directed: adults with a negative self-concept who, largely as a result, allow others to guide their basic life decisions and shape their actions.

peer groups: groups of people of about the same age and social position whose members have significant influence on one another.

personality: the sum total of a person's unique yet consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions.

play stage: Mead's term for middle childhood, during which the child begins to seriously act out the roles of adults.

preoperations: the second stage of cognitive development (Piaget) in which children develop the ability to think in symbolic terms and use language to communicate with others.

resocialization: an abrupt and often basic change in life-style and life priorities.

rites of passage: formal events that signal the end of one position or stage in life and the beginning of another.

role taking: the ability to imagine ourselves in the social roles of other people and act them out in order to learn the social standards that will be applied to our behavior.

self-concept: the personal assessment people have of their own identity and self-worth and how they fit into the larger community and society.

self-fulfilling prophesy: a prediction by a person that something will occur which is then caused to happen by his or her actions.

sensorimotor stage: the first stage of cognitive development (Piaget) in which children develop motor intelligence and learn to distinguish different objects.

significant others: Mead's term for people with whom the individual has close personal ties.

social Darwinism: Spencer's argument that governments should not interfere in the lives of individuals or the operation of organizations so that the fittest can survive.

social isolates: children deprived of adequate social contact and stimulation in their early years who do not develop into functional adults as a result.

socialization: the process through which culture is transmitted to the individual and the personality and self-concept are developed.

sociobiology: the study of the biological aspects of social behavior in all species including humans.

sociocultural theory: a socialization perspective that focuses on the dynamic interplay between developing children and their guided participation in society by competent adults (Vygotsky).

superego: Freud's term for the idealized part of the self or conscience that makes us feel proud when we act properly and guilty when we do wrong.

Thomas theorem: The assertion by W. I. Thomas that when individuals "define situations as real, they are real in their consequences."

youth subculture: life-style characteristics and preferences among children and adolescents very distinct from those of their parents.

zone of proximal development (ZPD): the potential for learning that a child possesses that can be developed with help from skilled mentors as compared to what the child already knows or can learn on his or her own.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Corsaro, W. A. 2004. *The Sociology of Childhood,* 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA. An insightful survey of research into the social, interpersonal aspects of childhood that reveals information on the childhood experience of children in the United States as well as those of children in other cultures as well.

Croteau, D., and Hoynes, W. 2000. *Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press. An interesting look at how mass media portray reality (contemporary events, social issues, and social problems) and how the public sees and reacts to them.

Hunt, S. J. 2006. *The Life Course: A Sociological Introduction.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Examines socialization as a lifelong experience requiring continuous adaptations to society and one's place in it throughout the life course.

Keen, Andrew. 2007. *The Cult of the Amateur: How today's internet is killing our culture*. New York: Doubleday. A penetrating look at the dark side of the internet and social media. The author warns of the dangers in today's "cut-and-paste" on-line culture in which creative works are stolen anonymously and anyone can pose as a self-appointed expert about practically anything.

Putnam, R. D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks. A well-documented examination of the decline in civic engagement by Americans in recent times.

Rymer, R. 1994. *Genie: A Scientific Tragedy.* New York: Harper Perennial Library. The tragic story of a 13-year-old social isolate named Genie, who, after being rescued by authorities from a life of neglect and abuse, was fought over by various academics and human services professional who claimed to want to "save" her.