From Mirror Self-Recognition to the Looking-Glass Self: Exploring the Justification Hypothesis

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In his Tree of Knowledge (ToK) System, Henriques (2003) posits that the human ego or "self" has evolved because human beings are the only animals that have had to justify their behavior to others. This essay provides evidence for this Justification Hypothesis (JH) from everyday life sociology, starting with the work of George Herbert Mead and Charles Horton Cooley, and focuses on research related to the concept of the "looking-glass self." Special emphasis is given to the pragmatics of speech acts, the presentation of self in interaction rituals, the accounts given by actors in justification of their actions, and the role of social norms and conformity in the large-scale justification systems commonly called "culture." © 2004 Wiley Periodicals, Inc. J Clin Psychol 61: 47–65, 2005.

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The concept of the "self" has long been of interest to religious thinkers, philosophers, and scientists alike. Utilizing his Tree of Knowledge (ToK) System as a metatheoretical framework, Henriques (2003) develops the provocative thesis that the human ego is the mental organ of justification. Merging key insights from seminal figures like B.F. Skinner and Sigmund Freud, Henriques constructs a narrative for the evolutionary processes that gave rise to a uniquely human self-consciousness system (Henriques, 2004) that functions to allow humans to develop justifiable reasons for what they do.

Henriques points to the location of the evolutionary threshold human beings have crossed by reviewing empirical research on the nature and limits of animal self-awareness using the mirror self-recognition (MSR) paradigm. In this paradigm, animals are given the opportunity to see their reflection in a mirror. If an animal shows signs of recognizing the image in the mirror as its own, this ability suggests that the animal

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possesses a rudimentary ability to take itself as the object of its own cognition. While showing MSR does not provide convincing evidence that a species has attained human capacities at being reflective, the failure to show MSR provides compelling evidence that a species lacks the capacity for self-awareness. To date, empirical studies have suggested that most great apes appear to be capable of self-recognition but monkeys and lesser apes do not (Shaffer & Renner, 2000). Of course, the gap between human beings and the great apes in the capacity for self-reflection is well documented (Keenan, Gallup Jr., & Falk, 2003). Employing the logic of "reverse engineering" (Pinker, 1997), Henriques raises the question of whether there might have been some unique adaptive selection pressure in the hominid line that drove the evolution of a self-consciousness system.

Henriques answers this self-posed question by positing that the adaptive problem faced by early humans is the need for individuals to *justify* their conduct to others. This Justification Hypothesis (JH) becomes critical both for clarifying the nature of a unified psychology as well as clarifying the relationship between psychology and the other social sciences. In Henriques' view, the JH is based upon three postulates. First, he understands Freud's observations regarding the interactions between conscious and unconscious mental processes to imply that consciousness serves the individual as a *justification filter* for unconscious motives (Henriques, 2003, p. 166). Freud's doctrine that the superego stands at the threshold of consciousness, for example, symbolizes the centrality of individuals screening each impulse from the vantage point of society and admitting, whenever possible, only justifiable impulses to consciousness. Second, he asserts, "the human ego evolved in response to the adaptive problem of justifying one's actions to others" (p. 166). Third, he concludes that the first two postulates provide a framework for understanding the emergence of culture, which he characterizes as "large scale justification systems" (p. 166).

Culture plays an especially important role in the ToK System, and the ToK clearly avoids the historical problem of reductionistic explanation. Behavioral theory emerged almost a century ago, in part, because it became clear that animal behavior could not be explained with biological mechanisms alone. Similarly, Henriques argues that, "just as animals represent a subset of things that cannot be fully explained by biology, humans represent a subset of animal objects that cannot be fully explained by psychology" (2003, p. 163). Thus, a full explanation of human conduct requires the level of culture to complete the picture. And the third postulate of the JH reflects Henriques' belief that the JH becomes a basis for a unified theory of culture as well.

Henriques offered some preliminary evidence in favor of the JH by including synopses of several phenomena (such as the interpreter function, the self-serving bias, the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance, and the capacity to reason) that suggest that human self-awareness exhibits design features consistent with that hypothesis. But he also critiqued the current status of the JH as "a good just-so story" (2003, p. 172), suggesting that additional evidence was required in favor of the argument. In this article I present a preliminary exploration of additional supporting work—primarily from the field of sociology—that supports the JH. Because of both its brief and its selective character, the current work is really an overview rather than a full review of relevant literature. Nevertheless, there are many obvious points of correspondence between the JH and sociological theory that can be identified and that should serve as grist for the mill of discussion the ToK System deserves.

While Henriques chose to emphasize Freud's ideas as a framework for the Mind-to-Culture joint point, I will begin elsewhere because Freud had relatively little direct impact on sociological theorizing (Hewitt, 2000; Swanson, 1961). Freud was far too influential an intellectual force for sociologists to ignore, and even today most introductory sociology textbooks still summarize Freud's stages of psychosexual development in their discussions of

the process of socialization. But Freud's views on the reciprocal relationship between society and the individuals that compose it appeared far too antagonistic for sociologists' temperament. Scheibe (1985), for example, cites *Civilization and its Discontents* (Freud, 1930/1962) as an example of Freud's depiction of the "enmity" between society and the individuals that compose it. Fortunately, there is another starting point for connecting sociology to Henriques' ToK System in the contributions of the American pragmatists, especially George Herbert Mead (1930, 1934) and Charles Horton Cooley (1902). I appreciate Henriques' strong endorsement of this line of exploration (Henriques, 2004, personal communication).

I will provide a narrative of the development of social psychological theories of the role of justification in the rise of culture. I will frame my comments within the scope of everyday life sociology (Adler, Adler, & Fontana, 1987). Blending elements from several varieties of micro-level sociologies (including, symbolic interactionism, dramaturgy, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and existential sociology), everyday life sociology seeks to develop an integrated perspective on the study of social interaction. Whatever the differences among these perspectives, they share the conviction that social action can only be understood contextually by taking seriously the actors' objectives in their interactions with one another. The meaning of actions is related to the actors' motives, and actors are seen to be inclined toward managing favorable impressions of themselves in the minds of others. I believe that this perspective is fundamentally compatible with the JH.

