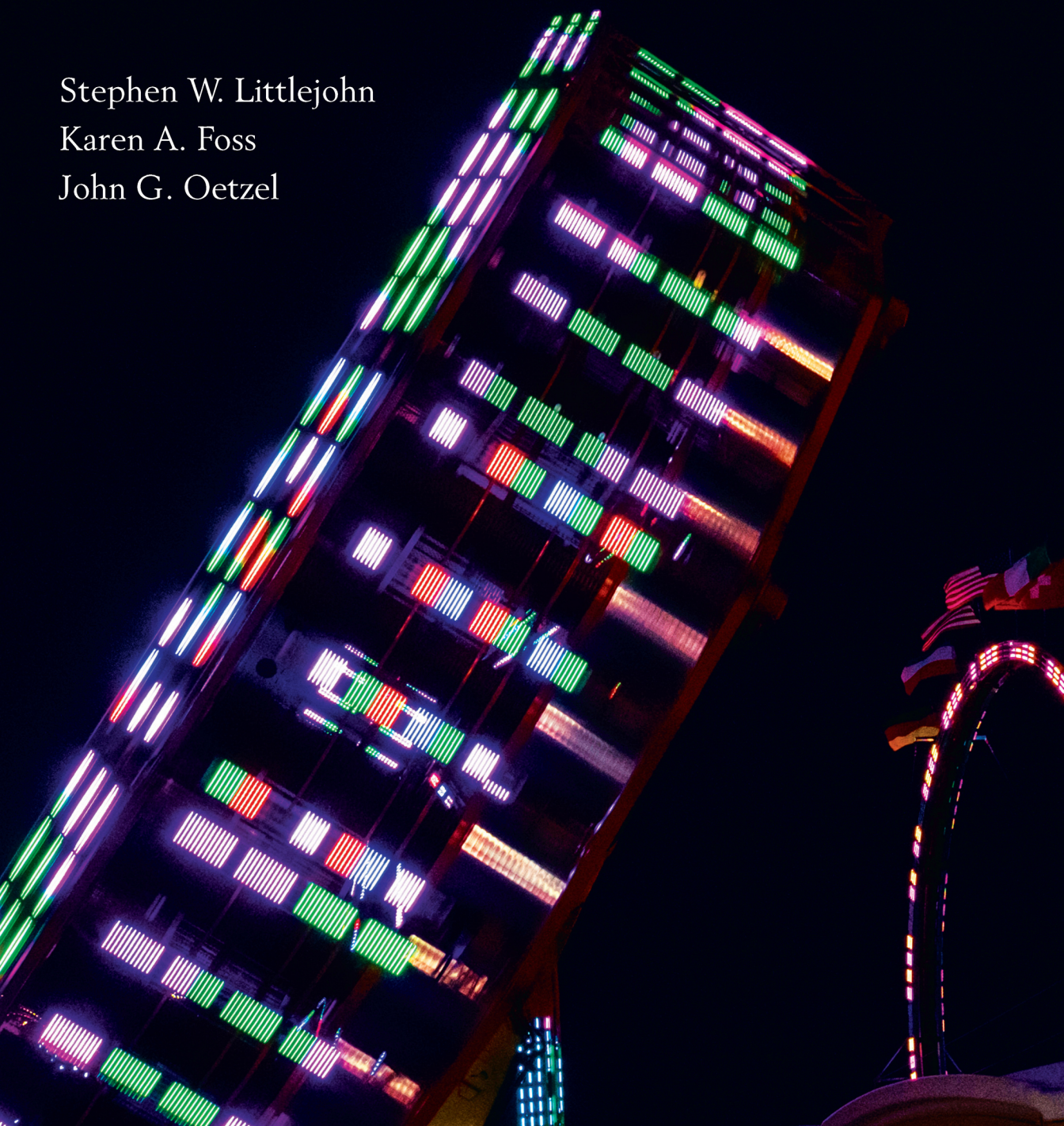
THEORIES OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Eleventh Edition

Stephen W. Littlejohn
Karen A. Foss
John G. Oetzel



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Contents

Prologue xi

PART ONE
Foundations

1 Foundations of Communication Theory **3**

Defining Communication 4
The Academic Study of Communication 5
The Idea of Theory 7
Dimensions of Theory 7
- Philosophical Assumptions 8
- Concepts 12
- Explanations 13
- Principles 14

Evaluating Communication Theory 14
- Theoretical Scope 15
- Appropriateness 15
- Heuristic Value 15
- Validity 16
- Parsimony 16
- Openness 16
- So What Makes a Good Theory? 16

Our Theoretical Standpoint 17
Looking Forward 18
NOTES 20

2 Frameworks for Organizing Theories **25**

Paradigms of Inquiry 26
- The Nature of Social Science 26
- The Nature of Society 27
- Four Paradigms 28

Discourses of Communication 30
Axes and Quadrants 31
Discursive Orientations 32
Communication Tiers 35
Tier One 36
Tier Two 37
Tier Three 38
Tier Four 39
Traditions of Communication Theory 40
The Semiotic Tradition 41
The Phenomenological Tradition 41
The Cybernetic Tradition 42
The Sociopsychological Tradition 42
The Sociocultural Tradition 43
The Critical Tradition 43
The Rhetorical Tradition 44
Conclusion 45
NOTES 45

PART TWO
Elements of the Communication Model

3 The Communicator 51
Biophysiological Theories 51
Trait Theories 52
Embodiment 54
Cognitive and Information Processing Theories 56
Attribution and Judgment 56
Information-Integration 61
Consistency Theories 64
Communication Competence 71
Interaction Adaptation Theory 71
Expectancy Violations Theory 72
Theory of Communication Competence 74
Identity Theories 75
Symbolic Interaction and Self as a Social Object 76
Presentation of Self 77
Cultural Identity Theory 78
Identity Negotiation Theory 79
Standpoint Theory 81
Queer Theory 83
Agency 85
Agency as Protean 87
Agency as Contradiction 88
Constricted and Constructed Potentiality 89
Conclusion 91
NOTES 94

4 The Message **101**

Semiotics 101
Structural Linguistics 103
Nonverbal Communication 105
Interpretation 110
Phenomenology 110
Distanciation 112
Linguistic Relativity 114
Language and Gender 115
Social Construction 117
Constructivism 119
Production, Use, and Strategy 120
Speech Act Theory 121
Coordinated Management of Meaning 124
Theory of Identification 127
Message-Design Logic 130
Compliance Gaining 131
Goals-Plans-Actions Model 131
Politeness Theory 133
Invitational Rhetoric 136
Conclusion 138
NOTES 140

5 The Medium **145**

The Medium and Production 146
Medium Theory 146
New Medium Theory 148
Media Ecology and Mediatization 151
Media and Cultural Production 154
Content and Effects 157
The Effects Tradition 157
Cultivation Theory 159
Agenda Setting Theory 161
Media Framing Theory 165
Motivations, Uses, and Consumption 167
Transportation 167
Spiral of Silence 169
Social Action Media Studies 171
Uses and Gratifications Theory 174
Media and Channel Use Theories 176
Conclusion 179
NOTES 181

6 Beyond Human Communication **187**

Communication between Humans and Nature 189
Naturalizing Culture 190
The Materiality of Nature 192
The Othering of Nature 193
Animate Rhetoric 194

Communication between Humans and Objects 195
Actor Network Theory 195
The Revenge of the Crystal 198
Communication between Humans and Technology 200
Media Equation Theory 201
Media Dependency Theory 203
Digital Play and Media Transference 205
Media Transformation 208
Communication between Humans and the Divine 210
Prayer as Rhetoric 211
Relational Prayer Theory 213
Conclusion 216
NOTES 218

PART THREE
Contexts of Communication

7 The Relationship **223**
Boundaries and Connections 224
Communication Privacy Management Theory 224
Affection Exchange Theory 228
Dyadic Power Theory 229
Family Communication Patterns Theory 231
Queering Family Communication 235
Constructing and Transcending Difference 237
Moral Conflict Theory 237
Performing Foreignness 239
Theory of Coalition and Alliance Building 241
Dialogue as Building a Culture of Peace 243
Tensions and Challenges 245
Relational Dialectics Theory 245
Identity Management Theory 249
Theories of Relational Maintenance 252
Interpersonal Deception Theory 255
Conclusion 257
NOTES 259

8 The Group **263**
Foundational Approaches 263
Interaction-Process Analysis 264
Interaction Analysis and Group Development 265
Input-Process-Output Model 268
Symbolic Convergence Theory 270

Group Context 272
Effective Intercultural Workgroup Communication Theory 273
Concertive Control and Self-Managed Teams 277
Bona Fide Group Perspective 279
Adaptive Structuration Theory 282
Group Process and Effectiveness 285
Simplified Model of Social Influence Process 285
Socio-Egocentric and Group-Centric Model 287
Transactive Memory Theory 289
Groupthink Theory 292
Vigilant Interaction Theory 295
Conclusion 297
NOTES 298

9 The Organization 303

Organizing and Structuring 303
Theory of Organizing 304
Structuration Theory and the Four Flows Model 306
Montreal School Approach to Communicative Constitution of Organizations 310
Network Theory 313
Organizational Culture 316
Control and Resistance 319
Theory of Bureaucracy 320
Organizational Control Theory and Organizational Identification 321
Discourse of Suspicion 325
Corporate Colonization Theory 327
Feminist Theory in Organizational Communication 329
External Stakeholder Communication 333
Situational Crisis Communication Theory 333
Corporate Social Responsibility Communication Model 336
Fully Functional Society Theory 338
Conclusion 340
NOTES 342

10 Health Contexts 347

Messages and Behavior Change 348
Narrative Theory and Health 348
Entertainment Education 351
Extended Parallel Process Model 353
Inoculation Theory 356
Relationships 359
Theory of Normative Social Influence 359
Social Support Theory 362
Patient-Centered Communication 364
Structurational Divergence Theory 366
Managing Information and Risk 368
Risk Perception Attitude Framework 369
Theory of Motivated Information Management 371
Risk and Crisis Communication Management Theory 373

Health Disparities 375
Community-Based Participatory Research Conceptual Model 375
Culture-Centered Approach 378
Conclusion 381
NOTES 382

11 Culture **387**

Communicating Culture 388
Cultural Hermeneutics 388
Ethnography of Communication 389
Performance Ethnography 393
Intercultural Communication Competence 396
Anxiety-Uncertainty Management Theory 396
Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity 399
Communication Accommodation Theory 401
Cultural Adaptation and Change 404
Integrative Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation 404
Differential Adaptation Theory 407
Diffusion of Innovations Theory 409
Negotiating Difference 411
Face-Negotiation Theory 412
Co-cultural Theory 415
Cultural Contracts Theory 417
Critical Race Theory 419
Conclusion 423
NOTES 424

12 Society **429**

Modernism and Postmodernism 429
Modernism 430
Postmodernism 430
Power and Ideology 431
Marxism 431
Critical Theory 433
The Frankfurt School and the Theory of Communicative Action 434
Cultural Studies 440
Post-Structuralism 442
Postcolonialism 445
Feminist Theories 448
Critical Rhetoric 451
Preservation and Change 455
Development Communication 455
Collective Memorializing 459
Conclusion 467
NOTES 469

Index 477

Prologue

The publication of the eleventh edition marks the fortieth anniversary of *Theories of Human Communication.* Stephen was an assistant professor in 1974 when he was motivated to begin work on the first edition. At that time, the only publication on communication theory was a collection of readings; there was no textbook. The first edition was published in 1976. Karen became a coauthor on the eighth edition. *Theories of Human Communication* has enjoyed an enduring place in the discipline.

The addition of a new coauthor, John Oetzel, was an excellent opportunity to systematically assess the theories now current in the discipline. We reviewed all of the volumes of over 50 journals between the years 2010 and 2016, the period since the tenth edition of *Theories* was published. The journals reviewed are published by the major communication associations (the National Communication Association and the International Communication Association), as well as regional journals, specialty journals, and journals published outside the United States. We believe this edition offers a comprehensive and up-to-date compilation of the major theoretical work in communication.

There have been some substantial changes to the theories presented in this book. Some theories that were prominently featured in earlier editions are now treated as historical background—as the starting point for the theories now included. In earlier editions, theories from other disciplines—psychology, sociology, linguistics, for example—played significant roles because that was where communication scholars first directed their attention. Over the years, however, the field has moved from relying on sister disciplines for theoretical starting points to theories developed within communication itself—theories that center communication in ways other disciplines do not. Over time, more and more theories developed by communication scholars have been the focus of this book, and that trend continues in this edition. As with earlier editions, we are interested in presenting the theories that have provided a foundation for the discipline and in the contemporary evolutions of those theories. Our aim is to continue to offer a full complement of theories, from earliest to most recent. A feature we have continued (and expanded) from previous editions is "From the

Source." These boxes provide a brief look at the motivation and inspiration for the theories in the authors' own words. We have included a substantial number of new "From the Sources" in this edition.

Another shift is that the theories in the discipline are increasingly cognizant of cultural and contextual factors of all kinds; thus, the theories in the communication field are much more culturally diverse and rich than those with which the discipline first concerned itself. While the Western US tradition of communication remains the dominant source of theories in this book, there are many that derive from other traditions, that cross traditions, and that even challenge the Western tradition.

The increasing diversity of theories in this book raises questions about the notion of the *human* as central to communication—and indeed, as central to the title of this text: *Theories of* Human *Communication*. For the first time, this book includes theories about communication between humans and nature, humans and objects, humans and technology, and humans and the divine. That said, we still consider the human being as the only standpoint we can reliably know. So whether a human is communicating with another person, an animal, an object, or something else, and no matter who or what initiates the interaction, we can only come at it from the human side. Thus, we continue to privilege the human perspective on communication—and the title of this book remains the same—while we also recognize that the human vantage point is not the only one available. And speaking of humans—we alternate pronouns between chapters so as not to privilege one gender over the other. So in chapter one, we use the female pronoun *she* for all examples; in chapter two, we use the pronoun *he,* and so on.

Part one provides the foundation for our exploration of communication theory, the nature of inquiry, methods of evaluation, and frameworks by which theories and research have been organized. We hope to give you a sense that scholarship is never just a series of separate, discrete projects. Rather, theorists are connected in numerous ways to larger approaches and issues in the discipline. Parts two and three present the actual communication theories we cover in this book. In part two, we organize theories around the elements of the communication model: communicator, message, medium, and beyond human communication (which extends the study of communication to humans communicating with nature, objects, technology, and the divine). In part three, we organize theories around context: relationship, group, organization, health, culture, and society. Important to keep in mind is that this is an imperfect organizational scheme, for several reasons. First, it suggests that communication is linear (part two) and hierarchical (part three), which we do not mean to imply. Rather this is just a scheme that is naturally constrained by the fact that we need to present chapters in some kind of order, and these divisions have been frequently used in the discipline.

Within each chapter, theories are organized according to a framework that emerges from the topics and research in that field. Rather than trying to force fit a common organizational scheme onto all the chapters, we have chosen to make use of the research itself to organically generate the categories, an approach that more accurately conveys a sense of research in that area. We begin each chapter with a chart that displays the theories, theorists, and key

ideas associated with each theory. We hope this device helps you remember the different theories and the distinctions among them.

Important to note, too, is that theories do not necessarily fit neatly into a single category; we have made choices about where best to include them, and some are referenced in several chapters. In reality, there is considerable overlap between elements of the basic model of communication (part two) and context (part three); there are many possible organizations. Others might put theories into very different categories. This is another fruitful point of discussion: where else might each theory be placed and why? That there are various perspectives on and debates about theories and how they relate to one another and to the overall field of communication is not a problem, then, so much as a topic for consideration.

Finally, the theories included here may not actually use the term *theory* to describe the work in question. We use the term to suggest systematic and sustained investigation, explanation, and description of bodies of scholarship that have helped define what the communication discipline has become. Sometimes, then, we have grouped several studies together that suggest a theoretical trend or direction. In addition, we made every effort to find recent research studies that make use of the theories we have included here—in fact, that was a benchmark for us in deciding a theory's significance. Finally, we cannot describe every theory in detail; instead, we offer broad brushstrokes about the theories to serve as starting points for you to investigate further the ones that are especially interesting or relevant to you.



PART ONE

Foundations

1

Foundations of Communication Theory

As long as people have wondered about the world, they have been intrigued by the mysteries of human nature. The most commonplace activities of our lives—the things we take for granted—can become puzzling when we try to understand them systematically. Communication is one of those everyday activities intertwined with all of human life so completely that we sometimes overlook its pervasiveness, importance, and complexity. In this book, we treat communication as central to human life. Every aspect of our daily lives is affected by our communication with others, as well as by messages from people we do not even know—people near and far, living and dead. This book is designed to help you better understand communication in all of its aspects—its powers, its possibilities, and its limitations.

We could proceed with this book in several ways. We could provide a set of recipes for improving communication, but such an approach would ignore the nuances and ambiguities of the communication process. We could describe some basic models, but this approach, too, offers a limited view of communication. Instead, we focus on theories of communication because theories provide explanations that help us understand the phenomenon of communication.

Our guiding question is: How have scholars from various traditions and perspectives described and explained this universal human experience we call *communication*? Developing an understanding of a variety of communication theories means you can be more discriminating in how you communicate in every area of your life, can gain tools to use deliberately to improve your communication, and can better understand what the discipline of communication is about.

Studying communication theory will help you see things you never saw before and understand things about your communication that you could not explain before. The various communication theories will cause you to re-think, re-sort, and re-prioritize the concepts and categories by which you understand communication. The philosopher Thomas Kuhn, talking about revolutionary paradigm shifts in science, explains how transformative seeing through a new or different lens can be: "It is rather as if the professional community had been suddenly transported to another planet where familiar objects are seen in a different light and are joined by unfamiliar ones as well. . . . We may want to say

that after a revolution scientists are responding to a different world."[1] In learning more about theories of human communication, you, too, will be responding to a different world—a world much richer, more creative, and more complex in terms of communication, how it functions, and the role it plays in your life. We hope that you will gain more than just an academic understanding of various theories of communication; we hope your own communication is impacted as well. Rather than responding in habitual ways, we hope your communication will become increasingly adaptable, flexible, and sophisticated because of your exposure to these theories of communication.

Defining Communication

To begin our study of communication theories, we turn first to the task of defining *communication*—and this term is not easy to define.[2] Theodore Clevenger noted that "the continuing problem in defining communication for scholarly or scientific purposes stems from the fact that the verb 'to communicate' is well established . . . Indeed, it is one of the most overworked terms in the English language."[3] Frank Dance echoes this sentiment: "We are trying to make the concept of 'communication' do too much work for us."[4] Scholars have made many attempts to define *communication,* but arriving at a "best" definition has proved impossible and may not be very fruitful.

Frank Dance found three points of "critical conceptual differentiation" in attempts to define communication.[5] The first dimension is *level of observation,* or abstractness. Some definitions are broad and inclusive; others are restrictive. For example, the definition of communication as "the process that links discontinuous parts of the living world to one another" is general.[6] On the other hand, communication as "the means of sending military messages, orders, etc., as by telephone, telegraph, radio, couriers," is restrictive.[7]

The second distinction is *intentionality.* Some definitions include only purposeful message sending and receiving; others do not impose this limitation. The following is an example of a definition that includes intention: "Those situations in which a source transmits a message to a receiver with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviors."[8] A definition that does not require intent is the following: "Human communication has occurred when a human being responds to a symbol."[9]

The third dimension is *judgment.* Some definitions include a statement of success, effectiveness, or accuracy; other definitions do not contain such implicit judgments. The following definition, for example, presumes that communication is successful—that the thought or idea is successfully exchanged: "Communication is the verbal interchange of a thought or idea."[10] Another definition, on the other hand, does not judge whether the outcome is successful or not: Communication is "the transmission of information."[11] Here information is *transmitted* but not necessarily *received* or *understood.*

Debates over what communication is and the dimensions that characterize it undoubtedly will continue. Dance calls for a family of concepts that collectively define communication rather than a single theory or idea. Robert Craig elaborates on this notion, suggesting that theories always will reflect the diver-

sity of practical ideas about communication in ordinary life, so the field of communication always will be characterized by a multiplicity of definitions and approaches. Rather than seeking a standard model or definition that applies universally to any communication situation, Craig argues we should seek a different kind of coherence based on (1) a common understanding of the similarities and differences, or tension points, among theories; and (2) a commitment to manage these tensions through dialogue: "The goal should not be a state in which we have nothing to argue about, but one in which we better understand that we all have something very important to argue about."[12]

Various definitions of communication, then, are not inconsequential. They frame and focus reality in one way rather than another and emphasize some aspects of communication over others. Peter Andersen suggests the importance of these differences: "While there is not a right or wrong perspective, choices regarding [definitions] are not trivial. These perspectives launch scholars down different theoretical trajectories, predispose them to ask distinct questions, and set them up to conduct different kinds of communication studies."[13] Someone interested in media might assume that a mediated source that transmits a message with certain effects is crucial to their definition of communication. A scholar interested in nature-human communication, however, might question the assumption that the human is the source of the communication in such an interaction and would develop a very different definition of and theory about communication as a result.[14] Different definitions serve different functions and enable theorists to do different things.

In this book, we do not offer a single definition of communication. Instead, we look at many theories, each of which offers its own definition of communication. We hope this range of definitions will help you determine the definitions that resonate with you, why those definitions make sense to you, and where your interests fit within the broad area called *communication theory.* Indeed, the choices you make will determine what questions you will ask, the paths you take within the discipline of communication, and even how you choose to communicate in your personal life.

The Academic Study of Communication

Communication has been systematically studied since antiquity,[15] but it became an especially important topic in the twentieth century. Barnett Pearce describes this development as revolutionary, in large part because of the rise of communication technologies (such as radio, television, telephone, satellites, and computer networking) along with industrialization, big business, and global politics: "New technologies of communication have empowered communicators to do more, faster, at greater distances, and with less effort than ever before, and they have greedily been put into play by those who would speak, write, listen, eavesdrop, monitor, organize, inform, persuade, educate, or entertain."[16] Clearly, communication has assumed immense importance in our time, as has the study of communication as a discipline.

Intense interest in the academic study of communication began after World War I, prompted by advances in technology and literacy.[17] Twentieth-century

philosophies of progress and pragmatism, which stimulated a desire to improve society through widespread social change, added further impetus to this interest in communication. During this period, the nation was "on the move" in terms of efforts to advance technology, improve society, fight tyranny, and foster the spread of capitalism. Communication figured prominently in these movements and became central to such concerns as propaganda and public opinion; the rise of the social sciences; and the role of the media in commerce, marketing, and advertising.

After World War II, the social sciences became fully recognized as legitimate disciplines, and the interest in psychological and social processes intensified. Persuasion and decision making in groups were central concerns, not only among researchers but in society in general. The widespread use of propaganda during the war to disseminate the ideas of oppressive ideological regimes alerted people to the uses and abuses of communication strategies. Communication studies developed considerably in the second half of the twentieth century because of pragmatic interests in what communication can accomplish and the outcomes it produces, whether in organizational, interpersonal, mediated, or public contexts.

At first, university courses related to communication were found in many departments—the sciences, the arts, mathematics, literature, biology, business, and political science.[18] In fact, communication still is studied across the university curriculum. Psychologists study communication, for instance, as a particular kind of behavior motivated by different psychological processes. Sociologists focus on society and social processes and thus see communication as one of many social factors important in society. Anthropologists are interested primarily in culture, treating communication as a factor that helps develop, maintain, and change cultures. There has been, then, considerable cross fertilization between communication and other disciplines: "While many disciplines have undoubtedly benefited from adopting a communication model, it is equally true that they, in turn, have added greatly to our understanding of human interaction."[19]

Gradually, separate departments of speech, speech communication, communication, communication studies, and mass communication developed. Today, most departments are called departments of communication or communication studies; whatever the label, they share a focus on communication as central to human experience. In contrast, then, to researchers in fields like psychology, sociology, anthropology, or business, who tend to consider communication a secondary process or something important for transmitting information once other structures are in place, scholars in the discipline of communication see communication as the organizing element of human life.[20] In other words, communication *constitutes* reality. *How* we communicate about our experience helps to shape that experience. Craig summarizes: "Communication . . . is not a secondary phenomenon that can be explained by antecedent psychological, sociological, cultural, or economic factors; rather, communication itself is the primary, constitutive social process that explains all these other factors."[21] As communication became a discrete discipline, organizations such as the National Communication Association and the International Communication Association, as well as many regional associations, developed to assist in articulating the nature of the discipline. Today, organizations devoted to the study of communication span

the globe; these include the World Communication Association, the Chinese Communication Association, the Australia and New Zealand Communication Association, the Asociación Latinoamericana de Investigadores de la Comunicación, and the Association for Women in Communication.

The Idea of Theory

Now that we have a sense of what *communication* means and how it developed as a discipline, we now turn to what *theory* means. We have been talking around the term without really defining it. Uses of the term range from your theory about why the Panthers should win the Super Bowl to Einstein's theory of relativity. Even scientists, writers, and philosophers use the term in a variety of ways. Stephen Littlejohn defined theory more technically as "a unified, or coherent, body of propositions that provide a philosophically consistent picture of a subject."[22] We use the term *theory* here in its broadest sense as *any organized set of concepts, explanations, and principles that depicts some aspect of human experience*.[23] Theories are formulated in order to help explain and understand phenomena; they provide a conceptual framework or foundation from which scholars develop knowledge. Theories serve various roles, from providing a means for the evaluation of new research data to identifying new research problems and questions to suggesting solutions to problems.

The purpose of this book is to represent a wide range of thought—or theories—about the communication process. Different theories are different ways of "talking about" communication. Each theory looks at the process of communication from a different angle, inviting us to consider what communication means and how it functions from that vantage point.[24] We will use the term *communication theory* to refer to single theories about communication as well as to the collective wisdom found in the entire body of theories related to communication.

Dimensions of Theory

Theories are typically seen as consisting of four dimensions: (1) *philosophical assumptions*, or basic beliefs that underlie the theory; (2) *concepts*, or building blocks of the theory; (3) *explanations*, or dynamic connections made by the theory; and (4) *principles*, or guidelines for action. Although some theories—usually referred to as quasi theories—include only the first two, most scholars believe that a theory worthy of the name must have at least the first three dimensions—assumptions, concepts, and explanations. Not all theories include the final piece; in fact, as we will see later, the inclusion of principles is somewhat controversial. Not every theory included in this book incorporates all four of these dimensions; many do not even use the word *theory* as a label for the set of explanations offered. We have tried to include well developed descriptions of communication phenomena that have had staying power in the discipline as well as some newer, evolving descriptions from emerging theoretical work about communication.

Philosophical Assumptions

The starting point for any theory is the philosophical assumptions underlying it. The assumptions to which a theorist subscribes determine how a particular theory will play out. Knowing the assumptions behind a theory, then, is the first step to understanding that theory. Philosophical assumptions often are divided into three major types: assumptions about *epistemology*, or questions of knowledge; assumptions about *ontology*, or questions of existence; and assumptions about *axiology*, or questions of value. Every theory, explicitly or implicitly, includes assumptions about these areas—about the nature of knowledge and how it is obtained, about what constitutes existence, and about what is valuable. Looking for these assumptions provides a foundation for understanding how a given theory positions itself in relation to other theories.[25]

Epistemology. Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge, or how people know what they claim to know. Any good discussion of theory will inevitably come back to epistemological issues. The following questions are among the most common questions of epistemological concern to communication scholars.[26]

To what extent can knowledge exist before experience? Many believe that all knowledge arises from experience. We observe the world and thereby come to know about it. But perhaps there is something in our basic nature that provides a kind of knowledge even before we experience the world. The capacity to think and to perceive is cited as evidence for such inherent mechanisms. For example, strong evidence exists that children do not learn language entirely from hearing it spoken. Rather, they may acquire language by using innate models to test what they hear. In other words, a capacity for language exists in the brain *a priori*—before a child begins to know the world through experiencing it.

To what extent can knowledge be certain? Does knowledge exist in the world as an absolute—there for the taking by whoever can discover it? Or is knowledge relative and changing? The debate over this issue has persisted for hundreds of years among philosophers, and communication theorists position themselves at various places along this continuum as well. Those who take a universal stance—who believe they are seeking absolute and unchangeable knowledge—will admit to errors in their theories, but they believe that these errors are merely a result of not yet having discovered the complete truth. Relativists believe that knowledge will never be certain because universal reality simply does not exist. Instead, what we can know is filtered through our experiences and perceptions; thus, theories evolve and change as well.

Anatol Rapoport presents the following amusing anecdote about three baseball umpires, which illustrates the different positions theorists take about the nature of knowledge:

> The first umpire, who was a "realist," remarked, "Some is strikes and some is balls, and I calls them as they is." Another, with less faith in the infallibility of the professional, countered with, "Some is strikes and some is balls, and I calls them as I sees them." But the wisest umpire said, "Some is strikes and some is balls, but they ain't nothing till I calls them."[27]

The first case represents knowledge as certain or absolute and awaiting discovery. The third umpire suggests the relativist position—nothing is certain until it

is labeled; the label plays a large part in determining what that something is. The second umpire represents a kind of middle ground in terms of the nature of knowledge, a position that acknowledges the role of perception and the human element in the discovery of knowledge.

By what process does knowledge arise? This question is at the heart of epistemology because the kind of process selected for discovering knowledge determines the kind of knowledge that develops from that process. There are at least four positions on the issue. *Rationalism* suggests that knowledge arises out of the sheer power of the human mind to know the truth ("I calls them as they is"). This position places ultimate faith in human reasoning to ascertain truth. In contrast, e*mpiricism* states that knowledge arises in perception. We experience the world and literally "see" what is going on ("I calls them as I sees them").

Constructivism, the third position, holds that people create knowledge in order to function pragmatically in the world—that phenomena can be fruitfully understood many different ways—and that knowledge is what the person has made of the world ("They ain't nothing till I calls them"). Taking constructivism one step further, *social construction* is a fourth position on how knowledge comes to be; it suggests that reality is socially constructed, a product of group and cultural life. Knowledge, then, is a product of symbolic interaction within social groups. In the case of the umpires, the knowledge of what a ball is and what a strike is only can be known or constructed within the framework of the game of baseball, and both terms—*ball* and *strike*—have many other meanings in English that are quite different from the meanings they have in baseball.

Is knowledge best conceived in parts or wholes? Those who take a holistic approach believe that phenomena are highly interrelated and operate as a system. True knowledge, in other words, cannot be divided into parts but consists of general, indivisible, gestalt understandings. Others believe that knowledge consists of understanding how parts operate separately, so they are interested in isolating, categorizing, and analyzing the various components that together comprise what can be considered knowledge.

To what extent is knowledge explicit? Many philosophers and scholars believe that you cannot know something unless you can state it. Within this view, knowledge is that which can be articulated explicitly. Others claim that much of knowledge is hidden—that people operate on the basis of sensibilities that are not conscious and that they may be unable to express. Such knowledge is said to be tacit.[28]

The way scholars conduct inquiry and construct theories depends largely on their epistemological assumptions, because what they think knowledge is and how they think it is obtained determines what they find. The same holds for the next type of philosophical assumptions—assumptions of ontology.

Ontology. Ontology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of being.[29] Epistemology and ontology go hand in hand because our ideas about knowledge depend in large part on our ideas about who is doing the knowing. In the social sciences, ontology deals largely with the nature of human existence; in communication, ontology centers on the nature of human social interaction because the way a theorist conceptualizes interaction depends in large measure on how the communicator is viewed. At least four issues are important.[30]

First, *to what extent do humans make real choices?* Although all investigators probably would agree that people perceive choice, there is a long-standing philosophical debate on whether real choice is possible. On one side of the issue are the *determinists* who state that behavior is caused by a multitude of prior conditions that largely determine human behavior. Humans, according to this view, are basically reactive and passive, creatures who simply respond to the world around them. On the other side of the debate are the *pragmatists*, who claim that people intentionally plan to meet future goals. This group sees people as active, decision-making beings who affect their own destinies. Middle positions also exist, suggesting either that people make choices within a restricted range or that some behaviors are determined whereas others are a matter of free will.

A second ontological issue is *whether human behavior is best understood in terms of states or traits.*[31] This question deals with whether there are fairly stable, enduring dimensions of human behavior such as introversion or passivity—*traits* that an individual generally exhibits across situations—or more temporary, situational conditions or *states* that affect how people behave. The state view argues that humans are dynamic and go through numerous states in the course of a day, year, and lifetime—from feeling elated, being anxious, being cautious—depending on what is being experienced. The trait view believes that people are mostly predictable because they display more or less consistent characteristics across time. One person is generally carefree, another is fearful, and yet another is optimistic. Traits, then, do not change easily and define an individual's way of being in the world. A trait might be thought of as a continual state. There is, of course, an in-between position, and many theorists believe that both traits and states characterize human behavior.

Is human experience primarily individual or social? This ontological question deals with whether the individual or the group carries the most weight in terms of determining human action. The unit of analysis for scholars with an individualistic perspective is the psychological dimensions of the individual—the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that affect how that individual experiences and acts in the world. Scholars who focus on the group use social life as the primary unit of analysis. These social scientists believe that humans cannot be understood apart from their relationships with others in groups and cultures.[32] The ontological question of individual or social is especially important to communication scholars because of their focus on interaction.

To what extent is communication contextual? The focus of this question is whether behavior is governed by universal principles or whether it depends on situational factors. Some philosophers believe that human life and action are best understood by looking at universal factors—laws, if you will—that operate generally across all situations. The theory of cognitive complexity states that those with greater cognitive complexity are better at adapting messages to audiences than those with lesser complexity. This is a universal principle that applies generally to speakers addressing audiences. Others believe that behavior is richly contextual and cannot be generalized beyond the immediate situation—that the specifics of the particular interaction must be considered. Communication scholars frequently take the middle ground, believing that behavior is affected by both general and situational factors.

Axiology. Axiology is the branch of philosophy concerned with the study of values—the values that guide research and the implications of those values for the outcome of the research process. For communication scholars, three axiological issues are especially important.[33]

Can theory be value free? Classical science answers this first axiological concern in the affirmative—theories and research are value free, scholarship is neutral, and scholars attempt to uncover the facts as they are. According to this view, when a scientist's values intrude, the result is bad science.[34] But there is another position on this issue: science is not value free because the researcher's work is always influenced by particular ways of viewing the world as well as preferences about what to study and how to conduct inquiry.[35] Furthermore, government and private organizational values as well as larger political and economic interests and ideologies determine what research is funded.[36] Scientists' choices, then, are affected by personal as well as institutional values, making value-free inquiry impossible.

A second value issue centers on the question of whether scholars intrude on and thereby affect the process being studied. In other words, *to what extent does the process of inquiry itself affect what is being seen?* To what degree does the researcher become part of the system under examination and thus affect that system? The traditional scientific viewpoint is that scientists must observe carefully without interference so that accuracy can be achieved. Critics doubt this is possible, believing that no method of observation is completely free of distortion. Even when you look at planets through a telescope, you are automatically distorting distance because of the properties of lenses. When the doctor puts a stethoscope on your chest, your nervous system reacts, and sometimes your heart rate is affected. If you bring participants into a laboratory and ask them to talk to one another as part of an experiment—as communication researchers often do—individuals do not communicate in exactly the same way as they would outside the laboratory.

Not only does inquiry potentially affect what is observed but it also can affect life outside of the study itself.[37] This means the scholar, by virtue of scholarly work, becomes an agent of change because studying human life changes that life. For example, if you interview a married couple about their relationship, simply reflecting on and talking about some aspect of their relationship can affect it in some way. The role of the scholar as change agent, then, means at a minimum considering the ethical issues raised by the research.

A third issue of axiology concerns the ends for which scholarship is conducted. *Should scholarship be designed to achieve change, or is its function simply to generate knowledge?* Traditional scientists claim that they are not responsible for the ways scientific knowledge is used—that it can be used for good or ill. According to this perspective, the discovery of nuclear fission was in and of itself an important scientific discovery—that it was used to make atomic bombs is not the scientist's concern. Critics object, saying that scientific knowledge is, by its very nature, instrumentalist. It is control oriented and necessarily reinforces certain power arrangements in society. Therefore, scholars have a responsibility to make conscious efforts to help society change in positive ways.[38]

The TV mini-series *Manhattan* addressed the use of the nuclear bomb and the ultimate ends for its creation.[39] Several members of the research team were

interested simply in the scientific development of the bomb; what it would be used for was not their concern. Others actually tried to sabotage the project because they knew the destruction the bomb would unleash. Yet others sought a middle ground—they wanted to detonate the bomb over an unoccupied island to show the world its potential force for destruction; they did not want it to be actually used to kill people unless the demonstration failed to convince Japan to surrender. At one end of the continuum, then, is *value-free scholarship* in which researchers believe they can seek objectivity without personal values affecting that scholarship. At the other end is *value-conscious* scholarship, in which researchers recognize the importance of values to research and theory, are careful to acknowledge their particular standpoints, and make concerted efforts to direct those values in positive ways.

We turn next to the second dimension of theories. Concepts—terms and definitions—tell us what a theorist is looking at and what is considered important.

Concepts

Humans are by nature conceptual beings and group things into conceptual categories according to observed qualities.[40] Thomas Kuhn writes that we do not "learn to see the world piecemeal or item by item"; we "sort out whole areas together from the flux of experience."[41] In our everyday world, we learn to consider some things to be trees, some houses, and some cars, and those categories are given to us by our experiences within a family, a community, a culture.

How one categorizes is not universal. The philosopher Michel Foucault cites a passage from a Chinese encyclopedia in which "'animals are divided into: (a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) suckling pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) *et cetera*, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies.'" He concludes by noting that "the thing we apprehend in one great leap . . . [is] the stark impossibility of thinking *that*."[42] It is not, in other words, a categorical system that makes sense to us in the United States in the twenty-first century.

Formulating and articulating a set of concepts is an important first step in theory building. To determine concepts, the communication theorist observes many variables in human interaction and classifies and labels them according to perceived patterns. The set of conceptual terms identified becomes an integral part of the theory—and is often unique to that theory. Take a classic communication theory—expectancy-violation theory—as one example.[43] This theory predicts how people react when their expectations about an interaction are somehow violated. Some of the most important concepts of this theory are:

- Expectancy
- Violation
- Nonverbal behavior
- Enacted behavior
- Heightened arousal
- Reward valence
- Interpretation

- Evaluation
- Reciprocity
- Credibility
- Attitude change
- Context

These concepts are essential to this particular theory. Although they do appear in other theories, no other theory combines them in exactly the same way as expectancy-violation theory.

Theories that stop at the conceptual level—theories in which the goal is to provide a list of categories for something without explaining how they relate to one another—are known as *taxonomies*. Because they do not provide an understanding of how things work, many theorists are reluctant to label them theories. The best theories, then, go beyond taxonomies to provide *explanations*—statements about how the variables relate to one another—to show how concepts are connected. Notice, for example, that the conceptual terms of expectancy violations theory listed above do not have much meaning in isolation. In order to highlight their relevance, the theory must show how one concept is related to, causes, or explains another concept or concepts. The third dimension of theory—explanations—addresses relationships.

Explanations

At the level of explanation, the theorist identifies regularities or patterns in the relationships among variables. Put simply, explanation answers the question: Why? An explanation identifies a "logical force" among variables that connect them in some way. A theorist might hypothesize, for example, that if children see a lot of television violence, they will develop violent tendencies. In the social sciences, the connection is rarely taken as absolute. Instead, we can say that one thing is "often" or "usually" associated with another and that there is a probable relationship: If children see a lot of television violence, they probably will develop violent tendencies. In the theory of expectancy violation, one important proposition is that a violation of an expected communication behavior, such as failing to maintain an appropriate physical distance, causes psychological or physiological arousal, which in turn affects whether the violation and the communicator doing the violating are viewed positively or negatively.

There are many types of explanations involved in theory construction, but two of the most common are causal and practical.[44] In *causal explanation*, events are seen as connected causally, with one variable seen as an outcome or result of the other. In causal explanation, the consequent event is determined by some antecedent event, and the researcher seeks to determine what that causal force is. *Practical explanation*, on the other hand, explains actions as goal related, with the action designed to achieve a future state. In practical explanation, actions are chosen because a particular outcome is desired.[45] To clarify this distinction, consider how you might explain to a friend why you failed a test. Using a causal explanation, you might say: "My professor didn't provide enough background, so I didn't have the information I needed to pass the test." On the other hand, if you did well on the test, you would probably use a practical explanation: "I want to get an A in this course, so I studied hard for this test."

The distinction between causal and practical explanation is important in the debate about what a theory should do. Many traditional theorists say that theories should stop at the level of explanation. These scholars believe that theories depict things as they are by identifying and explaining the causal mechanisms of events. There is no need to go further because they have accurately depicted how a particular communication phenomenon works. Other scholars assume there are many ways to interpret and act in a situation; they assume that people are agents who take an intentional and deliberate role in creating knowledge and meaning, and the decisions each individual makes may vary considerably from how others might approach that same situation.[46] For practical theorists, then, theories should go beyond depiction of how the world is; they should provide a guide to practical action—principles, the final dimension of theory.

Principles

A *principle* is a proposition, precept, or guideline that enables someone to interpret and evaluate an event and decide how to act in the situation. A principle has three parts: (1) it identifies a situation or event; (2) it includes a set of norms or values; and (3) it asserts a connection between a range of actions and possible consequences. For example, in cross-cultural adaptation theory, the first aspect is the move to and need to adapt to an unfamiliar culture. The second aspect—values or norms—includes the notion that communication is critical to adaptation. The connection asserted between actions and consequences, the third aspect of principle, is that as long as the individual remains engaged to some degree with the host culture, some adaptation will occur. Those theorists committed to making recommendations based on the theory developed believe the construction of principles in theory building to be paramount; generating principles that can be used as the basis of action in the world is the whole purpose for engaging in the theoretical enterprise. Such researchers want to improve life in concrete ways as a result of their work. In the case of *Manhattan* and the atomic bomb described above, those scientists concerned about how the bomb would be used in the world were concerned with the development of principles as part of theorizing.

The various dimensions of theory just described—assumptions, concepts, explanations, and principles—combine in different ways to construct different kinds of theories (although they are not always explicitly identified in each theory). Each starts from a different set of philosophical assumptions and makes use of different concepts and explanations. It is not enough, however, to distinguish the various parts of theories; evaluating theories is also an important part of the theorizing process.

Evaluating Communication Theory

As you encounter theories of communication, you will need a basis for judging one against another. All theories have limitations, so you will not find a theory for which each of the following criteria are "true." Furthermore, certain criteria will be more important to certain kinds of theories. The following criteria offer a starting point from which you can begin to assess the theories you will encounter in this text.[47]

Theoretical Scope

A theory's scope is its comprehensiveness or inclusiveness. Theoretical scope relies on the principle of generality, or the idea that a theory's explanation must be sufficiently general to extend beyond a single observation.[48] When generalized too narrowly, the explanation is merely speculation about a single event rather than a theoretical explanation about a range of events. The opposite is also true. A theory can fail by attempting to cover too broad a range of human behavior.

Two types of generality exist. The first concerns the extent of coverage. A theory that covers a sufficiently broad domain is considered a good theory. A communication theory that meets this test would explain a variety of communication-related behaviors usually confined to a specific context—health, media, or relationships, for example. One of the powers of a good practical theory is that it can be applied to richly different situations and still be helpful.

A theory need not cover a large number of phenomena to be judged good, however. Indeed, many fine theories are narrow in coverage. Such theories possess the second type of generality. They deal with a narrow range of events, but their explanations of these events apply to a large number of situations. Certain theories of relationship breakups illustrate this type of generality. They only cover one topic, but they are powerful because they explain many instances of relationship dissolution, whether of an intimate partnership, colleagues at work, or parents and children.

Appropriateness

Are the theory's epistemological, ontological, and axiological assumptions appropriate for the theoretical questions addressed and the research methods used? In the last section, we discussed the fact that different types of theory allow scholars to do different kinds of things. One criterion by which theories can be evaluated is whether their claims are consistent with or appropriate to their assumptions. If you assume that people make choices and plan actions to accomplish goals, it would be inappropriate to predict behavior on the basis of causal events. If you assume that the most important things affecting behavior are unconscious, it would be inappropriate to survey subjects about why they did certain things. If you believe that theory should be value free, it would be inappropriate to base your definition of communication on some standard of effectiveness or any other value.

In a way, then, appropriateness is logical consistency between a theory and its assumptions. For example, some writers from the cognitive tradition state that people actively process information and make plans to accomplish personal goals. Yet theories produced by these researchers often make law-like statements about universal behaviors, which, if true, would leave little room for purposeful action. In other words, causal explanation is not appropriate for explaining intentional, deliberate action.

Heuristic Value

Will the theory generate new ideas for research and additional theory? Does it have heuristic value? *Heuristic* literally means serving as an aid to learning, discovery, or problem solving. Theories differ significantly in their heuristic

value, but they accomplish this value in different ways. At one end are theories that are heuristic in generating new research questions, new hypotheses, and new concepts or variables. At the other end are theories that are heuristic to the extent that they produce new ideas by continually exploring new situations.

Validity

Generally speaking, validity is the truth value of a theory. "Truth" is not intended to mean absolute unchanging fact; rather, there may be a variety of "truth values" in an experience. Validity as a criterion of theory has at least three meanings.[49] One kind of validity is *value*, or worth. This kind of validity refers to the importance or utility of a theory—does the theory have value? This is the primary form of validity in practical theories. The second kind of validity is *correspondence*, or fit. Here the question is whether the concepts and relations specified by the theory actually can be observed. The third kind of validity is *generalizability*, which is exactly the same as theoretical scope, discussed above. This is the classical definition of validity and applies almost exclusively to traditional, discovery-oriented, law-like theories.[50]

Parsimony

The test of parsimony involves *logical simplicity.* If two theories are equally valid, the one with the simplest logical explanation is better. For example, if I can explain your behavior based on one simple variable such as reward, the theory is more parsimonious than if I need three variables such as *reward*, *personality*, and *difficulty.* We need to be careful with parsimony, however, as highly parsimonious explanations may be overly simplistic and may leave out many important factors that expand our insight into what is happening. Parsimony must always be balanced with other criteria.

Openness

Finally, theories can be judged according to their *openness*. This criterion is especially important in the practical paradigm. It means that a theory is open to other possibilities.[51] A theory is considered tentative, contextual, and qualified, and any theoretical construction is seen as a way of looking rather than a reproduction of reality. It admits to diversity and invites dialogue with other perspectives. It acknowledges its own incompleteness.

So What Makes a Good Theory?

Theories that exhibit the criteria offered here impact the communication discipline in several ways. First, they provide insights we would not ordinarily have. When you read a really good theory, you have an "aha" reaction. You realize that this makes sense, yet it is not something you necessarily would have come up with on your own. In other words, the theory introduces you to new ideas and helps you see things in new ways. Such theories are fascinating precisely because their concepts are intriguing and helpful.

At the same time, theories change constantly. The leading theories of today evolved from earlier theoretical ideas that have grown, combined, and expanded through research and careful thinking. Leading theories, then, are the product

of collaboration, extension, and elaboration; rarely is a single person responsible for a major theory. Although a theory may be associated with a particular scholar, you will see many contributors to it in the literature. This means that the work has attracted a number of scholars who carry on the work because the theory remains interesting and relevant.

Another hallmark, then, of an important or significant theory is that it has staying power. It was conceptualized and proposed by a theorist; developed over time, either because of that theorist's work or the work of others; and continues to evolve as scholars grapple with and contribute to it. Such theories are so useful, insightful, or interesting that they are not easily abandoned.

Our Theoretical Standpoint

By way of summary about the nature of theory, we end this discussion by summarizing how we think about theories. We hope this discussion begins to get you thinking about where you find yourself on the theory continuum—the assumptions that underlie your view of communication theory.

First, we see theories as constructions. Theories are created by people, not ordained by some higher power. When scholars examine something in the world, they make choices—about how to categorize what they are observing, what to name the concepts they identify, how broad or narrow their focus will be, and so on. Thus, theories represent various ways observers see their environments; theories do not "capture" reality.[52] Two observers watching two individuals in conversation will see different things, depending on each observer's theoretical point of view. One observer sees an instance of privacy management in how each person nonverbally imposes emotional and physical boundaries on the conversation; the other sees a case of accommodation because of how one individual acquiesces to the other. Yet another sees a theory about power and hegemony based on race and class. Each observer notices and chooses to focus on different aspects of the communicators and their interaction. None of the observers are wrong. Their theoretical frameworks simply stress different aspects of the observed situation.[53]

We believe, then, that theories are less a record of reality than a record of scholars' conceptualizations about that reality. Abraham Kaplan writes, "The formation of a theory is not just the discovery of a hidden fact; the theory is a way of looking at the facts, of organizing and representing them."[54] Stanley Deetz adds that "a theory is a way of seeing and thinking about the world. As such it is better seen as the 'lens' one uses in observation than as a 'mirror' of nature."[55] For us, then, theories are value laden and never neutral. A scholar might be drawn to a particular variable because of some experience she[56] had in her own life; another takes up a research topic because she is intrigued with how that body of literature defines human agency; yet another tackles a topic because it is so foreign to how she sees the world. A scholar's research standpoint is not good or bad, but it does shape the nature of the work, the kinds of studies possible, and the research trajectory that can result from it.

This also means that theories always leave something out. Theories focus our attention on certain things—patterns, relationships, variables—and ignore

others. This aspect of theory is important because it reveals the basic inadequacy of any one theory. In the field of physics, scientists seek one basic set of propositions that can explain all phenomena in the universe—the "theory of everything." Although physicists have not yet achieved this goal, most are optimistic that they will someday get there. This view of theory is unrealistic in the social sciences. In matters of human life, no single theory will ever reveal the whole "truth" or be able to address the subject of investigation totally.[57]

Furthermore, any theory is really just a snapshot in time. It provides a brief glance at a moment in the unfolding history of ideas within a community of scholars. The body of theory that evolves helps members of the community to identify their primary areas of interest; it pulls them together as a community and provides a set of standards for how scholarly work should proceed. But what is considered a good theory is an evolving notion, and theories come into and go out of favor as personal and disciplinary interests change and develop.

Robert Craig suggests, and we agree, that rather than viewing a theory as an explanation of a process, it should be seen as a statement or argument in favor of a particular approach or particular way of seeing the world. Because a theory offers one way to capture the "truth" of a phenomenon and is never the only way to view it, the process of theory construction is always a process of making a case for that construction. Every academic discipline has its own assumptions, equations, and language for the presentation of theories, and students of that discipline learn the appropriate language in which to argue for their theories. Each discipline, in other words, "contains a set of instructions for reading the world and acting in it."[58] Each discipline teaches its members how to view the world, how to theorize about that world, how to argue on behalf of that world, and ultimately how to act in that world.

We believe that any theory about what communication is should be evaluated on the basis of its usefulness rather than its truthfulness. How well does it help a scholar answer the question she is investigating? How well does it help that scholar explain the world as she sees it? How does it help with communication problems in everyday life? Deetz describes the process of theory construction as "the human attempt to produce theories that are useful in responding to our own issues. We are struggling to find interesting and useful ways of thinking and talking about our current situations and helping us build the future we want."[59] Theories are opportunities to reflect on problems and principles employed by actual communicators in various situations and, at their best, suggest new and constructive ways of interpreting situations. These interpretations make it possible to transform old patterns of communication and create new understandings for actions that work in people's lives. Theories function as "equipment for living,"[60] helping us understand, explain, interpret, judge, and participate in the communication happening around us.

Looking Forward

By the time you finish this book, you may feel that you have been assaulted by a seemingly limitless list of theories and a pile of names—or maybe you're already feeling a bit overwhelmed by what's to come. Rather than using these negative

metaphors, we encourage you to take a different view, to find another metaphor that helps you put what you have read in a larger, more workable perspective.

Try thinking about communication theory as a prism. Using this metaphor, communication becomes a multifaceted process that is understood in terms of many contexts, some narrow and some broad. You can look at a prism from any of its sides, peer into it, and watch various reflections come off the surface as you rotate it. Like a prism, communication theory absorbs insight and reflects it back in colorful and interesting ways. Communication theory, then, can be a way to see many possibilities for how to think about and study communication, to discover and understand how various theories connect with and reflect one another, and to gain insight into your favorite facets of communication.

Or maybe a project metaphor works for you. Instead of thinking about communication theories as discrete bits of data produced by individual scholars, think of the field as a collaborative building effort. What looks to you like a coherent structure—an edifice, a building—is in fact the result of decades of particular efforts to hammer out explanations for communication processes. But each of these efforts builds on other pieces that connect to yet other structures, and the end result looks like a single whole. Although communication theory may appear to be a sturdy edifice because of the ways the field is organized and presented, it is constantly under construction. It is never done. Even as you read this, scholars are contributing new ideas to the project that is communication theory, and these will ultimately change the shape of the edifice as the years go by.

Another metaphor you might use to frame how to think about communication theory is the metaphor of exploration. Imagine all of the theories described in this book as having been discovered during an expedition or journey. Think of communication—all of those aspects that make up the complicated processes involved in human symbol use—as an unexplored region with several major trails and many minor ones. These trails meander in many directions, looping around, crossing one another, diverging again and again. Each trail has numerous side pathways that also link up, creating a maze of possible turns to take. Over time, some pathways eventually come to be marked by deep ruts caused by heavy traffic, while others are less traveled, perhaps overgrown, and hard to find. As an explorer or scholar of communication, you set off on your adventure by heading down one pathway. You may find you stay with that, not deviating much onto smaller trails. Or you may find yourself turning from your original path to take a less traveled trail that, for some reason, catches your attention. Or perhaps you will choose to hike off trail, forging new trails and pathways for others to follow.

As a beginning scholar of communication—perhaps on your first visit to this region—you probably will start walking down whatever trail happens to be in front of you until you see something intriguing and turn off to explore where it leads. After some time, you will have favorite trails that you revisit often, and you may find that there are some parts of the landscape that you no longer enter. You will also find that you focus on some features of the landscape and not others. Some of you will look at landforms and geological structures—larger parts of theory. Others of you will be concerned with specifics within the landscape itself—the trees and flowers growing there or the wildlife. Yet others might choose to focus on how climate and weather affect the landscape and how the relationships among features affect one another.

Each of these choices is not unlike how scholars choose to focus within the grand landscape that is communication theory. Some study smaller units, others larger ones, and yet others the connections among theories. Each of these kinds of investigations is necessary for understanding the landscape as a whole, but no one person can undertake the investigation of them all. And just as you cannot investigate all of the communication questions the field offers, neither will all of them appeal equally. Some theories will naturally resonate with your perspective on the world. You may find yourself questioning others (just as you questioned whether to follow a particular trail through the wilderness), but you can still appreciate the theory (or path) because it offers some understanding of a communication phenomenon.

We hope you are not asked to learn all of the theories in this book and just reproduce them on an exam. We would prefer that you come to understand the larger issues, trajectories, and patterns in communication and know just a couple of theories within each area. If you have a grasp of the big picture, you will know where to look for theories within any given subarea or approach. And you will better appreciate the whole that is communication theory as a way of mapping this thing we call *communication*.

NOTES

[1] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 111.

[2] There are 126 definitions of communication listed in Frank E. X. Dance and Carl E. Larson, *The Functions of Human Communication: A Theoretical Approach* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1976), Appendix A.

[3] Theodore Clevenger, Jr., "Can One Not Communicate? A Conflict of Models," *Communication Studies* 42 (1991): 351.

[4] Frank E. X. Dance, "The 'Concept' of Communication," *Journal of Communication* 20 (1970): 210.

[5] Dance, "The 'Concept' of Communication," 201–10.

[6] Jürgen Ruesch, "Technology and Social Communication," in *Communication Theory and Research*, ed. Lee Thayer (Springfield, IL: Thomas, 1957), 462.

[7] *The American College Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1964), 244.

[8] Gerald R. Miller, "On Defining Communication: Another Stab," *Journal of Communication* 16 (1966): 92.

[9] Gary Cronkhite, *Communication and Awareness* (Menlo Park, CA: Cummings, 1976).

[10] John B. Hoben, "English Communication at Colgate Re-examined," *Journal of Communication* 4 (1954): 77.

[11] Bernard Berelson and Gary Steiner, *Human Behavior* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World, 1964), 254.

[12] Robert T. Craig, "Communication Theory as a Field," *Communication Theory* 9 (1999): 124.

[13] Peter A. Andersen, "When One Cannot Not Communicate: A Challenge to Motley's Traditional Communication Postulates," *Communication Studies* 42 (1991): 309.

[14] Recent developments in environmental communication offer an example of this kind of problematizing of a definition of communication. See Tema Milstein, "Environmental Communication," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 344–49.

[15] See, for example, David Beard, ed., "Forum: On the History of Communication Studies," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 93 (2007): 344–64; John Stewart, *Language as Articulate Contact: Toward a Post-Semiotic Philosophy of Communication* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), 33–101; W. Barnett Pearce and Karen A. Foss, "The Historical Context of Communication as a Science," in *Human Communication: Theory and Research*, ed. Gordon L. Dahnke and Glen W. Clatterbuck (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1990), 1–20; Nancy Harper, *Human Communication Theory: The History of a Paradigm* (Rochelle Park, NJ: Hayden, 1979).