At the risk of seeming self-absorbed, I feel the need to preface my narrative with a few disclaimers in the justification of my choice of topics, as well as my characterizations of the disciplinary categorizations of the writers whose work I will highlight. However, I am emboldened to include these disclaimers because, in their own way, these disclaimers are examples of the very pressures that constitute the central thrust of Henriques' JH!

First, it is practically impossible to characterize the disciplinary foundation of my narrative to everyone's satisfaction. Mead, whose academic position was in the philosophy department in the University of Chicago, has routinely been assimilated into the history of sociology and especially into the narrative of the rise of symbolic interactionism (Denzin, 1992; Hewitt, 2000; Jackson, 1988). However, Mead is also identified with the pragmatic tradition in American philosophy along with such figures as Charles Sanders Pierce, William James, and John Dewey (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). These men have also been written into the early history of psychology, especially since James (1891) authored a prominent American textbook in psychology. Since symbolic interactionism deals with micro-level social interaction, in contrast to the familiar macro-level theorizing associated with structural-functionalism (traced to Emile Durkheim, 1897/1951) and with conflict theories (traceable either to Karl Marx or Max Weber), some would categorize Mead's lineage as social psychology rather than sociology (Hewitt, 2000). Of course, some writers (such as Sheldon Stryker, 1977) have distinguished between two social psychologies—one psychological and one sociological, and in this taxonomy Mead's work is seen as an example of sociological social psychology. But others, such as sociologist Jay Jackson (1988), insist that the symbolic interactionists have systematically misread Mead to assimilate him into their history and think of Mead as part of a tradition of "psychological sociology." My point here is that disputes about the taxonomic placements of the writers I am referencing abound, and thus some would undoubtedly question my interpretations.

Second, as Thomas Kuhn (1962) pointed out, preparadigmatic sciences are characterized by conflicts among competing schools of thought in which vigorous debates concerning the proper interpretation of founders' texts are common. Sociologist Randall Collins (1989), for example, wrote about formulating a "Neo-Meadian" sociology only to be criticized for having misunderstood and misrepresented Mead's thought (Couch, 1989; McPhail, 1989; Rochberg-Halton, 1989). My goal is not to argue whose exegesis of

Mead or others is correct, and I cannot claim that my view of the authors I have included is the only, or the "correct," interpretation. My goal, rather, is to point to some sources that may be heuristically valuable in assessing the JH but may be unfamiliar to an audience composed primarily of psychologists.

Finally, in commenting on a theoretical joint point that links the level of mind to that of culture, my narrative seeks to build bridges across literatures whose concepts and theories have often seemed incommensurable. For example, I will be bridging from research on the "Theory of Mind" (Keenan, Gallup Jr., & Falk, 2003; Premack & Woodruff, 1978; Shaffer & Renner, 2000) to the sociological view of the development of the self associated with Mead and others such as Charles Horton Cooley. As my title suggests, I will find common ground between what we learn with use of a literal mirror about the frontiers of animal cognition and what we learn about the development of human self-awareness from Cooley's figurative use of a mirror or "looking-glass." Some readers might question my interpretation of these connections, but I believe that the ToK System, with its unified conception of science, affords great opportunities for the exploration of bridging traditionally separate domains.

On Self and Society

Henriques (2003) views the human ego as a self-awareness system that has evolved beyond the demonstrated capacities of the great apes because of the adaptive pressures described in the JH. Some of the great apes that have the mental capacity to recognize their images in a mirror appear to have developed the capacity to infer intentionality in others. Extrapolating from studies of MSR, many believe that great apes can move from monitoring their own thoughts (the hallmark of self-awareness) to the ability to understand the mental state of other animals—a capacity known as a *Theory of Mind* (Keenan, Gallup Jr., & Falk, 2003; Premack & Woodruff, 1978). This capacity would be adaptive because it would allow an animal to use its mind as an analogy of the minds of others, including understanding differences in perspective and recognizing the limits of what others know. Developmental psychologists compare this level of processing to that of human children, where MSR tends to occur in the second year and the Theory of Mind seems to be present at about age four (Keenan, Gallup Jr., & Falk, 2003). Sociologists have also been interested in the development of the Theory of Mind for nearly a century, but their terminology is different. Particularly because of the impact of Freud's tripartite view of the mind, sociologists have tended to avoid the term "ego" and, because of the influence of George Herbert Mead, to choose to speak instead about the "self."

The central node in the growing network of work on theorizing the relationship between self and society was Mead. Mead was profoundly connected to the intellectual leaders of his day, having come to the University of Chicago at the insistence of John Dewey (Collins, 1989), struck up a friendship with former student and colleague psychologist John B. Watson (Jackson, 1988; Watson, 1936), and lived in the home (and tutored the children) of William James (Collins, 1989). Yet, Mead's contributions are all the more remarkable because he published so little in his lifetime. His major work, *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934), was essentially a transcription of his students' class notes (Collins, 1989; Desmonde, 1967; Hewitt, 2000). Sociologist Randall Collins (1989) has suggested that Mead's reticence was actually writer's block owing to the fact that his father was a professor of theology and he was aware, at some level, that his views on the self could be seen as a heretical, evolutionary naturalization of the soul.

The Western philosophical tradition, informed by the Judeo-Christian theological heritage, assumed that each person was a unique individual with an inborn constellation

of traits and abilities corresponding to the religious concept of the soul (Baylis, 1967; Broom & Selznick, 1973; Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). The 18th and 19th centuries articulated this assumption into a doctrine of the self, termed *the Transcendental Self* (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). Central to this conception of the self was the belief that each person was born with an innate sense of right and wrong that eventually came to be known as the conscience (Baylis, 1967). The conscience, like a moral gyroscope, gave individuals reliable guidance about whether acting out any impulse would be right or wrong. With this belief came a sense of moral justice in society's retribution for any misdeed, since any misconduct was understood as a deliberate violation of morality. By taking conscience for granted, no one had any need to explain the origins of either personal conduct or of societal standards since both were simply a reflection of what was available to all.