[16] W. Barnett Pearce, *Communication and the Human Condition* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), xvii.

[17] This brief history is based on Jesse G. Delia, "Communication Research: A History," in *Handbook of Communication Science*, ed. Charles R. Berger and Steven H. Chaffee (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1987), 20–98. See also Donald G. Ellis, *Crafting Society: Ethnicity, Class, and Communication Theory* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1999), 16–19; Gustav W. Friedrich and Don M. Boileau, "The Communication Discipline," in *Teaching Communication*, ed. Anita L. Vangelisti, John A. Daly, and Gustav Friedrich (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1999), 3–13; John Durham Peters, ed., "Tangled Legacies," *Journal of Communication* 46 (1996): 85–147; and Everett M. Rogers, *A History of Communication Study: A Biographical Approach* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

[18] The multidisciplinary nature of the study of communication is examined by Craig, "Communication Theory as a Field"; see also Stephen W. Littlejohn, "An Overview of the Contributions to Human Communication Theory from Other Disciplines," in *Human Communication Theory: Comparative Essays*, ed. F. E. X. Dance (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 243–85; and W. Barnett Pearce, "Scientific Research Methods in Communication Studies and Their Implications for Theory and Research," in *Speech Communication in the 20th Century*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), 255–81.

[19] Dean Barnlund, *Interpersonal Communication: Survey and Studies* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1968), v.

[20] The disciplinary status of the field is addressed by Susan Herbst, "Disciplines, Intersections, and the Future of Communication Research," *Journal of Communication* 58 (2008): 603–14.

[21] Craig, "Communication Theory as a Field," 126.

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[41] Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* 128.

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[49] This analysis is adapted from David Brinberg and Joseph E. McGrath, *Validity and the Research Process* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1985).

[50] Shapiro, "Generalizability in Communication Research," 52. This point is developed in some detail by Penman, "Good Theory and Good Practice."

[51] This point is developed in some detail by Penman, "Good Theory and Good Practice."

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[53] These examples are taken from Norwood Russell Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 4–5.

[54] Kaplan, *Conduct of Inquiry,* 309.

[55] Stanley A. Deetz, *Democracy in an Age of Corporate Colonization: Developments in Communication and the Politics of Everyday Life* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1992), 66. The mirror analogy is developed and critiqued by Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979).

[56] We alternate pronouns between chapters so as not to privilege one gender over the other. In chapter one, we use the female pronoun *she* for all examples; in chapter two, we use the pronoun *he,* and so on.

[57] Many are skeptical that a theory of everything is even possible in physics. See, for example, David Lindley, *The End of Physics: The Myth of a Unified Theory* (New York: Basic Books, 1993).

[58] Quoted in "Anderson Succeeds Ellis as *Communication Theory* Editor, Invites Papers," *ICA Newsletter* 24 (January 1996): 1.

[59] Deetz, *Democracy in an Age of Corporate Colonization*, 77.

[60] Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 293–304.

2

Frameworks for Organizing Theories

In this chapter, we provide some of the larger frameworks or patterns by which communication theories have been organized. We do not suggest that these are the only or the best ways to organize the field—simply that they are possible organizational patterns. We want you to see that theories are placed into frameworks and that there are as many debates about placement as there are about the nature of the theories themselves. This chapter provides four schemas or typologies for organizing theories into larger units to make sense of the discipline of communication as an area of inquiry.

The four typologies—Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan's paradigms, Stanley Deetz's discourses, John Powers's tiers, and Robert Craig's traditions—focus on different aspects of theories, of the discipline, and of inquiry generally. Each asks different questions in order to make sense of the discipline of communication, and those differences reflect the interests of the creators of these schemas as much or more than the theories themselves. Again, we offer these typologies not because they are the "right" ways to organize theories but because they have had some influence and staying power in the discipline. In other words, they have intrigued enough scholars that they have stimulated conversations, elaborations, critiques, and commentaries about theory construction in communication.

You probably will find that one or some of these schemas resonate more with you than do the others—that you are drawn to one because of how you think about communication, which is precisely the point. Like the scholars who developed these organizing schemes, you will have preferences about arranging and grouping theories that make sense to you because of what interests you about communication as a field of inquiry. We hope you can appreciate these schemas for what they are—conceptualizations of theories that, like the theories themselves, can have significant impact on how the field of communication sees itself. We hope it encourages you to explore the many ways theories have been conceptualized into larger conceptualizations or frameworks over time.

Paradigms of Inquiry

Burrell and Morgan's four paradigms first were described in 1979 in a book called *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life.*[1] Originally conceived as a project to relate organizational theory to larger contexts within the social sciences, Burrell and Morgan realized that their approach was in fact a discourse on the nature of the social sciences and on the nature of society generally—and thus was relevant beyond studies of organizational life. Not only was their scheme the earliest one developed of the four we offer here, but it is somewhat of a classic in terms of how to think about social scientific inquiry in relation to society. It was picked up by scholars in communication—first by those in organizational communication and later by those interested in communication theory more generally—because it articulated clear distinctions between assumptions and approaches in the social sciences and gave legitimacy to the diverse methodological approaches that were emerging for conducting social scientific inquiry.

The Nature of Social Science

Burrell and Morgan began their efforts to categorize the theories in the social sciences by addressing four main debates. They frame these debates as questions that concern social scientific inquiry. The first concerns the nature of *reality* or ontology: Is reality external to the individual or is it the product of cognition—a product of the human mind? In other words, does reality impose itself on the individual from without, or does the individual create reality from within? Burrell and Morgan position *realism* at one end of this continuum and *nominalism* at the other.

The doctrine of realism maintains that there is a real world out there, made up of real structures and objects. No matter how we perceive these or name them—or whether we are even aware of them at all—they still exist. Realism is the effort to represent objects, actions, and social conditions as they are. The individual is born into a social world that exists prior to the existence of any human being. Nominalism, in contrast, is defined as the doctrine that universals are mere names without any corresponding reality. Instead, there are only concepts, created by humans, in order to describe the world. Words, concepts, names, and labels are simply tools—products of the human mind—useful for making sense of, managing, and navigating the external world. For the nominalist, the individual helps create the world into which he is born.

The second debate Burrell and Morgan describe is about epistemology (the nature of *knowledge*) and it is closely related to the first question about the nature of reality. Is reality something objective and real, capable of being known and transmitted to others in some tangible form, or is it more personal and subjective, the result of reflection and insight? *Positivism* and *anti-positivism* are the endpoints of this continuum.

Positivism seeks "to explain and predict what happens in the social world by searching for regularities and causal relationships between its constituent elements."[2] Positivism is essentially traditional science, characterized by proposing, testing, analyzing, and verifying hypotheses in order to establish the true nature of the world. Anti-positivism, in contrast, rejects the possibility of uni-

versal laws and suggests the world cannot be known except from the standpoint of the participants themselves. Anti-positivist epistemologies see the world as relativistic and reject the possibility of any kind of objective standpoint.

The third debate concerns issues of *human nature*. Are humans determined by their environment, or are they the creators of their environments? Are humans, as Burrell and Morgan put it, "the master" or "the marionette?"[3] *Determinism* and *voluntarism* are the endpoints Burrell and Morgan identify as defining this debate.

Determinism, or the belief that all human action is caused by or subject to forces outside the human being, suggests humans are determined by the conditions in which they find themselves. Voluntarism, on the other hand, sees human will as the fundamental agency or principle governing human action; in its extreme form, voluntarism suggests humans are autonomous beings, having and exercising free will apart from any situational factors or constraints.

Finally, these three questions or debates have important and different methodological consequences. How one answers questions about the social sciences will necessarily involve different ways of investigating and analyzing data. Burrell and Morgan's fourth concern, then, is with the methodological consequences of operating within any given approach. *Nomothetic* and *ideographic* are the terms they use to name the endpoints here.

Nomothetic inquiry is the process of inquiry in the natural sciences that involves testing hypotheses according to established and rigorous protocols, analyzing data according to established and verified tests, and using those results to predict future actions. Ideographic inquiry, on the other hand, relies on subjective reports from individuals; to understand something, the researcher must get inside the experience being investigated.

Burrell and Morgan collapse these four debates into a single continuum—*objective-subjective*—that captures the commonalities across the four debates and thus characterizes inquiry in the social sciences. The objective dimension is essentially an "attempt to apply models and methods derived from the natural sciences to the study of human affairs. It treats the social world as if it were the natural world."[4] The subjective end of the continuum suggests that human affairs cannot be understood by means of the models and methods of the natural sciences; inquiry at this end of the continuum reflects a much more personal way of seeing the world. Realism, positivism, determinism, and nomothetic inquiry fall on the objective end of the continuum, while nominalism, anti-positivism, voluntarism, and ideographic inquiry fall on the subjective end.

The Nature of Society

Having offered their characterization of the social sciences, Burrell and Morgan next turn to a characterization of the nature of society. Here, they offer the principle of *regulation-radical change* to capture society as it intersects with the social sciences. They use the term *regulation* to refer to those theories that focus on the underlying unity and cohesiveness of society and the need for regulation in human affairs. The basic question of such theories is "why society tends to hold together rather than fall apart."[5] The notion of radical change stands in stark contrast to the notion of regulation; theories that share this focus seek to explain the nature of contemporary society, which they see characterized by change, conflict, and domination. The primary question addressed by

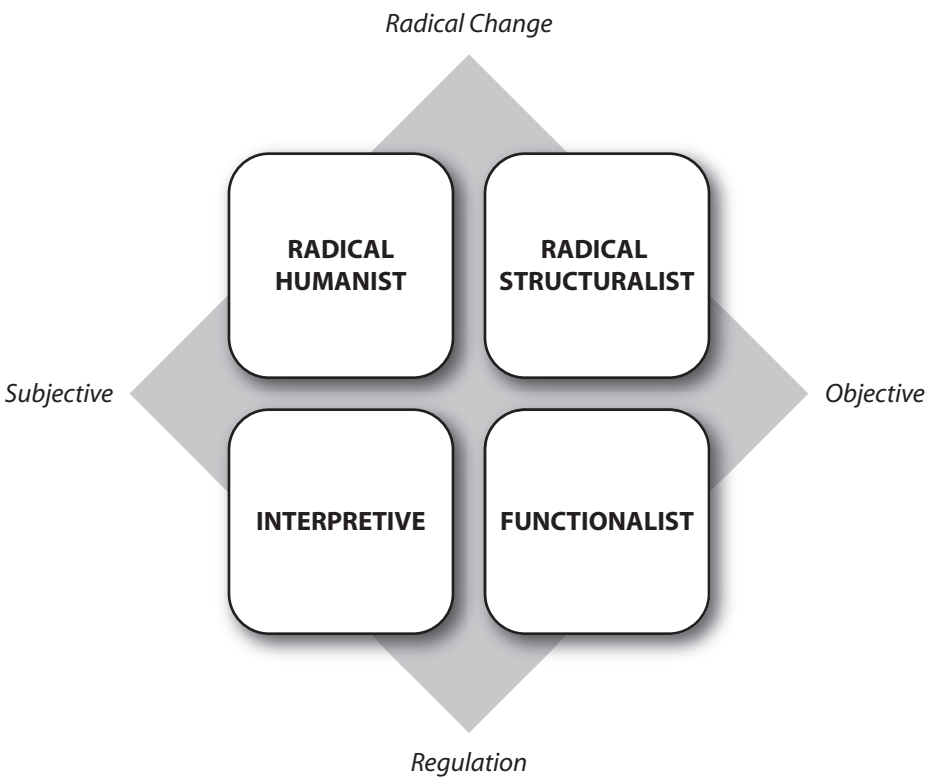
such theories concerns the deprivations and limitations of the human condition and the potential for emancipation.

Four Paradigms

Burrell and Morgan call the four quadrants created by the subjective-objective and regulation-radical change axes *paradigms* and consider them mutually exclusive ways to analyze human social life. They label these paradigms the *radical humanist*, *radical structuralist*, *interpretive*, and *functionalist*. Each begins with different assumptions and standpoints about science, social science, and society, and each employs different tools for analysis. Thus, each identifies a social-scientific reality that is quite distinctive: "To be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way."[6] Furthermore, the paradigms offer a convenient means for understanding the differences and similarities among theories and for locating one's own frame of reference as a theorist within the different ways to view inquiry and society.

Burrell and Morgan construct a chart to integrate their view of the social sciences with the nature of society. They make the subjective-objective axis a horizontal one and the regulation-radical change one a vertical one.[7] Together, these form a matrix that enables the systematic and comprehensive identification and analysis of social theories (see figure 2.1):

Figure 2.1 Four Paradigms of Social Science



Functionalist. Burrell and Morgan began with the functionalist quadrant to explain their typology because this has been the primary paradigm for the investigation of organizations in sociology. It approaches inquiry from an objective stance and is firmly rooted in the regulation mode. Thus, the theories located in this quadrant share a view of the social world as relatively stable and concrete. The objects and relationships that comprise this world can be studied by approaches developed in the natural sciences. Just as the world of nature is ordered, so the world of human affairs is similarly ordered and regulated. The task of the functionalist scholar is to understand the nature of this order.

In the communication discipline, the theory of reasoned action (TRA) is an example of a functionalist theory.[8] TRA (chapter 3) was designed to identify elements that can predict human behavior and thus guide behavior change. Smoking cessation, blood donation, and condom use are some of the topics to which TRA has been applied. The theory relies on several causal variables, such as behavioral intention, attitude, and motivation to comply to predict how someone is going to behave. Behavioral intention around stopping smoking can be calculated, for example, by whether someone buys nicotine patches, limits their smoking to half a pack a day, and finds a buddy to stop smoking with. All of these are strong predictors of the desired behavior around smoking. The researcher sums all of the relevant indicators and predicts how likely it is that the individual in question will indeed stop smoking. The theory of reasoned action is functionalist because it assumes a stable social world that will respond as predicted once the factors significant to the process are identified.

Interpretive. The interpretive paradigm, like the functionalist, features regulation, but it has a subjective standpoint as its focus. This paradigm seeks to explain the fundamental nature of the social world as it is manifest at the level of subjective experience. Scholars operating within this paradigm see the world as fundamentally ordered and cohesive, and they are interested in how it emerges, develops, and evolves for each participant.

Social action media theory (chapter 5) is one example of a communication theory within the interpretive paradigm. This theory emphasizes the interpretive activity of media audiences. Media are understood to be a concrete feature of everyday life, but audiences create their own texts—iconic and idiosyncratic—from media content. These personal texts are always subject to the commentary and critique of the community to which the individual belongs. The social world, then, contains its stable elements—various media outlets—but an audience's engagement with those media is subjective.[9]

Radical Structuralist. The radical structuralist paradigm approaches the world from an objectivist standpoint and with a goal of change. Theorists working within this tradition seek a change in societal structures and relationships. Like radical humanists, they desire emancipation, but it comes not through a focus on consciousness but through the capacity for change built into the nature and structure of society itself. According to these theorists, fundamental conflicts characterize society, and the political and economic crises generated as a result of these conflicts are what lead to social change. Radical change, then, is not only possible but also natural and necessary. There is a deterministic dimension to this paradigm.

Feminist standpoint theory (chapter 3) is an example of a theory that fits within the radical structuralist paradigm. Feminist standpoint theorists are interested in identifying the cultural norms and values that account for the subjugation of girls and women as well as highlighting the distinct knowledge cultivated by women's socialization and activities in the world. This theory suggests that all knowledge is ideological in that the conditions and experiences common to females are not natural but are a result of social, political, and economic forces to which girls and women are subjected. In seeking to identify and challenge existing social hierarchies and arrangements that have privileged men and subordinated women, feminist standpoint theorists both acknowledge ongoing structures in society and the capacity for those structures to change.[10]

Radical Humanist. Theories within the radical humanist paradigm are subjective and change oriented. Scholars working within this paradigm are committed to emancipating individual consciousness from the constraints that social arrangements have on human development. The desired outcome of such efforts is a release of human consciousness from alienating and limiting ideologies that structure the nature of society; so the change sought is not a change to the structures of society but to individual consciousness itself.

Critical ethnography (chapter 11) is a theory, popular in communication and other disciplines, that fits within the radical humanist paradigm. A research methodology and strategy more than a theory per se, critical ethnography seeks to understand the norms, rules, and cultural practices that characterize a group, culture, or society in order to produce its transformation. Critical ethnographers, in other words, share features of the objective axis—there are real conditions, artifacts, relationships, and forms in the world that need to be taken into account. At the same time, they seek an end to power hierarchies, domination, and oppression, and they collaborate with the participants whose cultures they are studying to figure out what will contribute to this emancipation.[11]

In sum, Burrell and Morgan's four paradigms provide a general view of how the social sciences and society intersect in terms of inquiry. By identifying dominant scientific elements—the subjective vs. objective dimension—and dominant social elements—the regulation vs. change dimension—they construct a scheme that foregrounds the assumptions that undergird the various theoretical stances. At the same time, they recognize and highlight commonalities and differences across types of inquiry so theories can be productively compared and contrasted.

Burrell and Morgan are not without their critics.[12] In fact, Stanley Deetz developed the second scheme we describe in response to limitations he saw with the Burrell and Morgan model. Please remember that we are not siding with either Burrell and Morgan or Deetz—or with anyone else for that matter. We are simply using the two variations, along with the other two schemas that follow, to show different approaches that have been developed for and applied to theories in the communication discipline.

Discourses of Communication

Stanley Deetz, like Burrell and Morgan, is an organizational scholar. Burrell and Morgan are sociologists; Deetz's disciplinary home is communication. He is

interested in "how organizational science is practiced—how research representations are produced, disseminated, and used."[13] One of the issues Deetz has with the Burrell and Morgan classification is that it reifies research approaches. It is easy to put concepts into one of the four quadrants rather than focusing on the two lines that created those grids—lines that usefully could call attention to important differences among research traditions as well as the ways different kinds of inquiry cross those lines. In his revision of the Burrell and Morgan categorization, first published in 1996, Deetz chooses to ask a different question: "the question is not: Are these the right categories or who fits in each? But: Are these differences that make a difference?"[14]

Axes and Quadrants

Deetz begins his reworking of Burrell and Morgan's classification by locating two different axes with which to form the four quadrants of social scientific inquiry. The first dimension, the horizontal axis, contrasts *local/emergent* concepts with *elite/a priori* concepts. This axis focuses on the origin of research concepts, problems, and questions, and the key question is "where and how do research concepts arise?"[15] In other words, do concepts develop and emerge in relation to those who use them, with the concepts themselves transformed by the research process, or are concepts static—developed and applied by the researcher to those under investigation? This first dimension, then, shares with Burrell and Morgan's objective-subjective continuum a focus on the process of scholarly inquiry.

Research at the local end of Deetz's continuum privileges multiple communities, multiple language games, and local narratives. The knowledge produced is situated and practical, with the researcher learning along with participants as they develop new meanings, new translations, and new ways of understanding on the basis of their interactions throughout the research process. At the other end of the pole, the elite/a priori end, Deetz calls attention to research that privileges the language system of the researcher and the research community. The elite/a priori endpoint tends to seek "truth" statements that arise out of distancing oneself from the research and seeking concepts and insights that hold or are generalizable across populations. What gets produced is knowledge that is more theoretical than at the local end, and it is knowledge justified by appeals to universal or essentialist assumptions. The attention to consistency and reliability often leads to seeing this kind of research as "better" in that it "more carefully represents what 'really' is the case."[16]

Deetz labels the vertical dimension of his scheme the *consensus-dissensus* axis, which directs attention to how research relates to existing social orders. Again, he parallels Burrell and Morgan's interest in the relationship between inquiry and society but believes the consensus-dissensus labels better describe the different ways that research studies manage social orders. The consensus end of the pole assumes an order waiting to be discovered; more often than not, such social orders are generally unquestioned and are taken for granted. What is "normal" is featured at this endpoint, and what is dissonant is downplayed, with efforts to reduce dissonance, deviance, and uncertainty in favor of existing norms.

At the other end (dissensus) conflict and struggle are highlighted; in fact, these are considered to be the natural state at that endpoint. Research itself is

considered part of the struggle of dissensus. The research process is one of constantly challenging seemingly stable orders and revealing what previously had not been visible about the tensions and conflicts operating in society. Thus, the nonnormative is emphasized here as well as random events that inevitably help produce social change. Deetz does not see the ends of these two poles as discrete processes. Rather, he maintains that every consensus arises out of dissensus, and dissensus gives way to emerging consensus.

Discursive Orientations

Deetz refers to the spaces created by the two axes of local/emergent-elite/a priori and consensus-dissensus as discourses, and he specifies a type of discourse characteristic within each quadrant: the discourse of normative studies, the discourse of interpretive studies, the discourse of critical studies, and the discourse of dialogic studies. Each discourse (described below) represents a different way of engaging in a research process. Deetz chooses not to call these paradigms, as Burrell and Morgan do, because he does not see them as discrete and mutually exclusive divisions. Instead, he suggests most researchers frequently cross and mix these discourses; they "gather at the crossroads, mix metaphors, borrow lines from other discourses," and "happily move from one discourse to another without accounting for their own location."[17] These discourses, then, are not "sealed off" from each other. In fact, Deetz is interested in how various groups relate to one another across the discursive lines and how researchers draw from the various discourses in ways not always explicit in their work. He cites the case of feminist research, which shows a "general sympathy with the conceptual and analytic power of dialogic research programs" but also carries a political agenda typical of critical theory. Each discursive space, then, is intended to show how research looks from a particular vantage point. Both the "ideal types" as well as the "differences that matter that are hard to see in the flow of research activity" are visible with this scheme.[18]

Discourse of Normative Studies. Deetz first describes a normative orientation, characterized by research practices that mirror the natural sciences. He uses the label *normative* to highlight the interest in the normalization or generalization of experience through a search for law-like rules to govern human experience. The goal of normative research is to discover fundamental processes that in turn can contribute to the creation of changes for the betterment of the human social world. The consensus pole and the elite/a priori pole are featured, which means the outcome of research in this discourse tends to be regarded as facts—as fairly stable and agreed upon information.

Kory Floyd's affection exchange theory (chapter 7) offers an example of normative studies.[19] Floyd argues that affection is an adaptive process—that it leads to human survival and procreation. Thus, the theory has a foundation in Darwinian approaches. The theory includes five postulates (with subpostulates)—law-like propositions that explain the relationships among constructs in his theory. For example, one subpostulate states that experiences of receiving affection are associated with regulatory physiological pathways for stress and reward. In other words, receiving affection is associated with positive health outcomes such as management of stress hormones, reduced blood pressure and resting heart rate, and blood lipids.

Discourse of Interpretive Studies. Interpretive discourses privilege research participants themselves rather than normalizing processes that seek to categorize, generalize, and create covering laws that apply across populations. Instead, interpretive studies are concerned with people as active sense makers, so the key concepts and explanations of the research are worked out with those whom the researcher is studying. Interpretive discourses share with the normative an effort to "get it right, to display unified, consensual culture in the way that it 'actually' exists."[20] To this end, many interpretive studies rely on field research and in-depth personal interviews as the researcher seeks a full understanding of how a particular aspect of human cultural life is produced and maintained through norms, rituals, and daily practices. These discourses privilege the local/emergent and consensus ends of Deetz's axes because they attend to the particular meanings created by a community but are also seeking to collect and preserve the nature of a social group or culture at a given moment in time.

Donal Carbaugh's studies of various cultures—from the Blackfeet in Montana to the television program *Donahue*—exemplify interpretive work. Using the theory of speech codes (chapter 4), which seeks to understand the terms, rules, and meaning that make the talk in a given community distinctive, Carbaugh analyzes conversations in order to capture, understand, and explain the cultural codes operating. What often appears to be an individualistic speech act is, in fact, a cultural construction and performance. Carbaugh notes that "What I hold up . . . is not merely a mirror, but a portrait that has been carefully crafted to embrace communal aspects of living that may otherwise remain hidden."[21] Whether examining how listening or honesty or sex are talked about, Carbaugh's research relies on reflecting with his interactants about those practices: "Reactions were always instructive, for they lead me deeper into collective premises for what was going on, these being at times quite far from what I could have understood, initially, without their input."[22]

Discourse of Critical Studies. Critical researchers, Deetz's third type of discourse, identify and critique forms of domination and oppression by showing that various constructions of reality favor certain interests and obscure others. The result is false consciousness and distorted communication, constructions that appear normative or natural over time. In examining structures of domination and marginalization, critical studies scholars seek the emancipation of people, meanings, and values, so there is a transformative goal inherent in critical theory. Because of its interest in disrupting unexamined social forces and discursive practices, critical research is positioned at the dissensus end of the continuum; it seeks to make people aware of the distorted and skewed interests that dominate and to encourage their acting to change these conditions. Because the groups or organizations studied are seen as social historical creations that gain dominance over time and through a process of hegemonic struggle, critical studies are positioned in the elite/a priori space in Deetz's scheme.

Lisa Flores's study of the competing narratives of Mexican immigration, as presented in US media in the 1920s and 1930s, is a study that fits within Deetz's critical orientation.[23] Flores traces two major narratives of Mexican immigrants—one as docile laborers or peons lacking in ambition and another as dangerous criminals. Important to both narratives, however, is the way each

narrative "constructed the Mexican character so it had no permanent place in the national body."[24] Notions of nation, race, and immigration intersected to create a discourse designed to contain Mexicans and leave them out of the United States. Flores's interest in the historical and persistent constructions of Mexican immigrants illustrates the privileging of a priori constructions; her interest in disrupting these ongoing rhetorical constructions falls on the dissensus end of Deetz's axis.

Discourse of Dialogic Studies. Deetz's final discourse is that of dialogic studies. Dialogic studies are concerned with "the fragmentation and potential disunity in any discourse." These discourses share with critical studies an interest in domination, but they do not see domination as a preexisting condition or structure. Instead, domination is situational rather than fixed; it is not "done by anyone."[25] Scholars working within this form of discourse look for suppressed identities, meanings, voices, and practices and seek to cultivate local means of resistance to address the partiality and asymmetry in any given interaction. Social transformation is less a utopian ideal than a continually ongoing and evolving process of addressing particular instances of marginalization and domination. Because of the attention to particular and specific cases of marginalization, this research is located at the local/emergent pole; because of its interest in disrupting and intervening in such instances, its concern is with dissensus rather than with consensus.

From the Source . . .

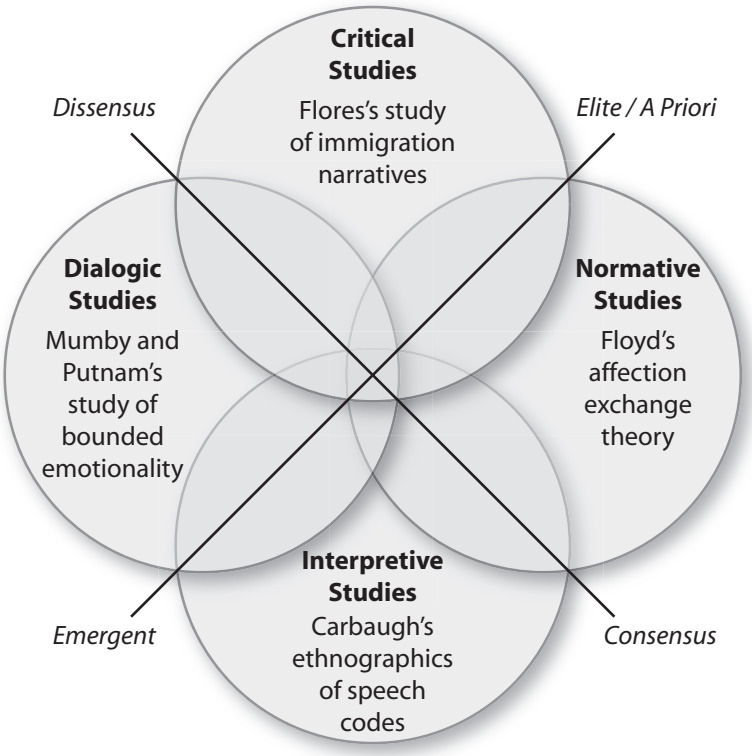
The point of presenting a different grid in response to Burrell and Morgan was to avoid the harm from perpetuating the subject-object dichotomy. I hoped to provide a better way to discuss the construction processes in all knowledge, emotion, or any experience. I also hoped my typology would direct attention to the different logics we each use in regard to different human problems with varying degrees of social consensus and open interaction with others.

Stan Deetz

Dennis Mumby and Linda Putnam offer a feminist organizational critique of the concept of *bounded rationality.*[26] The modifier *bounded* was introduced to organizational theorizing to suggest that optimal choice, or rationality, is constricted by how humans act in organizations. When a decision needs to be made, individuals act with incomplete information, explore only a limited number of alternatives, and generally select the first appropriate alternative that meets organizational goals, rather than looking for the optimal solution. Mumby and Putnam disrupt the normalization of this concept, proposing instead a theory of bounded emotionality, which takes into account intersubjective dimensions such as nurturing, caring, and supportiveness that are also part of an organization or community. In bounded emotionality, emotions are values that add to rather than subtract from the decision-making capacity of the human being. Mumby and Putnam's approach emphasizes the particular forms of domination constructed by

the concept of bounded rationality, making their work fit with the local/emergent endpoint; in seeking to disrupt bounded rationality in favor of bounded emotionality, which better meets not only organizational needs but also the needs of women in organizations, they are addressing the dissensus endpoint. Figure 2.2 displays Deetz's discourses along with a representative theory for each discursive type.

Figure 2.2 Deetz's Four Discourses



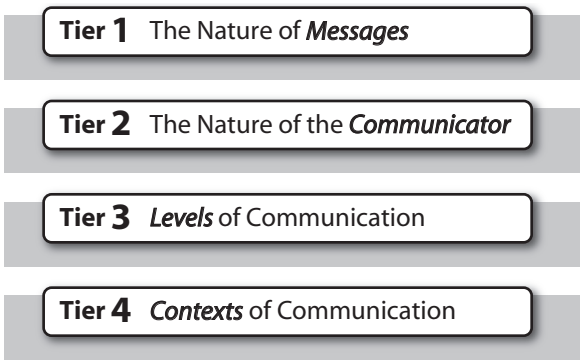
In sum, Deetz's scheme builds on Burrell and Morgan's starting point. Rather than emphasizing what fits within each quadrant itself, Deetz encourages scholars to think about research as part of fluid and evolving discursive communities. Any given piece of scholarship might take bits and pieces from various discourses. Deetz hopes that his approach spurs scholars to think more carefully about the configurations that characterize their research and to make explicit the assumptions and values that guide their research.

Communication Tiers

We include John Powers's approach to organizing theories in communication because it differs substantially from both Burrell-Morgan and Deetz. Published

in 1995, Powers was interested in capturing what makes the communication discipline distinctive as well as how the intellectual diversity of research interests plays out across the different contexts in which communication occurs. Specifically, he was responding to three questions an outsider to the discipline might ask: (1) What holds this field together? (2) What is the central issue or organizing principle? (3) How can we make sense of the diversity of research happening in the discipline? Powers, then, is interested in how research in communication can be made understandable to outsiders—especially scholars in other disciplines, administrators, and educators.[27] In focusing on research studies and how they fit within the field, he is less concerned with theories per se than are the other communication scholars whose organizing schemes are included in this chapter. Nevertheless, his work has value because of how he conceptualizes the field; the theoretical assumptions behind his conceptualization can be articulated, even if Powers does not explicitly do so.

Figure 2.3 Powers's Four Tiers



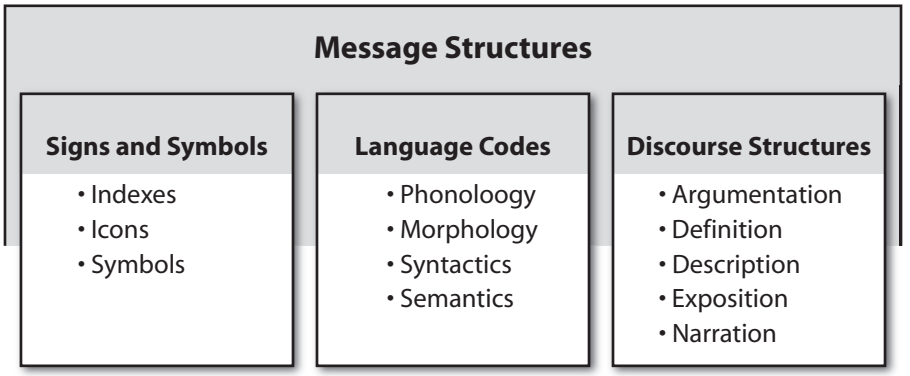
Powers constructs a model of the discipline that consists of four tiers. Each tier deals with a different aspect of the field, and each builds on the tiers that come before. The end result is a comprehensive sense of the intellectual discipline of communication as well as its major emphases and contexts (see figure 2.3).

Tier One

The first tier Powers identifies highlights the distinctive nature of the discipline. What makes the field of communication unique is the concept of the *message*. While many disciplines address aspects of communication (it is, after all, an important element in human social life), the communication discipline is distinctive in that it centers the study of communication. As Powers notes, the "concept of message is the single core concept that most clearly differentiates any *communication*-centered discipline from all other intellectual pursuits."[28] Because the message is the conceptual center of the discipline, the first tier is devoted to the analysis of messages. Powers includes in this tier traditional divisions of the field—verbal versus nonverbal communication, signs versus symbols, and intentional versus nonintentional messages. Within each of these divisions, Powers suggests arranging research about messages from the smallest, most independent messages to the larger, more complex message structures. Within the study of verbal messages, for instance, he suggests signs and symbols as the smallest mode followed by language as a formal code and then discursive structures (see figure 2.4).

A study by Joshua Bentley about Rush Limbaugh's 2012 apology to Sandra Luke provides an example of research that features message.[30] Conservative

Figure 2.4 Message Structures



radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh called Sandra Fluke, a Georgetown University law student, a "slut" and a "prostitute" after her comments in support of insurance coverage for contraceptives. Limbaugh argued that these were appropriate descriptors because Fluke wanted other people to pay for her to have sex. Limbaugh continued to make similar statements over the coming days before issuing an on-air apology—but only after some advertisers and radio stations dropped his program. Analyzing Limbaugh's public statements, Bentley referenced the symbols, narrative, and argumentative structures used to conclude that although Limbaugh used strategies of evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness, and mortification, in fact, his apology was vague, insincere, and closer to a pseudo apology. Bentley suggested that Limbaugh adopted these strategies because of a concern with preserving his talk radio audience rather than a desire to truly apologize.

Tier Two

The second tier in Powers's scheme is centered on the *communicator* and specifically on the relation between the communicator and messages. Powers offers three primary concerns about the communicator that have occupied the interests of those in the communication discipline: (1) the communicator as an *individual*; (2) the nature of the *relationships* created, maintained, disrupted, and destroyed through communication; and (3) the role of communication in creating a *cultural community.* The first concern is about the individual and the mental processes, personality characteristics, and traits that affect message creation, presentation, and reception. The second interest—in relationships—deals with those aspects of message that come into play in the interaction between two communicators. Community is the third concern. It deals with the role of communication in "*creating, maintaining, disseminating, and changing a culture's understanding of reality.*"[31] How messages create shared culture through material artifacts, every day practices, rituals, and interactions is the focus of this level of analysis.

For each of these areas of investigation, the assumption is that some aspect of the message, identified in tier one, is selected for study. For instance, a

researcher interested in the individual communicator, the first area Powers identifies in tier two, might study the nonverbal behaviors of a communicator and how those affect the presentation of a message. A researcher interested in relationships might choose to study the role of communication in the development of a friendship or an intimate relationship. Finally, a researcher interested in the role of communication in creating a cultural community might study how a particular type of humor functions among adolescents.

Tema Milstein and Charlotte Kroløkke's study comparing whale watching and the viewing of a fetal ultrasound[32] offers an interesting example of a focus on the communicator—although undoubtedly not the kind of study Powers had in mind when he was developing his scheme. Milstein and Kroløkke consider whale watchers and family members viewing an ultrasound in progress to be bio-tourists or *spectactors*, a term that combines *spectacle* and *actor* to highlight the performative aspect of this kind of viewing. Milstein and Kroløkke focus on the similar responses of these actors to seeing the whale or fetus for the first time, and they call these responses an orcagasm and ultragasm respectively. These messages of awe and wonder rupture and transcend, at least momentarily, the humanature [*sic*] divide. The communicators become boundary creatures themselves, challenging and resisting the boundaries that have kept humans separate from the natural world.

Tier Three

Tier three is centered on *level* in Powers's scheme. Powers uses the term to describe the nature of or sphere of communication, and he discusses the three levels that traditionally have defined the communication discipline—interpersonal, group, and public. Today, we would add (at a minimum) mediated, cultural, and societal levels to this scheme. The assumption is that the level at which communication occurs provides a distinctive sphere that is qualitatively different from what is happening in tiers one and two. The number of people involved in the interaction is a clear criterion for distinguishing among levels, but degree of formality may also be a factor. Powers suggests there are distinctive patterns of communication that occur at each level that significantly affect how the message is designed and presented and how the communicator behaves. A message in an interpersonal interaction would look quite different from a message delivered at a graduation, and the communicators would play distinctively different roles as well.

An example of a study in the interpersonal sphere or level was conducted by Katheryn Maguire and Erin Sahlstein Parcell about strategies used by military families during deployment.[33] They interviewed 50 women from families whose partners had recently returned from deployment in Iraq or Afghanistan, asking about a significant event or turning point in the relationship, the stresses they experienced, coping responses, and communication patterns with their spouses. Maguire and Parcell identified several coping paradoxes, including avoidance and loss, relationship maintenance and work, and social support and stress. The first involved spouses withdrawing from or avoiding their spouses during predeployment because they were afraid of the impending separation and emotional distance. So they withdrew when they should have been spending quality time together. The women also reported wanting to use the time together to share their

thoughts and feelings, but also needing to do the emotional labor of preparing to continue the relationship at a distance. A third paradox involved asking others for support but then being stressed out by the extra demands that support involved. An example would be a new mother asking her mother to come help with the baby but then resenting her mother because of the extra stress her mother's presence caused. The authors suggest that if those involved in such situations could acknowledge the existence of these coping paradoxes, perhaps the paradox could be mitigated and the situation reframed. This study, then, contributed to understanding particularly stressful family interactions at the interpersonal level.

Tier Four

The fourth tier described by Powers is *situation* centered. It takes into account the recurring social contexts in which communication is studied in the three previous tiers. The situations Powers identified include education, the family, medical and health contexts, legal settings, mediated communication, organizations, religious settings, and sports teams. This is by no means an exhaustive list; it is simply some of the socially significant situations that have interested communication scholars. If an outsider were to look at the discipline just in terms of this tier—the many contexts studied—the coherence of the discipline might be difficult to see. But this is why it is important that the previous three tiers are always evident and acknowledged:

> Fortunately, our discipline is not defined by the wide variety of social situations within which it explores communication phenomena. It is defined by its emphasis on the tier-1 analysis of messages, the tier-2 investigation of the communicator, and the tier-3 study of the levels of communication that occur within those situations. From a disciplinary point of view, we don't study "health care" in the abstract; we study message-related activity in health care situations. We don't study "organizational behavior" in general; we study the role of message behaviors within various organizational situations.[34]

From the Source . . .

I first became interested in identifying the inherent conceptual structure of the communication discipline early in graduate school, when my major professor told me that there was no single article or book I could read on the topic, and that if I wanted to read one, I would have to produce it myself. The project began in earnest during my first academic appointment when I posted a large blank sheet of paper on my wall and started to chart a place for every article I read—showing each one in relation to every other in terms of its primary focus. Over several years of drawing, erasing, and rearranging, the four-tier structure as it was published in 1995 came into being. The model has subsequently been used by colleagues to develop academic curricula and by myself to consider how our theoretical ideas can be critiqued and interlinked to form a more coherent philosophical foundation for theoretical work in the future. It comes as close as I could make it to being the article I would like to have read at the beginning of my own graduate education.

John Powers

Michael Butterworth's research on public memorializing provides an example of a study in this fourth tier.[35] Butterworth examined public memorializing at major sporting events on the tenth anniversary of 9/11. He found that the ceremonies included several common elements: portrayal of US flags and red, white, and blue colors; performance of the national anthem or other patriotic songs; and the presence of military personnel. Themes of "never forget," "support the troops," and "strength and unity" emerged from these shared images, rituals, and practices. He suggests that while the memorializing events "appear democratic" in that Americans come together in communal expression of public memory, in fact that unity is an illusion because it masks the conflicts and divisions with the citizenry.[36] Butterworth asks how such ceremonies might invite reflection and identification across differences rather than simply offering spectacular patriotism. This research shows one of the contexts—sports—that has interested communication scholars, but it also shows the intersection of the three earlier tiers as well—the message (9/11 memorializing), the communicator as part of a larger cultural community, and the message in mediated form—on television, in magazines, and in social media.

In sum, Powers's approach to mapping the intellectual field that is communication largely is designed to be able to present the discipline as a coherent entity to outsiders. It reflects how the discipline emerged, the central questions it addresses, and the various ways the study of communication is approached. Thus, it also can serve as not only a historical referent for how the field developed but also as an agenda-setting tool or guide for assessing the intellectual progress of the field.

Traditions of Communication Theory

Robert Craig's approach to organizing theories is the most recent of the schemes we examine here.[37] Craig divides the world of communication theory into seven traditions: (1) the semiotic; (2) the phenomenological; (3) the cybernetic; (4) the sociopsychological; (5) the sociocultural; (6) the critical; and (7) the rhetorical. Each of these traditions can be thought of as offering a different perspective on communication. Some of these traditions stand in opposition to one another, while others have a good deal of overlap. As a group, these traditions provide sufficient coherence to allow us to look at theories side by side and

From the Source . . .

I take a pragmatic view of theory. There is no one correct theory of communication, but many theories are useful for thinking about specific problems. The more theories you know, the more different problem-solving options you have. However, the diversity of the field is also a source of confusion. My model simplifies the big picture by showing that most communication theories come from a small number of traditions representing fundamentally different practical approaches.

Robert Craig

to understand their essential commonalities and differences. For Craig, these traditions provide "a kind of intellectual coherence, not by reaching universal consensus on one grand theory, but by promoting dialogue and debate across the diverse traditions of communication theory."[38]

The Semiotic Tradition

Semiotics, or the study of signs, forms an important tradition of thought in communication theory. The basic concept unifying this tradition is the *sign*; a second basic concept is the *symbol*, which usually designates a complex sign with many meanings, including highly personal ones. The semiotic tradition includes a host of theories about the use of signs and symbols to represent objects, ideas, states, situations, feelings, and conditions outside of themselves.[39] Semiotics is usually divided into three parts—*semiotics*, or the study of signs and symbols as basic elements; *pragmatics,* or the study of the relationships among signs; and *syntactics*, or the ways signs are combined into complex systems of signs.

The system of relations among signs is a foundation of communication theory. For communication to occur, there must be shared understanding—not only of individual words but also of grammar, society, and culture. The semiotic tradition has had considerable impact on communication theory because many communication theorists are interested in how signs and sign systems are used as tools to accomplish things in the world.

Much of the work of Jean Baudrillard (chapter 6) exemplifies the semiotic tradition. Baudrillard points out that signs once stood for what they represented. Rank, duty, and obligation told you how to behave as a member of the feudal class in the Middle Ages, for example. Now, however, signs are separated from what they stand for, and we build lives on symbolicity rather than on anything real. We possess things—expensive watches—for their symbolic value rather than to tell time, and we privilege the Eiffel Tower in Las Vegas over the original one in Paris.

The Phenomenological Tradition

While semiotics tends to focus on the sign and its functions, phenomenology looks much more at the individual as the key component in the communication process. Phenomenology is the way in which human beings come to understand the world through direct experience.[40] Much of the phenomenological tradition deals with how interpretation of phenomena occurs. In the semiotic tradition, interpretation is considered to be separate from reality, but in phenomenology, interpretation literally forms what is real for the person.

Most phenomenologists today subscribe to the idea that experience is subjective, not objective. They believe that subjectivity is an important kind of knowledge in its own right. Things in the world do not exist independently of the knower; rather, people give meaning to things through personal relationships with those things. Any phenomenological experience, then, is necessarily a subjective one. What is real is what is available to us packaged in language.

Mark Orbe's co-cultural theory (chapter 11) illustrates the phenomenological tradition. For Orbe, marginalized groups are co-cultural groups, and he privi-

leges the perspective of the members of marginalized groups. He is interested in the strategies such groups use to negotiate and manage their positions in society.

The Cybernetic Tradition

Cybernetics is the tradition of complex systems in which interacting elements influence one another.[41] Theories in the cybernetic tradition explain how physical, biological, social, and behavioral processes work. At the core of cybernetic thinking is the idea of a *system*.[42] Systems are sets of interacting components that together form something more than the sum of the parts. Any part of the system is always constrained by its dependence on other parts, and communication is one of the parts of or variables in the system. A system takes in inputs from the environment, processes them, and creates outputs that are put back into the environment. Sometimes the inputs and outputs are tangible materials; sometimes they consist of energy and information.

In addition to interdependence, systems are also characterized by self-regulation and control. In other words, systems monitor, regulate, and control their outputs in order to remain stable and to achieve goals. Systems are always embedded within one another such that one system is part of a larger system, forming a series of levels of increasing complexity.[43] Systems theory has been important to communication theory because of the ways variables impact one another through various levels of systems.

Actor network theory (chapter 6) illustrates the cybernetic tradition. Actor network theory privileges the networks that establish patterns of action over the people in the networks. Objects, policy statements, and regulations, as well as human actors, all contribute to the networks responsible for the actions that emerge.

The Sociopsychological Tradition

The study of the individual as a social being is the thrust of the sociopsychological tradition. Originating in the field of social psychology, the theories of this tradition focus on psychological variables, individual effects, personalities and traits, perception, and cognition. The individual human mind[44] is the focus of research in this tradition; the mind is seen as the locus for processing and understanding information.[45] Much of the work in this tradition in communication has focused on persuasion and attitude change—how humans develop, process, and strategize messages and the effects of messages on individuals.

The sociopsychological tradition can be divided into three large branches: (1) the behavioral; (2) the cognitive; and (3) the biological. Theories in the *behavioral* branch concentrate on *how* people actually behave in communication situations. Centering on patterns of thought, the cognitive branch concentrates on how individuals acquire, store, and process information in a way that leads to behavioral outputs. The third general variation is *biological*. As the study of genetics assumed increasing importance, psychologists and other behavioral researchers became interested in the effects of brain function and structure, neurochemistry, and genetic factors in explaining human behavior.

Uncertainty reduction theory (chapter 3) and expectancy-violation theory (chapter 4) are examples of theories within the sociopsychological tradition because they are centered on cognitive processes that impact human communi-

cation behavior. The choices we make in terms of how to reduce uncertainty and deal with violations of expectations can affect the outcomes of our interactions.

The Sociocultural Tradition

Sociocultural approaches to communication theory address the ways our understandings, meanings, norms, roles, and rules are worked out interactively in communication.[46] Such theories explore the interactional worlds in which people live, positing that reality is not an objective set of arrangements outside of us but constructed through a process of interaction in groups, communities, and cultures. Indeed, the categories used by individuals to process information are socially created in communication, according to the sociocultural tradition.

Many sociocultural theories also focus on how identities are established through interaction in social groups and cultures and how identity is negotiated from one situation to another. Identity becomes a fusion of the individual self with social, community, and cultural roles.[47] Because of the importance of culture and context, then, sociocultural work is generally, though not always, holistic. Researchers in this tradition may focus on a small aspect of the whole situation in a particular study, but they fully recognize the importance of the larger context on what happens at the microlevel.

There are several theorists within the sociocultural tradition, each of whom approaches communication a bit differently. Wittgenstein used the metaphor of a *language game* to discuss the way people follow rules to do things with language as well as the fact that these rules vary. Just as there are different rules for games such as chess and poker, there are different rules for different language games. Giving and obeying orders, asking and answering questions, and describing events are examples of language games. When you engage in language games, you are actually performing an act—stating, questioning, commanding, promising, or a number of other possibilities. J. L. Austin, another theorist within the sociocultural tradition, focused on the practical use of language as *speech act*[48] to capture the performative aspects of language use. Another influential perspective within the sociocultural approach is *ethnography*, or the observation of how actual social groups build meaning through their linguistic and nonlinguistic behaviors.[49] Ethnography looks at the forms of communication used in specific social groups, the words they use, and what those words mean to the group, as well as the meanings for a variety of behavioral, visual, and auditory responses.

Mary Jane Collier's cultural identity theory and Stella Ting-Toomey's identity negotiation theory (chapter 3) are two examples of the sociocultural tradition. Both theories examine how identities are constructed in social groups; identity construction is not an individual and discrete process but one performed in relation to others who share one's linguistic and cultural group.

The Critical Tradition

Critical scholars investigate how power, oppression, and privilege are the products of certain forms of communication throughout society.[50] Heavily influenced by work in Europe, by US feminist and queer scholars, and by postmodern and postcolonial discourses, the critical tradition seeks to understand the

taken-for-granted systems, power structures, and beliefs—or ideologies—that dominate society, with a particular eye to whose interests are served by these power structures. Critical theorists are particularly interested in uncovering oppressive social conditions and power arrangements in order to promote emancipation, or as Della Pollock and J. Robert Cox put it, "to *read* the world with an eye towards *shaping* it."[51]

Marxism is considered the source of contemporary critical theory.[52] Marx, in what is called the *critique of political economy*, taught that the means of production in society determines the nature of society, so the economy is the basis of all social structure. In capitalistic systems, profit drives production, a process that ends up oppressing labor or the working class. Communication practices are seen as an outcome of the tension between individual creativity and the social constraints on that creativity. Liberation will occur only when individuals are truly free to express themselves with clarity and reason. Paradoxically, however, language is also an important constraint on individual expression because the language of the dominant class defines and perpetuates that oppression, making it difficult for working-class groups to fully understand their situations and to discover the means to achieve emancipation.

Feminist and queer theories (chapter 12) are examples of theories within the critical tradition. Both critique gender with an eye to transforming gender relationships. Rather than fixed, static, and rigid constructions, these scholars describe gender in fluid and always evolving terms, offering possibilities for emancipation to previously oppressed social groups.

The Rhetorical Tradition

The word *rhetoric* often has a pejorative meaning—empty or ornamental words in contrast to action. In actuality, however, the study of rhetoric has a distinguished history dating back, in the West, to fifth-century BC Greece. Originally concerned with persuasion, rhetoric was the art of constructing arguments and speechmaking. It has evolved to encompass all of the ways humans use symbols to affect those around them and to construct the worlds in which they live.

Central to the rhetorical tradition are the five canons of rhetoric—invention, arrangement, style, delivery, and memory. These were the elements involved in preparing a speech, and the rhetor or speaker in ancient Greece and Rome was concerned with the discovery of ideas, their organization, choices about how to frame those ideas in language, and finally, issues of delivery and memory. With the evolution of rhetoric, these five canons have undergone a process of extension beyond just the elements of a speech and can be used to describe any kind of symbolic construction.[53] *Invention* now refers to conceptualization—the process through which meaning is assigned to symbols through interpretation, an acknowledgment of the fact that humans do not simply discover what exists but create it through the interpretive categories they choose to use. *Arrangement* is the process of organizing symbols—arranging information in light of the relationships among the people, symbols, and context involved. *Style* concerns all of the considerations involved in the choice, management, and presentation of those symbols, whether words, clothing, furniture, or dance. *Delivery* has become the embodiment of symbols in some physical form, encompassing the range of options from nonverbals to talk to writing to mediated messages.

Finally, *memory* no longer refers to the simple memorization of speeches but to larger reservoirs of cultural memory as well as to processes of perception that affect how we retain and process information.

Many see *rhetoric* as synonymous with the term *communication*, and the decision of which term to use depends largely on the philosophical tradition with which you most identify. The theory of invitational rhetoric is one example of a theory (chapter 4) within the rhetorical tradition. This theory suggests that inviting might be as or more effective in certain communication contexts than persuasion.

Conclusion

We hope this chapter provides a starting point for thinking about the larger frameworks into which theories can be organized. As you begin your journey through the theories and schemas that make up the study of communication, keep in mind that you are beginning to contribute to the field of communication by how you think about these various perspectives. In other words, we want you to realize that any time you think about communication, you have a perspective that will be influenced, in part, by the kinds of questions you are asking, the frameworks that organize those questions, your academic interests, your life experiences, and your goals.

This is exactly how theories of communication are developed and sustained: Cadres of devoted scholars initially found a certain way of thinking attractive, assimilated this thinking into their way of working, and developed a way of understanding what they experienced. We know that as you navigate the terrain of communication theory, you will come to appreciate some theories over others, will find some theories work for you in explaining how you see the world, and will make connections and contributions of your own. And throughout this process, you will be collaborating with many others in helping to develop the field of communication.

Notes

[1] See Gibson Burrell and Grant Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life* (1979; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1998).
[2] Burrell and Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms*, 5.
[3] Burrell and Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms*, 2.
[4] Burrell and Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms*, 7.
[5] Burrell and Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms*, 17.
[6] Burrell and Morgan, *Sociological Paradigms*, 24.
[7] Adapted from Burrell and Morgan, 22.
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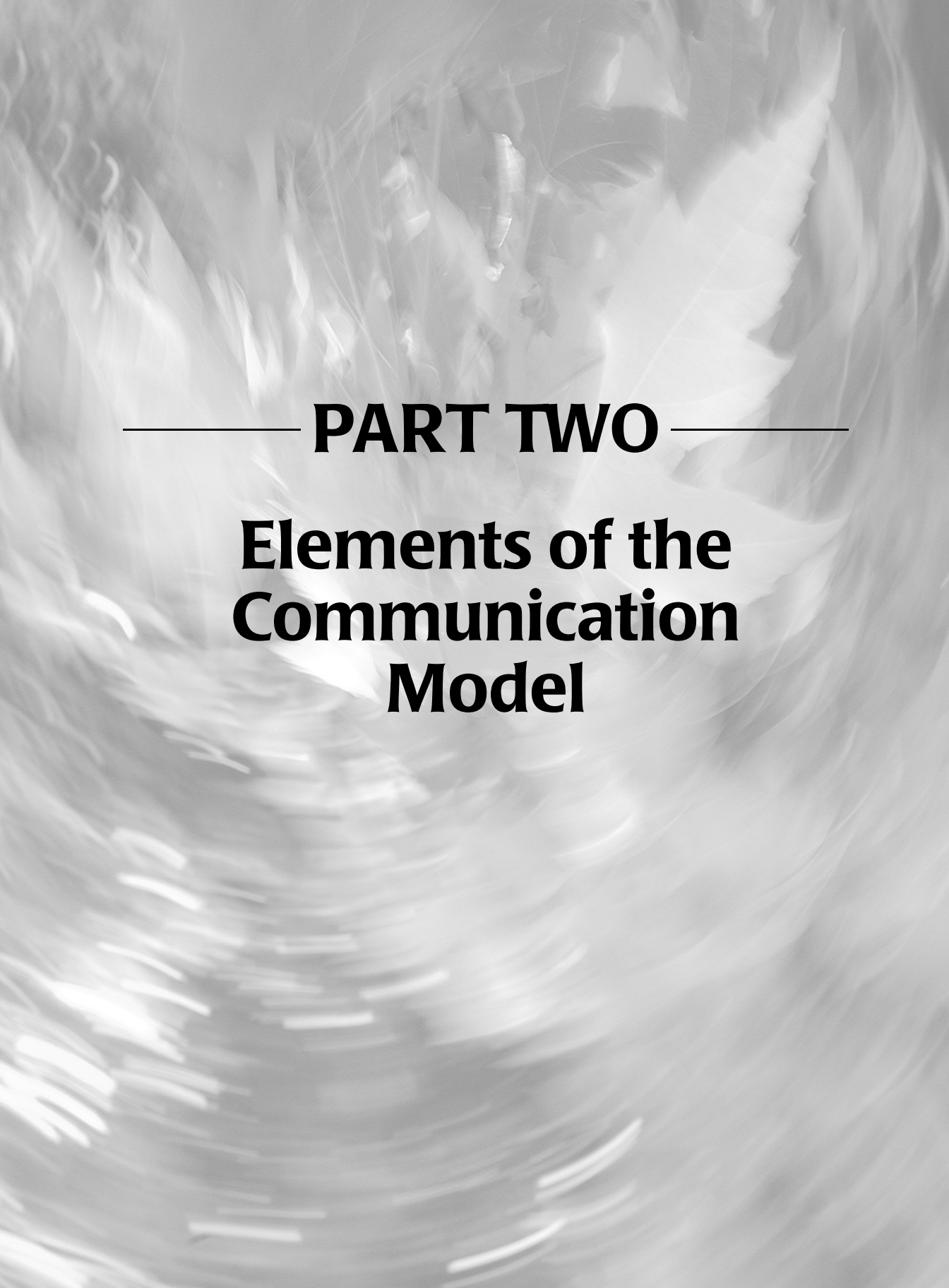
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PART TWO

Elements of the Communication Model

3 The Communicator

As you move through life communicating with people in numerous settings, there is one constant: You bring yourself to the encounter. Whether watching television, talking to a friend, arguing with your boss, working on a radio production, or designing a PR campaign, you most often look at the situation from your own perspective as a communicator. In Western society, the individual assumes tremendous importance as the "key player" in social life. It is natural, then, for us to start with the individual as we begin to think about communication theories. In this chapter, we will be concentrating on theories in which the focus is on the nature of the communicator and the communication dimensions she brings to a communication encounter.

In this chapter, we explore five major groups of theories, each of which offers a different way communication scholars have focused on the communicator. These categories for understanding the communicator are: (1) the biophysiological; (2) cognitive and information processing; (3) communication competence; (4) theories of identity; and (5) theories of agency. The theories in the first category are interested in innate biological or psychological factors. The next major group of theories looks at the ways we process information as communicators—the cognitive dimension of communication. Communication competence, the next category, moves the communicator into a realm in which skills, more than inner processes, are the focus. Finally, we cover theories of identity and agency, which move the communicator clearly into the realm of constructing and negotiating how one sees oneself in relation to others and in relation to the situations in which communication occurs. The chapter map (pp. 92–93) summarizes the five categories of theories.

Biophysiological Theories

We begin with *trait theories*, which assume that there are specific aspects of human behavior that are generally consistent across situations. Trait theories emerged from work in psychology that sought to understand aspects of personality and behavior that remain relatively constant for an individual. Theories of

the body, in contrast, see biology as an important element in what the communicator does and is capable of doing.

Trait Theories

A trait is a distinguishing quality or characteristic; it is an individual's relatively consistent way of thinking, feeling, and behaving across situations. Traits are distinguished from states, which are considered more temporary conditions affected by situational factors and intentions at a particular moment in time. Trait theories were among the first developed in the communication discipline to describe the communicator; like many theories in the discipline, they were adapted from theories in psychology.

While many traits have been investigated in both psychology and communication, researchers realized that examining traits in isolation and generating taxonomies of traits per se is not especially useful. Instead, traits often group together to create personality types.[1] Psychologists began to develop various trait-factor models, or models of *super traits*,[2] which show how traits cluster together. These larger clusters are used to explain personality differences. One of the most popular trait-factor models is the *five factor model* developed by John Digman.[3] This model identifies five rather general factors that, in combination, determine an individual's more specific traits. The five factors include (1) *neuroticism*, or the tendency to feel vulnerable, anxious, and unstable emotionally; (2) *extraversion*, or the tendency to be sociable, assertive, optimistic, and talkative; (3) *openness*, or the tendency to be curious, creative, independent, imaginative, and reflective; (4) *agreeableness*, or the tendency to be cooperative and sympathetic rather than suspicious and antagonistic; and (5) *conscientiousness*, or the tendency to be self-disciplined, organized, efficient, and oriented toward task completion.

Trait theorists in communication made use of super-trait models to help explain and predict various communication behaviors. We will describe two of the most commonly researched traits in communication—argumentativeness and communication apprehension.[4] These were among the earliest traits researched in this tradition and serve as prototypes of how this research has proceeded. Using Digman's five factor model, for example, argumentativeness might be understood as a combination of low neuroticism, high extraversion, low openness, low agreeableness, and high conscientiousness. Communication apprehension includes high neuroticism, low extraversion, low openness, low agreeableness, and low conscientiousness. The trait approach offers a way to understand differences across human behavior while also acknowledging the similarities.

Argumentativeness. Argumentativeness is viewed as the tendency to engage in conversations about controversial topics, to be able to support your own point of view, and to effectively refute opposing beliefs.[5] According to Dominic Infante, Andrew Rancer, and their colleagues, who have been primarily responsible for the development of this concept, argumentativeness, together with assertiveness, are positive tendencies, while aggression and hostility are negative ones. Argumentativeness, then, is associated with better communication skills, more creative problem solving, and more effective leadership; indeed, knowing how to argue properly may be a solution to the negative tenden-

cies of aggression and hostility. As a case in point, Infante, Teresa Chandler, and Jill Rudd studied husbands and wives in violent relationships and discovered that those marriages are characterized by higher verbal aggressiveness and lower argumentativeness than are nonviolent ones.[6]

From the Source . . .

It is no wonder that I developed an interest in argumentative and aggressive communication. My earliest memories include sitting around the dinner table with my family discussing a variety of personal and public issues. Sometimes these discussions were measured and rational, with well-reasoned arguments as the primary form of discourse. On other occasions, the discussions were quite heated and emotional and included messages of verbal aggression—attacks, teasing, and an occasional curse word. The theory of aggressive communication (comprised of the traits of Argumentativeness and Verbal Aggressiveness) grew out of a desire to better understand how and why people engage in both constructive and destructive communication behavior during conflict.

Andrew Rancer

Communication Apprehension. Communication apprehension (CA) refers to anxiety associated with oral communication, and James McCroskey and his colleagues pioneered the work in this area in the communication discipline.[7] Although everyone has occasional stage fright, such as you might experience before giving a speech, that is not trait CA. *Trait CA* is used to describe someone who is apprehensive about communication across a variety of settings. This pathological level of communication apprehension, in which an individual suffers persistent and extreme fear of communicating, can result in someone avoiding communication to the point of preventing productive and satisfying participation in society.

Communication apprehension is part of a family of concepts, *social and communicative anxiety,* which includes social avoidance, social anxiety, interaction anxiety, and shyness. Miles Patterson and Vicki Ritts outlined several parameters of this group of traits in a comprehensive survey and analysis of this literature.[8] First, they found that social and communicative anxiety is characterized by a combination of responses, including *physiological* aspects such as heart rate and blushing, *behavioral* manifestations such as avoidance and self-protection, and *cognitive* dimensions such as self-focus and negative thoughts. Interestingly, cognitive correlates were found to be the strongest of the three, which may mean that social and communicative anxiety has more to do with how we think about ourselves in regard to communication situations than with any physiological or biological factors. In other words, negative thinking can lead to anxious self-preoccupation, which in turn disrupts normal information processing, which ultimately leads to a variety of withdrawal behaviors that reinforce the apprehensive cycle.

In a study that addresses both argumentativeness and communication apprehension, Scott Myers and Kelly Rocca explored how students' perceptions

of their instructors' argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness function in terms of classroom climate, classroom communication apprehension, and student motivation.[9] Specifically, they hypothesized that argumentativeness would be positively correlated with both classroom climate and student motivation and that aggressiveness would be negatively correlated with these elements. In addition, they predicted that both traits would be linked to classroom communication apprehension. College students in communication classes were asked to complete five scales: the Argumentativeness Scale, the Verbal Aggressiveness Scale, the Classroom Climate Questionnaire, the Classroom Apprehension Participation Scale, and the Student Motivation Scale. Myers and Rocca found partial support for their hypotheses. Verbal aggressiveness but not argumentativeness affects classroom climate; neither are linked to classroom communication apprehension; and both are related to perceived motivation. Despite not having the full range of effects predicted, the researchers established that instructors' use of argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are not immaterial in the classroom—they do have ramifications for student motivation and classroom climate. The final two theories in this section specifically concern the body and its impact on communication.

Embodiment

By embodiment, we refer to theories that consider the body as central to communication. Communibiology developed specifically to address communication apprehension as a biological phenomenon; communicology developed to more fully center the body in the communication process.

Communibiology. Theories of communibiology continue the focus on innate processes that determine or at least impact communication behavior. Michael Beatty and James McCroskey are credited with the term *communibiology*; having studied communication apprehension for many years, they came to believe that there are biological bases for various communication traits, including apprehension.[10] According to Beatty and McCroskey, how we experience the world is very much a matter of what is happening in our brains, and what happens in our brains is largely genetically determined. For these researchers, then, individual differences between communicators are largely a matter of differences between neurobiological systems, not differences between skills levels, training, or other kinds of learning.

From the Source . . .

I spent twenty years on a research program that ended up showing that life experience has little if any influence on the way people communicate before I discovered that the research into infant behavior, temperament, and identical twins explained why so many people respond differently—even in opposite ways—to similar life events. Over time, I began to see the differences in the ways people construct and respond to messages as manifestations of individual differences in brain functioning due more to genetic inheritance and prenatal hormone exposure than to experience.

Michael Beatty

Scholars working within the communibiology tradition make the following propositions about the relationship between communication behaviors and the brain: (1) All mental processes involved in social interaction can be reduced to brain activity; (2) different communicator traits are a function of differences in neurobiological functioning; (3) these individual differences in the neurobiological systems are inherited; and (4) situational factors have little impact on traits and temperaments. Beatty, McCroskey, and their colleagues claim there is more evidence in favor of neurobiological explanations than explanations that depend on experience, learning, or other socially derived factors. Citing evidence that newborns exhibit a wide range of differences in temperament, that hormones during pregnancy contribute to differences in personality, and that studies comparing identical and fraternal twins reveal inherited temperamental features, communibiologists believe there is ample evidence to consider a neurobiological basis for communication constructs and behaviors. We turn next to another theory that makes the body central to the process of communication.

Communicology. A relatively recent and substantially different theory, developed by Isaac Catt, is communicology, defined as the study of human discourse.[11] We have placed communicology in with other theories of biology and physiology because it foregrounds the body as the distinguishing or necessary characteristic for communication to occur. Catt's theory shares with trait theories an emphasis on a preexisting physical state or condition. Rather than an innate personality trait, however, Catt argues that the focus of the communication discipline should be the body because "there is no communication without a body-lived and a lived body."[12] While Catt's theory of communicology starts with embodiment, the body is more than mere substance; it is a perceiving and expressing channel of discourse. The body, then, is an expressive and perceptive point of mediation between the person and the cultural signs and codes of discourse in the larger society. The signs and codes of discourse impose constraints upon the communicator and what she can accomplish, and yet signs and codes are also the only means for the exercise of human potential.

According to communicology, the emergence of and understanding of the self as a communicator happens in the act of coming to consciousness about and sharing experience with others. The process of codifying the world in signs is a crucial part of human communication and personhood. Consciousness is always evolving and always in flux, which means who we are as individuals is always in development, worked out in the process of communication.

Catt does not see communication as many today view it—as an instrument and an activity. Rather, he describes communication as a process, an event, and a goal. It is a *process* because it is always evoking and realizing consciousness and expressing it in language and other symbolic codes. Every word, every gesture, every expression of the human body is also an *event*, simultaneously creating the contexts in which we come to know and be in the world. Communication, however, does not automatically occur—it is not a *goal* that is always realized. According to Catt, what is necessary for communication to occur is not a message but a shared code. Communication can be said to have taken place only when there is shared intelligibility or agreement about a code. Catt, then, disagrees with the common precept that we cannot not communicate. He believes,

rather, that the opposite is quite often the case—we fail at communication more often than we achieve it because we fail to achieve intelligibility. Communication is a possibility, not a probability, of human expression.

From the Source . . .

I was never satisfied with the popular idea that communication is merely a method for transmitting information. American pragmatism and European philosophy gave me an alternative, that communication is the study of how we experience our worlds by embodying the signifying systems of our cultures.

Isaac Catt

One of the obstacles to achieving communication is that each of us is capable of experiencing and expressing consciousness differently; thus, we create our own contexts and our own idiosyncratic experiences in the world. Catt suggests we always have a choice when expressing ourselves. We can experience the world in pre-given ways, defaulting to how the world has been created around us, or we can choose to create our own contexts and meanings. In the first case, we allow contexts to choose us; in the second case, we determine how to respond. Catt gives as an example a response to a rule: We decide whether to acknowledge and accept a rule (default mode), whether to interpret a rule in a unique way, or whether to resist it. Catt does not judge any of these responses as better or worse; he is simply interested in laying out the continuum of possible communicative responses—from acceptance of the existing social order to various efforts to disrupt that order, each of which can make it more difficult to reach shared intelligibility about the world.

After this discussion of theories grounded in innate biological processes, we turn to those that feature thinking and processing. Cognitive and information processing, one of the first bodies of theories to interest communication scholars, represents a major body of theories in the communication discipline.

Cognitive and Information Processing Theories

The main question at the heart of communication theories about cognition and information processing is how humans think, organize, process, and store information—and the implications of these capacities for communication.[13] Like trait theories, theories of cognition and information processing have a psychological orientation; they are interested in whether predictions can be made about how humans will behave in certain situations. Cognitive theories in communication, then, emphasize mental processes such as attention, perception, and interpretation.

Attribution and Judgment

In this section, we discuss three sets of cognitive theories that have been especially important in the communication literature: (1) attribution and judg-

ment theories; (2) information-integration theories; and (3) consistency theories. These theories extend our understanding of communicators by taking into account how humans conceptualize and organize the information that is the basis of their communication.

Attribution Theory. Attribution theory, first developed in psychology by Fritz Heider, deals with the ways humans make inferences about the causes of behavior—both their own and that of others.[14] Attribution is essentially the process of trying to figure out why people behave in certain ways. In its most basic form, attribution theories assume a three-step process: (1) observation of the action or behavior; (2) assessment of intent; and (3) attribution about the source of motivation—internal or external. Let's say you are the owner of a small company. As you walk through the building one day, you notice (step one) that one of the employees seems particularly industrious, and you want to figure out why. You might wonder if the workload in her area has increased for some reason or if she just really likes what she is doing and wants to do her best. You make use of context to help you assess intent (step two). For example, what has she done in the past, or what type of deadlines are looming? Finally, in step three, you attribute motivation to either internal characteristics—she just wants to do her best—or external factors—her project team has an upcoming deadline.

Harold Kelly, a social psychologist like Heider, added to the literature on how attribution works by offering three guidelines that influence attributions: consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus.[15] Thinking back to the employee whose industriousness you noted and using Kelly's guidelines, you would ask if the employee's behavior is *consistent* with how she typically behaves. If so, an internal attribution likely can be made. Next, is the behavior *distinctive*? Does it vary across different situations? If your employee is industrious no matter what the situation, an internal attribution is again possible; if she were industrious only in this setting, however, an external attribution makes the most sense. Finally, in this situation, is there *consensus*—do most people engage in this behavior in this situation? Would most workers in the factory behave in a similar fashion? If so, an external attribution could be made.

One of the most persistent findings in attribution research is the *fundamental attribution error.* This is the tendency to overemphasize personal or internal qualities when considering bad things that happen to others and to attribute external or situational factors, such as luck, for the good things that occur. In other words, we generally believe and act as if people are personally responsible for the bad things that happen to them but not for the positive things. Conversely, we reverse these dimensions when considering our own behavior: we blame situational factors for the bad things that happen to us and attribute our successes to our own internal qualities and abilities. If your roommate fails a test, you are apt to claim that she did not study hard enough, but if you fail the test, you will probably say that the test was too hard.

In addition to discussing the fundamental attribution error, attribution theory also suggests that people tend to make quick judgments about themselves and other people. We do not spend a lot of time, in other words, assessing the soundness of our attributions. Furthermore, the judgments we do make are hard to dislodge, no matter how compelling the evidence is to the contrary. If you

decide that your employee is industrious because she is naturally that way, you are not likely to change that belief, no matter how much information is offered to the contrary.

A study by Simon Quaschning, Mario Pandelaere, and Iris Vermeir demonstrates the role of attribution in how online product reviews are perceived by other readers of those reviews at sites such as Amazon and Yelp.[16] The researchers found that when most reviews for a product are positive—thus demonstrating both consistency and consensus—the positive reviews are attributed to product performance. When most reviews of a product are negative, and thus stand out as distinctive, they are attributed to personal factors of the reviewer and thus are deemed irrelevant to the purchase decision. Consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus, then, all are operating in finding that positive reviews generate more positive reviews and negative ones are dismissed as more idiosyncratic.

Social judgment theory, the subject of the next section, extends the work on attribution processes by looking specifically at how we judge and compare the statements or messages we make about ourselves and others. Not only are processes of attribution always at work, but we also make all kinds of comparisons on the basis of these attributions.

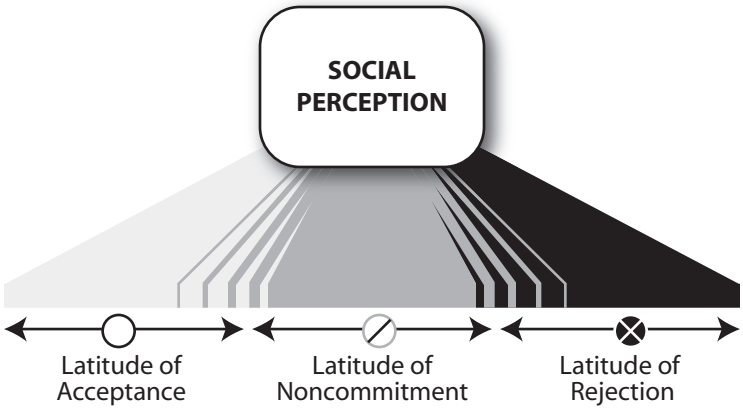
Social Judgment Theory. Social judgment theory, a classic in social psychology, was developed by Muzafer Sherif and his colleagues; it has had a long-term impact on the study of persuasion.[17] The starting point for social judgment theory was research that showed how context affects the assessment of physical objects. For example, suppose that you were asked to judge the weight of five objects without a scale. You would need some reference point—something that you know has a certain weight—such as a five-pound sack of flour. You would first lift the sack of flour and then judge the weight of the other objects by comparison to the flour. The known weight would act as an "anchor," influencing your perception of the weight of the other objects.

Thinking that similar processes might explain judgments of nonphysical stimuli, Sherif investigated the ways humans judge messages, coining the term *social perception* to describe this phenomenon. In interaction with others, we do not have a sack of flour we can use to judge a message; we have to rely on an internal anchor or reference point. These anchors are reference points in our heads that are based largely on previous experience.

According to social judgment theory, a position you hold on any given subject falls into one of three positions: latitude of acceptance (those positions you find acceptable), latitude of rejection (those you find unacceptable), and latitude of noncommitment (those about which you have no opinion or are ambivalent). The position within the latitude of acceptance with which you most agree is your anchor point; it is the position against which you weigh all other positions, just as you weighed objects against the sack of flour. Figure 3.1 displays a model of this theory.

How you respond to statements that express an opinion about something is influenced by your latitudes of acceptance and rejection. If something falls within your latitude of acceptance, you are more likely to distort that position favorably—to perceive it to be closer to your own position—than may actually be the case. This is called an *assimilation effect*. If a position falls in your latitude

Figure 3.1 Model of Social Judgment Theory



of rejection, it will be distorted negatively and perceived as farther from and less similar to your anchor position than it actually is—a *contrast effect*.

The degree to which assimilation or contrast describes your social judgment on a given issue also varies according to ego involvement. *Ego involvement* is your sense of the personal relevance of an issue—how closely that issue is tied to your identity or sense of self. Social judgment theory predicts that messages falling within the latitude of acceptance facilitate attitude change—they are seen as more persuasive than arguments outside of this range. If you think that incentives should be provided for owning electric cars as one way to mitigate global warming, you might be persuaded by a message in favor of gas-powered cars that get more miles to the gallon and produce fewer emissions, provided this position is still within your latitude of acceptance. If you judge a message to lie within your latitude of rejection, attitude change will be reduced or nonexistent. In fact, a *boomerang effect* may occur in which the discrepant message actually strengthens your position on the issue. Thus, a message against research and development of electric cars might make you even more firmly in favor of them. This means that the most persuasive messages are those that fall just outside the latitude of rejection in the noncommitment area. Ambiguous messages, in other words, may make you more likely to listen to a set of arguments because extremes of acceptance and rejection do not kick in.

Social judgment theory is important not only because it describes in part how we respond to messages but also because it suggests that each member of an audience will perceive a persuasive message differently, depending on where that message falls in terms of their anchor and their latitudes of acceptance, rejection, and noncommitment. We now turn to elaboration likelihood theory, which also deals with differences in how judgments get made. This theory adds a layer of critical thinking to the judgment-making process.

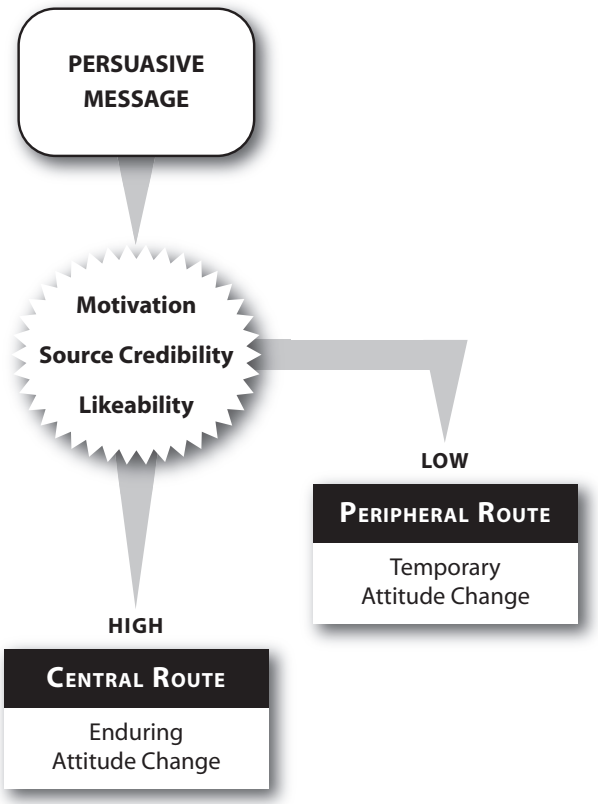
Elaboration Likelihood Theory. Developed by social psychologists Richard Petty and John Cacioppo, elaboration likelihood theory (ELT) deals with how communicators process persuasive messages.[18] ELT begins with the prem-

ise that humans sometimes evaluate messages in an elaborate way, using critical thinking, and sometimes they do so in a simpler, less critical manner. The term e*laboration* refers to the extent to which an audience member evaluates a message critically; *likelihood* refers to the fact that the amount of elaboration, or critical engagement with a message, can vary.

The likelihood of elaboration depends on the way a message is processed. There are two routes for processing information—a central route and a peripheral route. Elaboration, or critical thinking, occurs in the *central route*, while a lack of critical thinking occurs in the *peripheral* route. When you process information through the central route, you actively think about and weigh the new information against what you already know—you consider arguments carefully. If your attitude changes, it is apt to be a relatively enduring change that will probably affect how you actually behave. You are more likely to process information through the central route when the topic is relevant to you, you know something about it, and you find the source to be credible.

When you process information through the *peripheral* route, you are much less critical—you do not look closely at the strength of arguments but quickly make judgments on the basis of simple cues. Factors such as likability, credibility, whether there is consensus among those hearing the message, and your mood at the moment are among possible considerations operating when a peripheral route is selected. Changes induced through peripheral processing are most likely temporary. Figure 3.2 displays the elaboration likelihood model.

Figure 3.2 Elaboration Likelihood Model



Richard Petty, John Cacioppo, and Rachel Goldman conducted an experiment that shows how central and peripheral processing work in combination. Students were asked to evaluate audiotaped arguments in favor of instituting comprehensive examinations for seniors at their college.[19] Two versions were used—one with strong arguments and the other with weak arguments. Half of the students were told that the examination would in all likelihood go into effect the following year, but the other half was led to believe that the

change would not occur for ten years. Not surprisingly, the first group found the message more personally relevant than the second group and was more motivated to scrutinize the arguments carefully. As expected, the students who heard the highly relevant message were motivated to pay careful attention to the quality of the arguments and were more influenced by the arguments than were the students who heard the less-relevant message.

The researchers also added source credibility as a variable. Half of the students in each group were told that the tape was based on a report from a high-school class, and the remaining students were told that the tape was based on a report from the Carnegie Commission. Those students who heard the less-relevant message were more influenced by a highly credible source than were students in the highly relevant condition. In this case, credibility functioned as part of students' peripheral processing. While we might like to believe that we always make decisions based on a critical examination of arguments, it is impossible to attend carefully to every message, so some combination of central and peripheral processing is to be expected. Furthermore, persuasion can occur with both routes. The next topic, information-integration, concerns another cognitive process—how the communicator organizes information.

Information-Integration

The information-integration approach to the communicator centers on the ways we accumulate and organize information about persons, objects, situations, and ideas to form *attitudes*—predispositions to act in a positive or negative way toward some object.[20] An attitude is considered an accumulation of information about an object, person, situation, or experience. The information-integration approach is one of the most popular models offered to explain how information forms attitudes and produces attitude change.[21] We discuss two theories here—expectancy-value theory and theory of reasoned action—both of which deal with communicators' attitudes.

Expectancy-Value Theory. Expectancy-value theory (EVT) was originally developed in the 1950s and 1960s by John William Atkinson[22] as a way to understand how achievement and motivation function. Jacqueline Eccles adapted EVT to education; she was interested in how beliefs affect expectations for success and performance among children and adolescents.[23] Martin Fishbein and his colleague Icek Ajzen often are credited with EVT because of their 1975 book, *Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research*; their work has been the starting point of this theory in the communication discipline.[24]

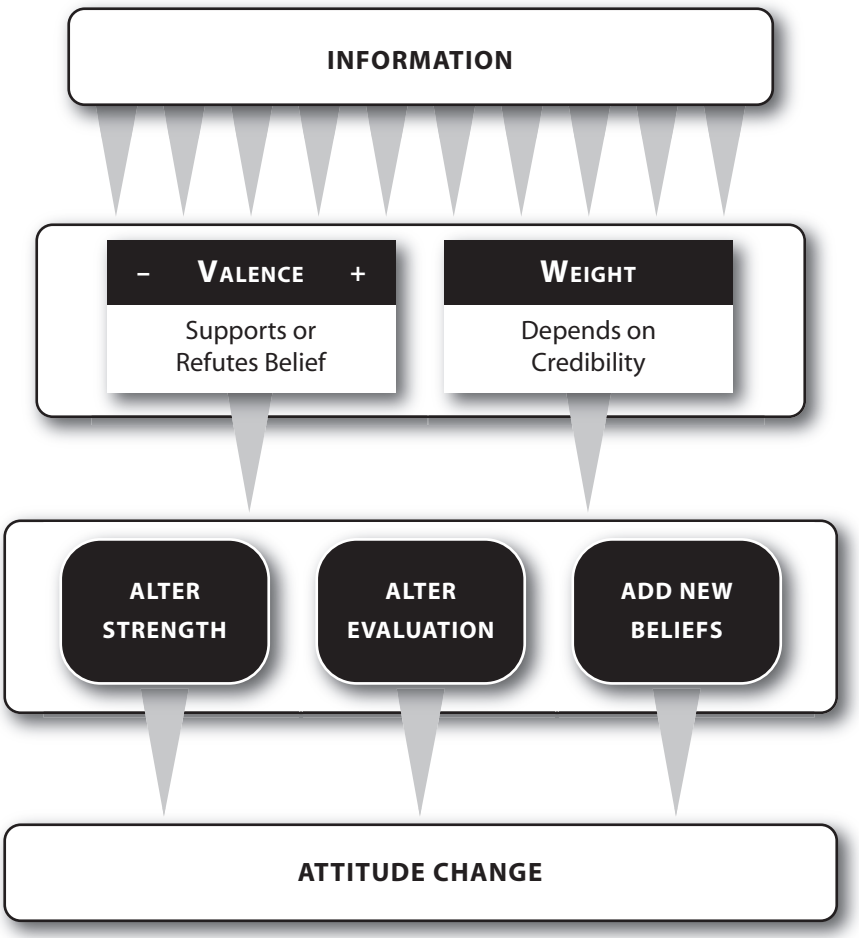
At the core of expectancy-value theory are two variables—valence and weight. *Valence* refers to whether information supports or refutes beliefs. When information supports a belief, it has "positive" valence; when it does not, it has "negative" valence. The second variable that affects the impact of information is the *weight* assigned to the information. Weight is a function of credibility. If you think the information is probably true, you will assign a higher weight to it; if not, you will assign a lower weight. Clearly, the more weight assigned to something, the greater the impact of that information on your system of beliefs.

According to expectancy-value theory, attitude change can occur from three sources: (1) information can alter the strength of particular *beliefs*; (2) informa-

tion can alter the *evaluation* of a belief; and (3) information can add *new beliefs* to the structure of an attitude. Attitude change occurs because new information is brought to bear on a belief, causing a shift in attitude, or because new information changes the weight or valence given to some piece of information. Any one piece of information usually does not have too much influence because attitudes consist of a number of beliefs that could counteract the new information. But changing one piece of information or giving it different weight can begin to shift the entire schema.[25] Figure 3.3 illustrates EVT.

Suppose that you have two friends—one who supports same-sex marriage and another who strongly opposes it. You hear a priest on the news talking about the immorality of same-sex unions. Your friend who favors it will not be affected if she assigns little weight to the priest's argument. On the other hand, if she decides that the arguments made by the priest are sound, she will assign a high weight to it, which could lead to thinking less favorably about same-sex mar-

Figure 3.3 Expectancy-Value Theory



riage. If your friend who opposes same-sex marriage assigns low weight to the priest's argument, it will have little effect on his attitudes, but if he believes this information and assigns high weight to it, it will make him more opposed to the idea than he originally was because the combination of high weight and positive valence reinforces his opinion. You would not expect your friends to completely reverse their attitudes on this subject because other beliefs they have are also operating—but the weight and valence of beliefs do impact how a persuasive message is received.

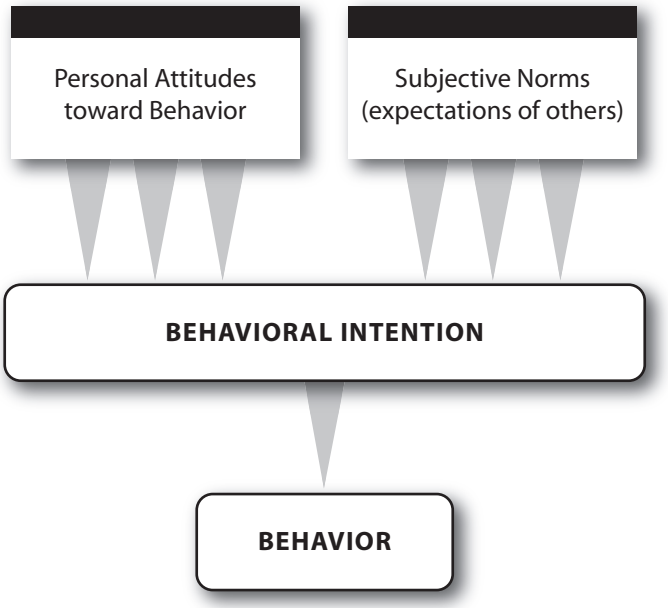
According to Fishbein, attitudes are organized in such a way that they can be predicted by a set of beliefs and evaluations in a summative fashion. A generally positive attitude toward same-sex marriage, to continue the example, would consist of beliefs about marriage, about religion, and about love. A certain set of beliefs that add up to particular attitudes about same-sex marriage would predispose a person to support or oppose such unions.

Theory of Reasoned Action. Icek Ajzen and Martin Fishbein extended their work on expectancy-value theory into a theory of reasoned action by adding the notion of intention to the equation.[26] Specifically, your intention to behave in a certain way is determined by two things—your *attitude* toward the behavior (whether you like the behavior or not) and *subjective norms* (your beliefs about how other people would like you to behave, including social pressure toward performing the behavior). Consider your progress in college as an example. Do you plan to continue until you get your degree, or will you take some time off to work for a while? The answer to this question depends on your attitude toward school and what you think others, like your parents, want you to do. Each factor—your attitude and others' opinions—is weighted according to its importance. Sometimes your attitude is most important; sometimes others' opinions are most important; and sometimes your attitude and others' are more or less equal in weight.

Your intention toward school can be predicted, according to the theory of reasoned action, by looking at your attitude toward the behavior—staying in school—and your parents' attitudes toward it as well. If you have developed a poor attitude toward school, and your parents are encouraging you to drop out for a semester to work, that is probably what you will do. On the other hand, if your parents are encouraging you to stick it out, and their opinions are very important to you, you will probably stay despite your negative attitude. If your parents' opinions do not matter that much, your attitude will win out, and you will make plans to leave college and get a job. Figure 3.4[27] (on the following page) displays a simplified version of the theory of reasoned action.

The theory of reasoned action predicts behavioral intention, but it does not necessarily predict the actual behavior that will follow. This is because we do not always behave in accordance with our intentions due to lack of control or lack of stability in the time between intention and behavior. Smokers may want to stop smoking but cannot because of the strength of their addiction. You might want to drop out of school, but before you can follow through, your parents threaten to cut off support; the thought of having to figure out how to support yourself keeps you in school despite your intention to drop out. Beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors form a complex relationship, and no theory will be capable

Figure 3.4 Model of Theory of Reasoned Action



of predicting with absolute certainty how someone will act on the basis of a certain set of attitudes. The next set of theories—consistency theories—deals with how we act in order to address contradictory attitudes and beliefs.

Consistency Theories

One of the largest bodies of work related to attitude, attitude change, and persuasion deals with the issue of consistency. All consistency theories begin with the same premise: people are more comfortable with consistency than with inconsistency. Consistency, then, is a primary organizing principle in cognitive processing, and the cognitive system is a basic tool by which consistency among beliefs is maintained. When balance is disrupted, attitude change can result from the effort to restore that balance or consistency.

Cognitive Dissonance. Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance is one of the most important theories in the history of social psychology that has had an impact on the communication field.[28] Over the years, the theory of cognitive dissonance has produced a prodigious quantity of research and volumes of interpretation and criticism. Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance begins with the idea that the communicator carries around a rich assortment of *cognitive elements* such as attitudes, perceptions, knowledge, and beliefs. These are not isolated cognitive elements—they relate to one another in various ways in addition to being related to behavior. They can reinforce or be consonant with one another; they can be inconsistent or dissonant; or they can be irrelevant, having no effect on one another. When two cognitive elements are relevant but inconsistent, a state of discomfort or dissonance is created. According to

Festinger, humans are motivated to reduce the inconsistency by altering some part of the cognitive system.

Take the example of dissonance between the belief that eating saturated fats is unhealthy and the fact that you eat red meat every day. The greater the dissonance you experience between these two pieces of information, the more likely you will be to do something about it. Festinger proposed several methods for dealing with cognitive dissonance. First, you might change one or more of the cognitive elements or behaviors—an action or an attitude, perhaps. For example, you might decide to eat meat every other day rather than every day. Second, new elements might be added to one side of the tension or the other. For instance, you might switch to using olive oil exclusively to balance out the fact that you continue to eat red meat. Third, you might come to see the dissonant elements as less important than they used to be. For example, you might decide that what you eat is not as important to your overall health as is your state of mind. Fourth, you might seek consonant information—evidence for the benefits of meat—by reading new studies on the topic. Finally, you might reduce dissonance by distorting or misinterpreting the information involved. This could happen if you decided that although a lot of meat poses a health risk, meat is not as harmful as the loss of important nutritional ingredients like iron and protein. No matter which of these methods you employ, it would reduce your dissonance and make you feel better about continuing to eat red meat. Figure 3.5 on the next page illustrates cognitive dissonance theory.

Cognitive dissonance is, however, not as simple as it appears. A study by Leanne Knobloch-Westerwick, Benjamin Johnson, and Axel Westerwick shows that exposure to a dissonant element is not always considered a negative to be managed in some way.[29] These researchers examined how online users attend selectively to health information on the Internet. It was hypothesized that participants would get defensive about health-promotion messages contrary to their own behaviors and would avoid those messages. In fact, participants spent equal amounts of time with messages promoting the health behaviors in which they already engaged and with messages promoting behaviors they did not do at all or were not doing as well at as they would have liked. Participants seemed to use these messages to motivate themselves to engage in these behaviors more frequently, suggesting that dissonant-producing messages can be positive and motivating.

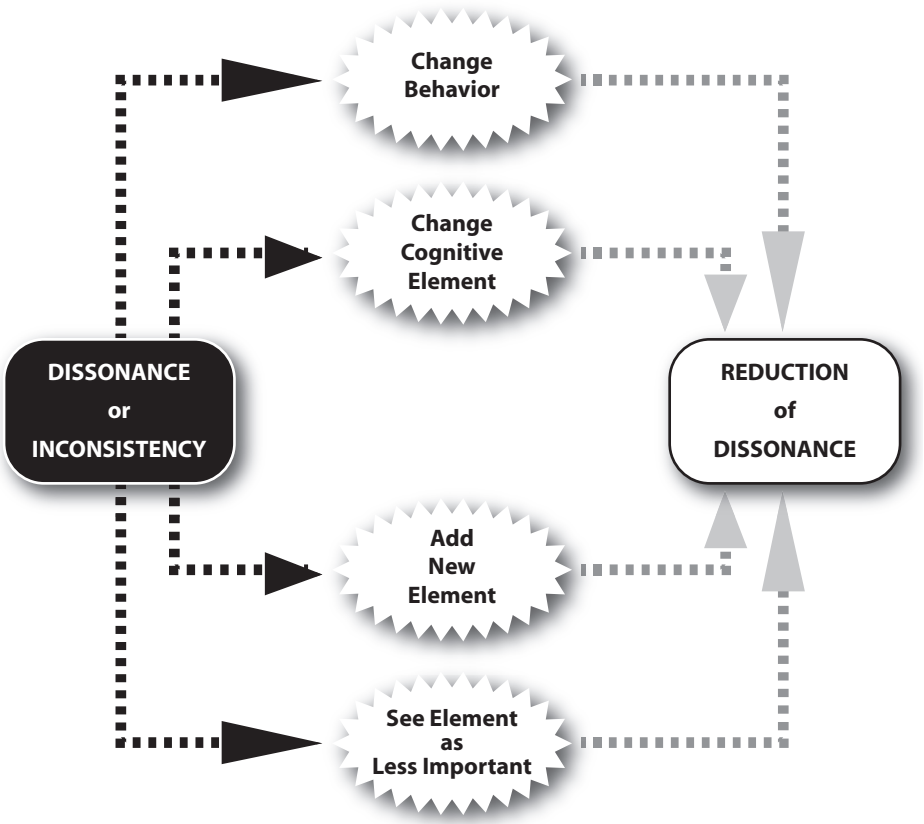
Much of the theory and research on cognitive dissonance has centered on the various situations in which dissonance is likely to occur. Decision making has been a major source of investigation. When making a decision, cognitively dissonant elements must be overcome. Buying a car is a good example. Often, while waiting for delivery of a new car, a customer will cancel the purchase because of buyer's remorse or what is technically called *post-decisional dissonance*. In one experiment, for example, a group of automobile customers were called twice during the period between signing the contract and actual delivery to reassure them about their purchase. Members of a control group were not called. As expected, about twice as many of those who were not called canceled the order compared to those who received calls.[30] A friend of ours recently bought a car, and in the days following the purchase, she received two letters from the car company. One offered $100 for referring other customers to the car dealership, and the other

offered $100 in services for the newly purchased car. Both of these can be seen as contemporary approaches to managing post-decisional dissonance.

The amount of dissonance experienced as a result of a decision depends on four variables. The importance of the decision is the first factor; buying a car can result in a great deal of dissonance because it is a major purchase. The second variable is the attractiveness of the selected alternative; if the chosen alternative is not very attractive, the greater the dissonance will be. If you are buying a new, snazzy car rather than an old, not very fun one, you probably will not experience much dissonance. Third, the greater the perceived attractiveness of the not-chosen alternative, the more dissonance you will feel. If you wish you had saved your money to go to Europe instead of buying a car, you will probably find yourself suffering considerable dissonance. Finally, the more similar the alternatives between which you chose, the less the dissonance. If you are debating between two similar cars, making a decision in favor of one will not result in much dissonance. If you are deciding between buying a car and going to Europe, you might experience quite a bit of dissonance.

Another situation in which dissonance is likely to occur is forced compliance—being induced to do or say something contrary to your beliefs or values.

Figure 3.5 Model of Theory of Cognitive Dissonance



This could happen at work, for example, when your boss asks you to do something you would rather not do. If you were told you would be fired if you did not comply, you would feel more justified in doing the task and experience less dissonance about it.

In one experiment designed to test how the compliance factor operates in regard to dissonance, students were asked to complete a boring task, after which they were "bribed" to tell other students that the task was fun.[31] Some of these participants were paid $1 to lie about how fun the task was, and the others were paid $20 to do so. As expected, the $1 liars tended to change their opinion of the task to actually believe it was fun because of the dissonance they experienced about lying. The $20 liars, on the other hand, tended to maintain the belief that the task was dull but justified the lie because of the cash received. This feature of dissonance explains why you might stay in a high-paying job you dislike; the high pay becomes a justification for doing so.

Dissonance theory also predicts that the more difficult one's initiation into a group, the greater the commitment toward that group. This explains why many organizations incorporate some kind of initiation rite in order to join. Another prediction of dissonance theory concerns the amount of social support received for a decision. The more social support you receive from friends about an idea or action, the greater the pressure to believe in that idea or action. Finally, dissonance theory also predicts behavior based on task difficulty. The greater the amount of effort you put into a task, the more you will rationalize the value of that task. Have you ever put a lot of work into an assignment you weren't looking forward to, only to discover after completing it that you liked it after all? This outcome is entirely consistent with cognitive-dissonance theory. The next theory offers another explanation of how we manage cognitively dissonant situations.

Problematic-Integration Theory. Austin Babrow has elaborated on cognitive dissonance by exploring how individuals manage *problematic integration* (PI), his term for cognitive dissonance.[32] He uses PI to refer to situations in which attitudes, beliefs, and values do not converge or are not well integrated. When a person's orientations related to a subject are well integrated, it is easy to make sense of what is going on, but when orientations do not easily come together, sense-making is problematic.

Babrow divides personal orientations into two types—probabilistic and evaluative. *Probabilistic orientations* are associations on a scale of probability from certainty to uncertainty. The second type of orientation is *evaluative*—all probabilistic associations are evaluated positively or negatively, on a scale from good to bad. In other words, what you believe to be true or certain affects whether you evaluate that knowledge as good or bad. Both of these orientations factor into how you make sense of a situation and how you communicate about those beliefs and behaviors. PI can occur when you lack sufficient information, information is inconsistent, beliefs and desires are in conflict, goals clash, or desires seem unattainable; it is rarely isolated to one set of associations.

A woman we know has been divorced for 15 years and evaluates this condition highly negatively, believing she will never meet another life partner. Probabilistic orientation suggests that this focus chains out to affect other issues. Despite

being a minister, activist, and musician who plays ukulele in weekend gigs, our friend does not see these many areas of her life as places where she might meet a new partner. She similarly dismisses the possibilities of online dating, always coming up with excuses for why such relationships could never work. According to PI, she could choose to reframe this situation—evaluate the situation positively instead of negatively. She could turn her divorced state into an opportunity to enjoy being alone, an opportunity to meet new and interesting people, and an opportunity to become the partner she wants to be in her next relationship.

From the Source . . .

PI theory arose out of my dissatisfaction with expectancy-value theories, which seem to trivialize the experience of communication in relation to uncertainty, ambivalence, and diverging expectations and desires. Since then, the theory has been evolving away from its roots in individual psychological models of information integration; in the most recent developments, we have begun to examine the dynamic interpersonal and sociocultural meaning making that occurs when people strive to understand challenging situations (e.g., pregnancy, cancer, bioterrorism.)

Austin Babrow

Laura Russell and Babrow offer the construction of risk as an example of how problematic-integration theory works.[33] It is increasingly difficult, in the world in which we live, to develop a coherent sense about the world, how it is structured, and how it works. A thought or statement of this type about the risky nature of the world represents a probabilistic orientation. When an evaluative orientation is added—when you try to figure out what this kind of world means for your well-being—things become even more complicated. You face uncertainty because of all of the competing narratives available and because of layers of expectations, information overload, and complexity that make any issue of any depth difficult to sort out. In PI terms, then, risk is a process of selection and valuing; you piece together particular moments of experience to formulate a sense of risk. Equally importantly, those ideas about risk can be changed—alternative narratives offered—if a different probabilistic orientation and evaluation is chosen. Someone with a fear of flying, for example, places considerable evaluation on the negative aspects of flying, the possibility of a crash, and so on. Different information—flying is safer than driving a car—can be added to the probabilistic orientation, which can cause the evaluative orientation to move from the far negative end of the evaluative scale to a more positive position on the scale.

Communication, then, is very important to the problematic-integration process. Not only is communication instrumental in constructing the meaning and evaluation of something in the first place but it also provides a way of coping with PI. Communication is the means by which a problematic situation is developed, maintained, and resolved. It provides the means, in other words, by which the PI is either maintained and strengthened or reappraised and reframed. New meanings can be created by your reflecting on the situation and choosing to see

it differently or talking with others about it. The next theory changes the focus to how we address a lack of knowledge about others.

Uncertainty Reduction Theory. Uncertainty reduction theory addresses the basic process of how we gain knowledge or reduce uncertainty about other people.[34] When we encounter a stranger, we may have a strong desire to reduce uncertainty about this person—to simply know more about her. Formulated by Charles Berger and his colleagues, this theory proposes that we have a difficult time with uncertainty. We want to be able to predict behavior, so we are motivated to seek out information about others in order to better predict how they will behave.

According to Berger, when we communicate, we are making plans to accomplish our goals.[35] We formulate plans for our interactions with others based on our goals as well as on the information we have about the others. The more uncertain we are, the more vigilant we become and the more we rely on data available to us in the situation. At highly uncertain moments, we become more conscious or mindful of the planning we are doing. When we are very uncertain about another person, we tend to be less confident in our plans and make more contingency plans or alternative ways of responding.

Attraction or affiliation seems to correlate positively with uncertainty reduction. As communicators find they have things in common, their attraction to one another goes up, and their apparent need for more information goes down. In other words, higher levels of uncertainty seem to create distance, but reduced uncertainty tends to bring people together. Often, the behavior of the other person immediately leads to a reduction in uncertainty, and you do not feel the need to get additional information. This is especially true when your involvement with the other person is limited to a particular situation, and you have all the information you need to understand the person's behavior in that situation. However, under other circumstances, you have a heightened need to know. Such circumstances might include abnormal behavior on the part of the other person, the expectation that you will be communicating with the other person in the future, or the prospect that the encounter will be especially rewarding or costly. Under these conditions, you will probably take action to get more information about the other person.

For example, if you hired a plumber to fix a leak in your house, you would probably not need to learn more about this contractor, assuming you would not see her again after the job was completed. On the other hand, if the plumber noticed that you had a "Room for Rent" sign in your window and expressed an interest in finding a new place to live, you would suddenly be motivated to get more information about her. In particular, you would be interested in reducing *predictive uncertainty*—you would want to know what to expect about this person's behavior. You would also want to reduce *explanatory uncertainty*—to better understand (or explain) your possible tenant's behavior. In initial interactions, people tend to engage in conversation to get information from and about the other person; as uncertainty is eliminated, questioning and other information-seeking strategies decline.

Berger suggests that we get information from others in a variety of ways. *Passive strategies* are observational, whereas *active* ones require the observer

to work to get information in some way, such as asking other people, arranging to show up at a place you know that person will be, and so on. *Interactive strategies* rely on direct communication with the other person. For example, if you are attracted to a student in a class you are taking, you might observe the person unobtrusively (passive), ask another classmate about her (active), and begin a conversation with her (interactive).

The first passive strategy Berger describes is *reactivity searching.* Here the individual is observed actually doing something—reacting in some situation. For example, if you are interested in dating a classmate, you might observe this person discreetly for a period of time. You might watch the way she reacts to events in the class—questions from the instructor, class discussions, and so forth—and you might listen in on conversations she has with other people in class. *Disinhibition searching* is another passive strategy in which people are observed in informal situations, where they are less likely to be self-monitoring and are behaving in a more natural way. You might be especially interested in observing your classmate outside of class in settings such as at a local coffee shop or in the residence hall.

Active strategies of information involve asking others about the target person and manipulating the environment in ways that set the target person up for observation. You might, for example, try to get assigned to the same project group as this classmate. Or you might ask a mutual friend to invite both of you to a party. A common way of finding out about people these days is to "Google" them—you see what you can find out about your classmate by Googling her name on the Internet.

Interactive strategies include interrogation and self-disclosure. Self-disclosure, which is discussed in more detail in chapter 7, is a significant strategy for actively obtaining information. If you disclose something about yourself, the other person is likely to disclose in return. Once in the project group, for instance, you could talk to your classmate, ask questions, and make disclosures in order to encourage her to disclose information as well.

To discover the ways strangers get information about one another, Charles Berger and Katherine Kellermann videotaped about 50 conversations in their laboratory.[36] The pairs in the study were told to get varying amounts of information from their conversational partners. Some participants were told to get as much information about the other person as possible, others were told to get as little as possible, and yet others were not given any instructions along these lines. Also, the dyads themselves were mixed: some consisted of pairs in which both had been asked to get a great deal of information, some consisted of pairs in which both had been asked to get little information, and some included one person from each category.

The researchers primarily were interested in finding out what the communicators actually did to get or to resist getting information. Predictably, the most common strategy for getting information was to ask questions, but some other strategies were also used, such as putting the other person at ease and self-disclosing. Even the low-information seekers used questions, but their questions tended to be innocuous inquiries into the weather and other irrelevant topics. Individuals who were trying to get a great deal of information asked significantly more questions than the low-information subjects. Those who were not

given any instructions asked about the same number of questions as those who were told to get a great deal of information, which suggests that we normally tend to ask many questions when talking with strangers.

We now turn to the subject of communication competence, which refers to the capacity of a communicator to effectively and appropriately interact. Various skills are involved in whether we determine a communicator to be competent or not; the three theories below address different aspects of competence.

Communication Competence

Competence theories generally attempt to explain how and why people are able to behave adequately, appropriately, and successfully in interaction with others. We include three theories in this section—interaction adaptation theory, expectancy violation theory, and a theory of communication competence. The first two theories essentially set the stage for competent communicating: knowing how to adapt in interaction with others and knowing when and how expectations get violated. The last theory offers a general theory of competence within the interpersonal context.

Interaction Adaptation Theory

If you were to videotape a conversation between yourself and a friend, you would probably see the two of you behaving in a similar way, mirroring or converging in a *reciprocal* pattern in some moments and backing away or diverging in a pattern of *compensation* at other times. Using the lens of interaction adaptation theory, you would begin to notice your behaviors are influencing each other, creating the pattern of interaction—rather like a dance. The ability to coordinate interactions in this manner is a kind of competence we develop as we communicate in various situations.

Judee Burgoon and her associates noticed this *interactional synchrony* or coordinated back-and-forth pattern among communicators and developed interaction adaptation theory as a result.[37] According to Burgoon and her colleagues, you have a rough idea about what will happen when you begin communicating with another person. This is your *interaction position*, the place where you begin. It is determined by a combination of factors that these theorists termed *RED*, which stands for requirements, expectations, and desires. Your *requirements* are the things you really need in the interaction. These may be biological, such as talking loudly enough to be heard, or they may be social, such as a need for affiliation, continued friendship, or to manage an interaction smoothly. Your *expectations* are the patterns you predict will happen. If you are not that familiar with the other person, you will rely on social norms of politeness and aspects of the situation—such as the purpose of the meeting and other similar encounters in the past. If you know the other person well, your expectations probably will be based largely on past experience. Your *desires* are what you want to accomplish, what you hope will result from the interaction.

Your initial behaviors in the interaction consist of a combination of verbal and nonverbal behaviors that reflect your interaction position, environmental factors, and skill level as a communicator. However, in most interactions, your

behavior will change—and so will that of your conversational partner—as you experience mutual influence. Mutual influence can be considerable and, in most situations, far greater than any preplanning you have done. If you like your partner's behavior more than you thought you would, you will probably reciprocate, or converge, making your behavior more like that of your partner. If your partner hugs you, you probably will hug her back; if she starts asking you questions, you probably will reciprocate and do the same.

Sometimes the reciprocal pattern is disrupted or disabled, however, leading to a second kind of response—*compensation*. If it turns out that your partner's behavior is more negative than you thought it would be, you probably will engage in a pattern of compensation—maintaining your own style and even exaggerating what you initially would have done. Let's assume you and a good friend are on a long car trip together, and you expected to spend most of the drive chatting. Your friend, however, is silent, just staring out the window as you drive. This violation of expectations might cause you to increase your frequency of talk in order to compensate for the violation and to encourage your friend to talk more. Sometimes, you end up reciprocating some behaviors and compensating others at the same time.

Burgoon and her colleagues have extended their work on adaptation with a theory about the violation of expectations. They discovered that the ways we adapt to other people depend in large measure on the extent to which other people violate our expectations for behavior.

Expectancy Violations Theory

As we know from interaction adaptation theory, we have expectations about the behavior of another person based on social norms as well as on our previous experience with that person and the situation in which the behavior occurs.[38] These expectations can involve virtually any nonverbal behavior, including, for example, eye contact, distance, and body angle.[39] The common assumption is that when expectancies are met, the other person's behaviors are judged positively, and when they are violated, the behaviors are judged as negative. Burgoon and her colleagues found, however, that this is not always the case. Violations often are judged favorably. This may be the case because violations sometimes draw our attention to aspects of the other's behavior we may not have noticed before, and we learn something positive about that person. If someone stands too close to you or too far away, if another person's eye contact is abnormal, you are aware of the difference. Whether judged as good or bad, violations cause us to be more attentive to what is happening in the interaction.

Imagine, for example, that you have just been introduced to an attractive person. In getting to know each other, you talk about everything from the weather to family. Suddenly you become aware that this person is standing unusually close to you. You take a step back, but the other person continues to move in. Your first tendency will be to interpret this behavior and then to evaluate it. If you like this person, you probably will evaluate this "come on" as good.

As this example shows, an important variable in the evaluation process is *reward valence,* or the degree to which you find the interaction rewarding. A conversation might be rewarding, for example, because it will lead to a positive outcome. On the other hand, valence might be negative because the behavior

entails more costs than benefits. Returning to the example above, if you are in a committed relationship, you could evaluate the close proximity as having more downsides than rewards. The meaning of the behavior is not always clear cut, of course—sometimes the behavior is ambiguous, and you might not know what to make of it. Expectancy violations theory predicts that ambiguous behavior by a valued communicator will be taken as positive, but such behavior by an unrewarding communicator will be taken as negative. Again, this effect will be accentuated in cases where expectations are violated.

From the Source . . .

Marketers have long known, and politicians are now grasping, the importance of setting expectations low enough so that you can violate them positively. No longer are violations assumed to be negative. Exceeding expectations is more beneficial than conforming to them—as long as you have the high reward value to carry it off. The trick, of course, is to know if you are regarded favorably enough to qualify as a high-reward communicator so that you can safely violate expectations, or if you are better served by meeting expectations.

Judee Burgoon

An interesting study of eye gaze, conducted by Judee Burgoon, explored how violations can affect judgments of behavior and communication outcomes.[40] Burgoon trained four confederates to play the role of interviewee in an employment interview; they were taught to manipulate their eye behavior to effect seemingly natural violations. Students in an organizational communication course were cast as employment interviewers in the study. The interviewee submitted a high-status résumé (creating expectations of a rewarding interview) to half of the interviewers; the other half received a low-status résumé (creating less favorable expectations). During the interview, some interviewers received normal eye contact from the interviewee, some received no eye contact, and some received above-normal eye contact. After the interview, each interviewer completed a set of scales related to the credibility of the applicant, the likelihood of employment, and other aspects of the relationship that developed between the interviewer and the interviewee. The results of this experiment showed that the failure to have eye contact with the interviewer resulted in negative outcomes for the applicant, whether they were high or low status. A higher-than-normal level of eye gaze also violated expectations, but it was interpreted somewhat differently depending on the status of the interviewee. High-status applicants with nearly constant eye contact were judged more favorably than were low-status applicants with constant eye contact.

Burgoon's theories of interaction adaptation and expectancy violation theory provide a basic framework for what makes a communicator competent: competence necessitates knowing when and how to adapt to an interaction and how to respond when expectations about the interaction are violated. Next we turn to a theory of communication competence that systematically addresses the general assumptions that determine competent communication.

Theory of Communication Competence

Many different theories of competence—the ability to adapt effectively to the surrounding environment—have been developed. Brian Spitzberg and William Cupach's theory deals with competence within an interpersonal context. Their theory of communication competence is representative and broad enough to encompass a variety of communication situations.