But the birth of the social sciences that occurred near the end of the 19th century was accompanied by a rejection of the transcendental self. Consequently, the doctrine of the conscience was swept away by evolutionary theorizing. For the new social sciences, the self was "not a unitary structure, appearing full-blown" (Sherif, 1968, p.153), but rather a developmental product of each individual interacting with its social and physical environment. Perhaps the fundamental insight of this first generation of thinkers was that scientific progress was impeded if theorizing began with a reified conception of both the self and of culture. For the developing child, both self and society are developmental outcomes of social interaction. As James Mark Baldwin put it, "the ego and the alter are . . . born together" (cited in Sherif, 1968, p. 150). The emerging developmental psychology provided compelling evidence that children's understanding of right and wrong was not innate and did not appear full blown (Sherif, 1936/1966). Of course, without reframing the origins of human conduct in more naturalistic terms, there would be no place for the JH because there would be nothing to explain.

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in William James, James Mark Baldwin, Charles Horton Cooley, and George Herbert Mead among psychologists (Harter, 1999), because these men set a new direction for the social sciences by setting Darwinian thinking squarely within the emerging fields of psychology and sociology (Harter, 1999; Scheibe, 1985). William James produced an original account of the social origins of the self. In James' formulation, the self was characterized as the recognition individuals received from others, and, since others do not often agree in detail about their perceptions of people, individuals may have as many selves as others that know them (Jackson, 1988). Thus, one individual may be said to have a repertory of selves for different situations (Broom & Selznick, 1973) and there may be inconsistencies among the selves displayed on various occasions. In one often-cited passage, James (1891, p. 294) described adolescent boys being demure among parents and teachers, but being swaggering, swearing tough guys among their peers. James made it clear that useful theorizing about the relationship of self and society could not assume a unified society with a monolithic culture. A workable theory of culture would need to be capable of explaining the influence of many (and often inconsistent) others. But it was George Herbert Mead who worked out the most detailed and thorough theory of a Darwinian viewpoint concerning the social nature of human beings (Scheibe, 1985). Mead provided a theory of the role of language in the development of symbols for both self and society.

The emergence of selfhood and culture is clearly linked to the development of human language (Henriques, 2003; Hewitt, 2000; Miller, 1973; Schwalbe, 1993; Smith, 1978). Indeed, the reflexivity required to use language itself seems to reflect the pressures associated with the JH. For example, Austin's (1962) analysis of speech acts and Grice's (1975) distillation of the principles of cooperation in conversations have documented that speakers are careful to maintain a stance of saying only what seems to be justified. For

example, Grice's *maxim of quality* specifies that speakers are obligated to avoid saying anything they know to be false and to avoid saying anything for which they do not have reasonable evidence. Because of these demands, speakers often utter sentences whose intended meaning is very indirect because the sentence often focuses on the speaker's presentation of the warrants for their utterances. For example, consider the following hypothetical exchange:

PETER: Is Barbara at home?
MARY: Her car is parked in front of her house.

The discrepancy between the expected, literal answer to Peter's question (yes or no) and the wording of the actual reply is striking. Mary's indirect answer to the simple question appears (and is) self-conscious. It is a marker that the speaker is concerned to present herself to the questioner as being justified in her answer. Since Peter probably shares Mary's understanding of how to cooperate in conversation, he probably understands her answer to be in the affirmative and takes the surface content of her answer as a statement of the evidence for her response.

The joint-point between the levels of mind and culture in the ToK System must be related to the emergence of language for two reasons. As Roger Brown (1986) has noted, language allows for individual life experiences to become cumulative across both persons and generations, and language makes "rapid cultural evolution possible and biological evolution almost irrelevant" (Brown, 1986, p. 464). Working with the limited knowledge of animal behavior available in his day, Mead articulated a fundamental distinction between animal and human cognition focusing on the uniqueness of human linguistic abilities. Animals, Mead argued, could communicate with one another through what he called a "conversation of gestures" (Mead, 1934). Animal behaviors, or gestures, could function as signs, or stimuli, to other animals, but these signs were not symbolic. That is, one animal could sense and respond to the behavior or vocalizations of another animal, but the first animal was not capable of self-conscious intention or recognition of its own signs. Only human beings, through natural languages, have symbols that they use to construct meaning for themselves and others. It is this capacity for self-reflection that truly distinguishes human beings from lower animals (Strauss, 1956). What Mead called "significant symbols" was capable of arousing the same response on both the user and the receiver. If a person says, "I am unhappy," for example, Mead believed that the symbol *sad* could invoke understanding and empathy in both the hearer and the speaker. As natural languages developed symbols for experiences of both the physical and the social world, these languages were building the content of culture.

When Mead turned his attention to language that people could use toward themselves, he began to develop a view that captured the reflexivity of human culture that was to become a cornerstone of sociological theorizing (Smith, 1978; Wiley, 1994). Mead began by paying attention to the use of pronouns in language. Like James had done before him, Mead made use of first person pronouns as a basis for describing the process of self-reflection. Pronouns such as *I* and *Me* are deictic shifters (Bruner, 1986); their meaning can only be determined by context. A child learning English has to master the distinction that the self-referent pronoun *I* is only appropriate when speaking in the subjective, but that the speaker must shift to the objective pronoun *Me* when speaking about himself or herself as the object. Mead realized that these two pronouns point to two complementary views each person has of the self. Rather than resort to neologism, Mead simply referred to the subjective sense of the self as an actor as the *I* and the objective sense of the self as the *Me* (Mead, 1934). The *I*, which could be known through

reflection, captured the person's conscious knowledge of the self including the person's motives behind each action. But Mead recognized that the *Me* had a different origin. To know one's self as a social object, one would have to literally leave one's body and be someone else. While that is physically impossible, Mead argued that humans do something analogous by using the symbols that natural languages provide to develop an imagination capable of constructing what others must think of us (Miller, 1973; Schwalbe, 1983). Mead referred to this process as taking the attitude (or role) of the other. For Mead, the self then contained two separate, but complementary, types of personal knowledge.