Spitzberg and Cupach first lay out seven interrelated assumptions about competence in their model. Competence (1) is perceived appropriateness and effectiveness, which means that expected norms are generally understood and followed; (2) is contextual—what is appropriate in one context is not appropriate in another; (3) is a matter of degree, with competence unfolding in the course of the conversation; (4) includes both micro, or specific behaviors, and global, or more abstract aspects; (5) is functional, or achieves certain outcomes; (6) is an interdependent process—the context of a relationship is a factor; and (7) is an interpersonal impression others have of the behavior, not an innate or intrinsic trait.[41]

Spitzberg and Cupach define *competence* as consisting of skills, knowledge, and motivation: "An individual's interpersonal skills, along with the accompanying knowledge and motivation, enable the occurrence of certain outcomes that are judged interpersonally competent in a particular interactional context."[42] By *skills*, Spitzberg and Cupach refer to behaviors that are repeatable and intentional rather than accidental or coincidental. In other words, skills are typically behaviors that are learned in interaction with others and can be performed in order to realize certain communication goals. Interpersonal skills function at several levels of abstraction and complexity. Simple micro behaviors include such behaviors as smiling and head nodding; higher-level skills exhibit a combination of such factors—showing interest involves head nodding, smiling, and eye contact. Spitzberg and Cupach generate a potential list of categories of skills that constitute competence: interaction management, social relaxation, expressiveness, and altercentricism or other orientation.

Spitzberg and Cupach claim that skills rely on two types of *knowledge*—the second element of their theory. There is content knowledge and procedural knowledge, and both are required for the successful performance of a skill. *Content knowledge* involves knowing *what*, and *procedural knowledge* involves knowing *how.* Content knowledge includes having information about the rules of language, social contexts, relational partners, and conversational topics. *Procedural knowledge* includes knowing how to select the appropriate skill(s) for a given interpersonal context. Knowing how to start and maintain a conversation, how to politely exit a conversation, and conversational maintenance strategies all would be part of a procedural skills set.

The third element in Spitzberg and Cupach's model is *motivation*. Motivation is the desire to do something or to behave in a certain way. Motivation can function positively or negatively. When motivation functions positively, you choose to communicate and move toward the accomplishment of goals. When motivation is absent, you avoid communicating because of communication apprehension, shyness, or some other reason. Spitzberg and Cupach stress that having skills, knowledge, and motivation do not guarantee a competent commu-

nication performance because competence is determined by those observing the performance. The others in the interaction are the test of whether competence is achieved.

From the Source . . .

During graduate school, with dozens of articles strewn across the floor, I found they could be sorted according to a theatrical metaphor from another article: In order to give a good performance, an actor needs to be motivated, knowledgeable, and skilled. Fellow grad student William Cupach and I engaged each other on one conceptual and operational challenge after another (e.g., competence as impression versus skill, appropriateness, and effectiveness) until we felt we had a defensible perspective.

Brian Spitzberg

A study by Joy Koesten suggests that communication competence is to some degree learned in families.[43] Interested in whether there was a relationship between family communication patterns, sex of the communicator, and communication competence, Koesten asked students to complete the Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire and the Revised Family Communication Patterns scale. She found that family communication patterns correlate with a demonstration of communication competence in both same-sex friendships and romantic partnerships. Specifically, those growing up in families in which a high conversation orientation is stressed demonstrate greater competence—the ability to make use of a greater variety of communication skills—in both friendships and intimate relationships than did those growing up in laissez faire or protective families. A gender difference was found as well: women described themselves as more competent at self-disclosure and conflict management in friendships than in intimate relationships; for men, it was just the opposite. This study suggests that many behaviors within the communication competence rubric probably are learned in the family environment, and there may be socialized gender differences as well that figure into how communication competence plays out in actual relationships.

We move next to theories of *identity* and how the sense and presentation of self are shaped by interaction in social and cultural groups. As with communication competence, these theories, too, play out in interaction with others.

Identity Theories

Another aspect of the communicator is how a unified sense of self is constructed through communication. The biophysiological approaches discussed earlier understand the communicator to be in large part determined by stable psychological or biological mechanisms, and cognitive theories are concerned with the ways we process information. Theories of identity generally assume

that communicators construct their identities in interaction with others. Who you are as a person, then, is a matter of the ways in which you construct, adjust, and evolve a coherent sense of self in relation to the situations and people around you. Such theories also deal with how you differentiate yourself from others.[44] In this section, we discuss symbolic interaction, Erving Goffman's performance of self, cultural identity theory, identity negotiation theory, standpoint theory, and queer theory. All of these have developed the notion of the self and identity as constructed through communication.

Symbolic Interaction and Self as a Social Object

Symbolic interactionism (SI) is a way of thinking about mind, self, and society.[45] George Herbert Mead is considered the founder of symbolic interactionism. With foundations in the field of sociology, SI teaches that as people interact with one another over time, they come to share meanings for certain terms and actions and thus come to understand events in particular and similar ways. Society itself arises from interlinked conversations among individuals. Here we will consider one concept from SI that has special relevance to the communicator—the *self.*

An important outcome of interaction is a certain idea of the self—who you are as a person. Manford Kuhn, a student of Mead's and founder of what came to be called the Iowa School, placed the self at the center of social life.[46] Communication is crucial from the beginning as children are socialized through interaction with others in the society in which they live. The process of negotiating the world occurs through communication as well: a person makes sense of and deals with objects in the environment through social interaction. An *object* can be any aspect of the person's reality: a thing, a quality, an event, or a state of affairs. The only requirement for something to become an object is that the person must name or represent it symbolically. Objects, then, are more than objective things; they are *social objects,* and reality is the totality of a person's social objects. To Kuhn, the naming of an object is important, for naming is a way of conveying the object's meaning.

Communicators do not just interact with others and with social objects; they also communicate with themselves. Communicators undertake self-conversations as part of the process of interacting; we have conversations in our minds in order to make distinctions among things and people. When making decisions about how to act toward a social object, we create what Kuhn calls a *plan of action*—verbal statements that indicate the values toward which action will be directed. For example, going to college involves a plan of action—actually a host of plans—guided by a set of attitudes about what you want to get out of college. How you relate to college could be influenced, for example, by your attitudes toward money, career, and personal success.

We do not work out the meaning of social objects, attitudes, and plans of action in isolation. Indeed, the whole premise of SI is that these things arise from interaction with others. Certain other people, termed *orientational others,* are particularly influential in a person's life. They are people to whom we are emotionally and psychologically committed. Orientational others, like parents, provide us with a general vocabulary, central concepts, and categories that come to define our realities. Orientational others may be present in our lives now, or they may have been significant in the past. These individuals were or are especially

important in helping us learn about the ways we are different from and similar to other people; these individuals help us work out who we are as persons.

The *self,* then, is an important social object, defined and understood in terms developed over time in interaction with orientational others. The self-concept provides anchoring attitudes, which act as your most common frame of reference for judging other objects. All subsequent plans of action stem primarily from the self-concept. Kuhn, interested in quantifying SI, invented the *Twenty Statements Test* (TST) for measuring various aspects of the self. If you were to take the TST, you would be confronted with twenty blank spaces preceded by the following simple instructions:

> There are twenty numbered blanks on the page below. Please write twenty answers to the simple question, "Who am I?" in the blanks. Just give twenty different answers to this question. Answer as if you were giving the answers to yourself, not to somebody else. Write the answers in the order that they occur to you. Don't worry about logic or "importance." Go along fairly fast, for time is limited.[47]

There are a number of ways to analyze the responses from this test, each tapping a different aspect of the self. The *ordering variable* refers to the relative salience of identifications. For example, if the person lists "Baptist" a great deal higher than "father," the researcher may conclude that the person identifies more readily with religion than with family affiliation. The *locus variable*—another way to assess the test answers—is the extent to which the individual tends to identify with consensual groupings such as "American" rather than idiosyncratic, subjective qualities such as "strong."

This test is an interesting way to explore aspects of the self. It is important in symbolic interaction to always keep in mind that the self is a social object, created and defined through a history of interaction within one's social worlds. The self is not constructed in some abstract sense but is also performed. An important part of who you are is the self presented to others in human interaction.

Presentation of Self

The work of Erving Goffman, one of the best-known sociologists of the twentieth century, laid the foundation for theories of identity as they have developed in communication.[48] Goffman used a theatrical metaphor to explain how communicators present the self. Everyday situations are viewed as a stage, and people are actors who use performances to make an impression on an audience. When you enter a situation, you essentially ask, "What is going on here?" Your answer constitutes a definition of the situation. On the basis of that definition, you decide how to position yourself, what to say, and how to act. In any situation, then, we choose to present a particular view of self that we hope is appropriate for the situation. Goffman elaborates:

> I am suggesting that often what talkers undertake to do is not to provide information to a recipient but to present dramas to an audience. Indeed, it seems that we spend most of our time not engaged in giving information but in giving shows. And observe, this theatricality is not based on mere displays of feelings or faked exhibitions of spontaneity or anything else by way of the huffing and puffing we might derogate by calling theatrical. The parallel

> between stage and conversation is much, much deeper than that. The point is that ordinarily when an individual says something, he is not saying it as a bold statement of fact on his own behalf. He is recounting. He is running through a strip of already determined events for the engagement of his listeners.[49]

Goffman believes that the self is literally determined by these dramatizations. You have only to think about the many situations in which you project a certain image of yourself. You probably do not behave the same way with your best friend as you do with your parents, and it is unlikely that the self you present to a professor is the same one you present at a party. In most of the situations in which you participate, you decide on a role and enact it, selecting the characterization you think will best fit the scene and facilitate the achievement of your goals within that scene. Often the first definition of a situation is not adequate, and a rereading may be necessary, as in the case of a practical joke, a mistake, a misunderstanding, or a case of outright deception. Performance, then, is not trivial but literally defines who you are as a communicator.

Scholarship on identity in communication builds on the ways we construct and perform our various identities, how those identities evolve and change, and how we adjust them to meet different situations. We discuss two identity theories here: Mary Jane Collier's cultural identity theory and Stella Ting-Toomey's identity negotiation theory.

Cultural Identity Theory

Cultural Identity Theory (CIT) was developed in the late 1980s by Mary Jane Collier and her colleagues to describe the communicative processes used by individuals to construct and negotiate cultural group identities and relationships across contexts.[50] These scholars were particularly interested in how diversity is realized within a cultural group given that the members of that group all have multiple cultural identities in addition to that shared group membership. Diversity, then, both within and between groups, is the starting point of CIT. Not only do individuals' identities consist of different and multiple cultural identities—race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality—but an individual's identification within a cultural group differs in salience and importance across various contexts. An African American identity may be less important than gender in a group of African Americans, but it might become extremely important if you are the only black person in a class or in an organization.

Cultural identity theory also deals with who constructs the social identities of cultural groups and the ways in which those identities are communicated. Collier describes two processes—avowal and ascription—to differentiate between how one describes one's own identity (*avowal*) and how one refers to the identities of others (*ascription*). Personal avowals are often responses to ongoing ascriptions, which are often stereotypic presentations of cultural groups. Each of us, then, engages in a constant process of identity negotiation because of the interplay between how we view our own cultural group and the ways it is seen by others.

Recent iterations of cultural identity theory have focused on how personal identities are negotiated in relation to larger, structural ascriptions such as those implicit in texts and documents, political histories, and government and public institutions. CIT scholars seek to understand the ways cultural identities

are constructed, lived, and reified—and how they can transform potentially oppressive structures, institutions, and relationships. For example, Collier interviewed both blacks and Afrikaners (whites) in South Africa in both 1992 and 1999, asking about cultural identifications, intercultural friendships, and how those friends dealt with cultural differences.[51] While the Afrikaners readily identified negative characteristics of blacks in the 1992 interviews—they said blacks need to wear suits and ties, they are too pushy, they smell—Afrikaners were much more ambiguous in the 1999 interviews, qualifying their statements while still managing to establish an "us" versus "them" dichotomy between blacks and whites. For black participants, there were also differences between the two interviews. Blacks showed more willingness to critique institutions as racist and classist in the 1999 interviews than in the earlier ones. The study shows how cultural histories and political climate intersect and are implicated in the construction and negotiation of cultural identities. Identity negotiation theory, by Stella Ting-Toomey, continues the interest in how a communicator negotiates cultural identity and the extent to which an individual feels secure in and comfortable with that identity.

Identity Negotiation Theory

Stella Ting-Toomey is interested in how particular identity domains or identities affect communication interactions.[52] She begins her theory by differentiating personal identities from cultural identities. *Cultural identities* (such as race, ethnicity, religion, and gender) are associated with membership in a particular cultural or social group; *personal identities* are the more unique characteristics—interests, abilities, skills, and preferences—that distinguish us from others.

Cultural and ethnic identities are characterized by two dimensions: value content and salience. *Value content* consists of the kinds of evaluation that you make based on cultural beliefs. For example, some cultures predispose members to value the community or group above the individual, while other cultures privilege individualistic values. *Salience* is the strength of affiliation we feel with a particular group in a particular situation. You may have very strong cultural and/or ethnic ties, or you may have only weak feelings of affiliation. Part of your identity—who you are as a person—is determined by how strongly you connect to the larger groups of which you are a part and the clarity of values that emerge from relationships.

Ting-Toomey is particularly interested in how individuals manage or negotiate the tension between personal and cultural selves in ways that enhance respect for and consideration of other cultural groups. She suggests that all people seek identity security, inclusion, predictability, connection, and continuity, but these are not always easily realized. A high degree of value and salience in connection with a cultural group may lead to an exaggerated sense of security and thus feelings of ethnocentricism—the belief that your cultural group is the best (discussed in more detail in chapter 11). Too much emotional insecurity can lead to seeing other cultural groups as too different or foreign from you and thus not able to be trusted. Most of us work through identity negotiation to develop some balance between these extremes.

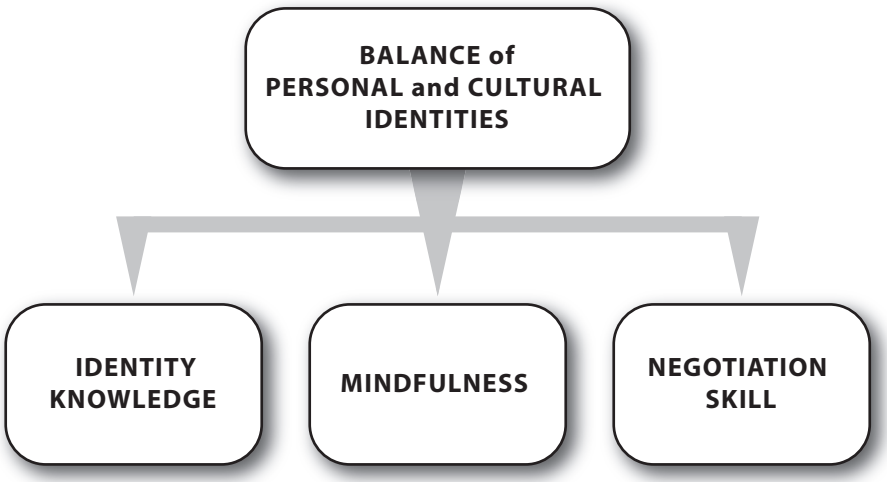
Some individuals are more effective than others at achieving a comfortable balance between personal and cultural identities. You know you have achieved

balance when you maintain a strong sense of self but are able to consider and understand the identities of others and allow for and appreciate their identities, no matter how different they may be from yours. Ting-Toomey calls this the state of *functional biculturalism*. When you are able to shift from one cultural context to another mindfully and easily, you have reached the state of being a *cultural transformer*. The key to achieving these states is intercultural competence.

Intercultural competence consists of three components—identity knowledge, mindfulness, and negotiation skill. *Identity knowledge* is an understanding of the importance of cultural/ethnic identity and the ability to see its importance to others. This means knowing something about cultural identities and being able to see the difference, for example, between a collectivist and an individualist identity. *Mindfulness* simply means being habitually and conscientiously aware. It means a readiness to shift to new perspectives. Finally, *negotiation skill* refers to the ability to negotiate identities through careful observation, listening, empathy, nonverbal sensitivity, politeness, reframing, and collaboration. You know if you have achieved effective identity negotiation if both parties feel understood, respected, and valued. Figure 3.6 illustrates a model of the identity negotiation theory.

Using Ting-Toomey's theory, Ying Huang interviewed Chinese tour guides and supervisors who worked in Yunnan Province, a popular tourist destination, to see how they negotiate or balance their identities in relation to the tourists they encounter.[53] Huang found that all tour guides emphasized professional, ethnic, and personal identities in managing their relationships with tourists, but that younger guides differed from older ones in how they accomplished this. Younger guides were seen by older guides as emphasizing relationships—being friendly, telling jokes—while older guides saw themselves as creating connections with tourists by showing how knowledgeable they are and emphasizing similarities across cultures. In addition, younger guides were seen by older guides as more willing to sacrifice their ethnic identities in order to please tourists and earn larger tips. Huang's study shows how self- and other perceptions

Figure 3.6 Model of Intercultural Competence



From the Source . . .

After all these years living in the United States, the identity dialectic of security-vulnerability continues to prompt my identity change forward. As an interculturalist, to be vulnerable is to have the courage to seek and accept movement and change. To be secure in one's identity state, one has to know the time and space to let go of oneself and just be, and emptying any preconceived notion of the term, *home*.

Stella Ting-Toomey

can differ within members of a cultural group. Even among members of a similar ethnic, geographic, and cultural identity—Chinese guides in Yunnan Province—disparate perceptions and attributions need to be negotiated and managed through communication.

In the previous sections on identity, we looked at two theories that show how our sense of self arises from social interaction and then is performed and negotiated across contexts and audiences. In the next section, we look at a line of work—identity politics—that focuses on the ways in which we position ourselves as empowered or disempowered individuals. Identity politics emerged from the various social movements that formed in the United States in the 1960s, including the civil rights, black power, women's, and gay/lesbian movements. In general, these movements recognized that society is structured by power relations that create unequal social locations; they sought to understand how the distinctive and shared experiences of members of marginalized groups can challenge dominant and oppressive ideologies. We will discuss two theories here that have been important to theorizing identity politics in communication: standpoint theory and queer theory.

Standpoint Theory

The work of Sandra Harding, Patricia Hill Collins, and Donna Haraway did much to crystallize standpoint theory in the social sciences. Julia Wood and Marsha Houston have been instrumental in incorporating it into the communication discipline.[54] Standpoint theory emerges in the recognition that unequal power relations are responsible for the marginalization or oppression of certain groups, and that the perspectives of the members of those groups are shaped by that inequality. In other words, every social location or standpoint is accompanied by certain expectations by which it is differentiated from dominant social groups. A woman's standpoint, for instance, is expected to be different from that of men; women are expected to have knowledge of homemaking, parenting, and care simply because of the fact of womanhood. These are not innate or instinctive traits and abilities but are part of a process of socialization for girls and women. There are different standpoints, too, within the general standpoint of *woman*. The characteristics of black women's experience, for example, create an angle of vision that is substantially different from that of white women. A standpoint becomes political when members of a marginalized group become conscious of their particular positionality in relation to the dominant culture and seek to challenge that dominance.

While there are shared standpoints based on race, class, gender, and other identity markers, we each have a unique standpoint formed by the particular and multiple identities we experience. Feminist theorist Gloria Anzaldúa offers an example of her distinctive standpoint when she describes herself as a "third world lesbian feminist with Marxist and mystic leanings."[55] She uses the phrase *mestiza consciousness* to signal the perspective or vantage point that is part of her worldview.[56] With this phrase, Anzaldúa not only indicates her various identity positions but also celebrates the strength of a multi-layered identity. Her multiple and interlocking identities enable her to construct a standpoint that offers more tolerance of ambiguity and awareness of various possibilities than a singular identity could. Rather than forcing an individual to choose an identity construction imposed from without, standpoint epistemology acknowledges and values the multiplicity of identities that defines any individual.

From the Source . . .

I was attracted to standpoint theory because it helps me understand recurrent experiences in my life. For years I wondered why I, and most of my women friends, saw situations differently from most men I know. We seem to have distinct perspectives on everything from housework to remembering birthdays to how to spend time with friends. Standpoint recognizes that men and women, in general, occupy different social locations and illuminates how those locations shape perspectives.

Julia Wood

Not only do marginalized or subjugated individuals see the world through multiple identity standpoints but they also are able to see the world from the standpoint of those in power. This dual capacity—to see from both dominant and nondominant positions—emerges because members of a marginalized standpoint of necessity live in both worlds. The capacity to see from several vantage points, then, is a survival tactic; it allows marginalized groups to negotiate the dominant sphere, of which they are not fully a part, but which is always a part of their realities. The reverse, however, is not true. Those in power do not have the need to see from the standpoint of the oppressed; they do not need to learn about others who are different from them in order to survive.

The novel *July's People* by Nadine Gordimer is a good example of this aspect of standpoint theory. Set in South Africa, July is a servant to a white couple in a city. When a revolution occurs, July takes the couple and their three children back to his village, where they must depend completely on him and his world to survive. They come to know him in very different and more complete and complex ways than was the case when they only saw him in their world and did not need to know anything about his other reality.[57]

Standpoint epistemology thus takes into account the variations within communication by understanding marginalized vantage points. Queer theory continues the standpoint orientation, questioning and challenging cultural relations, especially those constructed around issues of sexuality and desire.

Queer Theory

Historically, the term *queer* has carried a variety of meanings. It has meant something strange or unusual, as in quirky; it has referred to negative characteristics, such as madness, that lie outside social norms, as in "that's a bit queer or unusual"; and it has been a term of derision and endearment to refer to gays and lesbians. Most recently, the term queer has been taken back and radicalized as an academic subdiscipline called *queer theory.*

The origins of the phrase *queer theory* are attributed to Teresa de Lauretis who, in 1990, chose it as the title for a conference she coordinated, intentionally wanting to disrupt the complacency of lesbian and gay studies.[58] As an interdisciplinary field, queer theory has retained the disruptive mission de Lauretis first assigned to it: to deliberately shake up the meanings, categories, and identities around gender and sexuality. Queer theory attempts "to queer—to make strange, to frustrate, to counteract, to delegitimise, to camp up—heteronormative knowledges and institutions, and the subjectivities and socialities that are (in)formed by them and that (in)form them."[59] Queer theory seeks to "trouble" the categories of sexuality and identity by showing them to be social constructions created in discourse rather than essential, biological categories.

Judith Butler has been instrumental in elaborating the ways these categories of sexuality and identity get reified and normalized by the dominant hegemonic discourses of culture. By continually questioning existing discursive constructions around identity categories, queer theorists open a space for different, more fluid constructions to emerge. Butler summarizes: "I'm permanently troubled by identity categories, consider them to be invariable stumbling-blocks, and understand them, and even promote them, as sites of necessary trouble."[60] For Butler and queer theorists generally, constructions of gender and sexuality become fluctuating, evolving performances rather than stable, essential, unchanging categories; they are always designed to question and challenge the status quo.

While queer theory starts from an interest in gendered identity categories, many scholars choose not to limit the content of queer theory to these categories alone. David Halperin describes queer as "*whatever* is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. *There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers.* It is an identity without an essence."[61] Thus, while gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered were original sites of inquiry for queer theorists, some choose to broaden the category to include anyone who feels marginalized or who does not fit the heteronormative labels of dominant culture. According to this definition, single fathers and married couples without children could be called *queer* because, despite being heterosexual, they do not completely adhere to heteronormative practices of marriage and family.[62] Recent work extends queer theory even further, exploring the ways that discourses of globalization, diaspora, transnationalism, war, and terror are manifestations of sexual, gender, and racial hierarchies.[63] *Queer* is perhaps better thought of as a verb rather than a noun, a set of actions rather than a stable identity. Queer theory, then, lives up to its label by refusing to pin down its own identity: "it is a discipline that refuses to be disciplined, a discipline with a difference."[64]

In the communication discipline, the earliest treatment of what would come to be called *queer* was the book, *Gayspeak: Gay Male and Lesbian Communica-*

tion, edited by James Chesebro and published in 1981. The central thesis of this pioneering volume was that the social reality constructed around homosexuality is what makes it an issue; thus, communication about homosexuality rather than homosexuality itself should be the focus of inquiry. The next major treatment within communication was *Queer Words, Queer Images: Communication and the Construction of Homosexuality,* edited by Jeffrey Ringer. Published in 1994, this volume sought to continue to offer research findings about the LGBTQ community from a communication perspective and to use those findings to contribute to communication generally. Anthony Slagle's essay," In Defense of Queer Nation," followed shortly thereafter and signaled the transition from studies of the discourse of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals to queer politics. Initial studies analyzed gay, lesbian, and bisexual discourses within the traditional and normative conceptions of communication. Queer theory questioned definitions and categories of analysis, including the focus on oppression and marginalization, and instead sought to understand the multiple and fluid gender categories of queer as socially constructed. The volume, *Queer Theory and Communication: From Disciplining Queers to Queering the Discipline(s)*, edited by Gust Yep, Karen Lovaas, and John Elia, was the next major work advancing queer theory in communication; it offered research studies designed to intervene in the discipline, suggesting how queer theory changes the discipline. As a final example of the work in communication, Charles Morris published *Queering Public Address*, which brings queer theory into the study of public address, traditionally the study of famous public speakers. This work suggests that queer theory is being integrated into traditional areas of the discipline rather than remaining a discrete subfield; at the same time, *Queering Public Address* unsettles the ways historical accounts and categories are conceptualized. These works illustrate the evolving and growing interest in queer theory in communication and set the stage for the numerous articles grounded in queer theory that now populate communication journals.[65]

Peter Campbell's essay on "The Procedural Queer" demonstrates the fluidity of the *queer* label and the way in which it can be applied to contexts and experiences beyond LGBTQ identities.[66] Campbell applied queer theory to legal arguments—specifically the Supreme Court decision in the case of *Lawrence v. Texas*, in which the Court found in favor of the plaintiff, John Lawrence. Lawrence was arrested and prosecuted after police, responding to a report of suspected weapons, broke into his home and found him engaged in anal sexual intercourse with another man, in violation of Texas's anti-sodomy law. Kennedy's arguments on behalf of the Court were based on the belief that Lawrence's right under the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment had been violated.

Campbell suggests that Kennedy's arguments can be framed in ways that are useful to radical queer politics because of how Kennedy recognized that legal solutions seen as progressive in one time and place might be seen as oppressive in another. Kennedy insisted that the Constitution cannot be limited to any fixed historical interpretation but must remain open to the possibility of change if it is to be theoretically available to all persons. In stressing the Constitution's mutability, Campbell suggests that Kennedy is laying the groundwork for the use of the Constitution on behalf of a queer future in which those pres-

ently oppressed under that Constitution will no longer be. Campbell uses this case to queer legal theory through an analysis of the ways Kennedy framed and wrote his legal opinion, which implicitly opened the way for future constitutional rights for queer citizens.

A final group of theories about the communicator have to do with *agency*, or the degree to which a communicator sees herself as having and being able to exercise the capacity to act. Theories of agency follow naturally from standpoint theories; any marginalized standpoint raises questions about the degree of agency those who inhabit that standpoint can exercise in relation to a dominant culture.

Agency

Agency is essentially the "capacity to make a difference."[67] Traditionally, agency has been considered a property of the communicator because, to some degree, a communicator has and makes choices about how to respond in a communication interaction. What is in dispute among scholars of agency is the degree to which that capacity exists. While the concept of agency has been studied across the social sciences[68] (and many of those conceptualizations have influenced scholars in communication who are interested in agency), we will focus here on theories of agency that have emerged in the communication discipline.

Discussions of agency in communication can be said to have their origins in oratory. The study of oratory or rhetoric in ancient Greece is considered the beginning of the communication discipline. In Greece, rhetoric was equated with persuasion, and the effective and successful orator was considered to have the "competence to speak or write in a way that will be recognized or heeded by others in one's community."[69] The rhetor, then, was considered to be a fully conscious agent who was expected to learn and demonstrate the appropriate mastery of artistic and inartistic proofs so as to effectively persuade the targeted audience or individual. Dilip Gaonkar calls this the "ideology of human agency," which assumes that the individual speaker is the origin of agency; that strategy is intentional; and that speaker, audience, and the ends of discourse necessarily coalesce in a "web of purposeful action."[70] For much of the history of rhetoric, then, the rhetor's agency was not questioned; whether a rhetorical goal was realized or not was placed squarely on the rhetor's shoulders.

Lloyd Bitzer's description of the rhetorical situation and the debates that followed were among some of the earliest work in which agency was problematized. Bitzer claimed there were three components necessary to a rhetorical situation: a rhetor, an exigence, and an audience capable of addressing or resolving the exigence. Questions such as where is agency located, how much agency does the rhetor or communicator have in terms of how to respond to an exigence, and whether successful address of the exigence is necessary to say agency is realized were among the questions raised in the debate over the rhetorical situation. Some scholars claimed that the rhetor simply responds to an exigence constructed by external material conditions. Others believed that the rhetor linguistically constructs the exigence—the exigence itself does not exist until the rhetor gives it form.[71] In other words, to what degree is a concept like *axis of evil* an actual condition to which a communicator responds or a concept

created by the rhetor?[72] Both of these stances recognize an autonomous agent; what differs is the reach of the rhetor's agency and the degree to which she can be said to construct the exigence to which she is choosing to respond.

While Bitzer's approach to the rhetorical situation grants the rhetor considerable agency, another approach to agency situates agency at the other end of the continuum—in power relations and structural conditions. Such approaches rely heavily on the work of philosopher Michel Foucault, who sees the author or creator of communication as simply fulfilling a discursive function—playing a role—that is constituted and governed by the discursive formation in which that discourse is embedded.[73] Rather than the author having agency, agency is best seen as residing in the practices, conditions, rules, and structures imposed on the communicator. Megan McIntyre explores this position further, suggesting that in "opening itself to networks of causes and to nonrational ways of knowing," a posthuman view of agency can account for real-world change more accurately," taking into account its messiness and its fluidity.[74]

Another position on agency also exists outside of these two positions entirely. This is the position that agency is an illusion. This is an extreme position, articulated by Joshua Gunn, who suggests that any belief in the ability to act in the world can only be considered illusory. He suggests that confronting our irrelevance as communication scholars is the only honest option. Celeste Condit takes this position in a slightly different direction, suggesting that if agency is illusory, it is a necessary illusion. It is what grounds communication pedagogy in the classroom, for example—we teach students to exercise choice and thus provide them with greater agentic potential.[75]

Most theorists writing about agency today situate it between the endpoints of subject and structure. In other words, agency is recognized as occurring within a social reality, so it is impossible to ignore situational factors completely. Agency, then, is exercised in the tension between an autonomous actor and a decentered, determined, and constrained social situation. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell offers an eloquent statement of this position that takes into account some degree of autonomy on the part of the communicator and obstacles and possibilities imposed by context: "authors/rhetors are materially limited, linguistically constrained, historically situated subjects; at the same time, they are 'inventors' in the rhetorical sense, articulators who link past and present, and find means to express those strata that connect the psyche, society, and world, the forms of feeling that encapsulate moments in time. In this sense, agency is invention, including the invention, however temporary, of personae, subject-positions, and collectivities."[76] We will return to Campbell's theory of agency below.

Joshua Gunn (in what is perhaps a more moderate position than that expressed above) and Dana Cloud offer a view of agency that they claim leaves the idea of agency open, arguing for a dynamic between material and social realities. They suggest that perhaps "agency is only definitively sensible in retrospect and with situational specificity."[77] For other scholars, an in-between position is to see agency as a resource, constructed in particular contexts and ways.[78] Most communication theory, then, advances the notion of some kind of intersection between an agentic communicator and, to use Gunn and Cloud's language, an "enabling and constraining situation," with varying degrees of attention to how agency functions in society.[79] Agency might best be seen,

according to John Lucaites, as local and particular: "Every rhetorical performance enacts and contains a theory of its own agency—of its own possibilities—as it structures and enacts the relationships between speaker and audience, self and other, action and structure."[80] Below, we address three theories of agency that take into account both the agency of the communicator and the situational demands that may impact that communicator.

Agency as Protean

Karlyn Kohrs Campbell sought to make sense of the concept of agency amid contemporary debates about what it is, where it resides, and the conditions and practices that constrain it. Campbell defines agency as "the capacity to act, that is, to have the competence to speak or write in a way that will be recognized or heeded by others in one's community."[81] Campbell offers several propositions about the nature of agency. First, agency is communal and participatory; in fact, she sees it as the essence of life in the public sphere. So it is not the province of an individual alone. Rather the agent is a shifting, temporary identity, depending on symbolic and material conditions. Second, rather than thinking of agents as originators of action, they are best described as inventors of discourses or utterances who find ways to address the exigence of a community in any given moment. Third, Campbell argues that agency is learned; it is a developed faculty, a creative skill that develops from and is learned in action. Fourth, agency can be realized through form; a text can have agency because it can be separated from its author and from the moment of performance. Finally, Campbell suggests that agency can be destructive, a reminder that rhetoric contains the power of division and destruction as well as identification and transcendence. Ultimately, then, Campbell argues that agency is protean—ever changing, variable, shifting, and inconsistent.

These five propositions, for Campbell, offer a more complex view of agency as something that circulates through individuals and texts in contexts that are both material and symbolic. She uses these propositions to analyze a complex text, a speech by Sojourner Truth (a former slave who spoke at the 1851 women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio). What we have of her speech comes from fragments in newspaper and personal accounts, as well as an account of it written twelve years later by Frances Gage, who attended the Akron convention. Campbell discusses the contested, degrading, and transformative dialect of the speech coupled with Sojourner Truth's *ethos* and use of communal arguments from abolition and women's rights movements to show how a text continues to demonstrate agency long after its delivery—even if much of that text was invented.

Using Campbell's notion of rhetorical agency as a starting point, Nathan Johnson argues that a document can assume rhetorical agency.[82] The case concerns the technology of cascading style sheets (CSS) that define how web documents appear. The technology was created by the work of many individuals, thus embodying the communal agency Campbell describes. Web designers often would have to code a document many different ways because of incompatibilities between browsers. In 1998, a group of web designers formed the Web Standards Project (WaSP) to create web standards compatible across browsers and accessible to all. However, their original language was hostile and aggressive toward browser vendors, who had not endorsed web standards.

Later that year, the WaSP formed the CSS Samurai, a small group of ten members created specifically to lobby for browser support of CSS. Rather than opposing and fighting the vendors, this group approached vendors as experts and offered advice and support to them as well as reporting on glitches in existing implementations. Samurai members also spoke at conferences in support of standards rather than about problems with vendors, and they emphasized how standardized CSS technology would benefit everyone. When they made negative statements, they were usually phrased in the passive voice, in a spirit of ambiguity rather than blame. They essentially shifted the discussion from a battle between themselves and browser vendors to a discussion about fixing a document. The object of blame became the CSS technology, not any actual stakeholders important to the document.

This study illustrates Campbell's approach to rhetorical agency, showing how it can be embedded communally within an object. The CSS documents essentially reoriented and redistributed agency and power, taking it from the people and putting it on the document itself. While the CSS document was the original point of conflict, it became the agent around which the conflict and its final resolution coalesced. The role it played depended on the use to which the documents were put by the particular stakeholder group. This study, then, not only illustrates Campbell's theory of agency but also provides greater understanding of documents as agents as they are articulated, retrieved, stored, and archived.

Agency as Contradiction

Valerie Renegar and Stacey Sowards, writing about the challenges facing third-wave feminism, discuss how agency emerged from the use of contradiction among these activists.[83] Contradiction has been a hallmark of much third-wave feminist literature; Renegar and Sowards examine contradiction as a deliberate rhetorical strategy useful for third-wave feminists and generalizable as a broader strategy of agency, identity, and activism.

Examining third-wave feminist texts from the 1990s and early 2000s, they found several common themes: the absence of a coherent definition of third-wave feminism, the use of negative identity labels as terms of empowerment, and a resistance to simple and singular identity positions. Choice of dress and music, for instance, can simultaneously embrace and challenge and thus problematize traditional and feminist expectations. Furthermore, they recognize that feminist theories can be inconsistent and variable—there is no "one size fits all"—so what is oppressive to one person may not be oppressive to another. For example, pornography can be seen as violent, oppressive, and of no redeeming value or a tool by which women can become more comfortable with their sexuality. In fact, what unites many third-wave feminists is not a shared political understanding and stance but simply a recognition that there is no single, correct position on feminism.

Contradiction as a strategy, then, challenges binaries that often characterized earlier stages of feminism and allows for new alternatives to emerge. The contradictions apparent in third-wave feminism create a space for self-determination, new ways of imagining, and new forms of social action that can serve as a model for social movements facing complex circumstances and goals.

From the Source . . .

As graduate students, we were frustrated that feminist theory was frequently presented as a series of different, distinct identity categories often at odds with one another. We found that third-wave feminism resonated with us because it encouraged individual, intersectional identities. We theorized the strategic use of contradiction as a form of agency as a result of our experiences with multiple conflicting feminist identities, as well as other categories of identity and practice that were seemingly at odds with one another, but were authentic to our lives. This was one of our most important projects because we so closely identified with the material and it solidified a working relationship that has led to an ongoing series of collaborative work.

Valerie Renegar and Stacey Sowards

Brenda Helmbrecht and Meredith Love make use of contradiction as agency in their five-year examination of two third-wave feminist zines, titled *BUST* and *Bitch.*[84] They suggest that these zines create several kinds of *ethos. BUST* mimics mainstream women's fashion magazines in many ways, projecting a sassy sexy *ethos* that takes one of three forms: an *ethos* of one—that it is now up to individual women to make personal choices that reinforce social change; a socially active *ethos;* and an *ethos* of chic domesticity. *Bitch*, on the other hand, is about the value of audience participation. Women's art work, rather than fashion models, graces the covers, most of the pages are black and white, and there is a lengthy "letters to the editor" section where readers discuss previously published material. *Bitch* is characterized by a talk-back *ethos,* an *ethos* of anger, an *ethos* of chic, and an *ethos* of contradiction.

It is with this last strategy that the authors employ Regenar and Sowards's theory of agency as contradiction. In *Bitch,* the contradictions between theory and practice are pointed out, often through the use of the personal anecdote. Readers can identify with the anecdote because of a kind of universal appeal in it. They can then take that understanding to larger, wider, more global perspectives. Indeed, the authors found that when teaching these two zines in English or Women Studies classes, they worked well when positioned together to "disrupt both the public space of the classroom and the rhetorical tradition at large" precisely because they point up contradictions among feminisms and offer different interventions into feminist agency.[85] We turn next to a theory of agency that offers a kind of summary of agency debates.

Constricted and Constructed Potentiality

Sonja Foss and Karen Foss's theory of constricted and constructed potentiality offers a broad theory that encompasses multiple views on agency.[86] They describe two paradigms that operate in communication with regard to agency but which are not always made explicit. The first paradigm, constricted potentiality, emerges from traditional approaches to persuasion, social change, and the role of material conditions in achieving change; this is the paradigm that has been privileged in the communication discipline. The second paradigm, constructed potentiality, is an alternative that features the interpretation of condi-

tions as more important than the conditions themselves. This paradigm has been present to some degree in the discipline, but it has not been fully acknowledged by the field of communication.

Both paradigms begin with a choice of where to focus: to focus on material conditions or on symbols as primary change resources. In the paradigm of constricted potentiality, the communicator chooses to focus on material conditions—things that already exist in the world—including people, places, systems, organizations, events, documents, laws, regulations, and traditions. These resources are finite, fixed, and limited, and thus the name *constricted potentiality.* Operating within this paradigm, the communicator is constrained by the material conditions and resources available to her. The primary strategy available to the communicator is persuasion; persuasion is seen as the best way to attempt to make change in the world, given the competing demands and limited resources available. The audience for such change efforts is external; the communicator uses persuasion to address audiences capable of bringing about the desired changes. If persuasion is successful, there will be changes in material conditions—policies will change, certain individuals will be elected to office, injustices will be remedied.

In contrast, in the paradigm of constructed potentiality, communicators make use of a strategy of *interpretation* rather than persuasion to accomplish change. Communicators always have a choice about how to interpret something, and changing an interpretation changes how that situation is perceived and acted upon. A situation is interpreted differently by deliberately choosing different symbols to think and talk about that situation. Because symbolic resources and possibilities are endless—communicators never run out of new ways to configure symbols—there is an infinite number of symbolic options available. A communicator can always choose a different word, a different story, a different metaphor, each of which makes available different resources, options, and possibilities. This paradigm is called *constructed potentiality*, then, because the resources are created or constructed by the communicator. What changes in this paradigm is not necessarily the material conditions but the communicator herself, whose new interpretation makes a situation easier to manage or generates additional options—she is able to think differently, see opportunities in obstacles, and be open to various ways a situation can be handled or problem solved. Foss and Foss lay out several sample strategies for communicators operating in this paradigm—reframing, appreciation, and enactment—to suggest how the strategy of interpretation can be realized.

These two approaches to change, then, suggest very different views of agency. In the paradigm of constricted potentiality, the communicator seeks to change the things out in the world, a task that often can feel difficult if not impossible. In constructed potentiality, however, the communicator has an immediate sense of realized agency in that all of the resources are under her control, and the self is the primary focus of change. This does not mean things cannot and do not change in the external world in the paradigm of constructed potentiality; the path to how that change occurs is simply more varied, open, and improvised than is the case with persuasion. Foss and Foss do not claim that one approach is better than the other for realizing social change; they simply want to make available to communicators more than one approach for thinking about how change occurs. Similarly, they want to raise questions about how agency

From the Source . . .

We were thoroughly schooled in the paradigm of persuasion, but over the years, we began to observe instances of change that could not be accounted for by this paradigm. Discussions of the material and the symbolic, the social construction of reality, feminist theory, and dialogue processes, among others, offered glimpses into alternative ways change happens. We also remembered a story our father told about the power of interpretation. He was trying to get to sleep in a hot room and couldn't get the window to open. Finally, in frustration, he threw his shoe at the window to break it and immediately felt the cool breeze coming in and was able to sleep. In the morning, he realized he had broken the mirror in the room and not the window. This seemed to us an example of the kinds of self-change that happens in the constructed paradigm. We wanted to articulate this other paradigm because we believe it offers communicators an expanded toolkit for understanding and creating change.

Sonja Foss and Karen Foss

itself is always an interpretation, and how a communicator chooses to interpret agency can impact the exercise of that agency.

Sara Hillin's study of Shirley Temple Black, a movie star during the Depression who went on to become a US diplomat, serving as ambassador to Ghana and Czechoslovakia, makes use of constricted/constructed potentiality, among a variety of theories, to describe Black's feminism.[87] Hillin suggests that in difficult political situations, Black came up with labels outside of the traditional ones, thus creating interpretations that allowed audiences a different way of viewing something. In fact, generating different framings was a hallmark of Black's career. For instance, on Vietnam, Black said she was neither a hawk nor a dove but an owl.[88] In a UN meeting in 1972, prior to the Conference on the Human Environment, Black chose to define the problem facing the conference delegates as one of ethics, a framing that allowed her to avoid a narrow focus on contested environmental concerns. At that same conference, she employed a metaphor that framed the urgency of the problem in a new way; she suggested the conference was an excellent way of "ringing a fire-bell that all can hear and none can ignore." Black chose to construct new interpretations of problems, in line with constructed potentiality, in order to encourage her audiences to think in more creative and expanded terms.

Conclusion

Every communicator brings a special set of characteristics and resources to any communication encounter. The theories in this chapter help us to understand the nature of individual differences among communicators stemming from: psychological traits, different ways of processing and managing information, skill levels, identity characteristics, and notions of agency. Although we have talked about the communicator as a fairly independent entity, in reality, the communicator cannot be understood apart from interactions with others—who we are and

how we see ourselves in the communication process is worked out in relation to those around us and the contexts in which those interactions occur. In the next chapter, we look specifically at the process by which messages and meanings are created by the communicator in the ongoing process that is communication.

Chapter Map	THEORIES OF THE COMMUNICATOR		
Topic Addressed	**Theory**	**Author(s)**	**Brief Summary**
Biophysiological Theories	Trait Theories: Argumentativeness	Dominic Infante & Andrew Rancer	Argumentativeness is the tendency to engage in conversations about controversial topics and is associated with better communication and problem-solving skills.
	Trait Theories: Communication Apprehension	James McCroskey	Communication apprehension is a pathological and persistent fear of communication.
	Embodiment: Communibiology	Michael Beatty & James McCroskey	Communibiology suggests that differences between communicators can be attributed to biology more than to learning.
	Embodiment: Communicology	Isaac Catt	By means of communication, we embody and attempt to share the signs and symbols of our culture.
Cognitive and Information Processing	Attribution and Judgment: Attribution Theory	Fritz Heider; Harold Kelly	Inferences and attributions about intentions and motivations are made on the basis of consistency, distinctiveness, and consensus.
	Attribution and Judgment: Social Judgment Theory	Muzafer Sherif	Context and anchor points determine latitude of acceptance, rejection, and noncommitment on issues.
	Attribution and Judgment: Elaboration Likelihood Model	Richard Petty & John Cacioppo	Elaboration, or critical thinking, is most likely to occur when Information is processed through a central rather than peripheral route.
	Information-Integration: Expectancy-Value Theory	John Atkinson, Jacquelynne Eccles; Martin Fishbein & Icek Ajzen	Attitude change occurs when new information is brought to bear on a belief or because that new information changes the weight or valence given to information.
	Information-Integration: Theory of Reasoned Action	Martin Fishbein & Icek Ajzen	Intention to behave is affected by attitude toward the behavior and beliefs about how others would like you to behave.
	Consistency Theories: Cognitive Dissonance Theory	Leon Festinger	When cognitive elements are dissonant, humans act to reduce the inconsistency by altering the cognitive system.

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Cognitive and Information Processing *(continued)*	Consistency Theories: Problematic-Integration Theory	Austin Babrow	Probabilistic and evaluative orientations determine how a situation of cognitive dissonance is managed.
	Consistency Theories: Uncertainty Reduction Theory	Charles Berger	The more uncertain a situation, the more strategies are used in order to gain more information and feel more comfortable in the situation.
Communication Competence	Interaction Adaptation Theory	Judee Burgoon	In interactions, coordinated patterns of behavior develop to bring closer or distance self from the conversational partner, depending on goals for the interaction.
	Expectancy Violations Theory	Judee Burgoon	When expectations for behavior are violated, judgments can be negative or positive.
	Theory of Communication Competence	Brian Spitzberg & William Cupach	Communication competence consists of skills, knowledge, and motivation to be judged by those observing the performance.
Identity	Symbolic Interaction	George Herbert Mead	The self is defined and understood in interaction with orientational others.
	Presentation of Self	Erving Goffman	In every situation, choices are made about how to present the self to others.
	Cultural Identity Theory	Mary Jane Collier	Identity negotiation depends on definitions of self (avowals) and definitions of others (ascriptions).
	Identity Negotiation Theory	Stella Ting-Toomey	Negotiating identities consists of managing the tension between personal and cultural selves.
	Standpoint Theory	Sandra Harding; Patricia Hill Collins; Donna Haraway; Julia Wood & Marsha Houston	Standpoint is concerned with the social locations of marginalized groups and the vantage point by which they experience dominant and marginalized cultures.
	Queer Theory	Teresa de Lauretis; Judith Butler; James Chesebro	Queer theory destabilizes traditional categories of sexuality and identity, seeing them as fluid rather than essential categories.
Agency	Agency as Protean	Karlyn Kohrs Campbell	Agency is communal, learned, temporary, and ever changing.
	Agency as Contradiction	Valerie Renegar & Stacey Sowards	Contradiction as a strategy challenges binaries and allows for new alternatives to emerge, creating a space for self-determination and new forms of social action.
	Constricted and Constructed Potentiality	Sonja Foss & Karen Foss	Constricted potentiality, which features persuasion, has been privileged in communication; an alternative—constructed potentiality—features interpretation over persuasion as a means of change.

NOTES

[1] For a brief overview of trait theory, see Min-Sun Kim, "Trait Theories," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 963–66. For a discussion of situational factors in communication, see Judee K. Burgoon and Norah E. Dunbar, "An Interactionist Perspective on Dominance-Submission: Interpersonal Dominance as a Dynamic, Situationally Contingent Social Skill," *Communication Monographs* 67 (2000): 96–121; and Lynn C. Miller, Michael J. Cody, and Margaret L. McLaughlin, "Situations and Goals as Fundamental Constructs in Interpersonal Communication Research," in *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication,* 2nd ed., ed. Mark L. Knapp and Gerald R. Miller (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994), 162–97.

[2] For descriptions and discussions of these models, see Melanie Booth-Butterfield and Steve Booth-Butterfield, "The Role of Affective Orientation in the Five Factor Personality Structure," *Communication Research Reports* 19 (2002): 301–13; James C. McCroskey, Alan D. Heisel, and Virginia Richmond, "Eysenck's BIG THREE and Communication Traits: Three Correlational Studies," *Communication Monographs* 68 (2001): 360–66; James C. McCroskey, ed., *Personality and Communication: Trait Perspectives* (New York: Hampton Press, 1998); and Hans J. Eysenck, *The Biological Dimensions of Personality* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1976).

[3] John M. Digman, "Personality Structure: Emergence of the Five-Factor Model," *Annual Review of Psychology* 41 (1990): 417–40. See also Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield, "The Role of Affective Orientation."

[4] For an overview of several traits studied by communication researchers, see Howard Giles and Richard L. Street, Jr., "Communicator Characteristics and Behavior," in *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication*, 2nd ed., ed. Mark L. Knapp and Gerald R. Miller (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994), 103–61. In addition to communication apprehension, discussed here, Giles and Street survey the research on self-monitoring, dominance-submissiveness, Machiavellianism, cognitive complexity, need for affiliation and approval, anxiety and cognitive stress, and field independence-dependence.

[5] For a summary of this work, see Dominic A. Infante and Andrew S. Rancer, "Argumentativeness and Verbal Aggressiveness: A Review of Recent Theory and Research," in *Communication Yearbook 19*, ed. Brant R. Burleson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 319–52; Dominic A. Infante, Andrew S. Rancer, and Deanna F. Womack, *Building Communication Theory* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 1993), 162–68.

[6] Dominic A. Infante, Teresa A. Chandler, and Jill E. Rudd, "Test of an Argumentative Skill Deficiency Model of Interspousal Violence," *Communication Monographs* 56 (1989): 163–77.

[7] This work is summarized in James C. McCroskey, "The Communication Apprehension Perspective," in *Avoiding Communication: Shyness, Reticence, and Communication Apprehension*, ed. John A. Daly and James C. McCroskey (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1984), 13–38. For a brief overview, see Michael J. Beatty, "Social and Communicative Anxiety," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 890–91.

[8] Miles L. Patterson and Vicki Ritts, "Social and Communicative Anxiety: A Review and Meta-Analysis," in Brant R. Burleson, ed., *Communication Yearbook 20* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), 263–303.

[9] Scott A. Myers and Kelly A. Rocca, "The Relationship between Perceived Instructor Communication Style, Argumentativeness, and Verbal Aggressiveness," *Communication Research Reports* 17 (2000): 1–12.

[10] For a brief overview, see Michael J. Beatty, "Communibiology," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 117–20. For primary sources see, Michael J. Beatty, James C. McCroskey, and Michelle E. Pence, "Communibiological Paradigm," in *Biological Dimensions of Communication: Perspectives, Methods, and Research*, ed. Michael J. Beatty, James C. McCroskey, and Kory Floyd (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton, 2009), 1–14; Michael J. Beatty and James C. McCroskey, *The Biology of Communication: A Communibiological Perspective* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2001), 83–92; and Michael J. Beatty, James C. McCroskey, and Alan D. Heisel, "Communication Apprehension as Temperamental Expression: A Communibiological Paradigm," *Communication Monographs* 65 (1998): 197–219.

[11] Isaac E. Catt, "The Signifying World Between Ineffability and Intelligibility: Body as Sign in Communicology," *Review of Communication* 11 (2011): 122–44; Isaac E. Catt, "The Two Sciences of Communication in Philosophical Context," *Review of Communication* 14 (2014): 201–28; Isaac E. Catt, "Communication is Not a Skill: Critique of Communication Pedagogy as Narcissistic Expression," in Deborah Eicher-Catt and Isaac E. Catt, eds., *Communicology: The New Science of Embodied Discourse* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press), 131–50.

[12] Catt, "The Signifying World," p. 134.

[13] For a brief overview of cognitive theory, see John O. Greene, "Cognitive Theories," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 111–16.

[14] Fritz Heider, *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations* (New York: Wiley, 1958). For an excellent brief overview, see Virginia M. McDermott, "Attribution Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 60–63. For more recent summaries of attribution theory, see Eliot R. Smith, "Social Cognition Contributions to Attribution Theory and Research," in *Social Cognition: Impact on Social Psychology*, ed. Patricia G. Devine, David L. Hamilton, and Thomas M. Ostrom (San Diego: Academic, 1994), 77–108; David R. Seibold and Brian H. Spitzberg, "Attribution Theory and Research: Formalization, Review, and Implications for Communication," in *Progress in Communication Sciences*, vol. 3, ed. Brenda Dervin and Melvin J. Voigt (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1981), 85–125; Alan L. Sillars, "Attribution and Communication," in *Social Cognition and Communication*, ed. Michael E. Roloff and Charles R. Berger (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1982), 73–106.

[15] Harold H. Kelley, "The Processes of Causal Attribution," *American Psychologist* 28 (1973): 107–28.

[16] Simon Quaschning, Mario Pandelaere, and Iris Vermeir, "When Consistency Matters: The Effect of Valence Consistency on Review Helpfulness," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 29 (2015): 136–52.

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[66] Peter Odell Campbell, "The Procedural Queer: Substantive Due Process, *Lawrence v. Texas,* and Queer Rhetorical Futures," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 98 (2012): 203–29.

[67] Theresa Castor and François Cooren, "Organizations as Hybrid Forms of Life: The Implications of the Selection of Agency in Problem Formulations," *Management Communication Quarterly* 19 (2006): 573.

[68] See, for example, Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische, "What is Agency?" *American Journal of Sociology* 103 (1998): 962–1023; Albert Bandura, "Human Agency in Social Cognitive Theory," *American Psychologist* 44 (1989): 1175–80; and William H. Sewell, Jr., "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation," *American Journal of Sociology* 98 (1992): 1–29.

[69] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "Agency: Promiscuous and Protean," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 2 (2005): 3.

[70] Dilip Gaonkar's discussion of the rhetoric of science starts with this traditional view of the rhetorical agent, or what he calls the "ideology of human agency." He provides an excellent articulation of intertextuality by which agency is distributed across texts. See Dilip P. Gaonkar, "The Idea of Rhetoric in the Rhetoric of Science," *Southern Communication Journal* 58 (1993): 258–95.

[71] Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968), 1–14. For responses to Bitzer see Arthur B. Miller, "Rhetorical Exigence," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 5 (1972): 111–8; Richard E. Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 6 (1973): 154–86; Scott Consigny, "Rhetoric and Its Situations," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 7 (1974): 175–86; and David M. Hunsaker and Craig R. Smith, "The Nature of Issues: A Constructive Approach to Situational Rhetoric," *Western Speech Communication* 40 (1976): 144–56.

[72] This phrase was used by President George W. Bush in his January 29, 2009, State of the Union address following 9/11; he used it to refer to those governments that support terrorism.

[73] For an overview of Foucault's work, see "Michel Foucault," in Sonja K. Foss, Karen A. Foss, and Robert Trapp, *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, 30th anniversary edition (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2014), 343–83.

[74] Megan McIntyre, "Agency Matters," *Peitho* 18 (2015): 26.

[75] These positions are summarized in Cheryl Geisler, "How Ought We to Understand the Concept of Rhetorical Agency? Report From the ARS," *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 34 (2004), 12.

[76] Campbell, "Agency," 5.

[77] Joshua Gunn and Dana L. Cloud, "Agentic Orientation as Magical Voluntarism," *Communication Theory* 20 (2010): 72. Gunn and Cloud also provide an extensive survey of views of agency in this essay.

[78] Geisler, "How Ought We to Understand," 12.

[79] Gunn and Cloud, "Agentic Orientation," 72.

[80] Geisler, "How Ought We to Understand," 13.

[81] Campbell, "Agency," 3.

[82] Nathan R. Johnson, "Technical Documents as Rhetorical Agency," *Archival Science* 8 (2009).

[83] Valerie R. Renegar and Stacey K. Sowards, "Contradiction as Agency: Self-Determination, Transcendence, and Counter-Imagination in Third Wave Feminism," *Hypatia* 24 (2009): 1–20.

[84] Brenda M. Helmbrecht and Meredith A. Love, "The *BUST*in' and *Bitch*in' *Ethe* of Third-Wave Zines," *College Composition and Communication* 61 (2009): 150–69.

[85] Helmbrecht and Love, "The *BUST*in' and *Bitch*in' *Ethe* of Third-Wave Zines," 166.

[86] Sonja K. Foss and Karen A. Foss, "Constricted and Constructed Potentiality: An Inquiry Into Paradigms of Change," *Western Journal of Communication* 75 (2011): 205–38.

[87] Sara Hillin, "From the Good Ship Lollipop to the White House: Ethos and the Invitational Rhetoric of Shirley Temple Black," in *Political Women: Language and Leadership*, ed. Michele Lockhart and Kathleen Mollick (Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books, 2013), 31–46.