It is important to note that that Mead's *I* and *Me* were never intended to be understood as hypostatized elements of the self in thought. To the contrary, Mead conceptualized the self *as* thought (Scheibe, 1985). While Mead articulated a vision of *social behaviorism* different than that of the *behaviorism* of his student and colleague John B. Watson, Mead agreed with Watson that dualistic mentalism was to be avoided. According to Mead, children had to learn to converse with others before becoming able to reflexively converse with themselves. But once they were capable of carrying on dialogue with others, they also became capable of internalizing the activity with the child alternatively taking the roles of the actor and the audience, respectively (Scheibe, 1985). The terms *I* and *Me* for Mead then served as a shorthand expression to refer to each of these reflexive roles. But it is also important to note that Mead's formulation of the *I* and the *Me* was limited to self-knowledge, but not self-feeling (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000; Wiley, 1994). James had first emphasized the importance of feelings toward the self, but his ideas about how actors come to "feel" the self were advanced by Charles Horton Cooley.

The Looking-Glass Self

Charles Horton Cooley, like Mead, was interested in the development of the self, and is most remembered for his formulation of the concept of the *looking-glass self* (Cooley, 1902). Cooley's writings have become less familiar to psychologists than either Mead or James because he was assimilated into the symbolic interactionist tradition within sociology (Scheibe, 1985). But Cooley's ideas have also been relatively less influential than Mead's among sociologists because of Mead's criticisms of Cooley's thought. This is truly ironic. Mead and Cooley were contemporaries, but do not appear so in reference lists because of Mead's limited publication record during his lifetime (Scheibe, 1985). Because Cooley published his ideas more readily than Mead, Mead was able to criticize Cooley (Mead, 1930), but Cooley did not live long enough to read and criticize Mead. Mead's point of contention with Cooley was Cooley's emphasis on the role of imagination and affect in social life, which seemed solipsistic to Mead (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000; Wiley, 1994). Since Mead is presented as the fountainhead of symbolic interactionism, many sociologists have preferred not to emphasize Cooley's ideas. However, since current theorists understand both Mead's and Cooley's theories to be incomplete but seminal, I will treat Cooley's ideas as complementary—rather than contradictory—to Mead's view of the self.

The expression *looking glass* is an archaic English term for a mirror, and Cooley used the familiar figure of a person looking at his or her reflection in a mirror as a metaphor for understanding the development of the social self. While some commentators have misunderstood Cooley's allusion to a mirror as signifying that he believed in a passive process of self-perception (Scheibe, 1985), Cooley's looking-glass self is actually the product of an active process of construction through the developing mode of imagination (Cooley, 1902). The looking-glass self has three components. First, Cooley argued

that actors learn about themselves in every situation by exercising their imagination to reflect on their social performance. In doing so, they imagine themselves as others must see them, and this construction of what others must see is fundamentally like an image reflected back in a mirror. But second, in an extension of Theory of Mind analyses, Cooley argued that actors next imagine what those others must think of them. In other words, actors imagine the others' evaluations of the actor's performance. Third, and most important, the actor experiences an affective reaction to the imagined evaluation of the other. These affects are related to the imagined evaluation of others. If the others' evaluation of the actor is positive, the affect is positive (like pride), but if the others' evaluation is negative, the affect is negative (like shame or embarrassment).

    Contemporary sociologist Thomas Scheff has developed a detailed sociological theory of emotions based on the work of Cooley (Scheff, 1985, 1988, 1990, 1993, 2000, 2003). In contrast to psychological theories of self-monitoring (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000), Scheff (1988) begins by articulating what he calls the "Cooley-Scheff conjecture": People are always in emotional states based upon their constructions of others evaluations of the self. Scheff assumes that self-monitoring is virtually continuous in adults, that this self-monitoring always includes the presumed evaluations of others, and that resultant affective states are anchored at one end by a sense of pride and at the other end by a sense of shame. We do not always recognize these states, Scheff argues, because they are fleeting micro-emotions, and he therefore calls them "low visibility" pride and shame (Scheff, 1988). Pride and shame may be opposite ends of an affective continuum, but they share the property that the cognition that produces these states requires a process of comparison between performance in a social situation and some standard or standards that mark the performance as "good' or "bad." While there are certainly varying shades of pride, Scheff calls most attention to the markers of low visibility shame: feelings of embarrassment (including shyness, self-consciousness, and bashfulness), feelings of humility, feelings of ridicule (including foolishness, stupidity, and ridiculousness), and feelings of inadequacy or incompetence.

    When viewed from the perspective of the JH, the Cooley–Scheff conjecture is an important indicator of the continuing presence of the selection pressure responsible for the rise of Culture. Cooley contended that human beings are continually subject to self-feelings along the continuum of pride to shame precisely because they use their imaginations to take the role of the other (to use Mead's expression) and their imaginations tell them that others must have formed evaluations of them. Others are not expected to be dispassionate observers of an actor's actions, but to evaluate the actor as having been "good" or "bad" in those actions. From a Theory of Mind point of view, when actors praise or condemn others' actions, they also learn that others must also be doing the same thing to them. The sociological counterpart to the contemporary Theory of Mind would be Alfred Schutz's (1964) principle of the reciprocity of perspectives, which argues that actors routinely assume that each participant's experiences in a social interaction would be the same as that of other participants if both parties could simply trade places (see also Backman, 1985). When actors believe that others see their actions as good, either in the sense of being moral or in being competent, they believe that others see their actions as justified. But when actors believe that others see their actions as bad, either in the sense of being immoral or incompetent, actors feel some level of shame because they believe that others see their actions as unjustified.