[88] Shana Alexander, "The Feminine Eye," *Life*, November, 3, 1967, 17.

4

The Message

In the last chapter, our focus was the communicator as initiator of a message. In this chapter, we focus on aspects of the message itself and the complexity of issues that have interested communication scholars who focus on messages. The message is at the heart of the communication process; by means of messages, we not only transfer information but we also strategize and try to accomplish things. We also construct and share how we see our identities and our lives through the stories that make up the messages we tell, and we invite others to see us in a particular way. Communication scholars have looked at all aspects of messages, including how messages are conceptualized, structured, delivered, and interpreted. In this chapter, we discuss three basic aspects of the message that have concerned communication scholars: (1) semiotics, or how the basic units of messages, both verbal and visual, can be understood; (2) interpretation, or how messages signify; and (3) the process of message production, use, and strategy. The chapter map (pp. 138–139) summarizes the categorization of theories about messages.

Semiotics

Semiotics has been especially important in explaining what goes into a message—its parts—and how the parts are structured. Semiotics brings to light the relationship between the world of things and the world of signs; it is the study of signs, symbols, and signification.[1] Semiotics is concerned with how meaning comes to be created, not what something means. The theories in the semiotic tradition, then, deal with how signs come to represent objects, ideas, states, situations, feelings, and conditions. They help us understand how a message comes to have meaning.

The basic concept unifying semiotics is the *sign*, defined as a stimulus designating or indicating some other condition—as when smoke indicates the presence of fire. A second basic concept is the *symbol*, which usually designates a complex sign with many meanings, including cultural and personal ones. Philos-

opher Susanne Langer defines a symbol as an "instrument of thought" in that it enables us to think about something and to form a concept in the absence of the object itself.[2] Some scholars make a strong differentiation between signs and symbols—signs have a clear referent to something in reality, while symbols are arbitrary; for other scholars, all symbols are signs and what is more important is how they function in the world.

With its focus on the sign and symbol, semiotics deals with linguistic and nonverbal elements and how these interact to create systems of meaning. At the core of semiotics is the *triad* or *triangle of meaning*, which asserts that meaning arises from a relationship among three things—the object (or referent), the person (or interpreter), and the sign or symbol. Charles Saunders Peirce, the first modern theorist of semiotics, often is credited with this basic idea, although it has been elaborated in different ways by other theorists as well.[3] The sign represents the object, or referent, in the mind of a person—the one making sense of the sign. For example, when someone says the word *dog*, you associate that in your mind with a certain animal. The word is not the animal but is instead your thoughts, associations, and interpretation that link the word *dog* with the actual object. The actual dog is the object or referent while the word *dog* is the sign that stands for the object. A person who loves dogs and has one as a pet will experience the sign *dog* differently than the individual who was bitten by a dog as a child.

A study of *hijab*, or the practice of veiling among Muslim women, by Rachel Anderson Droogsma, provides an example of this three-part process of connecting object, sign, and meaning.[4] Droogsma asked a group of Muslim women living in the United States to articulate the meanings they ascribe to the veil. In this case, the veil is the "object" that becomes a "sign" of Muslim identity. How that sign gets interpreted will vary according to the standpoint of the one doing the interpreting. In the United States, many see *hijab* as oppressive—the veil is a symbol of the subordination of women in Muslim cultures. Droogsma found that for US Muslim women, however, the veil functions as a visible marker of Muslim identity, a check on behavior, a means to resist sexual objectification, and a source of freedom—meanings that are highly empowering and complex in contrast to the meanings given *hijab* by many non-Muslims. The meaning of *hijab* is not in the object or even the word but in the thought of the person in relation to the sign and the object the sign represents.

Semiotics is often divided into three areas of study—semantics, syntactics, and pragmatics.[5] *Semantics* addresses how signs relate to their referents, or what signs stand for. Dictionaries, for example, are semantic reference books; they tell us what words mean or what they represent. As a basic tenet of semiotics, representation is always mediated by the conscious interpretation of the person, and any interpretation or meaning for a sign will change from situation to situation.

The second area of study within semiotics is *syntactics*, or the study of relationships among signs. Signs virtually never stand by themselves. They are almost always part of larger sign systems (groups of signs) organized in particular ways. Syntactics consists, then, of the rules by which people combine signs into complex systems of meaning. When we move from talking about a single word (*dog*) to a sentence (*The dog bit me.*), we encounter syntax or grammar, which deals with the relationships among words and linguistic structures. Syn-

tactic rules enable human beings to use an infinite combination of signs to express a wealth of meanings.

Pragmatics, the third major branch of study within semiotics, looks at how context affects meaning. The three branches of semiotics build upon one another: semantics addresses the basic relationship between thought and thing, syntactics adds to that an understanding of the larger system of which that sign is a part, and pragmatics adds the level of culture. From a semiotic perspective, there must be some type of common understanding not just of individual words (semantics) but also of grammar (syntactics) and society (pragmatics) in order for communication to take place. By taking into account all kinds of pragmatic variables—culture, time and place, manner of speaking, and the like—speakers overcome ambiguity in communication and are able to make themselves understood.

Nonlinguistic signs—visual images, nonverbal forms of communication—create special pragmatic problems, which also have been of interest to communication researchers. For example, visual codes are quite subjective and more open in the meanings they evoke. This is not to say that a person's meaning for an image is entirely idiosyncratic; indeed, visual meanings can be and are affected by learning, culture, and other socially shared forms of interaction. But perceiving visual images is not the same as understanding language. Images require pattern recognition, organization, and discrimination, not just representational connections. Thus the meanings of visual images rely heavily on both individualized and conventional forms of knowledge.[6]

To suggest how semiotics serves as the foundation of messages, we offer two representative sets of theories: structural linguistics and nonverbal communication. Structural linguistics suggests how verbal units comprise messages, while theories of nonverbal communication bring in the other side of the coin—those nonverbal features of communication that both stand apart and work in conjunction with verbal messages. Together, the verbal and nonverbal offer basic building blocks of the semiotic tradition and lay the foundation for understanding the nature of the message from a communication lens.

Structural Linguistics

Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of structural linguistics provides an example of a theory that deals with words themselves as basic structures of meaning. Saussure is considered the modern founder of structural linguistics; his work was highly influential to the study of communication.[7] Saussure's starting point is the arbitrariness of language. He calls arbitrariness the first principle of language not only because different languages use different words for the same thing but also because there is no necessary, intrinsic, direct, or inevitable relationship between the signifier and the signified. For Saussure, signs are not referential—they do not designate an object; rather, they constitute it because there can be no object apart from the signs used to designate that object. All a person knows of the world is determined by language, so language should be thought of not as a map placed onto reality but as a system of signs that lies parallel to reality.

The relationship that exists between a sign and what it signifies is conventional—we collectively agree to its meaning. Therefore, signs are conventions governed by rules. In other words, you cannot choose any word you wish to express meaning, nor can you rearrange grammar at a whim—not if you wish to

be understood. Language described in structural terms, then, is a system of formal relations without substance. Only when meanings are attached to the structural features of language does a word come to represent something. The metal in money is not what determines the worth of the coin; it is the meaning given to the coin as part of a larger monetary system. A sign has no absolute value independent of the larger system of meanings of which it is a part.

The key to understanding the structure of the linguistic system, for Saussure, is *difference.* The elements and relations embedded in language are distinguished by their differences. One sound differs from another (like the sounds of *p* and *b*); one word differs from another (like the words *pat* and *bat*); and one grammatical form differs from another (like the constructions *has run* and *will run*). No linguistic unit has meaning in and of itself; only in contrast with other units does a particular structure acquire meaning. This system of differences constitutes the structure of the language, and it is a system that evolves and changes, depending on the particular historical moment.

Saussure makes an important distinction between formal language, which he calls *langue,* and the actual use of language in communication, which he refers to as *parole.* These two French terms correspond in English to *language* and *speech* respectively. Language (*langue*) is a formal system that can be analyzed apart from its use in everyday life. Speech (*parole*) is the actual use of language to accomplish a purpose. One difference between *langue* and *parole*, according to Saussure, is stability. Language is characterized by *synchrony,* meaning that it changes very little over time. Speech, on the other hand, is characterized by *diachrony,* meaning that it changes constantly from situation to situation. The rules of language, then, are worked out over a long period and "given" to us when we are socialized into a language community. In contrast, communicators create forms of "speech" all the time. A good example of the highly flexible and changing nature of speech is the shift in how the terms *was* and *like* are used in much colloquial speech. The following could never be predicted from formal rules of grammar, and yet most US Americans will easily understand what is being said:

> I was, like, *how could you do this to me?* And he was, like, *what do you mean?* Like he couldn't admit what he had done, right? So, I was, like, like, *oh, playing dumb now are we?* And he was, all, you know, like, you know, *what, what?* So I was so, like, *Oh, whatever.*

Saussure was more concerned with language than with speech; he sought to develop a basic understanding of how a language system works. Influenced by the work of Saussure, structural language theorists, working in the middle of the twentieth century, developed the standard model of sentence structure. Basically, this model breaks a sentence down into components in hierarchical fashion. Sounds and sound groups combine to form word parts, word parts form words, words combine to form phrases, and phrases make up clauses and sentences. Thus language can be analyzed on various levels, roughly corresponding to sounds, words, and sentences.

Structural analysis by itself cannot fully explain human language use. Consequently, communication scholars have moved beyond the purely structural approach in their efforts to understand language. A major area of interest is cog-

nitive studies of language development and use, one example of which is *generative grammar.* Developed primarily by Noam Chomsky in the 1950s (and elaborated by his colleagues and the linguists who followed him), generative grammar represents a substantial departure from classical linguistics and has become the mainstay of contemporary linguistics.[8] According to generative linguistics, there is a universal grammar innate to the human brain that enables the human to generate spoken language. Generative linguists attempt to establish a formal set of rules capable of generating, in theory, all the possible grammatical sentences available to a native speaker of a given language. Chomsky and his colleagues were interested in how native speakers can understand and produce a seemingly unlimited number of new utterances across a lifetime.

Another trend that built on structural linguistics has been the study of *discourse*. Discourse studies look at larger segments of language, including, for example, conversations, speeches, and media productions. The earliest investigations of discourse were done by linguists seeking to understand regularities in language use; importantly, discourse analysis introduced an emphasis on real-life interactions to the study of linguistics. Today, communication scholars interested in discourse explore how interactions constitute the realities in which we live and the realities that emerge from those contexts. Of particular interest to contemporary discourse theorists are ideological issues concerning gender, race, and other identity markers. Critical discourse analysis has emerged as a method for investigating the workings of language within social relations of power.[9] These issues are explored in more detail in chapter 12.

The foundation of semiotics is the interest in words as signs and symbols, how words fit together structurally, and the larger systems of language that constitute discourse. The other piece of the equation is nonverbal communication—the system of interactions and meanings that convey meaning outside of the verbal realm.

Nonverbal Communication

Communication scholars recognize that language and behavior more often than not work together, so theories of nonverbal signs are an important element within the semiotic tradition.[10] Generally, *nonverbal communication* can be defined as clusters of behaviors used to convey meaning. As Randall Harrison notes, the study of nonverbal communication is extensive:

> The term *nonverbal communication* has been applied to a bewildering array of events. Everything from the territoriality of animals to the protocol of diplomats. From facial expression to muscle twitches. From inner, but inexpressible, feelings to outdoor public monuments. From the message of massage to the persuasion of a punch. From dance and drama to music and mime. From the flow of affect to the flow of traffic. From extrasensory perception to the economic policies of international power blocks. From fashion and fad to architecture and analog computer. From the smell of roses to the taste of steak. From Freudian symbol to astrological sign. From the rhetoric of violence to the rhetoric of topless dancers.[11]

We explore the theories of several scholars interested in nonverbal communication—Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen, Judee Burgoon, and Miles Patterson.

Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen were among the first researchers to systematically describe the various facets and functions of nonverbal communication.[12] In attempting to understand the basic units of nonverbal communication, their work has parallels to semantics in the verbal realm. They began by isolating five relationships between verbal and nonverbal communication: *repetition*, when verbal and nonverbal communication are consistent; *substitution*, when nonverbal communication takes the place of verbal communication; *complementation*, when verbal and nonverbal forms add to one another to create a more complete sense of meaning; *contradiction*, when verbal and nonverbal messages are contradictory; and *emphasis*, when nonverbals underscore a verbal message. Their goal was ambitious: "Our aim has been to increase understanding of the individual, his feelings, mood, personality, and attitudes, and to increase understanding of any given interpersonal interaction, the nature of the relationship, the status or quality of communication, what impressions are formed, and what is revealed about interpersonal style or skill."[13]

Beginning with a foundation of differences between verbal and nonverbal, Ekman and Friesen analyzed nonverbal activity three ways: by origin, by coding, and by usage. *Origin* is the source of an act. A nonverbal behavior may be *innate* (built into the nervous system); *species-constant* (a universal behavior required for survival); or *variant* (different across cultures, groups, and individuals). One could speculate, for example, that eyebrow raising as a sign of surprise is innate, that marking territory is species-constant, and that shaking the head back and forth to indicate *no* is culture-specific.[14]

Coding, the second way Ekman and Friesen characterize nonverbal communication, is the relationship of the act to its meaning. An act may be *arbitrary*, with no meaning inherent in the sign itself. By convention in US culture, for example, shaking your head back and forth is an indication of *no*, but this coding is purely arbitrary. In fact, in parts of India, a certain head wag that is similar to shaking the head *no* in US culture means something like, "Go on; I'm listening." Other nonverbal signs are *iconic* and resemble the thing being signified. Using your hands to illustrate the height of something or pointing to indicate direction are examples of iconic signs. The third category of coding is *intrinsic.* Intrinsically coded cues are themselves part of what is being signified. Crying is an example of intrinsic coding. Crying is a sign of emotion, but it is also part of the emotion itself.

The third way to analyze a behavior is by *usage*. Usage includes the degree to which a nonverbal behavior is intended to convey information. A *communicative act* is used deliberately to convey meaning. *Interactive acts* actually influence the behavior of the other participants. An act is both communicative and interactive if it is intentional and influential. For example, if you deliberately wave to a friend as a sign of greeting, and the friend waves back, your cue is communicative and interactive. Some behaviors are not intended to be communicative but nevertheless provide information for the perceiver. Such acts are said to be *informative.* On a day when you are feeling less than friendly, you may duck into a hallway to avoid meeting an acquaintance coming your way. If the other person sees the avoidance, your behavior has been informative even though you did not intend to communicate.

Ekman and Friesen were especially interested in the nonverbal movements of the face and hands, and they classified body movements into five types, depending on origin, coding, and usage. The first type is the *emblem.* Emblems can be verbally translated into a rather precise meaning. They are normally used in a deliberate fashion to communicate a particular message. The "V" for victory sign and the black power fist are examples. Emblems emerge out of cultures and may be either arbitrary or iconic.

Illustrators are the second kind of nonverbal cues described by Ekman and Friesen. Illustrators are used to depict what is being said verbally. They are intentional and include such things as pointing or drawing a picture in the air. Illustrators are learned nonverbals that may be informative or communicative in use; occasionally they are interactive as well.

The third type of nonverbal behavior is the *adaptor,* which facilitates the release of bodily tension. Examples are hand wringing, head scratching, or foot jiggling. *Self-adaptors* are directed at one's own body. They include scratching, stroking, grooming, and squeezing. *Alter-adaptors,* like slapping someone on the back, are directed at another's body. *Object-adaptors,* such as twisting a paper clip, are directed at things. Adaptors can be iconic or intrinsic. Rarely are they intentional because you are typically not aware that you are engaging in them. Although they are rarely communicative, they are sometimes interactive and often informative.

Regulators, the fourth type of behavior, are used to control or coordinate interaction. For example, the use of eye contact to signal speaking and listening roles in a conversation or the use of a raised hand to signal the need to stop are examples of regulators. Regulators are primarily interactive. They are coded intrinsically or iconically, and their origin is cultural learning.

The final category of behavior is the *affect display.* These behaviors, some of which may be innate, involve the display of feelings and emotions. The face is a particularly rich source for affect display; smiling, grimacing, and crying are examples of affect displays. Affect displays are intrinsically coded; they are rarely communicative, often interactive, and always informative.[15]

Most early work on nonverbal communication concentrated on observing and measuring overt nonverbal behaviors in a single channel—for instance, how a particular facial expression functions and how it is received by those who are part of the interaction. The attention to a single channel was due in part to limitations of measurement—video cameras were new, expensive, and not particularly sensitive, so recording a range of behaviors across settings was not easy. The use of coders who observed nonverbal behavior in various settings was a reasonable alternative to videotaping, but coders could not easily manage to observe and track multiple behaviors simultaneously. Thus researchers tended to select and study a particular behavior—eye gaze or hand gestures—rather than attempting more complex observations. Scholars later were able to study nonverbals in combination, and Judee Burgoon has been a major nonverbal theorist who has contributed to understanding the complexity of nonverbal communication.

Judee Burgoon's early work extended Ekman and Friesen's typology of nonverbal behaviors. She proposed seven kinds of nonverbal activity: kinesics (bodily activity); vocalics or paralanguage (voice); physical appearance; haptics (touch); proxemics (space); chronemics (time); and artifacts (objects). Each of

these areas has received considerable attention from communication scholars.[16] In addition to elaborating the kinds of nonverbal activity, Burgoon and her colleagues distinguish between verbal and nonverbal communication, isolating five properties that show how verbals and nonverbals are different but also work together to produce messages.

First, nonverbal codes tend to be *analogic* rather than digital. Whereas digital signals are discrete, like numbers and letters, analogic signals are continuous, forming a spectrum or range, like sound volume and facial expressions. Therefore, nonverbal signals such as facial expression and vocal intonation cannot simply be classified into discrete categories but rather are processed more holistically. A second feature found in some, but not all, nonverbal codes is *iconicity,* or resemblance. Many nonverbal behaviors resemble the thing being symbolized, as when you depict the shape of something with your hands or cry to communicate an internal emotional state. This means that many nonverbal behaviors are understood across cultures.

Third, nonverbal codes enable the *simultaneous transmission* of several messages—nonverbals are multimodal while speech is unimodal. The face, body, voice, and other channels can send several different messages simultaneously—you can smile, gesture, and look away at the same time, for instance—while only one verbal message can be spoken at any given time. Fourth, nonverbal signals are often spontaneous rather than intentional expressions, especially if they are intrinsic—a shaky voice, a smile, or a nod.[17] Finally, nonverbal signals occur in the moment; it is impossible to use nonverbals to indicate something that is not there or to reference an earlier or a future state. By contrast, words can be used to refer to events removed in space and time (displacement) and to reflect on words themselves—to refine and recast words and their meanings after the fact (reflexivity).

Contemporary work in nonverbal communication focuses on how interrelated patterns of nonverbal behaviors work together to fulfill various communication functions, and Burgoon continues to investigate many of these dimensions of nonverbals.[18] The following areas have been of recent interest to nonverbal communication researchers: (1) identification and identity management; (2) impression formation; (3) emotional expression and management; (4) relational communication and management; and (5) deception. Identity management concerns the ways cultural factors, gender, and personality are communicated nonverbally and contribute to the presentation and management of identity. The study of impression management, from a nonverbal communication perspective, concerns the extent to which nonverbal behaviors are involved in judgments made about others and how accurate those assessments are. Emotions and emotion management largely have been concerned with whether nonverbal expressions of emotions are spontaneous and largely universal or cultural and the degree to which individuals can accurately decode the emotional nonverbal of others. Relational management is the study of the ways individuals use nonverbal communication to manage their interpersonal relationships. Finally, deception has been an important research area in nonverbal communication; it involves the nonverbal sending of messages designed to deceive.

In a summary of historical trends in the study of nonverbal communication, Miles Patterson offers an updated definition for nonverbal communication and

an agenda for future research. As a researcher who has explored immediacy and intimacy in particular as they manifest nonverbally, as well as writing generally about the field of nonverbal behavior, he suggests the need for a systems approach to nonverbal research. He defines nonverbal communication as "a kind of adaptive system, serving social goals and constrained by several determinant factors."[19] He suggests first that nonverbal research should continue its *functional* emphasis, working to understand not only the variety of functions the nonverbal system serves, such as providing information and regulating interactions, but also how a particular pattern can serve different goals and functions simultaneously for both sender and receiver. Second, Patterson argues for continuing research on what he calls *determinant factors*—personality, gender, culture, and biology—that predispose certain patterns of nonverbal behavior in specific social situations.

The role of *settings* in the nonverbal system is Patterson's third focus. While the ways a setting can affect nonverbal communication have long been recognized, Patterson wants to see an emphasis on the ways the physical and social environment can affect goals, judgments, and subsequent behaviors. Furthermore, more research is necessary on the ways "people select settings and settings select people"—the ways self-selection processes affect and predict interactions.[20] Patterson's next suggestion for nonverbal research is *patterns* of behavior and the ways nonverbal forms work together to create meanings. Researchers have continued to explore one or two behaviors at a time, probably because of ease, but we do not respond to behaviors in isolation. Rather, we respond holistically to an interdependence of multiple behaviors, and researchers need to figure out how to capture those patterns. Finally, Patterson calls for a focus on the *simultaneous sending and receiving* of nonverbal messages. Unlike most verbal interactions, communicators are simultaneously sending and receiving nonverbal messages. Researchers need to do a better job of studying the dynamic relationship between the sending and receiving sides of the equation rather than studying just one side or the other.

Patterson hopes to better capture the way nonverbal communication functions in actuality with his suggestions that nonverbal communication be studied as a system in which several dimensions combine to affect how that communication occurs. The field has progressed from a focus on individual elements to patterns of elements and how those patterns function, parallel to semantics, syntactics, and

From the Source . . .

In the 1960s and 70s, theories of nonverbal interaction were limited in scope, but they provided relatively specific, testable predictions. Later theories were much more comprehensive but, practically, less testable. Some of the elements that I've stressed in these later theories include: (1) a functional approach to nonverbal communication; (2) the dynamics of simultaneous and parallel sending and receiving processes; and (3) the utility of a systems approach. But have we gone from predicting, simply to explaining? And is it possible to do otherwise?

Miles Patterson

pragmatics in the verbal realm. It remains difficult to actually capture the interdependence and totality of nonverbal patterns as they operate in the social world, however, simply because of the nature of nonverbal behaviors.

Contemporary research on nonverbal communication helps to illustrate semantics. Yuko Minowa, Pauline Maclaran, and Lorna Stevens analyzed visual representations of physically violent women in different historical and contemporary contexts, concentrating on representations and gaze to provide a modern focus to the literature on nonverbal communication.[21] *Representation* is how something is depicted or symbolized; *gaze* describes the act of looking, usually from the point of view of the audience. Women-on-women assault, women's vengeance, and female domination are themes that emerged from the representations of violent women historically and in contemporary advertising and films. While contemporary images of women as violent often are assumed to be liberatory, the analysis by Minowa, Maclaran, and Stevens suggests just the opposite: the hypersexualization of women's bodies in the images limits choices for women rather than empowering them. These images offer examples of sexual subjectification, whereby women are complicit in their own objectification. As a result, women's violence is fetishized under the male gaze and comes off as sexual rather than powerful or dangerous.

The semiotic tradition, then, offers a starting point for understanding the communication message. Structural linguistics and the study of nonverbal communication provide the foundation for understanding how the message has been conceptualized in communication. The process of interpretation—what should a sign, group or signs, or message mean—is critical to how messages function. We turn next to theories of interpretation, or the process by which we come to understand and make sense of messages.

Interpretation

In this section, we discuss several approaches to interpretation that have grounded the work of theorists in communication. We begin with phenomenology, the branch of philosophy concerned with interpretation. Phenomenological theories are distinguished by their use of highly qualitative interpretive processes to discover the meaning of texts, and we discuss three theories that illustrate this tradition. We then discuss linguistic relativity and the social construction of reality, two approaches to interpretation that privilege the role of language in interpretive processes. We end this section with the theory of constructivism, which bridges interpretation and message production, the next section of this chapter.

Phenomenology

Theories in the phenomenological tradition assume that people actively interpret what happens around them and come to understand the world by personal experience with it. Phenomenology concentrates on the conscious experience of the individual who knows or perceives a *phenomenon*—an object, event, or experience—through direct experience.[22] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a theorist in this tradition, wrote that "all my knowledge of the world, even my scientific

knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world."[23] Phenomenology, then, makes actual lived experience the basic data of reality. If you want to know what love is, you would not ask psychologists; you would tap into your own experience of love.

Stanley Deetz summarizes three basic principles of phenomenology.[24] First, knowledge is found directly in conscious experience—we come to know the world as we engage it. Second, the meaning of a thing consists of the potential of that thing in your life—how you relate to an object determines its meaning for you. You will take your Spanish class more seriously if you know you are heading off to a job in Spain in six months. The third assumption is that language is the vehicle of meaning. We experience the world through the language used to define and express that world. We know *keys* because of their associated labels: "lock," "open," "metal," and "door."

The process of *interpretation* is central to phenomenological thought. Sometimes known by the German term *Verstehen* [understanding], interpretation is the active process of assigning meaning to an experience. In phenomenology, interpretation literally forms what is real for the person. You cannot separate reality from interpretation; interpretation is an active process of the mind, a creative act of clarifying personal experience. Interpretation involves going back and forth between experiencing an event or situation and assigning meaning to it, moving from the specific to the general and back to the specific again. The process of moving between an event and its meaning is called a *hermeneutic circle*.

When you first look at a text, you form a general idea of what it means; next, you modify your general idea based on your examination of the specifics of the text. Your interpretation is ongoing, as you move back and forth between specific and general. You can look at the composite meaning of a text and then examine the specific linguistic structures of that text. At that point, you might return to the general overall meaning, only to go back to the specifics again in a continual process of refining meaning. An example might be a woman who had a particularly rocky relationship with her father. That experience forms the basis of her understanding of relationships with men. This interpretation probably will undergo continual shifting throughout her life as she continues to go back and forth between experiencing relationships and interpreting them in light of her past and new experiences.

Three general schools of thought make up the phenomenological tradition: (1) classical phenomenology; (2) the phenomenology of perception; and (3) hermeneutic phenomenology. *Classical phenomenology* is primarily associated with Edmund Husserl, the founder of modern phenomenology.[25] Husserl, who wrote during the first half of the twentieth century, believed truth could be ascertained through focused consciousness. For Husserl, truth can only be ascertained through direct experience, but we must be disciplined in how we experience things: Only through conscious attention can truth be known. In order to arrive at truth through conscious attention, however, we must put aside, or *bracket*, our biases. We must suspend our categories of thinking and habits of seeing in order to experience the thing as it really is. In this way, the objects of the world present themselves to our consciousness. Husserl's approach to phenomenology thus is highly objective; the world can be experienced without the knower bringing his or her own categories to bear on the process.

In contrast to Husserl, most phenomenologists today subscribe to the idea that experience is subjective, not objective, and believe that subjectivity is an important kind of knowledge in its own right. Merleau-Ponty is a major figure in this second tradition; he is associated with what is called the *phenomenology of perception*—a reaction against Husserl's more narrow and objectivist view.[26] For Merleau-Ponty, the human being is a unified physical and mental being who creates meaning in the world. We know things only through our own personal relationship to them. We are affected by the world, and we also affect the world by how we experience it. For Merleau-Ponty, then, things do not exist in and of themselves apart from how they are known, thus making any phenomenological experience a subjective one.

The third branch, *hermeneutic phenomenology*, is consistent with the second branch but extends it further by applying it more completely to communication. *Hermeneutic phenomenology,* which is also known as *philosophical hermeneutics,* is associated with Martin Heidegger.[27] For Heidegger, the reality of something is not known by careful analysis or reduction but by natural experience, which is created by the use of language in everyday life. What is real is what is experienced through the use of language in context: "Words and language are not wrappings in which things are packed for the commerce of those who write and speak. It is in words and language that things first come into being and are."[28]

Hermeneutics literally means interpretation of texts; the study of hermeneutics arose as a way to understand ancient texts (such as the Bible) that no longer can be explained by the author. A contemporary example is the US Supreme Court, which uses hermeneutics to interpret the US Constitution. A text is essentially a recording of an event that has taken place at some time in the past—whether written, electronic, photographic, or preserved by some other means. Today, virtually any text is open for interpretation, and whether the author is alive to explain what he meant is not considered relevant. The text itself speaks to us; it has meanings of its own apart from what any author, speaker, or audience member might mean by it. Although hermeneutics is usually applied to the written word, it is not limited to it. Even actions can be viewed as texts. The problem remains the same: How do we interpret a message that is no longer part of an actual live event?

Hermeneutic phenomenology, then, is especially relevant to communication because of the link between language and social interaction. Communication is the vehicle by which meaning is assigned to experience. When you communicate, you work out new ways of seeing the world—your speech affects your thoughts, and your thoughts in turn create new meanings. We discuss the work of Paul Ricoeur as an example of a theory within hermeneutic phenomenology.

Distanciation

Paul Ricoeur is a major interpretive theorist who relies heavily on both the phenomenological and hermeneutic traditions.[29] Although he recognizes the importance of actual speech, Ricoeur believes text is more important. Once speech is recorded, it becomes divorced from the actual speaker and situation in which it was delivered. Textual interpretation is especially important when speakers and authors are not available, as is the case with historical documents.

However, it need not be limited to these situations. Indeed, the text itself always speaks to us, and the job of the interpreter is to figure out what it is saying.

The problem is not unlike interpreting a musical score or work of art. You may not know exactly what mood Mozart was in when he composed the *Jupiter Symphony.* A conductor carefully studies the elements of the score to determine what meanings are embedded in it and then proceeds to produce a musical interpretation. Orchestral versions will differ substantially in the interpretation performed, but you will always recognize the piece as the *Jupiter Symphony.* The same is true with a piece of art. You know the artist had one set of meanings for the piece; you as a viewer have another, and the art world may offer or impose yet other meanings.

Ricoeur calls the separation of text from situation *distanciation.* The text has meaning regardless of the author's original intention. In other words, you can read a message and understand it despite the fact that you were not part of the original speech event. Thus, the author's intent does not prescribe what the text subsequently is taken to mean, nor does any reader's individual understanding limit what the text itself says. Once written, the text can be consumed by anybody who can read, providing a multitude of possible meanings. For these reasons the interpretation of textual material is, for Ricoeur, more complex and more interesting than that of spoken discourse.

To account for the complexity involved in interpretation, Ricoeur's version of the hermeneutic circle consists of the process of explanation and understanding. *Explanation* is empirical and analytical; it accounts for events in terms of observed patterns among parts. In the analysis of a text, an interpreter might look for recurring words and phrases, narrative themes, and thematic variations. In studying a book of the Bible, for example, you would carefully examine the individual words of each verse, study their etymological derivations, and note the ways they form patterns of meaning. Ricoeur is particularly interested in words that have metaphorical value—words that point to meanings hidden below the surface of the writing. None of these structural elements is meaningful in and of itself; the various elements of a text must be put together in the understanding phase of interpretation to form some kind of meaningful pattern.

Understanding, the second part of Ricoeur's version of the hermeneutic circle, is synthetic, accounting for events in terms of overall interpretation. So in continuing your study of the Bible, you would synthesize the elements you found, looking for a holistic or general meaning of the passage under consideration. In hermeneutics, one goes through both processes, breaking down a text into its parts and looking for patterns, then stepping back and subjectively synthesizing and judging the meaning of the whole. You move from understanding to explanation and back to understanding again in a continuing circle. Explanation and understanding, then, are not separate but are two poles of an interpretive continuum.

Ricoeur also posits a particular relationship between text and interpreter, suggesting that the text can speak to and change the interpreter. Ricoeur refers to the act of being open to the meanings of a text as *appropriation.* If you are open to the message of a text, you appropriate it, or make it your own. Thus, interpretation begins with distanciation but ends with appropriation. To interpret the sections of the Bible, you would remove your own interests from your

study of the intrinsic meanings in the text, but then you would apply those meanings to your own life.

An example of a Ricoeurian interpretation is Barbara Warnick's study of the Gettysburg Address.[30] In a careful examination of the text, Warnick looked at references to agent, place, and time. *Agents* include "our fathers," "those who have given their lives," "we," and the people of the future. *Place* references include "upon this continent" and "a great battlefield." *Time* references include the far past ("four score and seven years"), the near past, a frozen present, and a possible future. The text can transcend the immediacy of the present situation by cycling back and forth from the present to other times, from immediate agents to other agents in the past and future, and from this place to other places. In so doing, the text tells a story of birth, adversity, acknowledgment of shared values, rebirth, and perpetuation of shared values.

In an example of appropriation, Warnick notes that this story parallels that of the Christian narrative, which appeals so deeply to many in US society. Other values of American culture are deeply embedded in the text as well. Warnick shows how the details of the text and the overall understanding of it as a projection of the American ideal go hand in hand; it expresses values that are part of but transcend the immediate situation, and thus it is relevant to generation after generation of US Americans.

Hermeneutic theories envision a particular relationship between language and an object, text, or experience. The next two theories—linguistic relativity and the social construction of reality—are theories that also discuss how language itself governs the interpretation process. Both deal with the important role language plays in what realities are available to us.

Linguistic Relativity

The *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis,* also known as the theory of linguistic relativity, is based on the work of Edward Sapir and his protégé Benjamin Lee Whorf.[31] A linguistic anthropologist, Sapir was interested in the relationship between thought and language. Whorf, an insurance company fire inspector, explored these ideas independently of Sapir. The two met in 1928 and collaborated on several papers. The Whorfian hypothesis of linguistic relativity simply states that the structure of a culture's language determines the habits of thought and behavior in that culture. It is not because of structures within culture that the world is organized as it is; rather, it is the structure of language that is crucial. In the words of Sapir:

> Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. . . . The fact of the matter is that the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group. . . . We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.[32]

According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, the interpretation that is possible is in some way predetermined by the language available, and how you think and communicate is a function of the structure of the language you speak. Thus the

world is experienced and conceived differently in different language communities, and those communities essentially live in different realities. Cheris Kramarae's theory about gender and language provides an example of how gender, as conceptualized in language, affects the reality in which speakers of that language live.

Language and Gender

Cheris Kramarae was one of the first communication scholars to explore the gendered implications of language and the ways languages treat women and men differently.[33] In an example of linguistic relativity, Kramarae explores how the linguistic constructions available to speakers of a language tell them how to think about gender. In most languages, we are "trained to see two sexes. And then we do a lot of work to continue to see only these two sexes."[34]

Kramarae is not only concerned with the ways a given language determine how we experience the world but also with the power relations embedded in such a linguistic system. Those who are part of the dominant linguistic system tend to have their perceptions, experiences, and modes of expression incorporated into language. Kramarae calls English a "man-made language"[35] because it embodies the perspectives of the masculine more than the feminine. The perceptions of white middle-class males, in particular, are normalized in standard linguistic practice. Men are the standard, for instance, in many occupational terms, and women are the aberrant category—*waiter* versus *waitress* and *actor* versus *actress*. *Mr.* as a title of address does not contain information about marital status, whereas the terms *Miss* and *Mrs.* do. The information provided is more useful to (heterosexual) men than to women; men are privileged by having access to this information about a woman's marital status.

The societal structures and institutions that derive from language, such as educational disciplines, technology, and the like also reflect the gendered relationships embedded in the language. A discipline like history, for instance, is the story of male activity—political upheavals, wars, and the like—and not issues of concern to women, such as inheritance laws/property rights, the location of work, or birth control. Similarly, technology, the practical application of information or science to solve human problems, typically is seen as the development of machinery and tools to help men's work; the development of tampons, for instance, is not usually part of what is thought of as technology, even though it also is the application of science to solve a problem—but one that affects only women.

The idea that social power arrangements are largely embedded in language also means that language and the world it creates often silences women in profound ways. Kramarae incorporates the work of anthropologists Edwin Ardener and Shirley Ardener on muted-group theory to elaborate this notion.[36] Edwin Ardener observed that anthropologists tend to characterize a culture in terms of the masculine; Shirley Ardener, upon closer examination, suggested that the actual language of a culture has an inherent male bias—that men create the meanings for a group and suppress or "mute" the feminine voice. This silencing of women, in Ardener's observation, leads to the inability of women to express themselves eloquently in the male parlance.

Shirley Ardener went on to suggest that the silencing or muting of women has several manifestations and is especially evident in public discourse. Women

are less comfortable and less expressive in public situations than are men, and they are less comfortable in public situations than they are in private ones. Consequently, women monitor their own communication more intensely than do men—watching what they say, and translating what they are feeling and thinking into male terms. When masculine and feminine meanings and expressions conflict, the masculine tends to win out because of the dominance of the male perspective in society.

Women respond in various ways to the ways they are muted by language. One response is that women find or create their own forms of expression outside the dominant male system. Sewing, gardening, playing bridge or mahjong, belly dancing, or participating in a women's book group allows women the space and time to express themselves on their own terms. Karen Foss and Sonja Foss interviewed women about significant forms of communication in their lives from gardening to writing to mothering, shopping, quilting, and dance. Interestingly, most of the women do other things for a living and come home and engage in these activities—they are not a means of livelihood, perhaps because they are not valued in the masculine, public world.[37] Furthermore, these activities are often considered trivial (because they are done by women), which means the women can have considerable autonomy. The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo began meeting in 1977 to protest the disappearances of their children by Argentina's military government. They started walking around the plaza when a police officer told them they would have to keep moving or be subject to loitering laws. They began to walk around the plaza every Thursday and were able to do so, despite laws forbidding public protests, in large part because they were women, and the government did not take them seriously.[38]

From the Source . . .

Much of our interaction now occurs through social media, changing the ways people relate to each other. The struggles around meaning and linguistic domination continue into our online communication. Who is defining the linguistic conventions concerning "friending," "liking," and "sharing"? Who decides what is considered online "joking around" or "bullying"? Who determines what online language use is racist, sexist, or classist? How can we live online with a better sense of mutuality?

Cheris Kramarae

Kramarae, along with colleagues Paula Treichler and Ann Russo, has written *A Feminist Dictionary*, which is one way of creating new meanings and helping construct a world in which women have a larger say.[39] This work attempts to capture the features of a feminist universe of discourse by including words with special meaning for women as well as definitions that are consistent with women's experiences. The dictionary also includes numerous and often contrasting definitions for a word, suggesting that a word might indeed mean different things in different contexts, at different times, to different women. For example, *hysterical* is "an alternative role option for middle-class Victorian

women faced with conflicting expectations (to be a 'lady,' to manage a house, to endure frequent childbirth)." The term *home* has several definitions: "a comfortable concentration camp," "where the revolution begins," and "the location of both work and recreation for women with small children."

Kramarae's work demonstrates the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in action in that language affects how gender plays out in culture. In contrast to the Sapir and Whorf notion that the kind of reality available is to some degree embedded in the structure of the language we speak, the theory below suggests that people create their realities in the process of interaction.

Social Construction

Originally called *the social construction of reality* after the work of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (and sometimes called social constructionism as well), social construction investigates how human knowledge is constructed through social interaction.[40] What something is or means is established by the language used to describe concepts, the way a community orients to and talks about that object or experience, and the social reality that is the outcome of that joint construction process.[41] Meanings are not found in things in the world or within each individual; rather, meaning develops in coordination with others. Language, then, is of critical importance because it is the system through which reality is constructed. Another way to say this is that the nature of the world is less important than the language used to name, discuss, and orient to that world.

According to the theory of social construction, each group, community, and culture develops its own understandings of the world. A thing does not really exist until it is conceptualized and defined as something by the social community. Even the simplest object "involves some form of categorization; it is not just seeing what is before the eyes but seeing it *as something.*"[42] There are large piles of dirt and rock that come to be known as *mountains*, but how that mountain comes to be understood depends on the categories and labels learned and created for describing mountains in a particular community. For some it is a barrier to be gotten through in order to build a tunnel; for another group, it is a sacred cultural place; and for yet others, it is a pleasant place to hike. The pile of rocks and dirt that we call a mountain, as well as everything else—from a religion to a war to a political system to an academic field—are all social realities that have been created by humans through their communication. We learn not only what a thing is for our community but also how to act toward it through communication. The mountain that is a sacred space will demand a different orientation than the mountain seen as a barrier to the completion of a tunnel.

The world begins to feel quite real and solid, despite the fact of social construction, because of habit and tradition. As the meaning for something becomes entrenched, it feels like an objective fact in the world that exists apart from the communication that originally created it. These constructions are taken for granted; it is assumed that this is the way the world is. Social groups that want to maintain a particular social construction often use the argument that "this is the way things are." Arguments against women's suffrage, racial desegregation, and same-sex marriage, to name a few social campaigns over the last centuries in

the United States, were made on the basis of a belief that the existing social order was natural and right. For many today, gender continues to be conceptualized and discussed as a real binary that consists of definable and knowable differences between female and male. In all of these cases, how something comes to mean says much more about the social group doing the constructing than about the thing itself.

While meanings can become reified and begin to seem real to members of a culture, they can and do change over time, and what was constructed as appropriate for one time is not seen as appropriate in another. In earlier centuries, *melancholy* was a widely agreed upon social construction that affected many individuals; it was seen as a sadness caused by black bile, which was secreted from the kidneys or spleen. Today, *depression* might be the label that comes closest to the symptoms of melancholy, and it is accompanied by its own set of social constructions, depending on the community. For some, it is a mental illness and for others a physical one; for some it is debilitating and all determining and for others it is something to be managed and gotten over. No matter the concept, what appear to be immutable, stable things in the world were created by communication; they did not exist until given meaning by humans using language to create a social reality.

In a study that suggests the power of social construction, Kim Hong Nguyen examined historical and contemporary distinctions between the words *nigga* and *nigger* as discussed by cast members of the movie *Crash* on an episode of the *Oprah Winfrey Show*.[43] The conversation reveals how these terms reflect different social constructions among members of the black community. Although there is a distinction between the terms for much of the African American community—*nigger* is a racial slur directed against people with dark skin, whereas *nigga* is a term used to affirm and build unity—the terms are often collapsed, and *nigga* is heard as *nigger* by both black and white audiences. Winfrey herself admitted to collapsing the terms; she called for a ban on all uses of words beginning with the phoneme *nigg* because she feels any such words are too racially charged. On the other hand, several cast members shared the positive, vernacular meanings of *nigga* within the African American community and argued for the need to understand the vernacular differences as they emerge among black users.

Nyugen suggests that the active mishearing of all words beginning with *nigg* by most white and many middle and upper-class black Americans is a continuing victimization of African Americans. Nguyen argues that this construction comes at a time when blacks are more prominent in society and suggests a refusal to see African Americans as agents who deliberately use language in potentially transformative ways. Those who refuse to use any word that begins with *nigg* ultimately are refusing to take responsibility for a deeper and more nuanced understanding of black culture, and the result is a continuing marginalization of blacks.

Social construction and linguistic relativity both center language in the interpretation of messages. The next theory, constructivism, serves as a bridge between theories about the interpretation of messages and theories of message production, use, and strategy. It looks at how our cognitive constructs affect our creation and understanding of messages.

Constructivism

The term *constructivism* is attributed to Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, who studied how a person's ways of knowing develop throughout childhood. In the communication discipline, Jesse Delia is credited with the theory of constructivism, the essence of which is that we interpret and act according to our minds' conceptual categories or knowledge structures. These develop over time through maturation and experience. Thus, reality does not present itself in raw form but is filtered through a person's own way of seeing things.[44]

Constructivism is based partially on George Kelly's personal construct theory, which suggests that we understand experience by grouping and distinguishing events according to similarities and differences.[45] Constructs are interpretive schemes that identify something as within one category or another, and we make sense of an experience or event by placing it into a category. You might see yourself as athletic and your brother as nonathletic; you might construct your job as boring or interesting. The important point here is that the category selected is itself an interpretation—a choice to see something one way and not another. When you call your job *boring* rather than *interesting*, you are choosing to orient to your job in a particular way, and that orientation probably will affect your behavior on the job as well.

Interpretive schemes develop as you mature. Very young children have simple construct systems, while most adults have much more sophisticated ones. When you were young, for example, you might have placed all people into two types: big and little. Now, on the other hand, you have an immense number of constructs with which to distinguish among different people. Also, the different parts of your construct system vary in complexity; you might have elaborate thoughts about music but simple ideas about international relations.

Cognitive complexity is a mainstay of constructivism.[46] Complexity or simplicity in the system is a function of the relative number of constructs and the degree of distinctions you can make among those constructs. The number of constructs available to you on a particular topic is called *cognitive differentiation*. Cognitively sophisticated people can make more distinctions than cognitively uncomplicated people. Many of us go to a tax accountant every year because we have not developed sufficient cognitive complexity in terms of tax law to prepare our taxes easily without the help of experts.

Cognitive complexity also plays a role in how we view others. Someone with fewer cognitive categories will tend to stereotype others, whereas someone with a greater degree of cognitive differentiation will make subtler and more sensitive distinctions among human groups. Generally, cognitive complexity leads to greater understanding of others' perspectives and a better ability to frame messages in terms understandable to other people. This ability, called *perspective taking*, leads to more sophisticated arguments and appeals when framing messages. Adjusting one's communication to others is referred to as *person-centered communication*, and the degree of cognitive complexity is one factor in the development of person-centered messages.

The theory of constructivism has provided communication scholars with substantial material to consider when considering message design, and it has been used particularly in persuasion research. Someone with a less complex

cognitive system will design simpler messages—messages that address only one goal. A slightly more cognitively complex individual will design messages that separate goals and deal with each in turn, and the most complex thinkers will create messages that integrate several goals in one message.[47] Further, the simplest persuasive messages only address your own goals without considering the other person's needs, whereas more adaptive, complex persuasive messages are designed to meet your needs and the needs of the other person simultaneously. For example, if you want to get a person to change a behavior—to stop smoking—you might want to do it in a way that would help the other person save face. This would require you to achieve at least two objectives in the same message—deliver a nonsmoking message and protect the other person's ego. Simple messages cannot do this, but more complex messages can. Constructivists have found that the tendency to help the other person save face is directly related to cognitive complexity.

Erina MacGeorge and Kristi Wilkum studied comforting messages in regard to miscarriages,[48] making use of person-centeredness as evidence of cognitive complexity. They hypothesized that those with prior experience with pregnancy loss would produce comforting messages of higher quality than those without such experience and that the quality of such messages would decrease over time. They further hypothesized a gender difference—that women would produce higher quality supportive messages than men because women, on average, score higher in terms of cognitive complexity and are more likely to have had some direct experience with issues of pregnancy and pregnancy loss. They found that participants with some indirect experience with pregnancy loss produced messages higher in cognitive complexity than those with no experience (no participants in the study had directly experienced a miscarriage), and the quality of such messages did indeed decline over time. Also as hypothesized, women produced messages higher in quality than men. This study suggests that even individuals with indirect experience with something can become effective support providers.

While constructivism has been primarily concerned, from a message standpoint, with how to design messages to deal with different levels of cognitive complexity, it also could be used to determine how capable an individual is of understanding or making sense of a message. As mentioned earlier, constructivism provides a bridge between how messages are interpreted and how messages are designed because it deals with both cognitive and design elements. In the section that follows, we turn to theories that are specifically designed to address how messages are constructed, organized, and used.

Production, Use, and Strategy

A major concern of communication scholars has been with how messages get produced and used. In this section, we cover several theories that deal with issues of message production and the strategic use of messages: speech act theory, the coordinated management of meaning, theory of identification, message-design logic, compliance gaining, goals-plans-actions, politeness theory, and invitational rhetoric. The first three discuss basic elements of messages and

provide general ways to understand how messages work; the remaining theories deal with message strategies and goals—the reasons why messages get made.

Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory, attributed to John Searle, is interested in how we accomplish things with words.[49] Speech act theory identifies what it takes to make a successful statement—to have an intention understood. If you make a promise, you communicate an intention to do something in the future, and you expect the other communicator to recognize that intention. If you say, "I promise to pay you back," you assume the other person knows the meaning of the words. But knowing the words is not enough; knowing what you intend to accomplish by using the words is equally important. Ludwig Wittgenstein's ordinary language philosophy and J. L. Austin's work on speech as expression of intention lay the foundation for speech act theory.[50]

Whenever you make a statement like, "I will pay you back," you are accomplishing one or more of four things: an utterance act, a propositional act, an illocutionary act, and a perlocutionary act. First, you are producing an *utterance act,* a simple pronunciation of the words in the sentence. Second, you are asserting something about the world, or performing a *propositional act.* In other words, you are saying something that you believe to be true or that you are trying to get others to believe to be true. Third, and most important from a speech-act perspective, you are fulfilling an intention, which is called an *illocutionary act.* Your primary concern is that the listener understands the intention—whether a promise, an invitation, or a request. Finally, there is the *perlocutionary act,* which is designed to have an actual effect on the other person's behavior. A perlocution is an act in which the speaker expects the listener not only to understand the intention but also to act on it. If you say, "I am thirsty," with the intention of having your brother understand that you need something to drink, you are performing an illocutionary act. If you also want him to bring you a diet Coke, you are delivering both an illocutionary and a perlocutionary act.

Let's say that your friend sends you an email that says, "I'd like to go out tonight." Your friend's English sentence is an *utterance act*, not unusual or problematic. Second, he expressed a *propositional act* or truth statement that means something about what he wants to do (again, the statement is self-explanatory). Third, your friend's message is an *illocutionary act* because it makes what you interpret to be an offer or invitation—asking you to go out with him. Fourth, he is trying to get you to do something, and if you accept the invitation, he has completed a successful *perlocutionary act.* Figure 4.1 on the next page displays a model of these acts.

These distinctions are more important than they sound. Let's begin with the distinction between propositional and illocutionary acts. A proposition, as one aspect of the content of a statement, designates some quality or association of an object, situation, or event. "The cake is good," "Too much salt is harmful to the body," and "His name is Shane" are all examples of propositions. Propositions can be evaluated in terms of their truth value, but you almost always want to communicate something more than just the truth of a proposition: You want to do something else with your words. In fact, truth is not considered terribly important in speech act theory. Instead, the real question is what a speaker

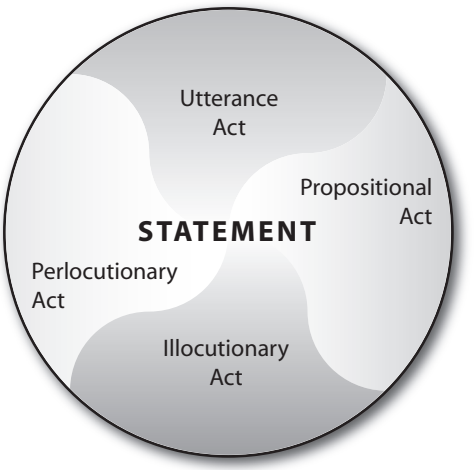


Figure 4.1 Model of Speech Acts

intends to do by uttering a proposition—what the illocutionary force of the statement is.

The illocution is the heart of speech act theory, and Searle is interested in how propositions function within a larger context. What a proposition intends to do can be seen in the following examples, which italicize the implicit intention: I *ask* whether the cake is good; I *warn* you that salt is harmful to the body; I *state* that his name is Shane. Although we would not actually say these sentences in this form, they convey the illocutionary force of what we are doing—*asking*, *warning*, and *stating*—in the act of delivering such statements. Often, a statement can consist of any number of speech acts. "I'm hungry" could count as a request if the speaker's intent is to have the listener offer food. It could count as an offer, if the speaker intends to start making dinner and invite the listener; or it might simply be a statement designed just to convey information and nothing more.

Searle outlines five types of illocutionary acts. The first is called an *assertive,* which is a statement that commits the speaker to advocate the truth of a proposition. It includes such acts as stating, affirming, concluding, and believing. The second are *directives*—illocutions that attempt to get the listener to do something. They are commands, requests, pleadings, prayers, entreaties, invitations, and so forth. *Commissives,* the third type, commit the speaker to a future act. They consist of such things as promising, vowing, pledging, contracting, and guaranteeing. The fourth, *expressives*, are acts that communicate some aspect of the speaker's psychological state, such as thanking, congratulating, apologizing, consoling, and welcoming. Finally, a *declaration* is designed to create a proposition that, by its very assertion, makes it so. Examples include appointing, marrying, firing, and resigning. To illustrate, you are not married until an authorized person actually says the words, *I pronounce you husband and wife*.

According to Searle, we know the intention behind a certain message because we share a common language game, consisting of a set of rules that helps us define the illocutionary force of a message. The rules tell us what something means, and there are two types of rules—constitutive and regulative. *Constitutive* rules tell you how to interpret something—whether as a promise, a warning, a request, or something else. These rules "constitute" or create the frame in which the speech act occurs. The game of football is constituted by or exists only by virtue of its rules; these rules tell you what a certain event on the field means. The rules help you distinguish the game of football from the game of baseball. In speech acts, constitutive rules tell you what to interpret as a promise as opposed to a request or a command. Your intention is largely understood by another person because of constitutive rules; they tell others how to distinguish a particular kind of speech act from another type of speech act.

Any illocutionary act must adhere to a basic set of constitutive rules in order to count as an illocution. The *propositional content rule* specifies some condition of the referenced object. In a promise, for example, the speaker must state that a future act will be done—to repay a debt perhaps. *Preparatory rules* involve the presumed preconditions that must be met by the speaker and hearer for the act to take place. For example, in a promise, the utterance has no meaning unless the hearer wants the future act to be done. The *sincerity rule* requires the speaker to mean what is being said. You must truly intend to repay the debt for the statement to count as a promise. The *essential rule* states that the act is indeed taken by the hearer and speaker to represent what it appears to be on its face—the promise establishes a contractual obligation between speaker and hearer. These types of constitutive rules are believed to apply to a wide variety of illocutionary acts, such as requesting, asserting, questioning, thanking, advising, warning, greeting, and congratulating.

The second kind of rule required for an illocutionary act is regulative. *Regulative rules* provide guidelines for acting within a game. The behaviors are known and available before being used in the act, and they tell us how to use speech to accomplish a particular intention. For example, if I want something, I make a request. When I request something of you, you are obligated either to grant the request or to turn it down.

Speech acts are not successful when their illocutionary force is not understood, and they can be evaluated in terms of the degree to which they employ the rules of that speech act. Whereas propositions are evaluated in terms of truth or *validity,* speech acts are evaluated in terms of *felicity,* or the degree to which the conditions of the act are met. The felicity of a promise is whether the essential rules for executing a promise have been accomplished.

Eli Dresner and Susan Herring examine emoticons—graphic indicators of emotion in computer-mediated communication—from a speech act perspective. Emoticons are generally understood to serve as indicators of affect, much as nonverbal communication does in face-to-face communication.[51] The use of a happy or sad face to convey happiness or sadness is an example of an emoticon consistent with an emotion. The authors suggest, however, that the term *emoticon* is a bit of a misnomer because conveying emotional affect congruent with a facial expression is only one of three functions served by emoticons. A second function is to convey nonemotional meaning. Using a wink emoticon to indicate joking is an example; joking can be overlaid onto many emotional states, so there is not a one-to-one congruence between the wink and an emotional state. Finally, a third function of emoticons—and the function of interest to Dresner and Herring—is to communicate illocutionary force. With this usage, there is little correspondence between the statement and facial expressions. Using a smile to downgrade a complaint to a simple assertion is an example; the emoticon comments directly on the speech act and not on an emotion of any kind.

Dresner and Herring argue that in cases where an emoticon comments on a speech act, emoticons indicate the illocutionary force of the message and thus should be viewed as part of the text, much like other punctuation marks, rather than as indicators of affect. The use of a smiley face to suggest sarcasm, for instance, cannot stand apart from the text to which it is attached; the meaning would be impossible to determine without the verbal text. The use of a wink to

suggest something is a joke is nonsensical unless the text is also present. Such uses of emoticons are necessary for understanding both the meaning of a statement and the speaker's intention; these are not simply a way of emphasizing meaning nonverbally. With speech act theory as a basis for how messages function, we turn now to the coordinated management of meaning, which shows how both meaning and coordination—meshing our actions with others—are built into messages.

Coordinated Management of Meaning

The theory of the coordinated management of meaning (CMM), developed by Barnett Pearce, Vernon Cronen, and their colleagues, is a comprehensive approach to social interaction that addresses the ways in which complex meanings and actions are coordinated.[52] CMM addresses communication in all contexts, ranging from micro-interactions to cultural and societal processes.

According to CMM, when you encounter any communication situation, you do two things. First, you assign meaning to the situation and to the behaviors and messages of others; second, you decide how to respond or act within the situation. Let's say you are called into your boss's office for a discussion, whereupon you are told that there are certain deficiencies in your work. Your supervisor engages you in a discussion of what you need to do to improve your performance, sets some goals for improvement, and asks whether he can provide you with any assistance or resources to meet these goals. Your supervisor meant for this to be a helpful and supportive meeting, but you leave angry, perplexed, and embarrassed.