The Self as an Organ of Justification

Language allows human beings to think about their own actions not only reflexively but also recursively. This means that actors have the capacity to think through the possible

consequences of their own actions and to think through more than one possible course of action before deciding what to do. While most discussion of this recursive quality has focused on the physical or situational consequences of potential actions, the JH shifts the focus of attention to the fact that different courses of action would lead to different looking-glass selves. When actors imagine that others would see their actions as justified, the Cooley–Scheff conjecture predicts that the actor would feel an anticipatory sense of pride. But when actors imagine that others would see their actions as unjustified, the theory predicts that the actor would feel anticipatory shame at some level. These emotions would then be expected to determine, at least in part, the final course of action to be taken. The suggested hypothesis would be that actors, upon reviewing their choices, will tend to take a justified course of action in most cases. While there is not a large body of empirical evidence concerning whether or not people try to examine the defensibility of each possible course of action before deciding what to do, the evidence that does exist supports the hypothesis that they do (Tetlock, 1985). Jackson has summarized what we know as follows:

> People assume that if their behavior can be observed that it will be interpreted and evaluated. They attempt to avoid negative evaluation in the process of constructing their conduct, before it "emerges" for public interpretation. In a social situation, participants monitor others' reactions to their own conduct. Their behavior acquires a situated meaning, specific to the social act. If one's conduct means something different to others than what one intended or assumed, one makes verbal and behavioral adjustments until one obtains the desired reactions. (Jackson, 1988, p. 121)

Jackson's synopsis reads like a social–psychological exposition of Henriques' postulate that human consciousness functions as a justification filter for human conduct.

Jackson's synopsis also makes an implicit distinction between how the concern for justification manifests itself before and after an action "emerges." That is, the ideal is for actors to behave in justifiable ways in the first place, when the self successfully applies its justification filter. One visible example of this process is the verbal stratagem that Hewitt and Stokes (1975) have called the *disclaimer*. A disclaimer is a statement inserted into a conversation in which the speaker anticipates—and seeks to prevent—an observer from making negative evaluations of the speaker's actions and negative attributions about the actor's character. Disclaimers are very common, and familiar examples include such expressions as "I am not prejudiced, but . . ."; "I know this may sound stupid, but . . ."; and "I am, not an expert in this sort of thing, but it seems to me . . .". The content of the disclaimer depends on the nature of the upcoming remark and the nature of the observer's possible reactions. But the very fact that disclaimers are delivered in conversation *prior* to the potentially offending remarks clearly indicates that the speaker has gone through a conscious process of recursively playing out scenarios based on each possible course of action. The obvious self-consciousness involved in the use of a disclaimer also suggests that the speaker's remark could not have passed through the justification filter without the attachment of the device.

The dramaturgical sociology of Erving Goffman (1959) makes a strong case in favor of the JH. Perhaps the best-known theorist of everyday sociology, Goffman put a fresh perspective on the looking-glass self by focusing on the what he called *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). Goffman saw actors as being concerned about their impressions in eyes of others just as Cooley had, and his portrayals of embarrassment read like an elaboration of Cooley's views on shame. But Goffman surpassed Cooley's accounts of the means by which actors can take control of the impressions of others. Focusing on the recursive capabilities of human thought, Goffman turned actions into

performances as actors learned to *manage* the impressions of others in the improvised roles of everyday life. Actors can choose their words, deeds, and sometimes even the physical staging of the setting of their performances, and they do so to convey an identity that Goffman terms *face* (Goffman, 1967). Goffman's research over the years provides a rich catalog of strategies and tactics that performers employ in hope of managing the impressions that others will form. Psychologists are likely to be more familiar with Goffman than with Cooley because the concept of impression management has been adopted by social psychologists, who have generated hypotheses about actor's strategies to be tested in rigorous experimentation (Thoits, 1995).

Most have focused on the details of Goffman's formulation of the dynamics of the performance with its evocative vocabulary of presenting a *face* (and losing or saving it) making *identity claims*, taking a *stance*, showing deference, distancing one's self from a *role*, and so forth. Some authors have understood Goffman to be arguing that performers have no concern about developing a coherent self and are only interested in projecting an image to their current audience (Scheibe, 1987). But more likely, Goffman saw the development of the rules of interaction in culture—especially the forms he called *interaction rituals* (Goffman, 1967)—as a necessary development of culture to protect the emotional sensitivities of each actor. All performances require a backdrop of cultural conventions (including *interaction rituals*, *expression games*, rules for *interactions*, *boundaries*, and so forth) that participants count on to craft effective performances (Goffman, 1967). But it is better to realize that Goffman was simultaneously arguing that actors care about the faces that they portray and that performances could only work out if people could trust each other to live by the rules for signifying behavior (Schwalbe, 1993). According to sociologist Michael Schwalbe:

> The need for maintaining the coherence of the self as a psychic process is so powerful that Goffman saw the interaction order itself as arising to meet this needà Every encounter is risky, in that disruptive signification can occur intentionally or accidentally. The rules of the interaction order arise to minimize the risk of damage to the coherence of the self, and thereby to minimize the risk of the bodily felt emotional pain that such damage can induce. The interaction order thus protects the individual's sanity and, by extension, his or her utility as a safe an effective interactant. When the interaction order is disrupted, both selves and society are at stake . . . (Schwalbe, 1993, p. 338).

Goffman's work therefore provides evidence that the pressures described by the JH create conditions that lead not only to ordinary individuals learning to craft performances of their identities but also to the development of cultural forms of the interaction order as well. I will return to this theme in the last section.

Saving Face Through Giving Accounts of Misbehavior

Jackson (1988) also points out that there are times when public actions will not appear justifiable in the eyes of others. "Inappropriate" behavior may occur because actors become impulsive and fail to filter their actions (and properly manage impressions) or because the actors miscalculate how others will understand and evaluate their motives and goals. Here, too, there is evidence for the ubiquity of pressure for appearing justified in the varieties of *motive talk* that actors use to explain themselves and repair potential damage to their reputations.