What does this event mean in CMM terms? Is your supervisor's message a helpful intervention, another episode in oppressive organizational life, or perhaps a long overdue conversation in a somewhat distant supervisor-employee relationship? What will you do? File a lawsuit? Seek the support of coworkers? Quit? Get even? Ignore it? Or buckle down and try to meet your performance goals? As you work through these questions, you are engaged in an ongoing process of meaning and action; you must consider what this event means, what you will do in regard to it, and how you will coordinate your actions with those of others—like your supervisor. CMM helps us understand the process of *meaning* and *action* that informs every communication event as well as how you *coordinate* your actions with others in the process of interaction. Taken together, this process of interaction is a *story* that you both live and tell. In other words, you experience the performance review as a kind of "story," and you tell yourself and others various aspects of this story. These three sets of ideas—meaning and action, coordination, and stories—are keys to CMM.

According to CMM, your meanings are closely connected to your actions. Meanings affect action, and action affects meanings. If you think the performance review is an oppressive act, your response will follow logically. If you respond by resisting, you will be recreating a meaning of oppression. But there is never a one-to-one relationship between meaning and action. Rather, the connection is mediated by a series of contexts. The context is the reference point that frames your meaning and action. Furthermore, contexts are related to one another in a hierarchy, with any given context always part of another, larger one. For example, an act may be interpreted within the context of the episode, the

episode within the context of self, the self within the context of relationship, and relationship within the context of culture. Further, each context affects the others. For example, your sense of self is affected by your sense of the relationship with the boss, which, in turn, is affected by the episode and, in turn, by the organizational culture. Your meanings and actions depend on the frame you set.

The theory of the coordinated management of meaning does not just describe how contexts frame interactions—it also details how meanings and actions are determined. Meanings and actions are shaped by rules.[53] There are two types of rules—constitutive and regulative *Constitutive rules* are essentially *rules of meaning,* used by communicators to interpret or understand an event or message. Such rules determine what something "counts as." The event or message, as one understands it, is "constituted by" the rules of meaning. For example, within the context of your self-image as a competent and effective person, you might take the supervisor's evaluation as a personal challenge and affront. The second category of rules is *regulative*, and these are essentially *rules of action,* used to determine how to respond or behave. The contexts, as outlined previously, shape these rules. Within the context of viewing yourself as a competent and assertive person, you will interpret and act one way; within the context of the organizational culture as open and accommodating, you may interpret and act in a very different way. Rules of action give you a sense of what is logical or appropriate in a given situation. This sense of logic or appropriateness is called *logical force.* Because people behave in a manner consistent with their rules, rules provide a logical force for acting in certain ways.

People are able to shift contexts, change meanings, and act in a variety of ways because of a history of interaction with many people over time; they have learned numerous ways to interpret and act in different situations. Thus, we have numerous resources for acting in a situation. Indeed, the variety of meanings that can apply to any situation is so numerous that we often experience problems in meshing our actions with those of others, which brings us to the second key to CMM—*coordination.*

When an individual enters an interaction, that person can never be certain what rules the other participants will be using. The primary task in all communication, then, is to achieve and then sustain some form of coordination. *Coordination* involves organizing interpersonal actions so that you feel you are proceeding in a logical or appropriate way. The communicators in an exchange do not need to interpret the events the same way, but they both must feel that what is happening makes sense (is coordinated), given their respective rule systems. People can have perfectly satisfactory coordination without sharing the same meaning. In other words, communicators can organize their actions in ways that seem logical to all parties, yet they understand what is going on in very different ways. For example, a dynamic and engaging speaker thinks he is educating and persuading the audience, but the audience, quite overjoyed by the speech, is merely entertained and forgets the point of the message within hours. Here, both sides are satisfied, and each thinks what happened was logical, even though their meanings were different.

Coordination is not always a satisfying experience. Two communicators may be coordinating very well without being happy about it. Over time, in fact, communicators can have such a strongly coordinated set of unfortunate actions

that they cannot think of how the pattern of interaction might be changed. In CMM, this is called an *unwanted repetitive pattern* (URP). Domestic violence is a good example of an URP in action. The pattern of behavior is *enmeshed*, meaning that it is so tightly organized into a certain form that change becomes very difficult, and the parties are unable to create new rule sets that would enable them to shift contexts, change how they might understand what is going on, and act differently in responding to one another. In other words, they need to be able to tell a different story—the next element of CMM—in order to get out of the unwanted pattern they are in.

Stories help communicators make sense of a situation. As noted above, if two communicators share a story of what is happening—whether happily or not—they have a kind of shared coherence or mutual understanding, which usually leads to a high level of coordination. It is entirely possible, too, for the communicators to remain perfectly coordinated even without understanding one another. Life experiences can be packaged and repackaged in numerous ways. But in every interaction, there are also stories that remain unheard, unknown, and untellable, which complicates the interaction—some are too difficult to tell, you do not have the frame or words to make sense of an experience, or you do not realize you have constructed your life into a particular narrative. Together, however, these stories constitute a storytelling process that provides the data or materials from which our meanings and actions emerge.

From the Source . . .

All of CMM's models and concepts (rules, hierarchies, loops, etc.) should be read as "heuristics"—invitations to "look at communication this way!"—rather than as declarations that "this is what we are doing." I am delighted that these heuristics have been found useful by mediators, managers, consultants, therapists, social workers, teachers, researchers, facilitators and others, who use them to understand, evaluate, and decide how to act in order to create better social worlds.

Barnett Pearce

In a study of stories about discrimination, Mark Orbe and Sakile Camara used the coordinated management of meaning to understand the nature of discrimination based on race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or age and how it is talked about by different cultural groups.[54] After collecting stories of discrimination from students and nonstudents, the researchers coded them based on repetition, recurrence, and intensity; these terms then were used to establish the core elements of discrimination narratives: communicative action, perceived cultural assumptions, difference, negative consequences, and situational context. Based on these elements, they defined discrimination as "a *communicative action*, guided by *preconceived cultural assumptions* associated with *difference*, which has covert and/or overt *negative consequences* in a given *situational context*."

Orbe and Camara then focused on discovering similarities and differences of perceived discrimination across different cultural groups, using CMM to

understand the various levels of meaning making used by participants. Those who were members of majority groups tended to make use of constitutive rules of meaning making that positioned the act of discrimination as a particular incident. For example, a middle-aged white man offered this instance: "I was officiating a flag football game. The losing team accused me of being racist because they believed I was not [refereeing] the game fairly."[55] In contrast, minority group members enact constitutive rules that position the act of discrimination within a larger life script of experiences with discrimination that sometimes span generations. One Hispanic woman described having been told by a male Hispanic acquaintance that "a woman's place was to be at home having as many babies as possible. For me to seek an education was a waste of time. Women are good for two things: pleasing her man and producing babies."[56] Her framing took into account familial and cultural contexts as well as the context of the specific incident.

CMM allowed Orbe and Camara to show that the term *discrimination* is used to refer to both individual and structural forms of discrimination. Participants contextualized their experiences of discrimination differently, depending on majority or minority group status. This study offers insight into how perceptions and experiences of discrimination share core elements but also differ, depending on group status. The theory of the coordinated management of meaning gets at the complexity of communication by seeing meaning and action as inextricably linked, creating logics that drive the stories that make up our lives. Kenneth Burke's theory of identification is another way of explaining how we coordinate our meanings and actions with others.

Theory of Identification

Writing over a period of 50 years, Kenneth Burke's theory is one of the most comprehensive of all symbol theories.[57] Burke's view of human action begins with the distinction between action and motion.[58] *Action* consists of purposeful, voluntary behaviors; *motions* are nonpurposeful ones. Objects and animals possess motion, but only human beings have action—only humans have the capacity for symbol use and misuse. Especially intriguing for Burke is that only humans can symbolize the process of symbolizing—we can talk about speech and can write about words. History itself is a process of writing about what people have already spoken and written in the course of events, thus adding another layer of symbols to the actual events that occurred.

According to Burke, language functions as the vehicle for action. Language is by nature selective and abstract, focusing attention on particular aspects of reality at the expense of others. Furthermore, language contributes to human action by bringing us together or dividing us. When symbols bring people together into a common way of understanding, *identification* is said to occur. The opposite, *division*, can also happen; language can promote separation and division by emphasizing difference.[59]

Three overlapping sources of identification exist, according to Burke. *Material identification* results from goods, possessions, and things, like owning the same kind of car or having similar tastes in clothes. *Idealistic identification* results from shared ideas, attitudes, feelings, and values, such as being a member of the same church or political party. *Formal identification* results from the

arrangement, form, or organization of something—such as when you recognize and identity with the form of a sonnet or the formula for a Hollywood Western or a fast-food restaurant.[60] Acknowledging the form often offers tacit agreement with the content; the content is not questioned because of the familiarity of the form. If two people who are introduced shake hands, the conventional form of handshaking causes some identification to take place.

When identification occurs, Burke says the two individuals are consubstantial—they share substance in common. Some consubstantiality always will be present merely by virtue of the shared humanness of any two people. But there are times when the sources of identification are considerable, such as when you and a friend are relaxing next to the swimming pool on a warm summer morning. You communicate with each other in a free and easy manner because you know each other well, share similar values, and don't have to watch what you say with each other. You are, in Burke's terms, experiencing *consubstantiality* on the basis of material, idealistic, and formal identification. Identification can be considerable or limited, and it can be increased or decreased by the actions of the communicators. Karen once was trying to rent a car on a Greek island, but she had forgotten to bring her driver's license. She noticed that the man behind the car-rental counter was wearing an Iowa T-shirt, so she tried identification on the basis of shared geography (she had gone to school in Iowa). That strategy did not work to create identification, however, because the man had never been to Iowa—he bought the T-shirt because he liked it. But he rented the car to Karen anyway.

Identification can occur when there is very little consubstantiality involved—very little in common. People of lower strata in a hierarchy often identify with people at the top of the hierarchy, despite tremendous differences or division between them. This kind of identification can be seen, for example, in the mass following of a charismatic leader. In such a situation, individuals perceive the leader to be an embodiment of the perfection for which they themselves strive. Second, the mystery surrounding the charismatic person simultaneously tends to hide the division that exists. Burke refers to this phenomenon as *identification through mystification.*[61] You think you have many things in common with your favorite singer or politician because mystery masks all of the ways you are different.

Burke introduces the concept of guilt to further explain how symbols motivate.[62] Guilt is Burke's all-purpose word for any feeling of tension within a person—anxiety, embarrassment, self-hatred, disgust, and the like. For Burke, guilt is a condition caused by symbol use. He identifies three related sources of guilt, the first of which is the *negative*. The negative is a concept that is only available in language. Language allows us to say what something is not as well as what a thing is; nature does not have this capacity. Nature simply presents what is. But because there is a negative in language, you can say no to something. Thus, comparison and judgment become possible. The negative allows for the development of judgments, commands, and admonitions—thou shalt nots. Without the negative implicit in language, moral action based on conceptions of right and wrong would not exist. But because there is the negative, we experience guilt about not being able to obey all of these moral prescriptions.

A second reason for guilt is the *principle of hierarchy.* In seeking order, people structure society in social pyramids or hierarchies (social ratings, social

orderings), a process that is inevitable. The hierarchic principle motivates action—those lower on the hierarchy are motivated to move up, those at the top fear they will be surpassed or replaced and are motivated to work hard to maintain their positions at the top of the hierarchy. Competition and division occur among classes and groups in the hierarchy as well, and guilt is the outcome. You are guilty for being up, you are guilty for not being higher up, and you are guilty for being down.

The third reason for guilt is the *principle of perfection*. Humans can imagine (through language) a state of perfection, a perfect completion of the symbolic hierarchy of which they are a part. The ideal toward which we strive can be positive or negative—one could strive to be the perfect criminal or the perfect father; Hitler created the perfect enemy out of Jews during World War II. That we are "rotten with perfection"[63] means we spend out lives striving for an unattainable perfection, often going to great lengths to do so. Guilt arises as a result of the discrepancy between the real and the unattainable ideal. A peace activist might be motivated by this kind of guilt; he can imagine a world without war and is motivated to speak out to try to reach that ideal of peace, even though any kind of perfection is in fact impossible.

Burke describes two primary ways of relieving guilt—victimage and mortification. *Victimage* is a process of transferring guilt to someone or something outside oneself. The victim is essentially loaded with the guilt of the victimizer. Hitler's use of the Jews as scapegoats is an example of victimage. *Mortification*, on the other hand, is the process by which someone takes the suffering on themselves. It is self-inflicted punishment, self-sacrifice designed to manage guilt. Someone may feel guilty for being higher on the educational hierarchy than his parents, for example, so denies himself certain pleasures—eating out, travelling—because these are not leisure activities available to his parents.

Burke suggests that we essentially progress through a pollution-purification cycle in terms of our guilt. The cycle begins when we are polluted by guilt, an inescapable fact of being a human symbol user. We achieve a kind of purification through victimage or mortification, which allows us a temporary sense of redemption or rebirth. We have a new perspective, feel as if things have moved forward, and/or believe that somehow a better life has been attained. But the cycle begins again, and we experience some other kind of pollution in the ongoing drama of human life.

Kara Shultz explores the debate over cochlear implants for deaf children, using Burke's notion of guilt and the pollution-purification-redemption cycle to frame her analysis.[64] The cochlear implant, which stimulates the auditory nerve and allows the child to hear some sounds, was approved for use in children in 1990. Those who advocate for cochlear implants for children argue that we live in a hearing world, and doing whatever can be done to help a child adjust to that world only makes sense. On the other side are those who advocate the validity of Deaf culture as a unique co-cultural minority in the United States. Deafness should be seen as an alternative way of being, not a disability that needs to be fixed.

On both sides of this debate, the cycle begins with the child experiencing guilt—guilt at not being able to hear. This sense of inferiority can be overcome in one of two ways. In the first, redemption comes from cochlear implants and

the eventual ability of the child to live "normally" in a hearing world. In the other, redemption comes from embracing an identity and life in Deaf culture, which is presented as just as fulfilling and rich as hearing culture. Each of these cycles of guilt, purification, and redemption sends the child down different paths in terms of their orientation to their deafness. In one, the child seeks relief from the guilt of deafness through working hard to achieve some kind of hearing; in the other, the child finds relief in an alternative community that does not rely on hearing at all.

Burke's theory shows how messages of all kinds incorporate strategies that lead to us inhabiting very different kinds of worlds. He sees in messages efforts to manage the identification and division inherent in language and to strategize ways to overcome the guilt that is a natural part of the human condition. Burke's ideas provide general message strategies that can be found in virtually every instance of symbolic activity. We turn next to message-design logic, which examines the way we cognitively organize knowledge and form messages on the basis of that knowledge.

Message-Design Logic

Barbara O'Keefe's thesis is that there are a variety of ways to approach messages, and people employ different logics in deciding what to say to another person depending on the situation. She uses the term *message-design logic* to describe the thought processes behind the messages created.[65] O'Keefe outlines three possible message-design logics that range from least person centered to most person centered—expressive logic, conventional logic, and rhetorical logic.

O'Keefe calls the communication of feelings and thoughts *expressive logic*. Messages in this mode are open and reactive in nature, with little attention given to the needs or desires of others. In the parlance of constructivism, expressive logic is self-centered rather than person centered. An example of a message resulting from expressive logic would be an angry outburst to a friend who forgot to get tickets to a concert. *Conventional logic* sees communication as a game to be played by following rules. Here, communication is a means of self-expression that proceeds according to accepted rules and norms, including the rights and responsibilities of each person involved. This logic aims to design messages that are polite, appropriate, and based on rules that everyone is supposed to know. For example, in the ticket situation, you might remind the other person that they agreed to follow through when they agreed to get the tickets. O'Keefe's third form—*rhetorical logic*—views communication as a way of changing the rules through negotiation. Messages designed with this logic tend to be flexible, insightful, and person centered. They tend to reframe the situation so that various goals—including persuasion and politeness—are integrated into a seamless whole. An example would be to brainstorm with your friend some possible ways you might still get tickets, even though the box office is sold out.

O'Keefe has noticed that certain situations tend to produce similar messages; in other situations, the resulting messages are more diverse. For example, if you asked your colleagues at an advertising agency to describe the position of graphic designer, the descriptions would be quite similar. On the other hand, if you asked them to evaluate your work on a team project, each individual would probably respond differently. This example illustrates mes-

sage diversity. If the goals of the communication are fairly simply, and face is not much of an issue, the design logic leads to essentially the same message form. On the other hand, if goals are numerous and complex, and face is an issue, the different design logics will lead to highly divergent message forms. We look next at compliance gaining, which continues the interest in how messages function to help us achieve goals.

Compliance Gaining

Compliance gaining, like O'Keefe's message-design logic, deals with how messages are put to use in the world. Compliance gaining involves trying to get other people to do what you want them to do or to get them to stop doing something you do not want them to keep doing.[66] As one example, compliance is a huge issue for physicians. How does a doctor get a patient to take a certain medicine or to avoid certain unhealthy behaviors? The prolific research program on compliance-gaining strategies received its impetus from the groundbreaking studies of Gerald Marwell and David Schmitt.[67] These researchers isolated 16 strategies commonly used in gaining the compliance of other people, including promising, threatening, applying aversive stimuli, making moral appeals, and calling in a debt.

Marwell and Schmitt use an exchange-theory approach as the basis for their compliance-gaining model. According to the exchange approach, a person will comply in exchange for something supplied by the other person: if you do what I want, I will give you something in return—esteem, approval, money, relief from obligations, good feelings, among other things. This model is inherently power oriented. In other words, you can gain the compliance of others if you have sufficient power in terms of resources and can provide or withhold something they want.

One of the most important theoretical questions about compliance-gaining tactics has been how to reduce the list of all possible tactics to a manageable set of general strategies or dimensions that would help explain what people are actually accomplishing when they try to persuade other people. In an attempt to create such a set of principles, Marwell and Schmitt generated five strategies or clusters of tactics that address the various compliance-gaining situations. These include *rewarding* (which includes, for example, promising), *punishing* (for instance, threatening), *expertise* (as in displaying knowledge of rewards), *impersonal commitments* (examples would include moral appeals), and *personal commitments* (such as debts).

Goals-Plans-Actions Model

Although the work of Marwell and Schmitt was foundational, it is limited in its ability to explain precisely how compliance-gaining messages work, and much work has been done to expand our understanding of this process. James Dillard developed his goals-plans-actions (GPA) model to identify cognitive processes involved in compliance gaining.[68] One may seek the compliance of another for several reasons, implying multiple goals. The desire to gain compliance is a *primary goal.* Other *secondary goals* also influence the choice of compliance-gaining strategies. These consist of *identity goals, conversation management goals, relational resource goals, personal resource goals,* and

affect management goals. For example, in getting a friend to buy a certain kind of car, you may achieve the secondary goal of bolstering your credibility in your friend's eyes because you know much more about cars and bargaining than he thought, which is a relational resource goal. Figure 4.2 displays the relationship among these goals.

Figure 4.2 Goals-Plans-Action Model



From the Source . . .

The Goals-Plans-Actions model begins with the idea that people—often, but not always—know what they are doing. From this, it follows that they are valuable sources of information about their own behavior. They can tell us something about how and why they do what they do (and what they don't). Although it was developed to explain the production of interpersonal influence messages, the GPA model has, quite rightly, come to be seen as something that can be applied to message production of any sort.

James Dillard

Cindy White and Jennifer Malkowski explored bystander behavior and intervention among college students to examine compliance gaining generally and message-design logics and goals-plans-actions strategies specifically.[69] Getting students to recognize high-risk behaviors and to offer help when needed can be important to reducing problem behaviors on college campuses. The researchers used message-design logic to examine bystanders' goals, the types of strategies and messages used to intervene, whether the strategies were related to the goals students said they were pursuing, and whether gender was a factor in terms of goals and strategies.

Two intervention scenarios were presented to participants to generate data about students' goals and intervention messages. The first, a guy–girl hookup, involved two students who appeared to be headed toward a sexual encounter. The female student was described as "pretty out of it (drunk)" and "reluctant" to leave with the male. In the second scenario, students were playing a drinking game, and a male student, who appears to be very drunk, tells others he is done and opts out. Others in the game, however, pressure him to keep playing. Participants in the study were told, "You decide to say something." At that point, they were asked what they would say, the goals they were trying to accomplish, and which one of the goals they felt was most important.

For the guy–girl hookup scenario, the most frequent primary goal was "safety" followed by "separation" from the male and "prevent isolation" (making sure the woman was not alone with the guy). In the drinking game scenario, the first goal identified was to "keep the guy from drinking," followed by "safety" and "reduce peer pressure" (getting others to leave him alone). In the guy–girl hookup, participants whose primary goal was separating the man and woman tended to insert themselves into the conversation; individuals who wanted to gather information from the woman tended to inquire by asking if she was okay. When the researchers examined the strategies individuals used, they found that the individuals who used rhetorical logic (one of O'Keefe's three types of message-design logics) tended to employ an insert message/strategy, engaging one or both of the individuals in communication. Expressive logic individuals tended to warn others about the risks of the situation, and conventional logic individuals were more evenly distributed across the different types of messages used to intervene.

Research that explores the goals and logics bystanders bring to a situation—as well as actual messages used to intervene—can offer guidelines for practitioners working with intervention campaigns. The next theory is one that addresses the accomplishment of several goals at once. In this sense, it extends and exemplifies compliance gaining theories generally.

Politeness Theory

The best-known social psychological treatment of politeness and face is that of Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson.[70] Their theory states that in everyday life we design messages that protect face and achieve other goals as well. Brown and Levinson believe that politeness often is a goal because it is a culturally universal value. Different cultures have different levels of required politeness and different ways of being polite, but all people have the need to be appreciated and protected, which these researchers call *face needs.*[71] *Positive face* is the desire

to be appreciated and approved, to be liked and honored. *Positive politeness* is designed to meet these desires. Showing concern, complimenting, and using respectful forms of address are examples. *Negative face* is the desire to be free from imposition or intrusion, and *negative politeness* is designed to protect the other person when negative face needs are threatened. Acknowledging that you are imposing when making a request is a common example of managing negative face: "I'm sorry to bother you, but could you tell me where the closest bank is?"

Politeness is especially important whenever we must threaten another person's face, which happens frequently in our relations with others. We commit *face-threatening acts* (FTAs) whenever we behave in a way that potentially could fail to meet positive or negative face needs. Face threatening is normal and not itself a problem, but it requires deft handling to mitigate undesirable and unwanted consequences. Whether we deliver an FTA, how we do so, and what forms of politeness are used depend on a variety of factors.

Face-threatening acts assume five possible forms. We can (1) deliver the FTA baldly or directly, without polite action; (2) deliver the FTA along with some form of positive politeness; (3) deliver the FTA along with some form of negative politeness; (4) deliver the FTA indirectly, off the record; or (5) not deliver the FTA at all. These five choices are arranged in order from the most to the least face threatening.

Suppose that you want to ask your professor to reconsider an exam grade. This is a face issue for the professor in that you are questioning his authority as a teacher. How will you do it? One approach is to deliver the bald FTA, "I would like you to reconsider my grade." You probably would not choose this approach because it would not be very polite. A slightly less threatening approach would be to combine the request with positive politeness, something like this: "I would appreciate it if you could look at my grade again. Other students have said you're really nice about doing that." Here we have a request (FTA) combined with a compliment. Even less threatening would be to combine the FTA with negative politeness: "I'm really sorry. I know you're very busy, but could I have a moment of your time? I would really appreciate it if you could look at my grade again." Notice that this message meets negative face needs by acknowledging and apologizing for the imposition.

An "off-the-record" FTA, the fourth option, is one that is indirect and ambiguous, which enables you to deny having meant the statement as an FTA. For example, you might ask to borrow your friend's car by saying, "I wonder how I will get to town this afternoon to pick up my dry cleaning?" You hope your friend will get the hint and say, "Why don't you use my car?" But if your friend says, "Well, you can't use *my* car," you can always reply, "Oh, I wasn't asking for it." In requesting that your professor reconsider your grade, you might say something like, "Gosh, I didn't think I had done this badly on the exam." You hope he will reply, "Well, why don't I read it again?"—but if he looks at you funny, you can always deny that you were requesting a reconsideration.

Imagine that you want to ask your brother for a simple, nonthreatening favor—to drop you off at the mall. You and your brother have the same status—he does not have any special power over you, and the request is not threatening. You will probably put little work into being polite. On the other hand, suppose you want to get a loan from your parents. Because you consider your parents

higher in status than you and with considerable power over your finances, you will probably be quite polite in your request. There are, of course, a variety of levels of politeness between these extremes. One variable can counteract another. For example, there may be little social distance but quite a bit of power disparity. Or perhaps social distance and power do not matter much because the FTA is so minor. There have been many critiques and extensions of politeness theory; it continues to be a concept of interest to communication scholars because of its usefulness in a variety of contexts.[72]

While politeness theory is most often conceptualized within informal interpersonal contexts, Sandra Harris extended it to adversarial political discourse.[73] She used the Prime Minister's Question Time in the British Parliament, a practice that originated in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century and continues to the present. During Question Time, a Member of the House of Parliament can ask one question of the Prime Minister about some aspect of government, the Leader of the Opposition is permitted several questions, and the next biggest party is allowed two questions. The questions typically bring up issues of current concern to the UK, and often the Prime Minister's actions in regard to those issues are ridiculed, challenged, or questioned.

Examining 12 sessions of Prime Minister's Question Time, Harris found that the questions typically request information by seeking assent to the proposition that follows the request, such as "doesn't he have a duty to," or "is he aware that" (the Prime Minister is always addressed in the third person). Frequently, these questions explicitly and intentionally attempt to threaten the face of the Prime Minister. Even when genuine questions are asked, these get construed as face threatening or face enhancing. Furthermore, these threats to positive face—accusations, contempt, criticism, ridicule, and challenge—coexist with attempts to avoid impoliteness. For instance, not addressing the Prime Minister directly ensures a certain sense of formality and distance—appropriate acts of deference toward a high-ranking government official. At the same time, deliberately insulting word choice is used, such as accusing him of dodging questions or being pathetic and worthless. Furthermore, statements of solidarity—acknowledging a nonpartisan tribute to Australia, for instance—occur in the same statement as face-threatening propositions. The mention of the tribute to Australia was followed by:

> Australians are straightforward people—so let me ask the Prime Minister a straightforward question—does he remember announcing a new Government policy last Friday—to a chorus of derision—something he must be getting used to these days—in what was billed as a major announcement—he said that drunken and violent thugs would be picked up by the police—taken to a cashpoint and asked to pay an on-the-spot fine—can he tell the House which person in the government came up with that brilliant idea?[74]

The sanctioned impoliteness that occurs during Prime Minister Question Time suggests that positive and negative face strategies can co-occur, often within the same utterance, and that the mitigating linguistic strategies identified by Brown and Levinson need not be present. This study of politeness theory in a political context, then, offers additional insights into how politeness functions outside of the interpersonal context.

For our final theory in this chapter, we turn to invitational rhetoric, which offers another way to think strategically about communication. In contrast to most communication theories that privilege persuasion, invitational rhetoric acknowledges that there are communication situations in which understanding rather than persuasion is the goal.

Invitational Rhetoric

Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin coined the phrase *invitational rhetoric* in their essay, "Beyond Persuasion: A Proposal for an Invitational Rhetoric."[75] They argue for consideration of a different interactional mode than persuasion—that trying to change another is not and need not always be the reason for communication. They base their theory on the work of Sally Miller Gearhart, who sees persuasion as a kind of "violence" because it implicitly, if not explicitly, says to another, "my perspective is right and yours is wrong." For Gearhart, persuasion is problematic because it denies the authenticity and integrity of the other's perspective—a perspective that has developed from one's distinctive life experiences. Seeking a way to communicate without persuasion as a central goal, Foss and Griffin propose a framework based in feminist values of equality, immanent value, and self-determination. An attitude of equality places each person and perspective on an equal plane and engenders relationships of respect and nondomination. An attitude of immanent value acknowledges the worth and dignity of all life—reputation or earned credibility are not privileged over inherent value. Finally, an attitude of self-determination affords all participants in the interaction the right to decide for themselves what to do and how to live.

From the Source . . .

We developed the theory of invitational rhetoric to describe communicative experiences we had had that could not be described as persuasion. Theorizing those experiences led us to question the idea that persuasion is a part of every interaction and then to challenge the definition of rhetoric itself. Although the theory has caused controversy, many communication students and scholars have embraced it because it expands the array of options available to rhetoric, especially to those committed to nondominating ways of living.

Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin

Invitational rhetoric uses the idea of an invitation, both literally and metaphorically, as an interactional mode. When you issue an invitation for others to consider your perspective, you invite audience members to see the world as you do and to take your perspective seriously. It is up to the audience, however, to decide whether to adopt that perspective or not, and the primary goal is the clarification of ideas among all participants. Unlike traditional efforts at persuasion, then, where audience members are expected to change in the direction advocated by the speaker, the speaker, too, can choose to change as a result of an invitational interaction.

Any changes that result as part of the interaction are the result of insight, not influence, because all change is self-chosen. Rather than having to get others to agree that your perspective is "right," diverse perspectives are seen as resources for better understanding an issue. Invitational rhetoric operates on the assumption that when we deliberately expose ourselves to ideas that are different from ours, we have more opportunities for understanding various perspectives. Ultimately, this means we have more possibilities to consider in terms of how we configure our belief systems, and we can choose (or not) to incorporate into our worldviews some of the new ideas to which we have been exposed. The perspectives of others become resources we can use to expand our ways of viewing issues.

Sonja Foss and Karen Foss refined and elaborated the notion of invitational rhetoric in their book, *Inviting Transformation*.[76] They contrast what they call different modes of rhetoric, or different forms of interaction, that are common in our culture. *Conquest rhetoric* is an interaction in which winning is the goal; you want to establish your "idea, claim, or argument as the best one from among competing positions."[77] It is perhaps the most prevalent communication form in US culture and is the expected communication mode in the US legislative, judicial, and political systems. *Conversion rhetoric*, on the other hand, is designed to change others' perspectives or behaviors based on the superiority or rightness of a position. Religious groups, social-movement groups, and advertising campaigns use conversion rhetoric; in these situations, communicators seek to convert others to their perspectives or points of view. Conversion and conquest rhetoric often go together; conversion rhetoric is used to accomplish conquest rhetoric.

A third rhetorical mode is *benevolent rhetoric*, which is designed to help others improve their lives. In the benevolent mode of interaction, information typically is provided to others with the aim of benefiting them in some way. Health campaigns—use sunscreen, practice safe sex—are examples of benevolent rhetoric. There is also a kind of rhetoric called *advisory,* in which you request information from someone. Counseling and education are two cases of advisory rhetoric; when you are on the receiving end of this kind of rhetoric, you ask for and expose yourself to new and different perspectives in the hopes of improving your life. Foss and Foss suggest that conquest and conversion modes function as default modes in our culture—they are the forms of interaction or conversation most privileged and most common. The world they create, however, is an adversarial one. Deborah Tannen uses the phrase *argument culture* to describe this world—a world in which we approach almost everything as if it were a fight.[78] The addition of invitational rhetoric to the available modes of interaction opens up the range of possibilities for communication.

According to scholars of invitational rhetoric, a necessary first step in moving to an invitational mode is creating an appropriate environment in which the assumptions of invitational rhetoric are created and upheld. An environment that is conducive to all parties reaching greater understanding consists of four factors: freedom, safety, value, and openness. Freedom is the power to choose or decide; it means allowing those with whom you are communicating more than one option, not insisting that others adopt your perspective, and not doing things that will restrict others' participation. You probably have found yourself in a situation where you felt that you would be humiliated or put down if you spoke up. Freedom is not present in that situation.

The condition of safety refers to feeling emotionally, physically, and intellectually secure in the interaction. Of course, what makes a situation "safe" for one person—the ability to speak freely and to be ensured a turn at participating—might mean extreme lack of safety to someone who is very shy and does not wish to speak. Nonetheless, determining what is safe in a speaking situation is critical if an invitational approach is to be realized.

Value, the third element of an invitational environment, refers to the intrinsic worth of each individual and of each person's perspective. Each perspective is valued and respected, in other words, and value is communicated by listening well, acknowledging, and taking seriously the perspectives offered by others.

The fourth and final condition is openness, a desire for, willingness to consider, and genuine curiosity about a variety of perspectives. Unless a feeling of openness exists in the interaction, participants will not feel free to share their perspectives fully, to consider different perspectives, and to utilize all the diverse perspectives that are available.[79]

The theory of invitational rhetoric, then, suggests an alternative conversational approach to the default modes traditionally privileged in our culture. Rather than accepting the dominance of those default modes, scholars interested in an invitational approach urge exploration and consideration of approaches that privilege understanding rather than a culture of competition and persuasion.

Conclusion

Messages are central to communication. Language and nonverbals form the basic elements of the message, but the meaning and effects depend on the interpretative processes of the receivers of the message. Messages serve several purposes simultaneously—from transmitting information and influence to structuring our view of reality. The complex system of functions and goals that comprise how messages work has been of ongoing interest to scholars of communication.

Chapter Map **THEORIES OF THE MESSAGE**

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Semiotics	Structural Linguistics	Ferdinand de Saussure	The study of language is a study of *language* and *parole*—how words and systems come to constitute meaning.
	Nonverbal Communication	Paul Ekman & Wallace Friesen; Judee Burgoon; Miles Patterson	Nonverbal communication is the study of the system of behaviors and interactions that convey meaning outside of the verbal realm.

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Interpretation	Phenomenology	Maurice Merleau-Ponty; Edmund Husserl	The world is known through direct experience with the phenomena or things of the world.
	Distanciation	Paul Ricoeur	A text exists separately from the author's original intention.
	Linguistic Relativity	Edward Sapir & Benjamin Whorf	The structure of a language largely determines how we see and experience the world.
	Language and Gender	Cheris Kramarae; Edwin Ardener & Shirley Ardener	Linguistic structures privilege certain constructions of gender and power that silence women and other marginalized groups.
	Social Construction	Peter Berger & Thomas Luckmann	Knowledge is constructed through interaction, so what something means is found within individuals rather than in the object or experience itself.
	Constructivism	Jesse Delia	We use constructs, or interpretive schemes, to understand experiences on the basis of similarities and differences.
Production, Use, and Strategy	Speech Act Theory	John Searle	Any statement is a speech act that consists of an utterance, a propositional act, an illocution, and a perlocution—ways we do things with words.
	Coordinated Management of Meaning	Barnett Pearce & Vernon Cronen	Communication involves assigning meaning and coordinating actions with others, using constitutive and regulative rules.
	Theory of Identification	Kenneth Burke	Identification occurs when symbols promote understanding between people.
	Message-Design Logic	Barbara O'Keefe	Different logics—expressive, conventional, and rhetorical—are used to create messages.
	Compliance Gaining	Gerald Marwell & David Schmitt; James Dillard	Gaining compliance from others involves goals, plans, and actions.
	Politeness Theory	Penelope Brown & Stephen Levinson	Politeness, as a communication goal, is especially important when face-threatening acts are committed.
	Invitational Rhetoric	Sonja Foss & Cindy Griffin	Invitational rhetoric privileges interactions in which understanding rather than persuasion is a primary goal.

NOTES

[1] For a summary, see Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz, "Semiotics and Semiology," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen Littlejohn and Karen Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 874–76; and Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz, *Semiotics and Communication: Signs, Codes, Cultures* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1993). The two-world assumption is described and critiqued by John Stewart, "The Symbol Model vs. Language as Constitutive Articulate Contact," in *Beyond the Symbol Model: Reflections on the Representational Nature of Language,* ed. John Stewart (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), 9–63.

[2] Susanne Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942), 63.

[3] The triad of meaning, which they call the *triangle* of meaning, is also discussed by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning* (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1923).

[4] Rachel Anderson Droogsma, "Redefining Hijab: American Muslim Women's Standpoints on Veiling," *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 35 (2007): 294–319.

[5] This division of the field is attributed to Charles Morris, *Signs, Language, and Behavior* (New York: Braziller, 1946). A shorter version can be found in Charles Morris, "Foundations of the Theory of Signs," in *International Encyclopedia of Unified Science,* vol. 1, pt. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 84.

[6] Sandra E. Moriarty, "Abduction: A Theory of Visual Interpretation," *Communication Theory* 6 (1996): 167–87.

[7] Ferdinand de Saussure's primary work on this subject is *Course in General Linguistics* (London: Peter Owen, 1960). Excellent secondary sources include John Stewart, *Language as Articulate Contact: Toward a Post-Semiotic Philosophy of Communication* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), 81–87; Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

[8] See, for example, Noam Chomsky, *Language and Mind* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1975).

[9] For an historical overview of *discourse* in communication, see Hedwig te Molder, "Discourse Theory and Analysis," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 312–17.

[10] For a summary of nonverbal communication in communication, see Vijai N. Giri, "Nonverbal Communication, in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen Littlejohn and Karen Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 690–94. For broad overviews of research in this field, see Mark L. Knapp and Judith Hall, *Nonverbal Communication in Human Interaction* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1992); Mark L. Knapp, "An Historical Overview of Nonverbal Research," in *The Sage Handbook of Nonverbal Communication,*" ed. Valerie Manusov and Miles L. Patterson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 3–19.

[11] Randall Harrison, *Beyond Words: An Introduction to Nonverbal Communication* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 24–25. For a discussion of limitations to nonverbal communication within the semiotic tradition, see Miles L. Patterson and Valerie Manusov, "Nonverbal Communication: Basic Issues and Future Prospects," in *The Sage Handbook of Nonverbal Communication*, ed. Valerie Manusov and Miles L. Patterson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 522–32.

[12] Ekman and Friesen's major works include *Emotion in the Human Face: Guidelines for Research and an Integration of Findings* (New York: Pergamon, 1972); and *Unmasking the Face* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975).

[13] Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen, "Hand Movements," *Journal of Communication* 22 (1972): 353.

[14] The distinction between biologically determined and socially determined signal systems is explored by Laura K. Guerrero and Kory Floyd, *Nonverbal Communication in Close Relationships* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2006); and Ross Buck and C. Arthur VanLear, "Verbal and Nonverbal Communication: Distinguishing Symbolic, Spontaneous, and Pseudo-Spontaneous Nonverbal Behavior," *Journal of Communication* 52 (2002): 522–41.

[15] For a brief discussion of emotion in communication, see Peter A. Andersen, "Emotion and Communication," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 332–36.

[16] Judee K. Burgoon, "Nonverbal Signals," in *Handbook of Interpersonal* Communication, 2nd ed., ed. Mark L. Knapp and Gerald R. Miller (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994), 232; and Judee K. Bur-

goon, Laura K. Guerrero, and Valerie Manusov, "Nonverbal Signals," in *The Sage Handbook of Interpersonal Communication*, 4th ed., ed. Mark L. Knapp and John A. Daly (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 239–80.

[17] For a more complete exploration of the automatic nature of nonverbal communication, see Jessica L. Lakin, "Automatic Cognitive Processes and Nonverbal Communication," in *The Sage Handbook of Nonverbal Communication*, ed. Valerie Manusov and Miles L. Patterson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006), 59–77.

[18] See for example, Judee K. Burgoon, "Relational Message Interpretations of Touch, Conversational Distance, and Posture," *Journal of Nonverbal Communication* 15 (1991): 233–59; Judee K. Burgoon, "Interpersonal Expectations, Expectancy Violations, and Emotional Communication," *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 12 (1993): 30–48; Judee K. Burgoon, Michelle L. Johnson, and Pamela T. Koch, "The Nature and Measurement of Interpersonal Dominance," *Communication Monographs* 65 (1998): 309–35; Judee K. Burgoon and Timothy R. Levine, "Advances in Deception Detection," in *New Directions in Interpersonal Communication Research*, ed. Sandi W. Smith and Steven R. Wilson (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 201–20.

[19] Miles L. Patterson, "Reflections on Historical Trends and Prospects in Contemporary Nonverbal Research," *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 38 (2014): 171–80. For examples of Patterson's work, see Miles L. Patterson, "Compensation in Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors: A Review," *Sociometry* 36 (1973): 237–52; Miles L. Patterson, "An Arousal Model of Interpersonal Intimacy," *Psychological Review* 83 (1976): 237–52; Miles L. Patterson, "A Parallel Process Model of Nonverbal Communication," *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 19 (1995): 3–29; Miles L. Patterson, *More Than Words: The Power of Nonverbal Communication* (Barcelona, Spain: Editorial Aresta, 2011).

[20] Patterson, "Reflections on Historical Trends and Prospects, 177.

[21] Yuko Minowa, Pauline Maclaran, and Lorna Stevens, (2014) "Visual Representations of Violent Women," *Visual Communication Quarterly* (2014): 210–22.

[22] For a good recent overview of these areas, see Mark P. Orbe, "Phenomenology," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 749–51; and James A. Anderson, *Communication Theory: Epistemological Foundations* (New York: Guilford, 1996).

[23] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception,* trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974), viii. For an excellent general discussion of phenomenology, see also Michael J. Hyde, "Transcendental Philosophy and Human Communication," in *Interpersonal Communication,* ed. Joseph J. Pilotta (Washington, DC: Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology, 1982), 15–34.

[24] Stanley Deetz, "Words Without Things: Toward a Social Phenomenology of Language," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59 (1973): 40–51.

[25] Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology,* trans. W. R. B. Gibson (New York: Collier, 1962); and Edmund Husserl, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy,* trans. Quentin Lauer (New York: Harper & Row, 1965). For a brief summary of Husserl's ideas, see Zygmunt Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).

[26] Merleau-Ponty's most important work is *Phenomenology of Perception,* originally published in 1945. See also Pat Arneson, *Perspectives on Philosophy of Communication* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2007), 137–62; Richard L. Lanigan, *Phenomenology of Communication: Merleau-Ponty's Thematics in Communicology and Semiology* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1988).

[27] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time,* trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962); Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language,* trans. Peter D. Hertz (New York: Harper & Row, 1971); Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics,* trans. Ralph Manheim (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1959). For a secondary treatment, see Arneson, *Perspectives on Philosophy of Communication*, 21–44.

[28] Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics,* 13.

[29] Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth: Texas University Press, 1976); John B. Thompson, ed. and trans., *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action, and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[30] Barbara Warnick, "A Ricoeurian Approach to Rhetorical Criticism," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 51 (1987): 227–44.

[31] Edward Sapir, *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1921); Benjamin L. Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, ed. John B. Carroll (New York: Wiley, 1956). For a brief overview, see Thomas M. Steinfatt, "Linguistic Relativity," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 605–06.

[32] Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality,* 134.

[33] For a summary of Kramarae's theory, see "Cheris Kramarae," in *Feminist Rhetorical Theories,* by Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 1999), 33–68.

[34] Cheris Kramarae, "Gender and Dominance," *Communication Yearbook 15*, ed. Stanley A. Deetz (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992), 470.

[35] Kramarae discusses the male construction and bias of language in *Women and Men Speaking: Frameworks for Analysis* (Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1981), 33–51.

[36] Edwin Ardener, "Some Outstanding Problems in the Analysis of Events" (paper delivered at the Association of Social Anthropologists' Decennial Conference, 1973); "The 'Problem' Revisited," in *Perceiving Women,* ed. Shirley Ardener (London: Malaby, 1975), 1–27; Shirley Ardener, *Defining Females: The Nature of Women in Society* (New York: Wiley, 1978). This theory is explored in some detail by Dale Spender, *Man Made Language* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), 76–105. For the proceedings of a recent conference that revisited muted group theory, see "Muted Group Colloquium Excerpts," *Women and Language* 28 (2005): 50–72.

[37] Karen A. Foss and Sonja K. Foss, *Women Speak: The Eloquence of Women's Lives* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 1991). For another example of an approach that draws on the experiences of women, see the work on feminine style by Bonnie J. Dow and Mari Boor Tonn, "'Feminine Style' and Political Judgment in the Rhetoric of Ann Richards," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 79 (1993): 286–302.

[38] For an analysis of the Mothers de Plaza de Mayo, see Karen A. Foss and Kathy L. Domenici, "Haunting Argentina: Synecdoche in the Protests of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 87 (2001): 237–58.

[39] Cheris Kramarae and Paula A. Treichler with Ann Russo, eds., *A Feminist Dictionary,* (Boston: Pandora, 1985).

[40] For foundational work, see Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966); and Alfred Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World,* trans. George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967). For a summary, see Mariaelena Bartesaghi and Kenneth N. Cissna, "Social Construction," in *21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook,* vol. 1, ed. William F. Eadie (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 128–36. The name *social constructionism* was given to the movement by Kenneth J. Gergen, "The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology," *American Psychologist* 40 (1985): 266–75.

[41] Anne Maydan Nicotera, "Constitutive View of Communication, in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 175–79. For an overview of social construction, see Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz, "Social Construction of Reality," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 891–94. For a discussion of the implications of social construction for teaching, research, and practice, see *Socially Constructing Communication*, ed. Gloria J. Galanes and Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton, 2009).

[42] Jonathan Potter, *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1966), 22.

[43] Kim Hong Nguyen, "Hearing What We See: Censoring 'Nigga,' Vernaculars, and African American Agentic Subjects," *Howard Journal of Communications* 24 (2013): 293–308.

[44] For a brief summary of constructivism, see Milton Campos, "Constructivism," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 179–83. For a summary of the theory and its various branches and applications, see Anne Maydan Nicotera, "The Constructivist Theory of Delia, Clark, and Associates," in *Watershed Research Traditions in Human Communication Theory,* ed. Donald P. Cushman and Branislav Kovačić (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), 45–66; Jesse G. Delia, Barbara J. O'Keefe, and Daniel J. O'Keefe, "The Constructivist Approach to Communication," in *Human Communication Theory: Comparative Essays,* ed. Frank E. X. Dance (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 147–91.

[45] George Kelly, *The Psychology of Personal Constructs* (New York: North, 1955).

[46] The idea of cognitive complexity originally was developed by Walter H. Crockett, "Cognitive Complexity and Impression Formation," in *Progress in Experimental Personality Research,* vol. 2, ed. Brendan A. Maher (New York: Academic, 1965), 47–90.

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[49] John Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 22. See also François Cooren, "The Contribution of Speech Act Theory to the Analysis of Conversation: How Pre-sequences Work," in *Handbook of Language and Social Interaction*, ed. Kristine L. Fitch and Robert E. Sanders (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), 21–40.

[50] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953); J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962). For a brief summary, see Stephen W. Littlejohn, "Speech Act Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 918–20. For a contemporary discussion and critique of speech act theory, see Andrew Munro, "Reading Austin Rhetorically," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 46 (2013): 22–43.

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[52] For a brief summary, see Stephen W. Littlejohn, *"Coordinated Management of Meaning," in Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 200–03. For a detailed presentation of the theory, see W. Barnett Pearce, *Making Social Worlds: A Communication Perspective* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), and W. Barnett Pearce and Vernon Cronen, *Communication, Action, and Meaning* (New York: Praeger, 1980).

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[54] Mark P. Orbe and Sakile K. Camara, "Defining Discrimination Across Cultural Groups: Exploring the [Un-]Coordinated Management of Meaning, *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 34 (2010): 283–93.

[55] Orbe and Camara, "Defining Discrimination Across Cultural Groups," 288.

[56] Orbe and Camara, "Defining Discrimination Across Cultural Groups," 290.

[57] See, for example, Kathleen M. German, "Dramatism and Dramatistic Pentad," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 320–22; Kathleen M. German, "Identification," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 491–92; Herbert W. Simons and Trevor Melia, eds., *The Legacy of Kenneth Burke* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

[58] This distinction between action and motion is discussed in Kenneth Burke, "Dramatism," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 7, ed. David L. Sills (New York: Macmillan/Free Press, 1968), 445; and Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Methods* (Berkeley: University of California, 1966), 28, 53, 63, and 67.

[59] For Burke's notion of identification and division, see Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California, 1969), 21–23.

[60] Burke's notion of form is discussed in *Language as Symbolic Action,* 486.

[61] Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, 174.

[62] For an excellent and humorous summary of Burke's theory of guilt and language, see Kenneth Burke, "Prologue in Heaven," in *The Rhetoric of Religion: Studies in Logology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 273–316.

[63] Kenneth Burke, "Poem," in *the Legacy of Kenneth Burke,* ed. Herbert W. Simons and Trevor Melia (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 263. See also Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action*, 16–17.

[64] Kara Shultz, "Every Implanted Child a Star (and Some Other Failures): Guilt and Shame in the Cochlear Implant Debates," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 86 (2000): 251–75.

[65] Barbara J. O'Keefe, "The Logic of Message Design: Individual Differences in Reasoning About Communication," *Communication Monographs* 55 (1988): 80–103; and Barbara J. O'Keefe, "Vari-

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[70] Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). See also Daena J. Goldsmith, "Politeness Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 754–57.

[71] For more information on face theory, see Kathy Domenici and Stephen W. Littlejohn, *Facework: Bridging Theory and Practice* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006).

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[74] Harris, "Being Politically Impolite," 465.

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[77] Foss and Foss, *Inviting Transformation*.

[78] Deborah Tannen, *The Argument Culture: Stopping America's War of Words* (New York: Ballantine, 1998), 3.

[79] For an explanation of these conditions, see Foss and Foss, *Inviting Transformation*, 39–44.

5

The Medium

We have myriad choices of the medium or channel for communicating with others, including face-to-face communication, telephone, social media, and mass media. Face-to-face remains a key preference as a means of communicating, and yet we are living in what Marshall McLuhan calls the "global village"; modern communication media make it possible for millions of people throughout the world to be in touch with nearly any place on the globe. This chapter introduces theories of various forms of mediated communication including television, print, and Web 2.0. *Web 2.0* is the development of the World Wide Web from a static information-sharing device to dynamic, interactive, and user-generated content.[1] These forms of media can be generally categorized into traditional/mass media and new/social media.

Central to any study of mediated communication are the media themselves.[2] Media organizations and individual users distribute messages that affect and reflect the cultures of society, and they provide information simultaneously to large heterogeneous audiences, smaller homogeneous audiences, and individuals—all of which makes media part of society's institutional forces.

Various metaphors have been created to capture different aspects of media. For example, Joshua Meyrowitz presents three metaphors that identify major ways of thinking about media—medium as *environment*, medium as *vessel*, and medium as *language*.[3] The first metaphor, "medium-as-environment," is the idea that media-determined sensory information pervades our milieu and arrives with varying levels of speed, directionality, interactivity, physical requirements, and ease of learning. Media environments shape human experiences in significant and often unconscious ways. The second metaphor—"medium-as-vessel"—is the idea that media are more or less neutral containers for content. The final metaphor is "medium-as-language"; each medium has its own structural elements or grammar, like a language. Print media, for example, have page design, font style, and so on. Other media may have various compositional elements such as visuals and sound that affect consumers in various ways. The effects of a medium rely in large measure on these structural features. This chapter explores theories that incorporate various aspects of these metaphors.

Chapter 6 also explores aspects of these metaphors as they relate to humans communicating with technology.

More specifically, this chapter introduces three topics exploring the construction, content, and use of various media in our communication with others. First, we introduce the nature of the media itself and the production of media by organizations and individuals and how that influences society and institutions. Second, we describe the content and effects of media. Finally, we explore the motivations for and consumption of media, including channel use. In this latter section, the role of generator and/or active receiver and user of media is given center stage. The chapter map (pp. 179–180) outlines the theories and the three topical areas presented here.

The Medium and Production

A large body of scholarship explores the nature of the medium and how the production of media shapes culture and society. Without question, structural features of various media, apart from media content, affect how we think about and respond to the world. This thesis is developed in the theories summarized in this section—theories that examine the fixed features of media and their effects on society depending on how they are produced.[4] Four theories are described in this section: (1) medium theory; (2) new medium theory; (3) media ecology and mediatization; and (4) media and cultural production.

Medium Theory

Marshall McLuhan probably is best known for calling attention to the importance of media as media. McLuhan, a well-known figure in the study of popular culture in the 1960s, received attention because of his unusual writing style and his startling and thought-provoking ideas.[5] Although some of the specifics of McLuhan's theory are rejected by mainstream media theory, his general thesis has received widespread acceptance and renewed interest with the advent of Web 2.0: media, apart from whatever content is transmitted, impact individuals and society. This idea in its various forms is what we mean by "medium theory." Television affects you regardless of what you watch. The Internet impacts society, regardless of what sites you visit. Personal media (e.g., iPods and smart phones) affect you regardless of what musical selections you make or apps that you download and use.

McLuhan was not the first to write about this idea. Indeed, his ideas were greatly influenced by the work of his mentor, Harold Adams Innis, who taught that communication media are the essence of civilization and that history is directed by the predominant media of each age.[6] For McLuhan and Innis, media are extensions of the human mind, so the predominant media in use biases any historical period.

Ancient heavy media such as parchment, clay, or stone are durable and therefore *time binding*. Something written on stone, for example, is unchanging and will last a long time, but it is hard to move and so has little effect on people across vast expanses of space. Because they facilitate communication from one generation to another and do not change much, time-binding media are biased

toward tradition. In contrast, *space-binding* media such as paper are light and easy to transport, so they facilitate communication from one location to another, fostering empire building, large bureaucracies, and military expansion and control. Written media, which are spatially arranged, produce a different kind of culture. The space-binding effect of writing produces interests in political authority and the growth of empires across geography.

McLuhan's thesis is that people adapt to their environment through a certain balance or ratio of the senses, and the primary medium of the age brings out a particular sense ratio, thereby affecting perception.[7] McLuhan sees every medium as an extension of some human faculty, exaggerating that sense: "The wheel . . . is an extension of the foot. The book is an extension of the eye. . . . Clothing, an extension of the skin. . . . Electric circuitry, an extension of the central nervous system."[8] Donald Ellis presents a set of propositions representing a contemporary perspective on the basic ideas of Innis and McLuhan.[9] Ellis notes that the predominant media at any given time will shape behavior and thought. As media change, so do the ways in which we think, manage information, and relate to one another.

From the Source . . .

Some time ago I began to realize that the media are like the air we breathe: unseen, but necessary, and taken for granted. I became interested in how these taken-for-granted media influenced our perceptions of the world and the ways we interact. By writing about media and social structures such as class and ethnicity, I was able to get beyond the simple transmission model of communication and realize that new media create new groups—groups that exist beyond the sphere of everyday encounters. As Meyrowitz correctly observed, the media alter our "sense of place" and hence our orientation to the world.

Donald Ellis

There are sharp differences among oral, written, and electronic media, each with different effects in terms of how we interact with each medium. Oral communication is highly malleable and organic. Oral messages are immediate and ephemeral, so that individuals and groups must keep information in their minds and pass it on through speech. Because everyday experience cannot really be separated from the oral medium of transmission, life and knowledge cannot be separated. The telling and retelling of stories over time privilege narrative as a form of communication and require group memory as the "holder" of society's knowledge. This can lead to a collective consciousness in which little distinction is made between self and group. Group identification and cohesiveness are high when oral media predominate.

Writing, and especially the advent of printing, led to profound changes in society. When you can write something down, you can separate it from the moment. You can manipulate it, change it, edit it, and recast it. In other words, you can "act on" information and knowledge in a way that is not possible in the

oral tradition. This leads to a separation of knowledge (what is known) from the knower (who knows it). Those who can read and write have special status, so that formal education takes on an important role. Knowledge, then, becomes objectified and can assume the status of truth, and individuals and groups can be divided among those who "have" the truth and those who do not. Further, information can be stored, or saved, which makes literacy a tool of conservation. Importance is assigned to that which is "stored" in written language.

Another shift occurred when electronic media came to the fore. Electronic media such as television can be immediate and ephemeral, but they are not tied to a particular place. Broadcast media extend your perception beyond where you are at any given moment, creating what McLuhan called the "global village." At the same time, like print, electronic media allow information to be stored. Because they are more readily available than print, electronic media create an information explosion, and a great competition occurs among various media to be heard and seen. Information in electronic media is sold like a commodity, which creates pressure for information to be attractive. Knowledge in the electronic age changes rapidly, and we become aware of different versions of truth. The politics of interest and a commodity-based economy separate people by accentuating their differences.

If you were a member of a primarily oral culture, differences would be minimal, and decisions would be made collectively based on the wisdom of tradition as it has been passed down generation to generation. If you were a member of a primarily print-oriented culture, decisions would rely on "truth" stored in documents, and those who had access to information would have great influence as a class in society's decision making. But today, you are likely a member of a primarily electronic culture in which you identify with interest groups that vie against one another. You hear many voices at once, and your challenge is to integrate these in some way.

Still another shift—the rise of the Internet and related technologies—social media and computer-mediated communication (CMC)—has created yet additional forms of reality. These are generally referred to today as "new media."[10] Although McLuhan and his mentors began to identify various media environments and their potential effects, the stark shift from broadcast to interactive media with the rise of the Internet brought media environments to the fore, with a renewed interest in medium theory among communication scholars. The next theory explores new medium theory as it relates to Web 2.0 and other CMC.