Perhaps the most literal feature of the sociology of everyday life that exemplifies the JH is the demanding and giving of *accounts*. Henriques has argued that human beings have evolved unprecedented self-awareness through the ability to use language. Natural

languages contain concepts detailing actions and motivations that humans use both to perceive the sources of their own behavior and to articulate explanations of their actions to others. The JH asserts that human beings are the only species that has had to account for its actions to others and the only species to evaluate the legitimacy of such accounts. As a result, Henriques argues that each group has developed its own folk psychology to serve as a guide for these explanations. Following Max Weber, sociologists usually eschew the psychological study of motivation (Hewitt, 2000); however, they recognize that all groups develop ways of talking about actions that revolve around a *vocabulary of motives* (Gerth & Mills, 1953; Mills, 1940). I will use Mills' concept of the vocabulary of motives as the sociological counterpart of folk psychologies (Bruner, 1990).

According to Mills, motives are specific terms that can be verbalized to explain an actor's conduct in a given situation. Vocabularies of motives contain kernel explanations of actions by linking each action to a situationally specific and sufficient (or at least adequate) reason for an actor's conduct. For example, people learn that "being hungry" is usually an adequate explanation for eating in most situations; if a person invokes such an explanation when questioned, others will feel obligated to accept this account at face value since it is in line with the group's vocabulary of motives. However, if a person were challenged to explain eating and the person responded that she was "depressed," the answer might express psychological insight, yet be socially unacceptable because it is out of line with the vocabulary of motives. People engage in motive talk whenever they perceive that their actions are appear to be questionable to others, whether they are overtly challenged or not. Motive talk is not limited to terms for simple internal states. To account for some actions, actors must often invoke personal goals or intentions that symbolic interactionists would call the *object* of the action to explain themselves (Stone & Farberman, 1983). For example, a student, asked what she was doing when she turned off a radio, might explain that she was preparing to study and needed a quiet environment. This analysis assumes what the JH asserts—that actors are always mindful that they may be called upon to justify their actions and they learn to stand prepared to give an account of their actions in terms of their group's vocabulary of motives.

Scott and Lyman (1968) have argued that accounts are provoked by questions that implicitly charge the actor with engaging in wrong (or at least unexpected) conduct. Since accounts are therefore defenses of conduct, they contain (at least implicitly) a response to a charge of wrongdoing. Scott and Lyman then divide accounts into two main classes: those that accept the charge of wrongdoing and those that do not. The former they characterize as *excuses* and the latter they call *justifications*.

Excuses acknowledge the observers' judgment that the conduct was somehow wrong or inadequate but seek to deflect responsibility for the act. Offering the excuse of having a flat tire on the way to a meeting allows an actor to both uphold the rightness of keeping appointments while repairing any potential damage to the social relationships resulting from the actor's tardiness. The varieties of excuses can be truly impressive. Scott and Lyman name four tactics: appeal to accident, appeal to defeasibility ("How could I have known an empty gasoline can could explode if I left it out in the sun"), appeal to biological drives ("I couldn't help myself"), and scapegoating ("He was spoiling for a fight"). Snyder, Higgins, and Stucky (1983) have compiled an extensive summary of empirical investigations of excuses and they have offered an additional list of tactics including alibis, blaming circumstances, buck-passing, derogating a victim, diffusing responsibility, appeals to bad luck, minimization of harm, self-handicapping, and appeals to illness—to name just a few.

On the other hand, justifications begin with the actor accepting responsibility for the conduct in question, but end with a denial that the conduct in question should be considered wrong. For example, Sykes and Matza (1957) studied the accounts of juvenile delinquents

and found that they engaged in forms of justification that they called *techniques of neutralization*. These techniques tried to portray the juveniles' questionable acts as morally neutral. Their subjects engaged in such tactics as the denial of injury ("Yes I set that fire, but nobody got hurt"), the denial of a victim ("He deserved it"), condemning the condemners ("Everybody does it but nobody else ever gets caught"), or the appeal to loyalties ("God told me to do it").

Recent research by Cody and McLaughlin (1988) and Schonbach (1980) has refined and extended the taxonomy of accounts offered by Scott and Lyman. Refinements include clarifying that justifications often take the form of arguments that the actions in question may have been permissible, rather than legitimate, under the circumstances. The themes of the arguments have also been separated from the categories of accounts: One theme (such as provocation by another) could be included in either an excuse ("You made me so mad that I lost control") or a justification ("After what you said to me you had it coming to you"). Extensions include the addition of the tactics of *concessions* and *refusals* to excuses and justifications (Cody & McLaughlin, 1988). Actors' concessions are acknowledgements of the appropriateness of others' charges against them concessions often take the form of confessions. Refusals, on the other hand, represent denials either of the substance of the charges ("I didn't do it"), or of the others' right to bring charges ("You've got no right to talk . . .").

Cody and McLaughlin (1988) have studied conversations containing charges and accounts and observed that there is a "canonical form" to these exchanges. Such sequences have three fundamental components: a reproach, an account, and an evaluation. In the reproach, one person takes offence at the actions of another and communicates their displeasure verbally or nonverbally. The accused then provides an account for the conduct in question using some combination of the various types of accounts and tactics, such as those previously mentioned. Finally, the accuser then pronounces an evaluation of the account that either accepts the account (and repairs the potential damage to the relationship between the two parties) or rejects the account (and sets the stage for further consequences to ensue). This canonical form has the character of what Goffman (1967) called an *interaction ritual*.

In addition to analyzing actions and motives, sociologists of everyday life emphasize that every particular exchange is "situated"—that is, vocabularies of motives can only be invoked in a convincing manner when the kernel exchanges fit in with participants' *definition of the situation*. This term, introduced by William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (1918), emphasizes that participants in an interaction must (implicitly or explicitly) answer the question "What is going on here?" before they can begin to anticipate what others will say or do and what others will expect of them (McHugh, 1968). Natural language contains a set of words and phrases that identify common situations, and people have to learn a constellation of attitudes, norms, roles, and sometimes even scripts that constitutes a complete understanding of each situation (Backman, 1985). Social interactions can proceed smoothly only when all participants share a common definition of the situation, because the ability to take the role of the other that Mead emphasized depends upon it. Situations vary along a dimension of ambiguity (Ball-Rokeach, 1973; McHugh, 1968), where rituals anchor the unambiguous pole and spontaneous, collective behavior anchors the ambiguous pole. Just as actors can vary the categories and tactics of the accounts they give of their actions, they can also vary their framing of the definition of the situation as a part of the presentation of their actions to others (Cody & McLaughlin, 1988). For example, Backman (1985) has studied the tactic of *conventionalization* that involves an actor attempting to repair potential damage to his or her reputation by verbally relabeling an action to make it seem more acceptable. For example, if accused

of stealing an object, an actor can attempt to reframe others' perceptions by explaining that "I was only borrowing" that object.

Each group's set of actions, accounts and situations are major constituents of what Schutz (1970) called the common stock of social knowledge. In Schutz's view, each element in this stock is transmitted and remembered as a *typification*—a figurative picture of a typical situation person, role, action or object—that a psychologist would probably identify as a schema. Taken together, this sociological stock of knowledge is an impressive inventory of evidence of the complexity of culture that is precisely what would be expected if the JH was correct.

The Rise of Culture as Large-Scale Justification Systems

After suggesting how sociological accounts of the formation of the self are consistent with the JH, I will turn finally to Henriques' view that culture represents large-scale justification systems and that we can account for the emergence of culture through the JH.

Everyday life sociology is concerned with actors working in real time, trying to bring their plans and goals to completion, and, in the process, taking themselves and others into account. As Henriques observed, this is done in a sociolinguistic context that provides materials for fashioning and judging the appropriateness of those actions (Henriques, 2003, p. 176). In this view, culture is not seen as part of a reified social structure that determines actors' conduct. Such a reified view leads to what sociologist Dennis Wrong called an "oversocialized conception" of human behavior (Wrong, 1961). When he writes about cultural systems, I understand Henriques' use of the expression "large scale" as intended to refer to the scope of each system. That is, to link the levels of mind and culture in the ToK System, one must be able to link behavioral investments with justifications through some systematic processes that can account for the phenomena studied by sociologists, economists, political scientists, and even historians. Following Cooley (1902), I take it that it is best to avoid reification by thinking of the terms *society* and *individual* as referring to sides of one coin—what Cooley called the "collective" and "distributive" aspects of the same phenomenon. Therefore, basic and pervasive social psychological processes related to justifications surface as candidates for explicating the emergence of culture. One obvious example is Muzafer Sherif's (1936/1966) classic demonstration of the emergence of social norms in interactions of individuals in novel, ambiguous circumstances.

Durkheim (1897/1951) observed that human beings experience society's influence as a force outside of themselves that constrains their behavior, and this observation has become a pervasive assumption in sociological theorizing (Scheff, 1988). But Durkheim did not specify the mechanisms by which this perception occurs. Muzafer Sherif performed his groundbreaking autokinetic study of the formation of social norms to explore Durkheim's views (Sherif, 1936/1966). Sherif read Durkheim's conjecture that social norms form in ambiguous and fluid circumstances, and realized that the apparent motion subjects see with the autokinetic effect represented a means to create a laboratory analog of events in early human history before the establishment of culture.

Sherif found that, when subjects were asked to make psychophysical judgments of the apparent motion by themselves, their initial judgments usually exhibited considerable variability. With repeated judgments, subjects reduced the variability around a personal anchor termed a *personal norm*. However, in the presence of other subjects, the verbalized judgments of the others were typically very influential in the subjects' subsequent judgments. The reciprocal influence among subjects eventually established social norms for each group of subjects. Sherif concluded that when objective structure is lacking, "the

spoken judgments of other persons have pronounced effects, even though no deliberate attempt is made to exert influence. The individual comes to perceive the situation in line with the views of others, and is frequently unaware that he has been influenced" (Sherif & Sherif, 1969, p. 119). At minimum, other subjects' judgments exerted what would later be called *informational social influence* (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955).

It is important to note that the experimental task—the judgment of the range of apparent motion of the light constituting the autokinetic effect—seems to be a morally neutral activity. Yet, Sherif found that these group norms functioned like everyday social norms in that, ". . . what stabilized as *customary* and *usual* is invested with 'rightness' and 'desirability' " (Sherif & Sherif, 1969, p. 201; emphasis in original). Since this moral or ethical quality is the hallmark of what Deutsch and Gerard (1955) called *normative social influence*, Sherif had effectively demonstrated empirically what Durkheim had theorized a few years before.

A few years after the publication of Sherif's study of social norm formation, Solomon Asch completed an equally influential study of social conformity (Asch, 1956). Like Sherif, he chose a perceptual task: Subjects were shown three lines of different length as comparison stimuli and one line as the standard stimulus. The experimental task required subjects to identify which of the three comparison lines was the same length as the one standard stimulus. The sets of lines were chosen so that when subjects were making and reporting their judgments alone, they made very few errors. But Asch's experimental manipulation was to have the true naïve subjects report their judgments in the presence of subjects who were confederates of the experimenter. The role of each confederate was scripted so that, on designated trials, the confederates verbally reported incorrect judgments. The object of the study was to determine what impact these wrong judgments would have on the naïve subjects. While the strength of the confederates' influence varied with their number and unanimity, at least some naïve subjects reported what they knew to be incorrect judgments.