New Medium Theory

In 1990, Mark Poster published his landmark book, *The Second Media Age*, which heralded a new period in which interactive technologies and network communications, particularly the Internet, would transform society.[11] The idea of the second media age began in the 1980s and introduced important changes in media theory. The first alteration loosened the concept of "media" from primarily "mass" communication to a variety of media ranging from very broad to quite personal in scope. The personal computer, tablets, and smart phones were a big part of this change.[12] Second, the concept drew attention to new forms of media use that could range from individualized information and knowledge acquisition to interaction. Indeed, it is now said that we live in a "network soci-

ety."[13] Third, the thesis of the second media age brought medium theory from the relative obscurity of the 1960s to renewed popularity that continues today. The power of media in and of themselves came back into focus, including a renewed interest in characteristics of dissemination and broadcast media.[14]

David Holmes explains differences between the first and second media ages.[15] The first media age was characterized by (1) centralized production (one-to-many); (2) one-way communication; (3) state control, for the most part; (4) the reproduction of social stratification and inequality through the media; (5) fragmented mass audiences; and (6) the shaping of social consciousness. The second media age, in contrast, can be described as: (1) decentralized and user-generated (many to many or many to few); (2) two-way; (3) beyond state control; (4) democratizing; (5) promoting individual consciousness; and (6) individually oriented.

Further, Holmes explains there are perhaps two dominant views of the differences between the first media age, with its emphasis on broadcast, and the second, with its emphasis on networks. These are labelled the *social interaction* approach and the *social integration* approach respectively. The *social interaction approach* distinguishes media in terms of how close they come to the model of face-to-face interaction. Older forms of broadcast-oriented media emphasized transmission of information, which reduces the possibility of interaction. Such media are thought of primarily as informational and therefore mediate reality for the consumer. New media, in contrast, are more interactive and create a new sense of personalized communication.[16]

A key advocate of the social interaction point of view is Pierre Lévy, author of *Cyberculture*.[17] Lévy sees the World Wide Web as an open, flexible, and dynamic information environment, which allows human beings to develop a new orientation to knowledge and thereby engage in a more interactive, community-based, democratic world of mutual sharing and empowerment. The Internet provides virtual meeting places that expand social worlds, create new possibilities for knowledge, and facilitate sharing of perspectives worldwide.[18]

Of course, new media are not the same as face-to-face interaction, but they provide new forms of interaction that bring us back into personal contact in ways that older media could not do. For example, we can share pictures and exchange messages on Facebook. At the same time, this communication is still mediated because it is going through a device and encourages us to eschew face-to-face communication in favor of mediated communication. For example, a friend of ours described how his son was having a Skype conversation with two friends. Rather than talking to each other, they were texting each other. These interactive media, then, have advantages and disadvantages for communication and create dilemmas for us. New media, for example, may provide openness and flexibility of use, and yet we rely on them for difficult conversations that would be better suited to talking in person (e.g., managing a conflict with your boss or breaking up with your girlfriend). New media greatly widen choice, but choice is not always a virtue when we need structure and guidance. Diversity is one of the great values of new media, but it can also lead to division and separation. New media may allow us flexibility in how we use time, but they also create new time demands.[19] For example, you can now check your email at any time of day, but you might have to spend a couple of hours daily checking email—which was not the case 20 years ago.

The second way in which media are distinguished is in terms of *social integration*. This approach characterizes media not in terms of information, interaction, or dissemination but in terms of ritual—how people use media as a way of creating community. Media are not primarily an instrument of information nor a means for achieving self-interest but rather a means that allow us to come together in some form of community and offer us a sense of belonging. This happens by using media as a shared ritual, which may or may not involve actual interaction. According to the social-integration view, interaction is not a necessary component of social integration through ritual. We interact not so much with other people but with the medium itself. Use of media is a self-contained ritual that has meaning in and of itself. For example, you might set *Washington Post Online* as your home page and check it several times a day—not because you want to know the news but because you have ritualized the action. Face-to-face interaction, then, no longer is the baseline for comparison of communication media.

Every medium has potential for ritual and integration, but media accomplish this function in different ways. With older, broadcast-oriented media, such as television and books, centralized sources produce situations and characters with which audiences can identify. Yet broadcast media allow for little interaction other than controlling the remote or deciding what stories to read or watch. You listen and view, but media do not talk back, or interact, with you.

In contrast, we use new media as a shared ritual that makes us feel part of something bigger than ourselves. Media are ritualized because they become habitual and take on values that are larger than media use itself. A smart phone is indeed useful for keeping track of and exchanging information with others, but it is much more. It makes us feel that we are part of a social community of users; we identify with something that transcends ourselves. Maybe this is why certain people love to check their email, Facebook, or Instagram on a smart phone while traveling along a country road in France on vacation.

Caren August and James Liu conducted a study of race talk online to illustrate how various forms of Web 2.0 media shape the nature of interaction.[20] They examined threaded comments on YouTube videos related to a news story about two race-related incidents involving Paul Henry, a New Zealand television personality. Henry is a controversial figure who first sparked outrage and debate when he asked the Prime Minister of New Zealand if the next Governor General of New Zealand would "look and sound like a Kiwi." The prior Governor General was New Zealand born of Indian decent. The second incident involved commentary about a minister in India whose name is Sheila Dikshit. Henry commented, "and it is so appropriate because she's Indian, we should call her a dick in shit." More than one thousand complaints were received by the Broadcasting Standards in New Zealand about these incidents, and Henry ultimately was forced to resign.

August and Liu completed a thematic analysis of the threaded conversations about the Henry incidents. They found that there were high levels of obscenities, overt and covert racist comments, denial of racism, and high levels of hostility as part of the YouTube conversations. There were almost no examples of resolution of arguments, but rather what the authors described as point scoring. Further, conversations were tangential and framed by hyper-low context com-

munication (very direct), combined with brief comments leading to interpretive ambiguity. The authors contrasted these posts with news-story posts, which lacked obscenity and overt hostility. The authors explain that these findings support medium theory in that the type of conversation on YouTube would not happen in other contexts. For example, on Facebook, users would be removed from the site if they included obscenity. Face-to-face conversation would likely lead to a fight if it followed this framework. Thus, certain aspects of technology enable certain types of conversations that construct and shape perspectives and relationships in society. The next theory develops the idea of medium theory further to explain how the structure of media shape institutions in society.

Media Ecology and Mediatization

Even before the rise of the Internet, the ideas of McLuhan and other medium theorists inspired a body of scholarship known as *media ecology.* This term was coined by Neil Postman in 1970; he was interested in the ways that the media of communication "affect human perception, understanding, feeling, and value."[21] Postman chose the word *ecology* because "it implies the study of environments: their structure, content, and impact on people."[22] Just as physical environments are ecological, Postman argued, so are media environments. He claimed technological innovations, like those in any system, inescapably have unpredictable, far-ranging consequences:

> One significant change generates total change. If you remove the caterpillars from a given habitat, you are not left with the same environment minus caterpillars: you have a new environment, and you have reconstituted the conditions of survival. . . . This is how the ecology of media works as well. A new technology does not add or subtract something. It changes everything. In the year 1500, fifty years after the printing press was invented, we did not have old Europe plus the printing press. We had a different Europe. After television, the United States was not America plus television; television gave a new coloration to every political campaign, to every home, to every school, to every church, to every industry.[23]

Aspects of media ecology, then, build on the foundational claims of medium theory. Chief among them is the idea that the inherent predispositions, or "biases," of a given medium are more important than the content of any particular message communicated through that medium. Indeed these biases affect the very fabric of the culture in which the medium is present. As Postman famously argued when television was the dominant medium (as it was in the global West during the late twentieth century), television's "bias" is toward entertainment; thus, all of the culture's other institutions prioritize entertainment as well. Politicians, clergy members, teachers, and business executives—not to mention news anchors—are judged on their ability to amuse as much as, if not more than, their success in accomplishing the substantive tasks expected of leaders in their fields.[24] Extending this line of thinking to twenty-first century concerns, contemporary media ecologists would say that since the bias of digital media is toward instantaneous availability of information, all other cultural spheres must now also provide immediate answers or instant gratification of some kind or be found wanting. As Postman foresaw as early as 1992, when technology gains "a

monopoly over the culture, efficiency is the only value universally held, and no institutions remain unaffected by the technological imperative."[25]

Concerns about the effects of media on institutions—as opposed to the effects of specific message content on audiences (a topic covered in the next section of this chapter)—are also the focus of scholars who study *mediatization*.[26] Whereas media ecologists take *media* as the starting point and focus of their analyses—typically asking how a given medium operates and, in so doing, how it shapes a culture's institutions, values, behaviors, and ways of thinking—scholars of mediatization start with the *institutions* themselves. They explore how institutions have changed and how their workings have been redefined—consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally—as a result of both (1) the incorporation of media processes and priorities into their own everyday functioning; and (2) the simultaneous ascendance of media to the status of autonomous, independent, and powerful institutions in their own right. Stig Hjarvard states that, for this reason, mediatization should be understood as a double-sided process. On the one hand, media "emerges as an independent institution with a logic of its own to which other social institutions have to accommodate. On the other hand, media simultaneously become an integrated part of other institutions like politics, work, family, and religion as more and more of these institutional activities are performed through both interactive and mass media."[27] Thus, mediatization scholars claim that the media no longer are in the background, merely reporting on, explaining, or critiquing other pillars of society: the media themselves comprise their own pillar while at the same time serving as a central structural component of each other pillar.

From the Source . . .

Media studies have for obvious reasons focused on processes of "mediation," i.e., the use of media for communicative purposes. This way of understanding the influence of media gradually appeared insufficient to me. In view of the spread of media to still more societal contexts such as politics, education, and family, we must also look at the consequences of the very integration of media in these contexts. "Mediatization" theory is an attempt to grasp how media are implicated in cultural and social change and come to condition, but not determine human interaction.

Stig Hjarvard

One of the more powerful concepts found in mediatization studies is that of media logic, an idea introduced by David Altheide and Robert Snow in the late 1970s.[28] As some mediatization scholars apply the term, *media logic* refers to the practices, priorities, and values of the media—such as a focus on image, performance, publicity, and appealing to audiences—that gradually become incorporated, usually unconsciously, into the daily routines of those who work in other institutions. As a result of this normalization of media priorities and values, institutions become *mediatized*.

Perhaps the institution that has become most visibly mediatized—and the one studied by the greatest number of mediatization scholars—is politics. In the twenty-first century, national-level political contests such as presidential campaigns are increasingly impersonal. Media serve as the most important, if not the only, sources of information for citizens in a democracy, and at the same time, media serve as the main channels of communication between politicians and citizens, as well as between politicians and other players in the political world (party officials, campaign managers, fund-raisers, etc.).[29] In other words, politics is highly mediated: it is a sphere in which communication takes place more through media than face-to-face.

Politics has become almost entirely mediatized. Due to the fact that "the media hold the key to the public sphere and can have a major influence on public opinion formation, no political actor or institution can afford not to take the media into consideration."[30] Thus, the media affect not only voter opinions, beliefs, and actions but also have permeated the very "structures and processes of political decisionmaking and political communication."[31] No contemporary candidate or sitting president makes a move without considering how it will be covered by the media; indeed, (the attempt to get) media coverage is the primary motivation for the development of many political events. For this reason, a central component of any campaign apparatus or presidential administration is its own internal media team, tasked with managing the politician's "brand image," securing television appearances, and transmitting and shaping media messages—tasks that were simply not a part of nineteenth and early twentieth-century politicking. Furthermore, the main reason-for-being of a campaign's fund-raising apparatus is to secure the money necessary to buy media advertising time. Thus, to run a twenty-first century political campaign is to run a media(tized) campaign; once elected, an office holder quickly comes to realize that her key administrative responsibilities include maintaining an effective internal media operation and engaging in a continuous struggle with external media organizations.

The effects of mediatization can be seen in realms other than politics, of course. In recent decades, scholars have explored the mediatization of religion, business, law, fashion, sports, science, education, art, homelessness, memory, climate change research, and even death.[32] But one does not need to be (in) an institution to experience the impact of mediatization. Contemporary friendships—and even our use of the word *friend*—are increasingly both mediated (they take place through communication technologies as much as, or instead of, in-person interaction) and mediatized—permeated and often defined by media presence and use. Even when friends are physically together, social interactions can center around media: going to movies, watching Netflix, or playing video games. And even when no larger screen is the object of friends' shared attention, their mobile devices are ever-present, often diverting each friend's focus toward their individual screens and away from the living, breathing, copresent companion.[33]

The study of mediatization—like that of medium theory and media ecology—sheds light on what Friedrich Krotz has called meta-processes: social, cultural, and institutional processes that shape other social, cultural, and institutional processes.[34] *Meta-processes* are gradual, cumulative, long-lasting, and broadly based; as a result, their effects often go unnoticed—in the short term, at least—

and are difficult to quantify. However, many of the growing number of scholars who study mediatization have offered increasingly convincing arguments that it is, and will continue to be, a meta-process as sweeping and as powerful as the others with which it is inextricably intertwined: globalization, digitization, and individualization. The next theory moves from the influence of media on institutions to the role of media as producing cultural elements in society.[35]

Media and Cultural Production

Pierre Bourdieu was a French sociologist who developed the theory of cultural production to examine how mainstream and alternative media produce content for and influence the culture of society. His original theory was developed to explain art and literary works; he extended it to include media—especially television and journalism—in the 1990s.[36] The theory centers on the idea of the "charismatic ideology of the creation," or the ideology behind the person or institution creating the product.[37]

The theory of cultural production has four key constructs: habitus, capital, field, and autonomy. *Habitus* is a person's schemes and dispositions for making sense of the world. Habitus is developed through socialization and is influenced by social setting, socioeconomics, and culture. It includes the ideology or worldview that is behind a specific cultural production. However, capital, field, and autonomy are more important elements for media and cultural production.

Capital consists of the resources that people have to produce media (or any other type of cultural product). There are three types of capital: (1) economic; (2) symbolic; and (3) cultural. *Economic capital* is the financial resources needed to produce media or received from the production of media. *Symbolic capital* is the prestige or honor associated with production. *Cultural capital* is the skills and knowledge associated with production. Symbolic and cultural capital are key elements of cultural production and are often seen as high-culture (high prestige and quality). High-culture (e.g., an art show or play) is contrasted with low-culture (e.g., a popular sit-com).

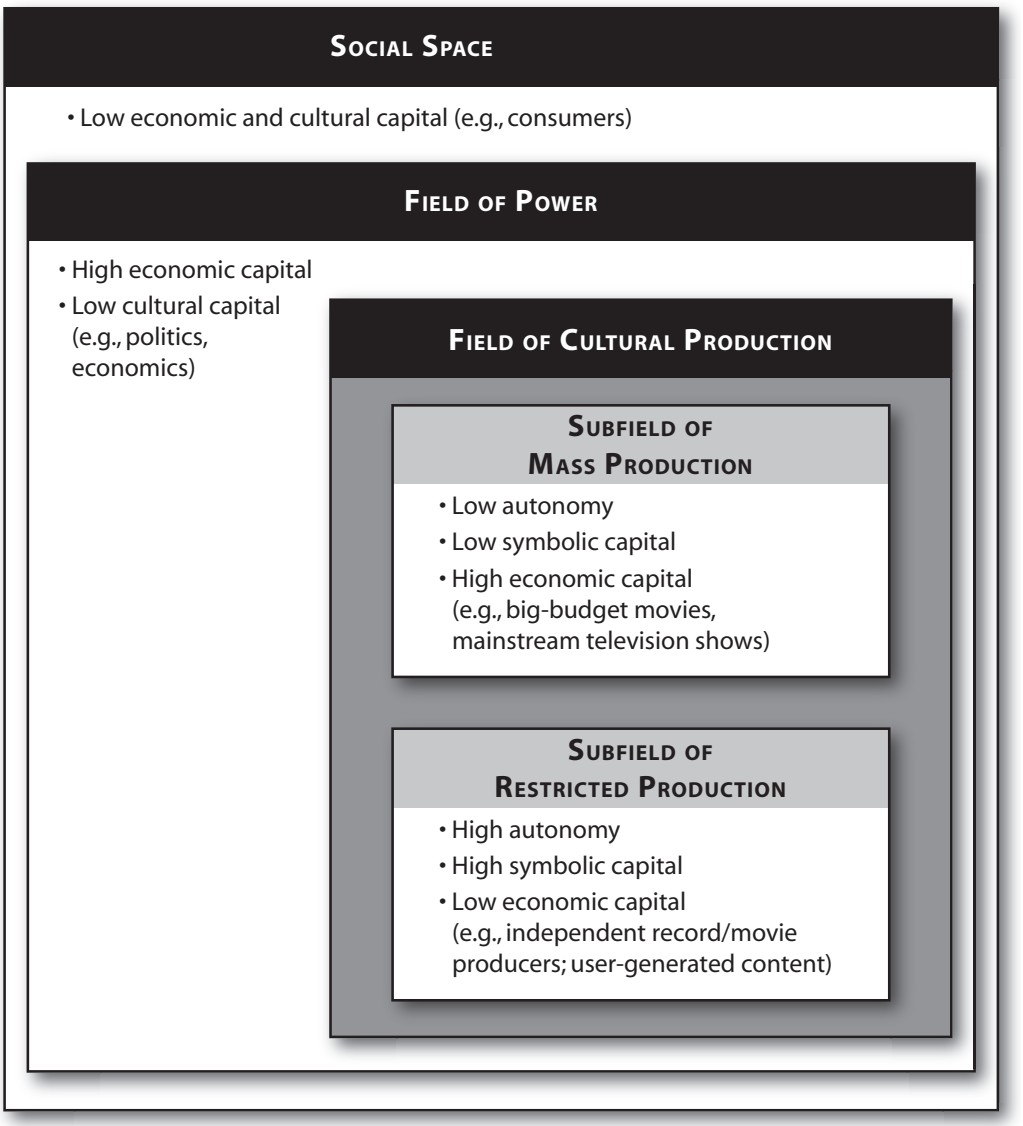
Fields are the various interrelated positions in a society that are determined by the distribution of capital. Some of the key fields are economic, political, educational, and intellectual, and all of these fields involve institutions that are key elements of society. For example, the educational field includes universities and other educational institutions. For media, two key fields are the small-scale production (or *restricted production*) and large-scale production (*mass production*). The restricted production field includes independent record labels and film producers; the mass production field includes major record labels and film producers. The economic and political fields together form the field of power. This field includes governmental organizations and banks. Together, all of these fields are organized around relations of power and status. That is, some fields have resources and power and thus the ability to influence other fields. For example, banks and governmental agencies can provide financial resources to media producers to create content.

Autonomy is the degree of independence of a field from other fields. Autonomy is an important element for cultural production because the more independent a media production is from the field of power, the more likely it is able to produce high-culture (or high symbolic and cultural capital). However, it is also

less associated with economic capital. Mass production has lower levels of symbolic and cultural capital because it has low autonomy; that is, mass media depends on consumers and larger institutions to buy or use its products. Similarly, the field of power has high levels of economic capital and low levels of cultural capital. Figure 5.1 displays a model of the field of cultural production.[38]

David Hesmondhalgh is a British media scholar who critiques and expands Bourdieu's theory to illustrate how it can better account for mass production.[39] First, he suggests that mass producers can develop high-culture products for

Figure 5.1 Model of the Theory of Cultural Production



elite audiences because the directors and producers are given independence. The mass producers recognize that there is an important audience for high-culture products and that low ratings do not necessarily discourage production. For example, a television show like *Orange is the New Black* comes from a mass producer and yet is critically acclaimed. Second, he notes that Bourdieu underappreciated the importance of the consumer and the importance of market research for cultural production. The economics of media mean that there must be an audience. The fact that producers pay attention to these audiences does not mean that only low-culture, mass-produced products are the result. Hesmondhalgh argues that more attention needs to be paid to the consumer/producer relationship than is afforded in Bourdieu's theory. Finally, he posits that critical theory with its emphasis on control and autonomy is a good blend for the theory of cultural production. Critical theory is discussed in more detail in chapter 12.

From the Source . . .

I'd been inspired by post-punk and its cultural transformations, and also by Pierre Bourdieu's hard-to-read but brilliant analyses in his book, *Distinction,* of what people from different social classes got out of art and culture. Yet Bourdieu's studies of cultural production (in his later book *The Rules of Art*) seemed not to recognize the complexities of commercial culture. It also seemed very pessimistic about attempts to intervene in its production. My article was about those problems, written at a time when Bourdieu was probably the most cited social scientist in the study of communication. But I'm actually still an admirer of his work.

David Hesmondhalgh

Natalia Levina and Manuel Arriaga use the theory of cultural production to introduce a new field of production—the *online field*.[40] They are interested in the social status production of a variety of user-generated content, including social media, online communities, blogs, and multiplayer games. They argue that producers and consumers of these media conjointly create power relations in the online field. For example, user-generated content sites depend on having a few people who are willing and have time to create content that other people find interesting. These individuals have status because they are able to create viral videos, for example. Further, the sites also depend on an audience who shares a common interest with the creators. Some producers and consumers have more online status than others—popular producers of content have both economic and cultural capital. Passive consumers have some economic but very little cultural capital. People who are mass raters (e.g., people who give a lot of reviews and are known to be good reviewers) of content have a moderate level of both. People who are unique producers of content may have cultural capital and little economic capital (not many follow them, and yet they are well respected). Overall, there is a dynamic between the producers and the consumers that shapes the capital each has. This study illustrates how Bourdieu's the-

ory has applicability to Web 2.0 user-generated content as well as mass-produced content.

In this section, we introduced various developments of medium theory and the impact particular kinds of media have had on individuals, institutions, the larger environment, and social structures at various times in history. We also illustrated the importance of media production of high- and low-culture and also user-generated content. The next major topic explores media content and its effects on people and how they perceive the world and behave in it.

Content and Effects

A large proportion of media theory has concentrated on individual effects of media. Parents wonder how television is affecting their children. Educators want to know if children will learn from films, videos, magazines, and television programs. Parents are uncertain about the consequences of cell phones and video games on children. There is a vast literature on how media affect us, and we can only take an aerial shot of it here by providing an overview of four theoretical programs within this tradition: (1) the effects tradition; (2) cultivation theory; (3) agenda setting theory; and (4) media framing theory.

The Effects Tradition

The theory of mass communication effects has undergone a curious evolution since the early twentieth century.[41] Researchers originally proposed the "magic bullet" or hypodermic-needle theory of communication effects and found that media were extremely powerful in shaping public opinion: media messages directly and heavily influenced individuals and did so in a uniform way.[42] According to this model, the cute gecko lizard in the Geico commercials would directly affect the number of policyholders in the general population.

However, Raymond Bauer observed that audiences are difficult to persuade and even called them "obstinate."[43] He denied the idea that a direct hypodermic-needle effect operates between communicator and audience and suggested instead that many variables interact to shape effects in various ways.[44] According to Bauer, you could not make the claim that Geico commercials will increase the number of policyholders in a simple and direct correlation. With his insistence that many factors are influential in the kind and amount of effects available from the media, Bauer foreshadowed much current work on media effects.

The hypodermic-needle theory was followed by the two-step flow hypothesis, which considered media effects to be minimal.[45] The *two-step flow hypothesis* posited that the media inform opinion leaders, who then influence others through interpersonal communication. You might get Geico car insurance because a friend recommends it—but not because of any direct influence from television advertising. You or your friend may be reminded about Geico being an option, but it is your friend's opinion that drives your decision.

Later, in the 1960s, research suggested that media effects are mediated by other variables and therefore are only moderate in strength. A Geico commercial might or might not influence you, depending on other variables, such as who you see the commercial with, how satisfied you are with your present car insur-

ance, and so on. Joseph Klapper articulated perhaps the best-known work—the reinforcement approach—on this limited-effects approach.[46] In surveying the literature on mass communication effects, Klapper argued that mass communication is not a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects; it is mediated by other variables. Thus, media are only one contributing cause. Media may play a reinforcement role rather than a direct causal relationship in terms of audience behavior. This kind of media reinforcement is thought of in terms of spirals of media choice and effect. The media choices you make reinforce your beliefs, attitudes, and values, which in turn affect the media choices you make. For example, a person with progressive, or liberal, political tendencies is more apt to read the *Huffington Post* than to listen to Rush Limbaugh's radio program. Huffington's content reinforces liberal views, which in turn reinforce media choice in a kind of positive feedback loop.[47]

Spiral models extend the selective exposure hypothesis, in which effects on an audience are mediated by selectivity, as well as group and interpersonal factors. This means that audience members are selective in their exposure to information.[48] In its simplest form, the hypothesis of selective exposure predicts that people in most circumstances will select information consistent with their attitudes. Compared with the magic bullet or hypodermic-needle theory, the reinforcement and selective-exposure theories viewed mass communication as more complicated than had previously been imagined. They envisioned situations rife with mediating variables that would inhibit media effects. The research in this tradition identified some important mediating variables, presenting a more elaborate pattern than previously had been constructed.

Overall, the history of effects theories illustrates various stages in thinking about the strength of media effects. Russell Neuman and Lauren Guggenheim completed a review of the articles on media effects theories over more than 60 years and identified six key stages of media effects research and theorizing.[49] The stages are more or less in a linear order, but there are overlapping periods when new media are introduced; thus, these stages should be considered conceptual stages rather than historical ones. Many of the theories introduced in these periods are still in use today and are included in this book.

The first stage (1944–1963), characterized by "persuasion theories," suggests that the media have direct effects on the audience through simple attitude and behavior change, such as we saw with the hypodermic-needle model. The second stage (1944–1986) includes "active audience theories" and focuses on a more active audience that selects what it is exposed to and makes choices about how to use the media. Several of these theories (e.g., uses and gratifications) are presented in the final section of this chapter. The third stage (1955–1983) is devoted to "social context theories" and emphasizes the role of interpersonal networks for shaping effects; the two-step flow hypothesis is an example. The fourth stage (1933–1978) focuses on "societal and media theories" and looks at the long-term accumulated effects of media on society and institutions. Cultivation theory (discussed below) is an example of this stage and was developed to explain the powerful impact of television on audiences; medium theory from the first section of this chapter is also from the fourth stage. The fifth stage (1972–1987) is composed of "interpretive effects theories" and includes theories that look at the salience and structure of attitudes resulting from the media. Agenda

setting and framing theories, included later in this section, are examples of these theories. Finally, the sixth stage (1996–present) is an era of "new media theories" and comprises a focus on expanded content and media choices along with expanded two-way communication through user-generated content. New medium theory from the first section and channel use theories from the last section are examples of this stage. The theories in this section fit the fourth and fifth stages and suggest some stronger media effects on audiences than other stages.

Cultivation Theory

George Gerbner and his colleagues found that television can bring about a shared way of viewing the world.[50] They developed what they call *cultivation theory*, the idea that television is so pervasive in our culture that it "cultivates" certain views across all segments of society. The researchers believe that television is a homogenizing agent that cultivates a common culture. Cultivation analysis is concerned with the totality of the pattern communicated cumulatively by television over a long period of exposure rather than by any particular content or specific effect. Total immersion in television—not selective viewing—is important in the cultivation of ways of knowing and images of reality. Indeed, subcultures may retain their separate values, but general overriding images depicted on television will cut across individual social groups and subcultures, affecting them all. As you might imagine, the theory predicts a difference in the social reality of heavy television viewers as opposed to light viewers. Heavy viewers tend to believe in a reality that is consistent with that shown on television, even though television does not necessarily reflect the actual world.

One of the most interesting aspects of cultivation theory is the "mean-world syndrome." Although less than 1 percent of the population are victims of violent crimes in any one-year period, heavy exposure to violent crimes through television can lead to the belief that no one can be trusted in what appears to be a violent world. Nancy Signorielli undertook a study of the mean-world syndrome, analyzing violent acts in more than 2,000 children's television programs between 1967 and 1985.[51] Signorielli found that about 71 percent of prime-time and 94 percent of weekend programs included acts of violence. Audience members witnessed over five violent acts per hour during prime-time viewing and about twenty per hour on weekends. A second part of this study sought to determine the effect of television violence on viewers by surveying audience members about their attitudes. Signorielli found that heavy viewers tend to see the world as gloomier and meaner than do light viewers, and heavy viewers tend to mistrust people more than light viewers do.

Patrick Jamieson and Daniel Romer conducted a recent study to test the validity of the mean-world syndrome.[52] They analyzed the number of violent acts on popular TV dramas from 1972 to 2010, finding a reduction of violence from 1972 to 1990 followed by an uptick in violence from 1990 to 2010. Consistent with the mean-world syndrome, the authors found that the rate of TV drama violence is associated with reported fear of crime. However, inconsistent with the syndrome, the study did not find that violence on TV predicted perceptions of local crime rates. Rather, national crime rates predicted perceptions of local crime rates. However, important to note is that people likely became aware of the national crime rates reported in the news, which are not captured in the study. Thus, the

authors likely underestimated the impact of the mean-world syndrome. Jamieson and Romer argue that their study provides partial support for cultivation theory and for the view that TV dramas transport viewers into a narrative world that creates fear of crime. In other words, the violence depicted on TV drama leads us to have a fear of crime because we get caught up in the story. Transportation theory is discussed in more depth in a later section of this chapter.

Gerbner and his colleagues also discuss the homogenizing effect of television viewing. *Mainstreaming* is the tendency of groups that watch television heavily to become more similar to one another than might otherwise be the case. Television draws people closer to a "mainstream" reality as depicted in the medium. Groups will maintain different opinions on issues, but the differences will become smaller among those who share a common pattern of heavy TV viewing. For example, both liberals and conservatives who are heavy viewers will tend to move toward the middle of the political spectrum than will those who watch fewer hours of television. However, mainstreaming is also impacted by *resonance*. Resonance is the degree to which the mediated image is consistent with a person's lived experience. A person's lived experience might limit the degree to which she moved to the middle of the political spectrum. Overall, the research shows that on aggregate heavy viewers move to the middle and yet individuals may not move much because of resonance.

Although cultivation is a general outcome of television viewing, it is not a universal phenomenon, despite the mainstreaming effect. In fact, different groups are affected differently by cultivation. Your interaction with others affects your tendency to accept TV reality. For example, adolescents who interact with their parents about television viewing are less likely to be affected by television images than are adolescents who do not talk with their parents about what they watched on television. Interestingly, people who watch more cable television tend to manifest more mainstreaming—more tendency to adopt the views offered by television—than do people who watch less. In the end, cultivation researchers are now claiming that television viewing is one, but only one, of the many factors than can affect perceptions of reality.

Cultivation theory has stimulated a large body of research, with over 500 studies conducted about it since its inception. James Potter completed a recent analysis of cultivation theory.[53] He identified three themes in the research. First, he found a variety of literature that advances cultivation theory as conceived by Gerbner. This research explicates cultivation theory in its original form. Second, Potter discerned a large number of studies that directly test the propositions of cultivation theory. Finally, he distinguished research that uses the idea of cultivation in a manner different from what was originally proposed. Some research has moved cultivation from a macro to micro focus. For example, cultivation theory examines overall television viewing, while some scholars explore how watching specific violent shows relates to attitudes. In addition, some cultivation research has moved the meaning from located in the content or message (Gerbner's view) to meaning situated in the receivers or audience.

Potter's analysis also offers an assessment of cultivation theory and identifies challenges for moving forward with the theory in the future. First, while he notes that the theory has stimulated considerable research, he asserts that the explanatory power of the theory is less than that of other theories. For example,

he compares studies of agenda setting theory (presented next) to show that it better accounts for media effects than does cultivation theory. Second, Potter explains that key elements of cultivation theory have not been well tested, including the aspect of institutional analysis. *Institutional analysis* suggests that mass production of media creates content that is consistent across platforms; in other words, we should expect there to be common meanings and patterns across commercial television. Third, Potter argues that the theory lacks precision in its explanations. For example, he notes that Gerbner's claims about institutional effects do not clarify what would constitute institutional effects. In conclusion, Potter suggests that cultivation theory can be a viable theory in the future if some of the past limitations can be addressed. The next theory, agenda setting theory, offers some similar arguments about the strong effects of the media on audiences. However, it also recognizes the interpretive component of the audience in creating these effects.

Agenda Setting Theory

Scholars long have known that media have the potential for structuring issues for the public.[54] One of the first writers to formalize this idea was Walter Lippmann, a prominent American journalist.[55] Lippmann took the view that the public responds not to actual events in the environment but to "the pictures in our heads," which he calls the *pseudo-environment*: "For the real environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance. We are not equipped to deal with so much subtlety, so much variety, so many permutations and combinations. And altogether we have to act in that environment, we have to reconstruct it on a simpler model before we can manage with it."[56] The media offer us that simpler model by setting the agenda for us.[57]

Agenda setting seems to operate through a process of *priming*. When you prime a pump, you fill the line with water so that when the pump comes on, the water flows immediately. Thus media, through repeated attention, make certain issues prominent and prime individuals' thoughts (or cognitions).[58] Donald Shaw, Maxwell McCombs, and David Weaver are media scholars who built on Lippmann's work and claim that media depictions can affect how people think about the news, help organize the world of experience, and are "stunningly successful in telling us what to think about."[59] In other words, agenda setting establishes the salient issues or images in the minds of the public; the media tell us what to think about and why (although not necessarily what we should think).

Agenda setting occurs because the media must be selective in reporting the news. News outlets make choices about what to report and how to report it. What the public knows about the state of affairs at any given time is largely a product of media *gatekeeping*.[60] Two levels of agenda setting originally were identified. The first establishes the general issues that are important (*object agenda setting*), and the second determines the parts or aspects of those issues that are viewed as important (*attribute agenda setting*). For example, the media may tell us that worldwide oil prices are an important issue (first level), but they also tell us how to understand this development as it impacts US economics (second level).[61] The third level is a relatively recent addition to the theory and is discussed below.

The agenda-setting function is a three-part process.[62] First, the priority of issues to be discussed in the media, or *media agenda,* must be set. Second, the

media agenda in some way affects or interacts with what the public thinks, creating the *public agenda.* Finally, the public agenda affects or interacts in some way with what policy makers consider important, called the *policy agenda.* In the theory's simplest and most direct version, then, the media agenda affects the public agenda, and the public agenda affects the policy agenda. Although a number of studies show that the media can be powerful in affecting the public agenda, it is still unclear whether the public agenda also affects the media agenda. The relationship may be one of mutual rather than linear causation. Further, it appears that actual events have some impact on both the media agenda and the public agenda.

The prevailing opinion among media researchers seems to be that the media can—but do not always—have a powerful effect on the public agenda. The power of media depends on such factors as media credibility on particular issues at particular times, the extent of conflicting evidence as perceived by individual members of the public, the extent to which individuals share media values at certain times, and the public's need for guidance. Media most often will be powerful when media credibility is high, conflicting evidence is low, individuals share media values, and the audience has a high need for guidance.[63]

From the Source . . .

Through the ongoing interaction of theorizing and empirical research consistent with the scientific method, agenda setting theory has evolved from a tightly focused perspective to a broad theory. Initially, the focus was on the way media affect the public's view of which issues are important. Later the theory broadened to encompass distinct aspects of public life: basic and attribute agenda-setting effects, the psychology of these processes, and the consequences of these effects for opinions and behavior. The participation of scholars worldwide has been central to the continuing productivity of the theory.

Maxwell McCombs

The power of media in establishing a public agenda depends in part on their relations with power centers. If the media have close relationships with the elite class in society, that class probably will affect the media agenda and the public agenda in turn. Many critical theorists believe that media can be, and usually are, an instrument of the dominant ideology in society. When this happens, that dominant ideology will permeate the public agenda.

Four types of power relations between media and outside sources have been identified. The first is a high-power source and a high-power medium. In this kind of arrangement, if the source and medium see eye to eye, a positive symbiotic relationship will exert great power over the public agenda. This would be the case, for example, with a powerful public official who has especially good relations with the press. On the other hand, if the powerful medium and the powerful source do not agree, a struggle may take place between them.

The second kind of arrangement is a high-power source and a low-power medium. Here, the external source probably will coopt the medium and use it to

accomplish personal ends. This is what happens, for example, when politicians buy airtime or when a popular president gives the press the "privilege" of interviewing him. In the third type of relation—a lower-power source and a high-power medium—the media organizations themselves will be largely responsible for their own agenda. This happens when the media marginalize certain news sources such as occurred with the student radicals and women's movements in the 1960s. The fourth type of relation is where both media and external sources are low in power, and the public agenda probably will be established by the events themselves rather than the media or the leaders. The media coverage of a disaster is an example of an event creating the agenda rather than the media, leaders, or the public doing so.

McCombs and colleagues recently revisited agenda setting theory and identified seven key facets of agenda setting theory, including many of the points reviewed in this section.[64] They also highlighted three of these points as being especially relevant for theorizing today: network agenda setting, need for orientation, and agendamelding.

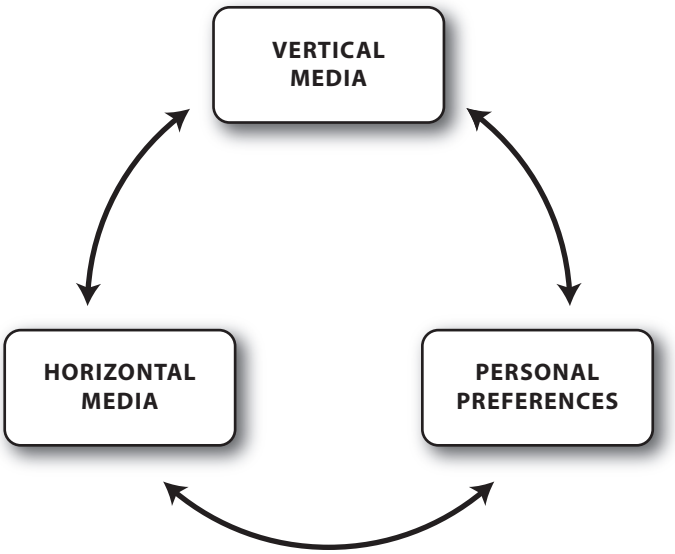
Network agenda setting is a third level of agenda setting complementing the two previously mentioned. Agenda setting theory suggests that objects and attributes are bundled together in messages and in our mental images, and the media can transfer these bundled or networked images to the public. Thus, the media can tell about an issue (oil prices), its attributes (impact on US economy), and other related aspects (e.g., how the impact on the economy may affect jobs and foreign relations). The networked elements provide a larger picture of the related issues that are associated with a specific topic or story.

Need for orientation refers to personal characteristics of audience members that impact the ability of the media to shape the public agenda. More specifically, it includes the level of relevance and uncertainty a person has about an issue and thus how much that individual attends to and considers the issue. If you always bike to work, you may see the issue of oil prices as irrelevant and thus have a low need for orientation. If you are concerned about oil prices and also have low uncertainty about the future (e.g., you know for certain that oil costs will rise), you have a moderate need for orientation. If you are concerned about oil prices and have high uncertainty (e.g., you are uncertain about what will happen to oil prices in the future), you have a high need for orientation. The greater the need for orientation, the more impact that media agenda has on the public agenda.

Agendamelding refers to ways people borrow from various media and public agendas to create or find personal communities in which they want to live. Agendamelding is about creating a satisfying image of the world. McCombs and colleagues use the unhyphenated word to reflect the intimate and often unconscious ways that this merging occurs. Agendamelding includes three elements: (1) vertical media agenda setting; (2) horizontal media agenda setting; and (3) personal preferences. *Vertical media* are the traditional large scale media (e.g., major network news broadcasts) that convey messages to large and diverse audience. *Horizontal media* are more tailored, focused media that convey messages to a specific audience and can be considered alternative media (e.g., magazines or websites focused on a specific interest group). *Personal preferences* include your own social networks, such as those found on your Facebook

accounts. These three elements are interrelated and shape perspectives on objects and attributes in a dynamic process that exerts varying degrees of influence. Figure 5.2 displays a model of agendamelding.

Figure 5.2 Model of Agendamelding



The idea that alternative media and personal preferences also shape agenda setting is consistent with Web 2.0 and the ability of individuals to create their own media content. Russell Neuman and his colleagues conducted a study of 29 political issues in 2012 to determine the ways that traditional and social media set agendas. They use "big data" to analyze whether individual users can in fact shape media agendas or whether a reverse agenda-setting approach is more likely. *Big data* refers to the ability to include massive amounts of information in social and traditional media through computer crawlers that collect such information. For example, a video that goes viral is big data if it encourages people to search for information from media outlets. The authors examined more than 100 million active Twitter users, over 160 million blogs, and 300,000 forums as well as traditional media broadcasts to understand how agenda setting works in today's media climate.

Neuman and colleagues found that social media performed more agenda setting for social issues such as birth control, same-sex marriage, and LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender) concerns as well as foreign affairs, such as Arab Spring. On the other hand, social media were less likely to include discussions of economics and government functioning. In the answer to the question of who sets the agenda, the authors conclude that for some issues, it is social media; for others, it is traditional media; and for still other issues, it is a mutual relationship. These findings support the emergence and significance of agendamelding

in agenda setting theory: there is a complex web of media and personal experiences that shape public agendas, especially given the development of Web 2.0. The next theory explores the role of framing to further illustrate the influence of media production on society.

Media Framing Theory

Framing refers to the process of putting a news story or other type of media message together, including the ways in which a story is organized and structured. The organization of a story sends out cues about how to understand the content being covered. Agenda setting identifies which issues are important; framing tells us how to understand those issues. In fact, agenda setting theorists view framing as a natural way to understand how second-level agenda setting occurs. This section will explore traditional coverage about media framing and then introduce prospect theory as a specific theory of framing.

Media framing highlights certain aspects of an issue and focuses attention on that issue. As mentioned earlier, the concept of framing has been closely associated with agenda setting over the years; however, it now has a sufficiently large body of literature to stand as a field of study in its own right.[65] In fact, many believe that framing is not as closely associated with agenda setting as originally thought and may suggest rather different processes at work.[66]

Todd Gitlin first applied the term *framing* to mass communication when he studied the way in which CBS made the student movement of the 1960s seem unimportant.[67] Media depictions frame events in ways that constrain how audiences can interpret these events. This can happen by various textual features of the "story"—headlines, audio-visual components, metaphors used, and the way in which the story is told, to name only a few of the ways framing functions.

Most framing theorists today do not believe that media by themselves create new ways for individuals to understand concepts. Instead, the media select components or structure messages in ways that resonate with schema already embedded in cognition. Media therefore bring out frames that have been around for a long time and are part of the culture. Frames are packages of message features like organization and language choice that help simplify and provide a perspective for understanding a subject. The frame package helps individuals define, explain, and evaluate their experiences. Thus, frames are built in the interaction between media, individuals, and culture; any given media message may tap into various parts of these cultural and cognitive frames.

Nicky Lewis and Andrew Weaver explored the effects of sports media framing on fans' intentions, enjoyment, and attitudes toward athletes.[68] They were interested in whether stories that are framed around athletes' in-game performance (performance frames) or their personal lives (character frames) are more important in shaping audience members' overall perspectives about the athletes. Lewis and Weber found that character-focused stories lead to more enjoyment and a greater likelihood to support the athlete in the future than performance-based stories. Further, the authors also factored in whether the person was a big sports fan or a slight sports fan and whether the athlete was religious or not in their analysis of the effect of framing on attitudes. They found that high sport fans who read a character-framed story about a religious athlete were more likely to provide support to the athlete than people who were low sport fans reading a character-

framed story about a religious athlete. Lewis and Weber conclude that character-framed stories represent a way to increase support for some athletes in contrast to the traditional focus of journalists providing stories about performance.

Prospect theory is a specific theory of message framing. Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky developed prospect theory to illustrate how message framing can influence decision making in uncertain conditions.[69] Kahneman and Tversky explain that people are not rational decision makers; they use heuristics, or cognitive short cuts, to make decisions. These heuristics are influenced positively or negatively by framing information. Positive messages are called gain frames, and negative messages are loss frames. *Gain frames* point out what you have to gain by making a decision. For example, if you brush your teeth every day, you will have a beautiful smile. *Loss frames* identify what you will lose by making a certain decision. For example, if you do not brush your teeth every day, you may get tooth decay and lose teeth.

Prospect theory often is used to theoretically frame health promotions and health communication campaigns because of the factor of uncertainty in terms of health outcomes. Prospect theory suggests that gain-framed messages motivate risk-averse choices (preventive behavior), and loss-framed messages motivate risky or uncertain choices (detection of disease). In other words, if there is a high certainty that an action will result in benefit, you want to frame it as a gain. For example, moderate exercise three–five times a week will help you look and feel better. If the outcome is uncertain, you want to frame the message as a loss. For example, if you do not complete a breast self-examination or mammography, you increase the risk of detecting cancer at a later stage, increasing the risk of dying from breast cancer.

While prospect theory hypothesizes clear effects of gain- and loss-frame messages on behavior, research demonstrates that these effects, while important, are slight to modest. For example, a study by Jennifer Gray and Nancy Harrington examined the impact of gain- and loss-framed messages on exercise intentions among college students.[70] They found that gain-framed messages had a stronger impact on exercise intentions than did loss-framed messages. This finding is consistent with a meta-analysis of 93 studies of gain- and loss-framed messages for preventive behavior: Daniel O'Keefe and Jakob Jensen found that gain-framed messages are more likely to lead to preventive behavior than loss-framed messages, although this was a small effect.[71] Finally, Alexis Roth and colleagues assessed whether loss- or gain-framed messages are more predictive of whether women in the criminal justice system will get a herpes simplex type 2 detection test.[72] The authors found that the loss-framed messages led to a higher rate of getting the herpes test when compared to gain-framed or neutral-framed messages. However, this effect was small as well. Thus, the research indicates that gain- and loss-framed messages are better with prevention and detection behaviors respectively, but these effects are small.

In this section, we explored theories that discuss the content of mediated messages and the effects these messages have on message receivers. While the effects tradition illustrates a number of potential explanations for how messages impact audiences, the theories in this section suggest that media content has a strong impact on the attitudes, perspectives, and behaviors of message receivers. The explanation for these strong effects ranges from cultivation to agenda

setting to framing. The message receiver tends to have a small(er) role in these processes. The next section explores theories that identify a much larger role for the receiver in determining the effects of medium and mediated messages.

Motivations, Uses, and Consumption

The previous sections in this chapter explored the nature of the medium, media products, media content, and media effects. The theories mention an audience, but media consumers are not central to the discussion. The theories in this section argue that media consumers are active participants in their media use as well as in how media affect them. There are a number of theories that explore the role of the receiver in terms of media, and we introduce five in this section: (1) transportation theory; (2) spiral of silence; (3) social action media studies; (4) uses and gratifications theory; and (5) media and channel use theories. The first two theories explore a blended role of media effects and media receiver. The third theory explores how audiences create communities within and through various media. The fourth section discusses peoples' motivations and rewards from selecting certain media, and the final section includes two theories that explain people's choice of media and/or communication channels.

Transportation

Have you ever been in a movie theatre when the audience clapped or cheered as the hero won the big game? Do you get so wrapped up in a story that you will spend hours reading a book, forgetting about the time and other things you need to do? If you said yes to either or both of these questions, you have experienced what Melanie Green and Timothy Brock describe as getting "transported into the narrative world."[73] *Transportation* refers to becoming so enmeshed in the story you are experiencing that you are swept away from your world into the world of the story. Green and Brock developed transportation theory to explain what happens when we get into this state and some of the resulting consequences.

Transportation theory first describes what happens when people get lost in the narrative world. People are moved away from their mundane world to the story world. They lose track of time, and they lose a sense of place. They become highly involved in the story and can picture themselves in it. They fail to recognize events around them and also experience strong emotions (both positive and negative) in regard to the story being told. People also appreciate, as part of the transportation process, the story with which they are engaged as a piece of art or quality craft.

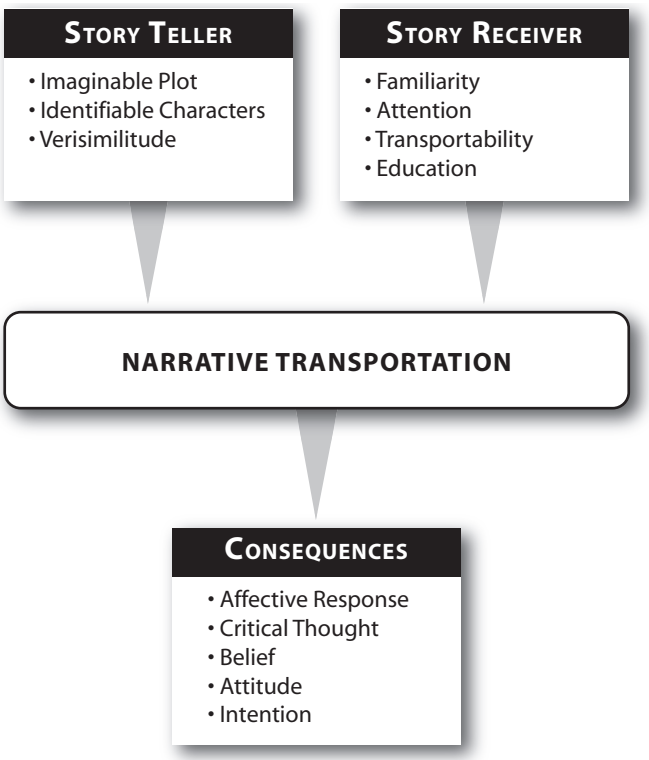
The key element of transportation is the narrative or story. Transportation only occurs in response to stories, and these can be either fact or fiction. People can become transported when they are reading, watching, or listening to various types of media. Green and Brock suggest that books may increase the level of transportation because the reader needs to create the mental imagery of the story for herself, and yet transportation still occurs with audio-visual materials. Further, the nature of the story does not appear to be important for transportation; we can become transported with a story of peril or one of happiness. There are several factors that influence transportation. First, having an imaginable

plot, identifiable characters, and verisimilitude (whether the story is lifelike) make transportation more likely. Second, transportation will increase depending on familiarity with the material, education level, transportability (how open you are to being transported), and the degree to which the receiver is paying attention to the material.

Transportation has been found to have important consequences for audiences. First, transportation has a number of personal benefits including escape (e.g., from ourselves or our troubles), transformation of self, and increased empathy. Second, transportation is associated with enjoyment, including connection with characters and interactivity with the media (e.g., talking to other users about a YouTube story we saw or playing video games). Third, transportation is associated with behavior and attitude change in a manner consistent with the story lines—an audience member might choose to travel because a character in the story does. We talk more about transportation and behavior change in health communication in chapter 10).

Tom van Laer and his colleagues conducted a meta-analysis of 76 published studies involving transportation to test the ideas of transportation theory.[74] Van Laer and colleagues expanded on a model created by Green and Brock (see figure 5.3[75] for van Laer and colleagues' extended transportation-imagery model). The model explains that story-teller and story-receiver characteristics influence

Figure 5.3 The Extended Transportation-Imagery Model



the level of narrative transportation, and transportation is associated with various outcomes, including affective (emotional) response, critical thought (lower with transportation), belief, attitude, and intention to act. Through their analysis, they found support for all of the elements in this extended model. They also propose future development of transportation theory by considering the medium of the narrative (e.g., social media) and the social groups to which the audience belongs (and their norms).

Spiral of Silence

The topic of public opinion has been of great concern in political science. It is defined as opinions publicly expressed, opinions regarding public affairs, and opinions of the public as a group rather than of smaller groups of individuals. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's theory of the spiral of silence continues this analysis by demonstrating how interpersonal communication and media operate together in the development of public opinion.[76] As a political researcher in Germany, Noelle-Neumann observed that in elections, certain views seem to get more play than others. Sometimes people mute their opinions rather than talk about them. Noelle-Neumann calls this the *spiral of silence*.

The spiral of silence occurs when individuals who perceive that their opinions are popular express them, whereas those who do not think their opinions are popular remain quiet. This process occurs in a spiral, so that one side of an issue ends up with much publicity and the other side with very little. In everyday life, we express our opinions in a variety of ways: we talk about them, we wear buttons, and we put bumper stickers on our cars. According to this theory, people are more apt to do these kinds of things when they perceive that others share their opinions.

This thesis rests on two premises. The first is that people know which opinions are prevalent and which are not. In other words, people are not reluctant to make educated guesses about public opinion and have a sense of the percentages of the population for and against certain positions. This is called the *quasi-statistical sense* because, while it is not scientific, people believe that it is the prevailing viewpoint. The second assumption is that people adjust their expressions of opinion to these perceptions. Noelle-Neumann presents considerable evidence to support these assumptions. In political elections, for example, people usually perceive quite accurately the prevailing opinion about the candidates and issues, and they are likely to express their preferences when others share them.

Noelle-Neumann devised an interesting test of the tendency to remain silent on unpopular positions—the "train test."[77] Respondents were asked to imagine that they were in a train compartment with a stranger for five hours and had to decide whether they would be willing to discuss certain topics with this person. Respondents were told that they were to imagine that the other person mentions his or her opinion on a subject; the respondents then were asked whether they would prefer to talk to the other person about this topic or not. Topics ranged from spanking children to the government of Germany. Interviewers presented this problem to 3,500 respondents, covering numerous topics over several years. The overwhelming tendency was to freely discuss the topic when one agrees with the other but to let it slide when one does not. People seem not to want to

"make waves." Of course, other factors enter into the decision to express one's opinion: young people are more expressive than older people; educated individuals will speak up more than uneducated ones; and men are generally more willing to disclose their opinions than women.

The spiral of silence seems to be caused by a fear of isolation. The spiral of silence is not just a matter of wanting to be on the winning side but is also an attempt to avoid being isolated from one's social group. Threats of criticism from others were found to be powerful forces in silencing individuals. For example, smokers who were repeatedly criticized for advocating smokers' rights remained silent on the issue rather than stating their views in the presence of vocal nonsmokers. In some cases, the fear of expressing an opinion is well founded, as Noelle-Neumann notes:

> Slashed tires, defaced or torn posters, help refused to a lost stranger . . . demonstrate that people can be on uncomfortable or even dangerous ground when the climate of opinion runs counter to their views. When people attempt to avoid isolation, they are not responding hypersensitively to trivialities; these are existential issues that can involve real hazards.[78]

The media themselves also contribute to the spiral of silence. One of the ways the media contribute is that they publicize which opinions are prevalent and which are not. When polled, individuals usually state that they feel powerless in the face of media. Two kinds of experience accentuate this feeling of helplessness. The first is the difficulty of getting publicity for a cause or point of view. The second is being scapegoated by the media in what Noelle-Neumann calls the *pillory function* of media. In each case the individual feels powerless against the media, making the media an important part of the spiral of silence.

Media effects on public opinion are cumulative and not always apparent. It sometimes happens that journalists' opinions differ from those of the general public, so that media depictions contradict the prevailing expressions of individuals. When this occurs, a dual climate of opinion results. Here, two versions of reality operate—that of the media and that of the public. Noelle-Neumann likens this event to an unusual weather situation—interesting and seemingly bizarre. In the 2004 presidential election in the United States, for example, the incumbent George W. Bush was strongly supported by public opinion, yet many believed that the media projected a bias against the president.

Sherice Gearhart and Weiwu Zhang conducted a study to test the spiral of silence theory, especially how the nature of issues shapes spiral of silence processes.[79] They chose three issues to investigate: immigration (a transitory issue that returns to the spotlight from time to time), gay marriage (an emerging issue that has the potential to remain in the spotlight), and abortion (an enduring issue that remains in the spotlight). They also focused on online communication, extending the theory from its face-to-face focus. They studied a large number of Facebook users who were assigned to one of the three issues and placed in a hostile or friendly condition (people who disagreed or agreed with the participant). The authors then asked about participants' own opinions and those of the media, their families, and their friends.

Gearhart and Zhang found differences in the willingness to post opinions across the three issues, particularly when participant opinion was congruent

with the predominant media position. For example, people in the abortion condition were willing to post their true opinion even in the hostile condition if their opinion was congruent with the predominant media position. However, this finding only occurred with the enduring issue. A different type of finding was found for gay marriage, an emerging issue. For gay marriage, Facebook users who think their true opinion is congruent with the future opinion of the nation were willing to post their opinions and less likely to refrain in the hostile condition. For immigration, Facebook users were likely to share their opinions if they felt the issue was important regardless of the opinion climate. Thus, this study illustrates that there is a relationship between the type of issue and the way that the spiral of silence works in Facebook posts, offering further support for the spiral of silence theory. The next theory explores how audience members create and interpret communities through and with media.

Social Action Media Studies

Many media scholars believe that the audience cannot be characterized as an amorphous mass.[80] Rather, it consists of numerous highly differentiated communities, each with its own values, ideas, and interests. Media content is interpreted within the community according to meanings that are worked out socially within the group, and individuals are influenced more by their peers than by the media.[81]

Gerard Schoening and James Anderson call the community-based approach *social action media studies,* and they outline six premises.[82] First, meaning is not in the message itself but is produced by interpretive processes of individuals. Different audiences will interpret or understand what they read and view in different ways. For example, talk-radio programs may be taken to mean many things, depending on who is listening.