As Scheff (1988) points out, Asch's design takes the empirical investigation of Durkheim's views one step further than Sherif. By choosing a simple, relatively unambiguous perceptual discrimination task, Asch succeeded in separating "exteriority" from "constraint." Judging from Asch's reports of post-experimental debriefing sessions, most subjects who conformed to the scripted errors of the confederates were aware of the errors when they conformed, indicating that they perceived the social standards of the others to be exterior to themselves. However, they also reported a sense of perceived social constraint in that the theme of conformers' comments was the discomfort they felt in being different from the group. In looking-glass fashion, these subjects reported being concerned about how others in the group must view them. Asch quotes one subject as reporting that, "You have the idea that the attention of the group is focused on you. I didn't want to seem different. I didn't want to seem an imbecile" (Asch, 1956, p. 31). This subject added, "They probably think I am crazy or something" (Asch, 1956, p. 31).

Feeling pride or shame requires the recognition of some implicit standard or norm against which the individual measures his or her conduct. Without such a standard, it is impossible to explain either affect. Sherif's research suggests how any action taken in any situation, no matter how novel or problematic, can lead to actors feeling the forces of social influence. Asch's elaboration of Sherif's paradigm demonstrates how actors feel social pressures expected under the JH. To perform in concert with others in a social situation is to perform in a justified fashion, but to perform in violation of group standards (as judged on the basis of collective performance) is to experience the discomfort of at least low visibility shame. Taken together, these classic studies of social influence form the basis for identifying the omnipresent selective pressure that leads to the devel-

opment of justification systems composed of norms that can affect a whole group or society. In most situations, the norms are already noted, preserved, and transmitted in the sociolinguistc heritage of a group that Schutz (1964) called the common stock of social knowledge. But whether in new or routine situations, these studies provide a frame of reference for linking the JH with the emergence of culture.

Thomas Scheff's most recent work (Scheff, 1993, 2000, 2003) expands on his analysis of the Cooley–Scheff conjecture by describing another systematic effect of justification in the arena of social control. Among macro-level sociologists, the articulation of the social structure of society is necessary to explain social control. In this view, society seeks to control the actions of its members through formal sanctions for behavior. Different institutions within society (such as government) are vested with authority to issue rewards and punishments to maintain civil behavior on a day-to-day basis. But Scheff points out that literal occasions in which actions are acknowledged and rewarded or punished are actually very rare, and this infrequency of the applications of sanctions makes this view incapable of accounting for the vast majority of good or bad social conduct. In place of such a formal social control system, Scheff (1988) has offered what he calls the *deference-emotion system*. In everyday life, the Cooley–Scheff conjecture implies that actors' experiences of low-level pride and shame functions as an informal social control system by examining the rewarding and punishing properties of these affects themselves. Conformity consists, in Scheff's terminology, of actors deferring to social norms in their conduct. When they do, Scheff argues that they experience some level of pride that has rewarding psychological properties. On the other hand, when actors do not defer to social standards, they experience some level of shame that is intrinsically punishing for each actor. While it is possible for society to enact this inner process of self-reward or punishment, Scheff maintains that this deference emotion system actually accounts for more conformity than systems of formal sanctions. Scheff points to Goffman's (1967) dramaturgical formulation for corroboration of his analysis. He notes the central role Goffman gives to the anticipation and avoidance of embarrassment in Goffman's views. Scheff writes:

> In presenting ourselves to others, we risk rejection. The form rejection takes may be flagrant, but it is much more frequently quite subtle, perhaps only a missed beat in the rhythm of conversation. Depending on its intensity and obviousness, rejection usually leads inevitably to the painful emotions of embarrassment, shame, or humiliation. By the same token, when we are accepted as we present ourselves, we usually feel rewarded by the pleasant emotions of pride and fellow feeling. (Scheff, 1988, p. 396)

The problem that all actors encounter sooner or later is that their abilities to take the role of the other and construct the social situation in ways commensurate with others are limited, and that means that, sooner or later, even a circumspect actor will do something that he or she discovers that others will reject and, despite their best efforts, they will experience rejection and embarrassment.

I believe the deference-emotion system represents a sociological recognition of what Henriques' termed *Behavioral Investment Theory*. It is possible to restate Scheff's view in the Skinnerian terms that Henriques has adopted. Human beings, as with other species, are capable of learning about their social environments and adapting their future behavior to these lessons. The consequences of behaviors are experienced as rewards or punishments and behaviors that lead to rewards are reinforced while behaviors that lead to punishments are suppressed. Thus, as is the case with all higher animals, the behavioral repertoires of human beings are subject to selection processes. These learned contingencies provide guidance for the organism in terms of relatively simple rules. To paraphrase Richard Dawkins (as cited in Henriques, 2003, p. 164): Human "survival machines"

would operate by the rules that one should learn and remember lists of "rewarding" and also of "nasty" things, that one should avoid doing actions that lead to nasty things, and that one should repeat actions that lead to rewarding things. In addition to following these rules, human survival machines, because of their facility with natural languages, can also reflexively expand the lists of rewarding and nasty things from the literal, physical consequences of their actions to the social consequences of their actions and expand the very concepts of rewarding and nasty to include their own emotional responses. Natural language also allows human survival machines to recursively rehearse possible actions and their likely consequences so that they can choose courses of action that lead both to rewarding physical consequences and to social acceptance and the feeling of pride and to avoid courses of action that lead both to punishing physical consequences and to social rejection and the attendant feelings of embarrassment or shame. As actors use language to describe these "lessons" and share them among others within one's group, and, over time with successive generations, the large-scale systems of justification we call "culture" emerge.

Conclusion

Henriques (2004) has argued that the significance of the ToK System in general, and the JH in particular, exists in the potential to build bridges between individual and sociocultural perspectives. More specifically, he has offered the vision of human psychology as a hybrid between psychological formalism and the social sciences. I am hoping that this essay will serve as an example of how existing literature from the current academic disciplines such as psychology and sociology, which are often seen as incompatible, may be integrated. I have experimented with the JH as a source of common assumptions and vocabulary for accomplishing this synthesis of individual and societal levels of explanation, as Henriques has suggested is now possible. Whether or not this effort is ultimately to be viewed as successful, I hope it will encourage others to try as well. The possibility of establishing a more mature science is a worthy goal.

Acknowledgments

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