The second premise is that the meaning of media messages and programs is not determined passively but is produced actively by audiences. This means that audiences actually do something with what they view and read. They act as they view. Some listeners, for example, may turn on talk radio to combat boredom while driving, others may turn it on late in the evening as a sleep aid, and still others may listen to it actively during the day as a means of getting information about current events. What a particular talk radio program means, therefore, is a product of how listeners treat it and what they do with it.

The third premise is that the meanings of media shift constantly as individuals vary their use of media. Sometimes the talk radio program may be strictly entertainment, sometimes serious information, and sometimes just background noise, depending on when and how it is used.

Fourth, while the meaning of a program or message may vary depending on the individual, meaning is also a communal activity. It is part of the tradition of a group, community, or culture. The implication of this is that when you join a community (by birth or membership), you accept the ongoing activities and meanings of that community or group.

Fifth, the actions that determine a group's meanings for media content are done in interaction with members of the group. In other words, how we act toward the media and what meanings emerge from those actions are social interactions. This does not mean that you never watch TV by yourself, but it

does mean that how you watch and use TV are part of an ongoing interaction between yourself and others. If you listen to talk radio in the car while you commute to work, this pattern is part of a larger web of interactions with people at home and at work. It is a routine that is made possible by a huge network of factors involving work, home, radio, boredom, cars, highways, and so on.

Finally, the sixth premise of social action media studies is that researchers join the communities they study, if only temporarily; therefore, they have an ethical obligation to be open about what they are studying and to share what they learn with those studied. Consistent with social action media studies, an increasingly popular way of approaching media is to think of the audience as consisting of numerous *interpretive communities*, each with its own meanings for what is read, viewed, or heard.[83] The researchers are part of such communities and thus bring their own meanings about the media being studied to the research process.

From the Source . . .

Social action theorists believe that humans make sense of themselves and the world through two great semiotic systems—language and action—both of which are human inventions and social products. It's a very different approach from the cognitivist-based theories you've been reading about. Instead of your mind shaping what you do, what you do shapes your mind. And what you can do is what your culture provides. Just try going to work (school) tomorrow in an entirely unique way.

James Anderson

Many texts come through the media. Stanley Fish analyzes the ways in which readers assign meaning to texts; he has had a significant impact on interpretive media studies.[84] For Fish, interpretive communities come into being around specific media and content. A community develops around a shared pattern of consumption, which results in common understandings of the content of what is read, heard, or viewed as well as shared outcomes. For example, a television audience consists of a number of "cultures" or communities of viewers who use and perceive the medium—even individual programs—differently. Thus, if you want to discover how television affects an audience, you have to understand the cultures of these various communities. Because the outcomes of media consumption depend on the cultural constructions of the community, this approach requires cultural interpretation.[85] See chapter 11 for more on cultural interpretation.

For example, a program like *Sesame Street* appeals to a variety of interpretive communities. One such community might be middle-class children whose parents encourage them to watch and discuss the show with them. Another community might be children who view the program on their own to kill time before dinner every evening. The *Harry Potter* books are another example where very different interpretive communities can be found. The books have a number of audiences, such as the children to whom the books are directed,

adults with whom the stories resonate, and people who form groups to read the books together.

Any person may be a member of a variety of interpretive communities, and particular social groups, such as the family, may be a crossing point for a number of such communities. For example, various members of a family may enjoy television news, top-40 radio programming, sitcoms, children's programs, biographies, and sports—and are therefore members of a variety of communities. Thomas Lindlof outlines three genres of interpretive communities: (1) content; (2) interpretation; and (3) social action.[86] Because interpretive communities define their own meanings for media, these genres constitute general types of media outcomes created by interaction within the interpretive community.

Content, the first genre of an interpretive community, consists of the types of programs and other media consumed by the community. One group shares an interest in televised football, another in mystery novels, and still another in music videos. It is not enough that a community share an interest in one type of medium content; it must also share some common meanings for that content. A mother who thinks *Sesame Street* is a cute and harmless pastime for her children, the children who become intimately involved with the characters day after day, the teenage son who thinks *Sesame Street* is silly, and the grandfather who loves the Muppets do not constitute an interpretive community because they see very different things in the content of that program.

Genres of *interpretation,* then, revolve around shared meaning. Members of a community interpret the content of programs and other media in similar ways. The impact on their behavior—especially what they say about the media and the language used to describe it—is similar. A group of friends who get together and binge on vampire movies from Amazon prime is a good example. They watch the movies and have conversation about the movies and develop shared meaning about them.

Finally, genres of *social action* are shared sets of behaviors toward the media in question, including not only how the media content is consumed (when and where it is viewed or read) but also the ways it affects the conduct of the members of the community. How are relationships affected by the media? Does a particular type of content facilitate the relationship in some way? Do people talk to one another about what they have seen or heard? Do they use relationships viewed on television as models for their own relationships?

From the Source . . .

I think that interpretive community theory is significant because it enables researchers to ask interesting questions about communication and culture. One particularly interesting question is: how do people create a collective identity, at least in part, through the ways in which they negotiate and legitimize readings of cultural texts? Thus the "community" metaphor has helped us understand the kinds of identities formed in cyberspace (virtual community), product consumption (brand community), and the professions (communities of practice).

Thomas Lindlof

Sue Robinson and Cathy DeShano conducted a study using the interpretive media theory perspective.[87] They explored two news groups in Madison, Wisconsin—bloggers (citizen journalists) and local reporters—to identify the common and distinct values of each group. Robinson and DeShano conducted interviews with members of each community and found some common values, including social responsibility, access to information, entitlement to knowledge, and notions of professionalism. These are values of the larger interpretive community of journalists. However, despite these core values, the authors found two distinct journalistic communities. For example, one of the primary drivers of social responsibility is the desire to find truth and improve the community. For local reporters, this involved upholding professional ethics such as confirming "facts" and ensuring accuracy from sources. These reporters viewed citizen journalists as compromising this process. In contrast, citizen journalists view their mission as focused more on action and community thinking. Their goal is to identify community dialogue and tell the community's stories rather than concentrating on the presentation of objective facts.

A second distinction between the two journalistic communities is the belief in the degree of position and professionalism. Local reporters view their formal positions as granting them the authority to report information and also the need to develop networks to help them identify this information. They view information only as important once it is reported in the mainstream news cycle. In contrast, citizen journalists view themselves as gatherers and disseminators of news and pride themselves on being the first to report something. They see their blogs as important sources of information. A final distinction is the level of professionalism. Reporters view citizen journalists as a threat to "real" journalism because they are "unprofessional," writing whatever they want to write. Citizen journalists view their type of reporting as important to opening conversations about an issue; thus, fact checking takes a back seat to presenting commentary to engage the audience. In summary, this study illustrates how the interpretive media perspective explains the different values and behaviors that represent different cultures within a larger system. The next theory moves to examining the motivations and rewards the people gets by using and consuming various media.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

One of the most popular theories of mass communication is the uses and gratifications approach.[88] This theory first was articulated in 1959 by Elihu Katz, although the theory became stated more formally in the 1970s by Katz and his colleagues.[89] The theory, and related theories, focus on the consumer—the audience member—rather than the message. Unlike the powerful-effects tradition, this approach imagines audience members to be discriminating users of media. Individuals use media content actively rather than being passive consumers. They use messages, in other words, to achieve their own goals.

Uses and gratifications theory makes five assumptions. First, audience members actively select from various media. Audiences have multiple choices in media; they choose what they want to watch, hear, or see (i.e., selective exposure). Second, audiences are active and goal directed. Audience members are largely responsible for choosing media to meet their own needs, and media are considered to be only one factor contributing to meeting needs. Third, the vari-

ous media available compete for the attention of audiences. Media institutions know there are a lot of options for media consumption, so they create media content in which audiences are interested. Fourth, social and contextual elements shape audience activity. Audiences live in a world where those around them and what is going on around them influence the media they choose to consume. Finally, the effects of media and audience use of media are interrelated. Thus, media only has an effect on a particular audience because those individuals choose to consume the media. Overall, audience members are assumed to have considerable agency: they know their needs and how to gratify those needs.

A great deal of research identifies various types of gratifications or rewards that people receive from media. Denis McQuail identified four general types of gratifications: (1) entertainment; (2) information; (3) personal identity; and (4) integration and social interaction (i.e., we are able to talk about a popular television show with others in our social networks).[90] Other research has examined specific types of gratifications for various media. For example, Li Li, Yea-Wen Chen, and Masato Nakazawa recently identified the gratifications that the television show *Prison Break* has for audiences in China.[91] The authors completed a content analysis of posts on a popular online discussion forum and found five predominant gratifications among audience members: (1) general information; (2) social integration; (3) parasocial interaction (i.e., we talk about and with characters on the television show); (4) conflict between protagonists (i.e., enjoying the conflict among the characters); and (5) valuation of the protagonists (i.e., appreciating the virtues and vice of the characters). The study analyzed the rewards media consumers demonstrated in online discussions about a TV show.

Philip Palmgreen created an extension of this theory based on his own work, that of Karl Rosengren, and others.[92] The theory applies expectancy-value theory, discussed in chapter 3, to media use. According to this theory, the gratifications you seek from media are determined by your attitudes toward the media—your beliefs about what a particular medium can give you—and your evaluations of this material. For example, if you believe that sitcoms provide entertainment, and you like to be entertained, you will seek gratification of your entertainment needs by watching sitcoms. If, on the other hand, you believe that sitcoms provide an unrealistic view of life and you do not like the kind of humor they contain, you will avoid viewing them.

Of course, your opinion of sitcoms consists of several beliefs and evaluations, and your viewing behavior will be determined by several things. Your entire cluster of beliefs and evaluations will determine your orientation to any type of

From the Source . . .

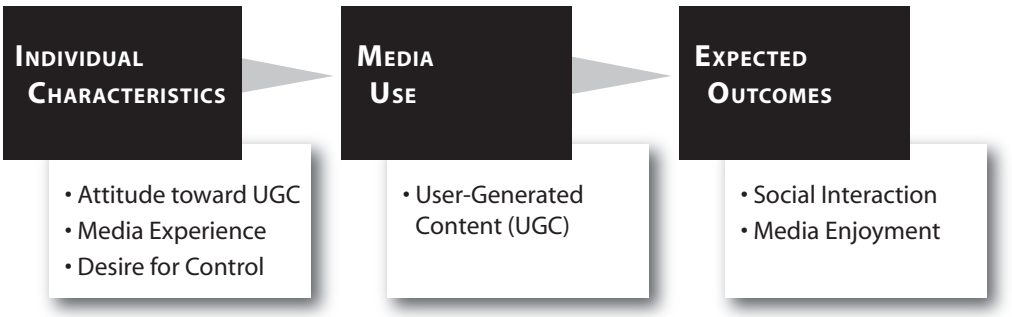
I was initially attracted to uses and gratifications theory because it was focused not on the *effects* of media messages but on explaining *why* billions of us are attracted to such messages in the first place! Our expectancy-value theory approach is exciting to me because it focuses on our constantly evolving beliefs and feelings about media messages and their contexts and is therefore equally applicable to traditional mass media or the burgeoning social media.

Philip Palmgreen

program. As you gain experience with a program, genre, or medium, the gratifications you obtain will in turn affect your beliefs, thus reinforcing your pattern of use. For example, assume for a moment that you have an insatiable desire for news. You are a news junky. Now assume that you like to explore news blogs and have made quite a study of them. You have developed a set of beliefs about the kind of news that each blog can provide and how well it provides it (i.e., evaluation). Over time, the extent to which you come to use blogs to gratify your need for news will be determined by the sum of these beliefs and evaluations.

Terry Daugherty and his colleagues use expectancy-value to explore the relationships associated with consuming user-generated content.[93] They propose a model that suggests that individual characteristics (attitude toward user-generated content, media experience, and desire of control) predict consumption of user-generated content, which predicts expected outcomes (social interaction and media enjoyment). Figure 5.4 provides a simplified version of this model.[94] This study supports expectancy-value theory in that people have certain expectations about gratifications, in this case social interaction and media enjoyment. The individual characteristics of the people consuming the media shape the beliefs and evaluation of the user-generated content and thus drive the consumption of this type of content. The next two theories build on this idea of motivation and expectations of media consumption, specifically exploring the choices people make regarding communication channels and media.

Figure 5.4 Model of Expectancy Value of User-Generated Content



Media and Channel Use Theories

There are a plethora of communication media or channels that people can use to communicate with others. The reasons behind the choices of channels is the subject of several theories. In this section, we identify two such theories: (1) channel complementarity theory; and (2) dynamic motivational activation.

Channel Complementarity Theory. As new media and communication channels are developed, some scholars predict that new media will displace or reduce the use of the old media.[95] For example, the introduction of the television reduced the use of radio. The introduction of social media reduces other forms

of media such as email and telephone. However, Mohan Dutta-Bergman (now Mohan Dutta) argues that communication channels do not get replaced so easily. He developed channel complementarity theory to illustrate how new channels are used in conjunction with older channels.[96] The theory is grounded in both selective exposure and uses and gratifications theory. Specifically, people are able to choose what channels and media they expose themselves to, and they choose exposures based on gratifications received.

Channel complementarity theory explores the relationships among various channels. Dutta-Bergman argues that the choice of channels is based on the motivation for or functionality of the medium rather than its nature. If channels are seen to meet the same function, there is likely to be congruency in channel usage. Dutta-Bergman studied this functionality in response to the 9/11 crisis. He found that if a person had a goal to build community after 9/11, she would be likely to communicate in online forums related to community building and also via face-to-face channels. The new media did not displace face-to-face communication; in fact, the two channels encouraged more communication using both channels. He also found that people who called a family member via telephone about 9/11 also were likely to communicate with the family member through online sources. Both of these channels served the function of connecting family members. Dutta-Bergman also posits that individual differences are likely to indicate which channels are chosen (e.g., whether we like using Facebook) rather than one channel displacing another.

Erin Ruppel and Tricia Burke completed a recent study to extend channel complementary theory by incorporating the concept of social competence.[97] Social competence is the same as communication competence—the ability to communicate in an appropriate and effective manner (see chapter 3). Ruppel and Burke argue that people with low social competence are more likely to show a preference for online and mediated communication and less likely to use face-to-face communication. The authors surveyed undergraduate students who had a Facebook account to identify the channels the students use for interpersonal communication. The findings indicate that people with high social competence use telephone and text messaging in a complementary manner. In contrast, for people with low social competence, email and text messaging were used in a complementary manner. Finally, face-to-face communication and Facebook showed a displaced relationship for people with high levels of social competence. Ruppel and Burke conclude that individual differences are important for understanding when channels are complementary or displaced. The next theory also helps us understand media selection and processing.

Dynamic Motivational Activation. Zheng Wang and her colleagues developed the dynamic motivation activation (DMA) approach for understanding how people choose, respond to, and process media.[98] These researchers argue that media choice and processing is a complex and dynamic process. Media choice is influenced by selective exposure due to both motivations and the nature of various media inputs—features that influence attention. They also advocate that both media choice and time with media are important to understand media motivations. They have explored the DMA in reference to social media use, entertainment media, and media multitasking.

Dynamic motivational activation posits that there is a reciprocal or recursive relationship between media choice and motivated media processing. First, media content is continuously changing and motivates the media user's information processing system (i.e., how we think and make sense of the content). Second, the user's information processing system adapts to the inputs and generates affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses. Third, these responses are determined by the media being used currently as well as by previous experience and responses. For example, John watched the Cleveland Cavaliers (he was born in Cleveland) win the NBA championship with his sons. Watching the game and what was happening created euphoria, in part, because as a Cleveland fan, John had experienced so many heartaches with prior Cleveland sports teams. It was the first Cleveland championship he had been able to root for in his lifetime, and he was able to experience it with his children—so high fives were slapped repeatedly throughout the game. Further, the nature of the broadcast with its lights and images no doubt enhanced this experience.

DMA also suggests that media choices are related to media use motivations in a reciprocal manner. For example, Wang and John Tchernev examined media multitasking during everyday lives of university students.[99] They found that media multitasking is motivated by having multiple needs at a time. As some of the needs are met and others remain unmet, it motivates subsequent media choices. More recently, Wang developed a ChaCha model (or Channel Changing) based on DMA to predict media choice and duration based on a series of probabilities including responses, motivational values (and the natural decay of motivation over time—i.e., we get bored doing the same thing over and over), and prior choices of media.[100]

The ChaCha model is based on a formula of reinforcement learning made possible by complex computing models. This formula takes prior choices and assumes they change our current environment. For example, once the basketball game was over, John could choose to watch something else, interact with his family, or any number of other choices. Knowing his motivations (e.g., his entertainment and identity needs) were met, we might predict that he wanted to talk with his family about other things. Wang studied television viewing to find that the data supported the ChaCha model. She argues that DMA and the ChaCha model provide insight into the complexity of why people select the media they choose and how much time they spend with it.

In sum, these two theories of channel complementarity and dynamic motivational activation are based on active media consumers who select what media and channels they use to satisfy their needs. The first theory, channel complementarity, argues that people use multiple communication channels to satisfy their motivations rather than one channel over another. The second theory (DMA) argues that there is a dynamic process of evaluating motivation, prior channel use, and responses to the media that explains why people select one or more media or channels. These two theories illustrate the larger focus of the theories in this section—that media users and consumers are active rather than passive in their choices of media. The media consumer has a clear role to play in deciding whether they are transported in a story, whether they state their opinion or remain silent, and whether they form a specific community of media users.

Conclusion

This chapter identified three key topics related to the nature of the medium. The first section discussed two key themes. First, the nature of the medium affects both individual and society. Different media have different features, and people use these features for different reasons. Second, the production of media shapes the institutions and culture of society. The second section looked at the content of the media and the macro and micro effects on media consumers. The theories in this section suggest that media has considerable effects on people. The final section explored theories that identify media consumers as active, using media content to meet their needs. Some of the theories in this section (e.g., transportation, spiral of silence) note that along with active consumers, media content is also important. Collectively, these theories illustrate the complex components involved in understanding the role of the medium in communication theory.

Chapter Map **THEORIES OF THE MEDIUM**

Topic Address	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
The Medium and Production	Medium Theory	Marshall McLuhan; Donald Ellis	The medium is the message; the nature of the medium shapes how it is used and how it affects people.
	New Medium Theory	Mark Poster; David Holmes; Pierre Lévy	Web 2.0 and related technologies have unique features that have changed the way that people communicate with each other.
	Media Ecology and Mediatization	Neil Postman; Stig Hjarvard; David Altheide & Robert Snow	Institutions (e.g., sports, government, politics) change as a result of both media permeating the institution's own workings and media, in the aggregate, rising to the status of institutions.
	Media and Cultural Production	Pierre Bourdieu; David Hesmondhalgh	Habitus, capital, field, and autonomy intersect to affect cultural production generally. Key fields for media are mass media production and restricted media production, which together with economic and political fields create relations of power that affect the type of product created.

(continued)

Topic Address	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Content and Effects	Effects Tradition	Raymond Bauer; Joseph Klapper; Russell Neuman & Lauren Guggenheim	Theories of the effects of media content on audiences have progressed from direct to mediated effects—from the hypodermic needle to two-step flow to reinforcement to selective exposure.
	Cultivation Theory	George Gerbner; Nancy Signorielli; James Potter	Television use cultivates or produces a common culture, particularly for heavy users.
	Agenda Setting Theory	Walter Lippmann; Maxwell McCombs, Donald Shaw & David Weaver	Media shape the public agenda. Media do not tell us what to think, only what we should be thinking about.
	Media Framing Theory	Todd Gitlin; Daniel Kahneman & Amos Tversky	The way that a story is put together or structured shapes the way people understand and are affected by the content (e.g., gain-frames or loss-frames).
Motivations, Uses, and Consumption	Transportation Theory	Melanie Green & Timothy Brock	Features of a narrative and individual characteristics influence whether people are transported into the narrative world.
	Spiral of Silence Theory	Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann	Media content and interpersonal networks shape whether an opinion is popular and thus influence whether people mute or voice their opinions about it.
	Social Action Media Studies	Gerard Schoening & James Anderson; Thomas Lindlof	Media content is interpreted within a community, and members of that community are influenced more by their peers than by the media.
	Uses and Gratifications Theory	Elihu Katz; Denis McQuail; Philip Palmgreen	Media consumers are motivated by their needs and select types of media to gratify these needs.
	Media and Channel Use Theories: Channel Complementarity Theory	Mohan Dutta-Bergman	New media do not replace old media; rather, people use media channels in a complementary way to address their motivations and needs.
	Media and Channel Use Theories: Dynamic Motivational Activation	Zheng Wang	Media use and time with media is determined by a complex dynamic of motivations, prior experience, and information processing.

NOTES

[1] Joseph B. Walther and Jeong-woo Jang, "Communication Processes in Participatory Websites," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 18 (2012): 2–15.

[2] For recent overviews and histories of mass communication theory, see Bradley S. Greenberg and Michael B. Salwen, "Mass Communication Theory and Research: Concepts and Models," in *An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research,* ed. Michael B. Salwen and Don W. Stacks (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1996), 63–78; and Robert S. Fortner, "Mediated Communication Theory," in *Building Communication Theories: A Socio/Cultural Approach*, ed. Fred L. Casmir (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994), 209–40.

[3] Joshua Meyrowitz, "Images of Media: Hidden Ferment—and Harmony—in the Field," *Journal of Communication* 43 (1993): 55–67; Joshua Meyrowitz, "Understandings of Media," *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 56 (1999): 44–53.

[4] For a brief summary of this body of theory see Donald Ellis, "Medium Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 644–49.

[5] McLuhan's best-known works are *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962); *The Mechanical Bride* (New York: Vanguard, 1951); *Understanding Media* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964); and Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium Is the Massage* (New York: Bantam, 1967). We have relied on the synthesis provided by Bruce Gronbeck, "McLuhan as Rhetorical Theorist," *Journal of Communication* 31 (1981): 117–28.

[6] J. W. Carey, "Harold Adams Innis and Marshall McLuhan," *Antioch Review* 27 (1967): 5–39. Innis's works include *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951); and *Empire and Communications,* 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).

[7] Good brief summaries of McLuhan's theory can be found in the following: Kenneth Boulding, "The Medium Is the Massage," in *McLuhan: Hot and Cool,* ed. Gerald Emanuel Stearn (New York: Dial, 1967), 56–64; Tom Wolfe, "The New Life Out There," in *McLuhan: Hot and Cool,* ed. Gerald Emanuel Stearn (New York: Dial, 1967), 34–56; and Carey, "Innis and McLuhan."

[8] McLuhan and Fiore, *The Medium Is the Massage.*

[9] Donald G. Ellis, *Crafting Society: Ethnicity, Class, and Communication Theory* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1999).

[10] For a brief summary, see David Holmes, "New Media Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 684–87.

[11] Mark Poster, *The Second Media Age* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995).

[12] See, for example, David Holmes, "Computer-Mediated Communication," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 161–64. W. James Potter argues that the term *mass communication*, although still used, is no longer really appropriate. He sees mass communication as characterized by audience heterogeneity, anonymity, limited interaction among audience members, and no leadership from among audience members in regard to media viewing. He argues that these characteristics offer a naïve view of audiences who always have been different and much more active in their use of media. More importantly, the media today are focusing on niche audiences, best indicated by the "cookies" on your computer browser, which give marketers very specific indicators of the product to market only to you. Thus, when you search the Internet, you may have ads for purses and shoes pop up while someone else will be presented with ads for camera accessories and digital-photography books. In other words, audiences of "one" have replaced "mass" audiences. See W. James Potter, *Media Literacy,* 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 44–45.

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6

Beyond Human Communication

The traditional communication model we have described in previous chapters includes the communicator, the message, and the medium. In its most simplistic form, the basic communication process has been viewed as an interaction in which two communicators, using some medium of communication, increasingly move toward a better understanding of the other through an exchange of messages. This chapter explicitly acknowledges the limitations of that model in that we extend communication to include interactions between humans and other animate and inanimate beings. Various terms have been coined to describe the kinds of interactions we discuss here—*nonhuman*, *posthuman*, *extrahuman*, *ahuman*, *transhuman*, *more than human*, and *other than human*. All of these terms suggest some kind of communication that extends the realm of interaction beyond the boundaries of the human. We are choosing to use the phrase *beyond human communication* as a covering term for these kinds of interactions because it is broad enough to encompass the interactions we address and because it references and literally extends the book's title. We explain the rationale for including these theories in the book for the first time and then illustrate four specific extensions of beyond human-to-human communication.

Foucault's assertion that the paradigm of humanism is in decline often is cited as one of the origins of the decentering of humans that is central to all of the theories in this chapter. When making his case for the disappearance of the human, Foucault suggests that the individual actor no longer will be the focus of or the perspective from which the world is viewed; rather, agency will be located in and distributed across and through beings and systems of all kinds. In shifting the focus to information, the privileged position of the subject disappears. Humans—long considered a special, distinctive species with qualities (language, superior intellect) that make it exceptional—no longer are privileged. Humans are merely bodies that carry information, and there is no meaningful difference between humans and any kind of animate or inanimate being or system—whether humans or animals or aliens or zombies or machines.[1]

Donna Haraway's work, spanning biology, primatology, feminist theory, and technoscience, also contributes to understandings of what it means to be beyond

the human. Across her work, Haraway explores the central question of what counts as natureculture; she elides the terms *nature* and *culture* to suggest the connections rather than the divisions between humans and other entities. To explore what is beyond the boundaries of the human—what it means to be all that is not us—she examines different kinds of entities, including primates, cyborgs, women, and the OncoMouse (a laboratory mouse engineered to carry an oncogene, which significantly increases the mouse's susceptibility to cancer and thus makes it especially suitable for cancer research). The cyborg,[2] the most famous of Haraway's menagerie, is a blending of organic and technological communication systems and is often used to represent the possibilities of extending and transcending the human to distribute agency throughout all kinds of cognitive systems. Not only do these various boundary creatures challenge traditional binaries—animal/human, human/object, human/machine, and nature/culture—they also suggest ways that all species, broadly defined, are dependent on and implicated with the other creatures through which they share the planet.

John Durham Peters, writing within the discipline of communication, offers a history of the "speaking animal" and the challenges and possibilities of the effort to communicate when a direct sharing of consciousness is impossible.[3] For Peters, all communication involves a touch of otherness, and once we acknowledge this fact, we are less restrictive in the boundaries we put around communication. We become open to exploring our communication with other creatures and with the nonhuman—from animals to extraterrestrials to angels to computers to technologies to objects.

The problem of communicating with these others is not all that different from the difficulties that characterize human-to-human communication, according to Peters. First communication can never be entirely successful; we cannot completely bridge the distance between beings or bodies. This means that otherness is always part of the communication equation. Furthermore, there can be a problem of recognizing the medium or message as an instance of communication. If a message came from aliens in outer space, we might not recognize it as a message; if a lion could speak, most of us would not understand him. Perhaps the lion's roar *is* the message from outer space. Messages of all kinds and from

From the Source . . .

I entered communication studies by accident as a master's student in English at the University of Utah. Communication studies seemed to my young and enchanted eyes a field in which a genuine interdisciplinary confluence was possible. What topic had called forth as much interdisciplinary research and reflection in the postwar era as communication? I thought I had found a field that would unite my diverse intellectual interests. Upon my transfer to my PhD Program at Stanford, I learned what I should have already known—that communication studies was a relatively narrow and parochial field in its vision of its mission and its past. I wrote *Speaking into the Air* to create an image and intellectual history of the field as I thought it deserved to be.

John Durham Peters

all kinds of beings might be all around us, and we simply fail to perceive them as messages. Communication, then, is always without guarantees because it is always a matter of managing otherness.

For Peters, then, the quest for communication with the nonhuman is both extraordinary and ordinary because there really is no other kind of communication. Strangeness is a hallmark of communication; and we clearly are surrounded by intelligence in all kinds of nonhuman forms, from bees, whales, porpoises, and computers (to name a few) with whom we have not learned to communicate. There is also the fact that humans themselves are many creatures—different genders, races, classes, ages—and our problem may be that we think of nonhumans as exotic when it is we who are exotic in all of our differences. All of the otherness and all of the problems we experience communicating with the "beyond humans" in our world are just extensions of the difficulties we can find in attempting to communicate among ourselves. Peters asks, "Why do we seek distant alien intelligence when we hardly know what to do with our own?"[4]

While acknowledging the challenges of "beyond human" communication, we remain intrigued by its possibilities. Our sense of the world gets bigger as the human is dethroned, as we relax our definition of what it means to communicate. Communication between humans and the others with whom we share the planet provides opportunities to imagine different worlds, different reasons for communicating, and different ways of communicating. We address four such kinds of conversations here: (1) between humans and nature; (2) between humans and objects; (3) between humans and technology; and (4) between humans and the divine.

These four sets of theories are representative of all of the largely unexplored kinds of interaction that exist beyond the human. The first of these, under the label of environmental communication, has been the most developed in the communication discipline. Conversations between humans and objects suggest the power of objects in interactions with humans, and one of the most potent kinds of human-object interactions is between humans and technology, so we have singled it out for special attention. Finally, conversations of a spiritual nature are reflected in theories about prayer as a form of communication. The chapter map (pp. 216–217) summarizes the four types of interactions.

Communication between Humans and Nature

In the science fiction novel, *The Judas Rose*, by Suzette Haden Elgin, human babies are placed with aliens for several hours a day and fairly quickly learn various alien languages. When human infants are placed with whales, however, the whales refuse to cooperate:

In every experiment that has been tried, the whales have simply done a Gandhi. They don't object, they don't charge the barrier, they don't turn belly up and die, they don't refuse to eat . . . they give us no trouble. But so long as a human infant is on the other side of the Interface partition, the whales do not make a single sound. Nor, so far as we can tell, do they make any movement—any body language—other than what is necessary to their survival. They just wait until somebody removes the infant, and then they resume normal behavior.[5]

In many ways, the communication discipline has been in a similar conundrum, seeking to communicate about and with nature but unsure of how to go about it—not to mention the issue of whether nature wants to talk to humans. Scholars in this area of environmental communication attempt to understand these complex relationships and issues.

Environmental communication, an interdisciplinary endeavor that draws from a variety of academic fields, has been of increasing interest to communication scholars. Emily Plec uses the phrase *internatural communication* to denote interactions "among and between natural communities and social groups that include participants from what we might initially describe as different classifications of nature."[6] Environmental communication scholars believe that how we communicate affects perceptions of the natural world as well as how we subsequently define and act upon our relations with and within nature. For environmental scholars, the conversation humans have about nature reflects, constructs, produces, and naturalizes human attitudes toward and practices in regard to the environment.[7]

Christine Oravec's 1984 study of the controversy over the building of the Hetch-Hetchy dam in California often is cited as the beginning of environmental communication research in the communication discipline. Oravec showed how the conservationist rather than the preservationist view prevailed in the building of the dam—material needs of humans won out over the view that the intact beauty of nature is important in and of itself. This privileging of the human viewpoint over the natural one continues to dominate many policy decisions in regard to the environment, and environmental scholars continue to push back against the way the human is centered and nature marginalized.

We will discuss four theories in environmental communication: (1) naturalizing culture; (2) materiality of nature; (3) othering of nature; and (4) animate rhetoric. Each theory elaborates difficulties with the human-nature conversation as traditionally conceptualized by communication scholars. That relationship is one of dominance, exemplified by Kenneth Burke's assertion of humans as "symbol-using animals," separated from nature and other creatures by "instruments of our own making."[8]

Naturalizing Culture

Donal Carbaugh's essay, "Naturalizing Communication and Culture," was one of the first to address how language shapes meanings about natural space.[9] His starting point is that communication, as traditionally conceptualized, sets up binaries—nature-culture, wilderness-civilization, animal-human, for example—as well as suggesting that reality is "out there," somehow separate from the language used to talk about the world. In other words, nature is an environment without culture, culture is an environment without nature, and communication is a way of saying something about each. Carbaugh argues instead that natural and cultural systems help shape each other and are radically consequential for each other. Thus, environmental communication is not just one kind of communication that is sometimes produced—rather, it is a dimension in all systems of communication practices. The question he poses is: "What is the nature of the communal conversation in which "the environment" is expressed (conceived and evaluated)?"[10]

Carbaugh answers this question in a later essay,[11] suggesting the need to balance the twin objectives of speaking about nature and literally listening to nature express itself.

He offers five touchstones to help humans listen to nature, captured in the acronym EARTH. The first is *environment*, which means having a dual allegiance to both words and worlds, each with voices that deserve our attention. *Active*, the second dimension, refers to a deliberate engagement with and responsiveness to earth and its people. *Responsibility* means aiming at the good, with nature as the measure of what is good. *Time* is necessary in order to know what environments have to say and to be able to act responsibly toward nature. Finally, *heuristic* explorations are needed to generate knowledge about communication as it mediates the relationship between people and earth's places and to generate new ways to proceed in understanding this relationship.

Carbaugh has developed a method of cultural discourse analysis (CuDA) over the course of his career to explicate the process of understanding culture and nature (as one of many subjects Carbaugh explores). CuDA incorporates theoretical, descriptive, interpretive, comparative, and critical analyses, beginning with the decision to focus on a particular communication practice. The researcher collects various instances of the practice across situations, the features of each instance, and then interprets how participants make sense of that by means of cultural assumptions, symbols, and codes.[12] The question guiding his method is: "What must be presumed—believed and/or valued—in order for that contribution to the conversation to be indeed what it is for these participants."[13]

From the Source . . .

I had been engaged in one of my favorite activities, hiking, when awestruck by the scene before me. It stopped me in my tracks as I marveled at the expansive view, sounds of water and birds. I had earlier been reading one of my favorite authors, Ralph Waldo Emerson, who wrote: "we know more from nature than we can at will communicate." Yes, indeed! I wondered if I could say something about that.

Donal Carbaugh

Carbaugh and Tovar Cerulli use Carbaugh's CuDA to examine specifically the discursive devices that link people to places.[14] They discuss five discursive hubs that can be used to explore cultural discourses: identity, action, feeling, relation, and dwelling. All five of these hubs are present, but one or more becomes explicit as a discourse when made so by practice. Taken together, these components comprise a matrix of discourses dealing with context and conduct that enable the scholar of culture and nature to explore what has been made of a place and the implications of that for what we can say and do there. These hubs extend Carbaugh's CuDA and demonstrate how to formulate a cultural "reading" of the meanings of communication practices for nature and culture. The next theory moves from the culture and context of nature to the materiality of nature.

The Materiality of Nature

Richard Rogers, writing a few years after Carbaugh's initial essay, picks up the discussion of the consequences of seeing humans as separate from nature.[15] For Rogers, the starting point for this separation is the disciplinary focus on reality as a construct of human symbol systems. While this has been useful in seeing "nature" as a social construct, there is also a downside—nature is in fact further objectified and silenced. Nature becomes something passive, something to be constituted by humans rather than an active force itself. The central agenda in his environmental work has been to work to create a space for "nature" as an active participant in shaping human perceptions, experiences, and definitions of "reality."

In order to address this separation, Rogers begins with the claim that we do not simply constitute the natural world through symbols—we are part of that world: "we are 'nature with a concept of nature.'"[16] He advocates for a view that acknowledges the inseparability of human words and worlds: "Discursive and material are inseparable. We do not just classify objects in books, we distribute bodies (in institutions and with architecture and urban design); we place animals in zoos, we designate wilderness areas, wildlife preserves, areas for multiple use. We build dams, blow up mountains, cut straight lines through and across the earth, carve up geography with geometric shapes using roads, canals, rails, pipelines, power lines, walls of sand, rock, and cement."[17] Rather than denying the materiality of nature—seeing it only as constructed—the natural world can function as something not only imbued with meaning but which itself can provide experience with meaning.

From the Source . . .

Despite being immersed in scholarly perspectives that posit all experience as socially and symbolically constructed, I found I could not dismiss my felt responses to the natural world as nothing but abstract human constructs. In embracing constitutive theories, environmental communication perpetuated the very silencing of nature that the field often criticized. I wrote this essay in an attempt to establish a place for both nature and embodied experiences of the natural world within communication studies.

Richard Rogers

What we need, Rogers argues, is theories that embrace human interdependence with and inseparability from nature rather than theories that continue to reify the separation. Such theories would not privilege exchange between entities but rather would see the entities as "fluid forces" that mutually engage each other in a nonlinear, embedded, and unpredictable dialogue. Rogers lays out four criteria that would characterize a materialist, transhuman dialogic theory of communication: (1) a place for the inclusion of "natural forces, traits, and structures" in communication theory; (2) an affirmation that humans are embodied beings embedded in a world not entirely of their own construction; (3) possibilities for listening to nonhuman entities, forces, and nondominant voices

and what they contribute to the production of meaning and materiality; and (4) the replacement of binaries, such as subject/object, social/natural, ideational/material, with a view of humans and the natural world as in dialogic, interdependent, and fluid relationships. The result of such theories will be a more sustainable and affirming relationship to the environment for humans. The next theory continues this focus by seeking to reframe the relationships of human and nature.

The Othering of Nature

Tema Milstein is another communication scholar who seeks to disrupt the traditional Western conversation about and between humans and nature. Her work examines human relations within/in/as nature, from urban to wild contexts, exposing and questioning the narratives that underpin ecocultural relations. Milstein is concerned in part with the dialectics within Western discourse that promote human-nature separation, such as mastery vs. harmony, othering vs. connection, and exploitation vs. idealism. Mastery over nature often has been accompanied by an assertion of social progress. Taming nature, in other words, means progress for Western civilization at the expense of the harmony that operates within nature. The othering vs. connection dialectic deals with separation and human-centeredness versus connection and ecological centeredness. The final dialectic, exploitation vs. idealism, refers to the Western unrestrained extractive stance toward ecosystems and their elements versus a stance of respect and reciprocity.

The first pole in each dialectic—mastery, othering, and exploitation—dominate the majority of Western discourses, which means the counter themes have less opportunity to be heard. Using zoos as a case study,[18] Milstein shows how the exoticized presentation of "zoo'd" animals exemplifies the theme of othering. In addition, the ways zoos present animals in "natural" exhibits masks the mastery of the zoological gaze. Given the dominance of these themes and that zoos are a profitable source of entertainment, it is difficult to imagine zoos promoting any changes in attitude about human relations with/as animals or nature. For zoos to forefront harmony, connection, and idealism rather than mastery, othering, and exploitation, different models need to be put into place. Milstein suggests humans need to respectfully come into contact with wild animals in ways that are witnessing and rehabilitating rather than objectifying and captivating.

Milstein turns to wild settings to extend her discussion of the Western symbolic and material separation of humans and nature by unpacking the performer metaphor, through which humans see themselves not only as separate from but audience to nature.[19] Using the case of nature tourism generally and whale watching in particular, Milstein observed the reactions of tourists when they saw endangered orcas and other wild animals. The orcas were talked about as putting on a show for humans—entertaining them—and doing so deliberately. Some tourists even talked about orcas choosing to come to their boat, providing another way to preserve the specialness of and centering of humans. The performer metaphor reasserts cultural binaries of self-other and human-nature, putting increased pressure on the more-than-human world and reducing the opportunity for human insight about other relational possibilities. Milstein suggests that changing the metaphor from spectator to watchful witness, with both

zoos and nature tourism, can help shift humans' framing of nature from separation and exploitation to ecological interdependence and responsibility.

From the Source . . .

> Our introductory textbooks often begin with the assertion that what sets humans apart is that we communicate. This never rang true to me. This distinctly Western notion ignores tens of thousands of years knowing otherwise—that our species is part of an interconnected, co-sensing, and co-expressive world. Yet this assertion, and the Western human-nature binary in which it is embedded, persist, constraining views of our own place with/in/as nature even as we lose our footing.
>
> Tema Milstein

In another study of whales as a tourist attraction, Milstein explored another kind of reaction of tourists to whales—silence.[20] Milstein found that those who participate in whale watching—as part of the industry or as tourists—experience two kinds of silence. The first is a silence beyond words—an ineffable reaction—at the power of the encounter. The second is a recognition of having no proper words, in most contemporary Western languages, to adequately express the profound nature of the experience of connecting beyond the human. The silence of the humans essentially opens a space for the whales to speak for themselves, decentering, if only momentarily, Western humans. The next theory continues the discussion about animals having a place in the conversation and speaking for themselves.

Animate Rhetoric

Natasha Seegert is interested in the intersections and relationships between animals—the human animal and the many more-than-human animals who are part of the world. She focuses in particular on the ways animals challenge and transform human boundaries and barriers, disrupting how we think about animals and nature. Seegert is not interested in dethroning humans as privileged symbol users but rather in widening and wilding rhetoric to encompass other animate beings. Seegert suggests that this means looking at and listening to—not just talking about—the animate others in our world.

For Seegert, one of the major shifts involved in this wilding of rhetoric is replacing the rational, which has been at the heart of rhetoric, with notions of connection and multiplicity. No longer is there an isolated rhetor speaking to nature but a rhetor connecting with a world that is full of voices already speaking. Seegert is careful to note that she is not claiming that "everything is speaking or that everything is speaking to us." Rather, she wants us to consider and pursue the possibility that all things might be speaking. It is a call to reconnect to those discourses—precognitive, prelinguistic, prerational—that may not be as clear as human speech but nevertheless reveal the world and ask us to engage it.

The wilding of rhetoric, then, is not only a way to reconceptualize rhetoric—to invite a different way of thinking about animals and nature—but a metaphor that

From the Source . . .

Animate rhetoric—the possibility that everything might be speaking—has surrounded and fascinated me from an early age. Household dogs romped between domestic and wilder worlds out of my reach. California poppies performed complex magic as they closed their blossomed heads at dusk and opened them again at dawn. The ancient chortle of sandhill cranes produced an incomprehensible ache in me. Rewilding rhetoric with the voices of animate others is not new. Many aboriginal cultures assert that the world is alive. And yet, we have too frequently lost that sense of alterity and wonder in our urbanized environments. To ignore the voices of the more-than-human world produces impoverished awareness and environmental degradation. Animate rhetoric forces us to consider ourselves in relation to other beings, and produces both humility and kinship.

Natasha Seegert

extends beyond human-nature connections. Animate rhetoric calls for engaged play with marginalized perspectives, performances, and voices that return us to ancient, enduring, and wild ways of knowing. This shift is important not only for rhetoric but for the planet; no longer is there a single human center but rather multiple centers composed of multiple species. It is an opportunity to reconnect with everything that lies outside the carefully rational and carefully understood human speech and to experience all that the animate world has to offer.

This section has explored various perspectives about human-nature communication. These theories emphasize the possibility of animal communication and the need to reframe the communication dynamic from talking about to talking with nature. These theorists suggest that humans have emphasized control and dominance over nature, minimizing the role of animals and nature in the communication model as a result. We turn next to communication between human and objects, another subject of growing interest to communication scholars.

Communication between Humans and Objects

Conversation between humans and objects challenges traditional notions of communication that demand both participants be animate, capable of responding in some way to the communication efforts of the other. We discuss two theories here that privilege the object in the communication interaction: (1) actor-network theory; and (2) Jean Baudrillard's privileging of the object. Actor network theory accounts for the role of objects as agents of communication in interaction networks with humans, and Jean Baudrillard's interest in the object suggests it plays an important role in disrupting the rational worldview with which humans have approached the world.

Actor Network Theory

Developed by science and technology scholars, including Michel Callon, Bruno Latour, and John Law, actor network theory (ANT) initially focused on

efforts to take into account not only what scientists do but what nonhuman objects contribute to the process of the scientific enterprise.[21] Starting from the practices that explain the production of science—from sensors, graphs, political agendas, and strategic alliances as well as the scientists themselves—ANT scholars were interested in how the scientific enterprise emerges from the communication activities that comprise it. In communication, actor-network theory was taken up by organizational communication scholars, especially James Taylor, Elizabeth Van Every, and François Cooren, who see an organization not as the starting point but as the product of communication activities.[22] Thus, they study the organizing properties of communication that occur among various agencies in interaction, from managers, procedures, computers, machines, architectural elements, ideologies, policies, and attitudes, to name but a few. Chapter 9 discusses the works of these theorists in greater detail.

Rather than treating an organization, system, or network as a fixed and relatively stable entity, ANT scholars are interested in how the entity emerges in the concrete mechanisms and interactions that comprise it. Societies, organizations, communities, and ideologies, then, emerge in conversation. The act of teaching, for instance, requires students, desks, computers, books, and any number of other human and nonhuman agents to be successful. These comprise the network of the classroom, and all participants must be taken into account to have a complete understanding of interaction in that setting. Actor-network theorists thus are interested in the ways the world is literally performed into being through interaction by analyzing and taking into account all of the elements that give rise to a communication product, including both human and nonhuman components. ANT scholars thus believe that humans and nonhumans should be integrated into the same conceptual framework and assigned equal amounts of agency—a stance that privileges interaction over the actors themselves and challenges traditional distinctions between subject and object.

Action, then, is not something done by actors but is always in the process of development and emergence. In other words, action exists outside of actors; it is articulated and rearticulated in the networks and patterns and relationships that emerge. For ANT, agency is productive and collective (networked) rather than possessed; it is not the property of an actor but what emerges in a network of interaction. This is not to say that an individual cannot act but rather that the individual is always part of an actor-network, linked to other humans, objects, discourses, and policies in networks of various kinds. It is through communication that the relationships within a system get articulated; communication, then, is crucial to how systems and networks emerge and the relationships that develop as part of that process.

As an illustration of actor-network theory, Kristen Cole studied *objectùm sexuality internationale* (OSI), a website devoted to those who feel love and affection toward objects.[23] Bridges, buildings, cars, musical instruments, sporting equipment, amusement rides, fences, and even languages and accents are among the objects discussed by those who experience love and desire toward objects. *Objectùm sexuality* (OS) largely became visible as the result of a documentary film about the organization that aired in 2008, and the subsequent development of a website. The documentary, *Married to the Eiffel Tower: Landmark Sex,* tells the story of Erika Eiffel, a self-identified *objectùm sexual* who

pronounced her commitment to the Eiffel Tower in a public marriage ceremony. Eiffel is also one of the developers of the *objectùm sexuality* website.[24]

Objectùm sexuality sees objects as significant actors within the co-construction of affect and desire. From an ANT perspective, what appears to be a stable view of sexuality as existing between humans is in fact the effect of the constant patterning and repatterning of a particular view of sexuality that occurs within networks of interaction. In privileging the interaction in networks itself over humans, ANT allows for the role of objects in sexuality to be taken seriously.

Cole began her study of OS by coding for key actors that comprise the four major "networks" or "systems of translation evident on the OS website. These consist of (1) the origins of OS; (2) what it means to be OS; (3) OS experiences; and (4) pleas for OS acceptance. Within the "origins" network, the *Internet*, *flyers*, and *connections* are examples of some of the nonhuman actors identified. For the second network and what it means to be OS, *gender*, *obsession*, and *mainstream* are some of the actors identified. Within the "OS experience," *marriage, public landmark,* and *polyamory* are some of the prominent object actors. Finally, *bravery*, *shame,* and *education* are nonhuman actors within the network labeled "pleas for acceptance."

Cole shows how OSI has constructed new actor-networks from these four starting points. These new networks occur at terminological, ontological, axiological, and epistemological levels, and within each network, new actors emerge—most of which are not human. At the terminological level, the website takes traditional terms and transforms them. For example, concepts such as *attraction* and *marriage* are recognizable concepts within the realm of relationships, love, and marriage, but the OS community transforms the meanings of these terms by adding new actors to these concepts. For instance, they add geometry as a possible source of attraction to objects. In other words, the composition of the object can be physically appealing. The geometric symmetry of the Eiffel Tower, for example is one of the reasons for Erika Eiffel's attraction to it.

At an ontological level, OSI proposes a view of reality that changes the way objects are conceptualized. Members of the OSI community construct a worldview in which objects become living beings with souls capable of receiving and reciprocating love, desire, and communication. In doing so, OSI works to change perceptions about the unexplored worlds of objects and the potential for objects to interact. At an axiological level, the interconnection of all beings is emphasized. Viewing objects as soul bearing and reciprocal encourages a valuing of all beings, both animate and inanimate. This valuing and interconnection of beings implicates humans and objects within each other's lives in a way that challenges human exceptionalism. Finally, at an epistemological level, existing ways of knowing are supplemented with knowledge about object interaction.

Each terminological, ontological, axiological, and epistemological level informs and builds on the others. These strategies begin by acknowledging dominant actor networks as safe and comfortable starting points of conversation but then add to them OS experiences that traditionally have been left out of these assumptions. The building of these strategies facilitates a worldview where OS can be understood and accepted. The OSI website is an effective rhetorical tool for communicating a new and unusual message. The next theory explores a different perspective on communication with objects.

The Revenge of the Crystal

The second theory of human communication with objects is offered by Jean Baudrillard, a French scholar who envisions a reversal of the human-object relationship because of the growing power of the world of objects over the subject. "The revenge of the crystal," which is also the title of one of Baudrillard's books, summarizes Baudrillard's views of objects in the contemporary commodity age. Baudrillard uses the word *crystal* to refer to objects; it is the perfect synecdoche because a crystal is a hyperreal object—more transparent and heavier than ordinary glass, glassier than glass. Objects are getting back at or retaliating against humans, taking the upper hand in the human-object relationship.

The starting point for Baudrillard's theory is the increasing separation of signs from the objects they represent.[25] At first, a sign was a simple representation of an object or condition. The sign had a clear connection to what it signified. In the second stage, that of *counterfeits,* signs assumed a less direct relationship to the objects they stood for. Signs themselves produced new meanings that were not necessarily the original and intended meaning. Instead, they were counterfeit and deceptive. The next stage is what Baudrillard calls *production*; in it, machines were invented to take the place of humans, making objects independent of any human use of signifiers. In this stage, production overtakes the symbol and manipulates the appearance and replication of signs. Today, we are in an era of *simulation*, and there is no longer any semblance of or comparison with reality. In Baudrillard's fourth stage, signs create reality. Signs, endlessly reproduced, point to nothing real. The movie, *The Pirates of the Caribbean,* is an excellent example. The movie is based on a Disneyland ride, which itself has no real existence; it is a movie about the sign of a sign.

There are several consequences of the fact that the meanings of objects are now separated from the original reason for the object. First, consumption now precedes production. Humans used to work toward something—a house, a car, a refrigerator—and gaining that possession was the reward. Today, with the ubiquitous availability of credit, objects are consumed before they are earned; objects and the satisfaction of needs are the preconditions of consumption, not the end of consumption. Furthermore, because there is no longer a natural connection between needs and production, the object is less important for its use value than for its value as a possession. Where once we needed farm animals to do work for us, we now value pets as a matter of ownership. We buy a watch to wear as a form of apparel and to show that we can possess the time as an object of our own. Automobiles are status symbols more than something to drive, clothing is purchased for fun, and people consume snacks just to kill time. To consume an object is not so much about consuming that product as it is about consuming a meaning.

A third consequence of the abstraction of objects from their social contexts is that humans are becoming objectified by objects and subject to their demands. While humans believe they are in charge of objects, in fact, they are becoming the object of those objects. "We flatter ourselves that we discover the object and conceive it as waiting there meekly to be discovered. But perhaps the cleverer party here is not the one we think. What if it were the object which discovers us in all this? What if it were the object which invented us?"[26] Collecting

something—dolls, stamps, art—offers an example. The collector seems to be the subject in the relationship—he undertakes a process of ranking, sorting, and classifying the objects that have been collected. But the objects are not passive in this relationship. Objects accumulate and reflect a particular image back to their owners; they create and preserve an image of the humans they surround. Similarly, pets are objectified by humans, made into what humans want them to be. At the same time, they exalt the image of the humans they are with. They turn the objectification on its head, and end up doing just as much objectification as the humans. The image of an independent subject acting on the world no longer holds in this system where signs reproduce signs and spin out of control in an excess Baudrillard calls *hypertelia*.

Baudrillard suggests humans tried to control the world through the invention of rationality, and *banal* strategies are those that function within the rational paradigm. According to Baudrillard, rationality exists because humans cannot bear to think of the world as illusion, so they make it exist and signify at all costs—removing all evidence of its arbitrary, accidental character and making sure nothing is left to chance. In fact, what humans are doing is producing a simulacrum called *reality*. Now, however, with the excessive simulation and excess of meaning, rationality is coming apart. What remains is the way the world really is, a world Baudrillard describes as a series of collisions, juxtapositions, opportunities, and coincidences—a world of chance, destiny, and fate. In this world, *fatal strategies* operate, and they privilege the object. Seduction is an example of a fatal strategy because it is not a rational exchange but a magical and mysterious way of connecting that is counter to the linear, produced world of rational sense making. It violates cause and effect and instead celebrates appearances; in a society where usually too much is said, seduction is subtle and secret, refusing to reveal everything. Fatal strategies, like seduction itself, offers a return to a world of illusion before rationality.

According to Baudrillard, the subject has been overprotected and no longer can manage a coherent representation of the world, so we must turn to objects and fate. He offers a comparison: "the only difference between a banal theory and a fatal theory is that in the former the subject always believes itself to be more clever than the object, while in the latter the object is always taken to be more clever, more cynical, more ingenious than the subject which it awaits at every turn."[27] In fact, the strategies of the object exceed the subject's understanding; the world is much more active, passionate, and magical than humans can know, and the object is in control.

Using Baudrillard's notion of simulacra, Jennifer Stromer-Galley and Kirsten Foot examine how citizens perceive the role of the Internet in political campaigns and the role they themselves play in political campaigns by using the interactive features of the Internet.[28] The researchers asked citizens to participate in focus groups in New Hampshire before the 2000 presidential primary elections. Focus group members were asked to examine at least two presidential candidate websites, one from each major political party, and to comment and reflect on what they saw. They were then encouraged to navigate the sites as a group, and their talk was analyzed for its views about interactivity.

The most salient aspect of media interaction was a sense of control. Participants felt they had control over their exposure to the depth, breadth, and config-

uration of content on a website. The Internet offered greater choice and control over the information to which they exposed themselves, and they did not need to waste time with information in which they were not interested. The responsiveness of the Internet itself also gave them a sense of empowerment—they could quickly get the information they wanted. Finally, the websites enabled citizens to directly email candidates, which gave them a sense of communicating directly with the candidate. Generally, then, the members of the focus groups identified candidate websites as having the potential for greater civic engagement in the electoral process in several important ways.

Stromer-Galley and Foot suggest that the interactive components of candidates' websites create a simulacrum of interaction with citizens. In other words, the Internet creates a representation of reality—a sense of interaction and control—that is not real. The Internet interaction stands in for or is a substitute for actual interaction with the candidate. Furthermore, the user believes he is in charge of the interaction when, in fact, his choices are constrained by what information the candidate has placed on the website in the first place. For instance, the candidate only answers questions he wants to answer, and if there is an issue on which the candidate is undecided, there usually is little or no information about that issue on the site. The website, then, is the object in control; it gives the appearance that the experience of interaction is real and under user control, but it is always the website that is in charge of how the interaction proceeds.

This section identified two different approaches to the study of human-object communication. The first, actor-network theory, illustrates how objects are a part of our larger network of communication relationships. The second, the revenge of the crystal, argues that objects have a much larger role in communication relationships than we imagine. We turn next to communication between humans and technology, an area of burgeoning interest to communication scholars. While human-technology communication clearly can be considered a subset of human-object communication generally, the advent of digital media and networked technology seem to be in a league of their own. And while humans have been interacting with technology for a long time—technology is simply the application of science to solve human problems—the advent of the computer, the Internet, and social media have brought human-technological interactions to the forefront of daily interactions.

Communication between Humans and Technology

The available interactions between humans and technology differ considerably from traditional human-human interactions. Where once technology was an instrument in the hands of humans, it now often is an end in itself: A cell phone is a means of communication, but more often than not, it is a way to occupy time and simply be connected, rather than to achieve communication with another person. The four theories discussed here suggest four different kinds of relationships between humans and technology: (1) media equation theory; (2) media dependency theory; (3) the function of gamer play and identity; and (4) media as transformative. The first, media equation theory demonstrates that we treat the media as if they were human—we envision them to have the same features and

characteristics we do—we interact with them as if they were us. With media dependency theory, the relationship created is one of reliance—we depend on and are affected strongly by content from media. The gaming framework presented here suggests that games as a medium serve many different functions and meet many different needs; the relationship is one of transference, since many of the functions carry over from the gaming environment to the real world. Finally, media as transformative suggests that humans are transformed or made different by media.

Media Equation Theory

In the movie *Her,* Joaquin Phoenix plays a man who develops a relationship with Samantha, his phone's operating system personified through a female voice (Scarlett Johansson).[29] That the characters in the movie do not find this odd speaks to media equation theory. Developed in the 1990s by Byron Reeves and Clifford Nass, media equation theory suggests that we respond to and react to communication media the same way we do to actual people.[30] In other words, we treat our technology—our computers, phones, televisions, and the like—not as mere tools or appliances but as real social actors. This explains why, for instance, your computer may seem to have a personality and why you talk to it and get impatient when it "misbehaves." As part of the development of the media equation hypothesis, Reeves and Nass replicated psychological studies that dealt with basic rules of human-to-human interaction but substituted media for one of the humans. They found that the human-human rules held for human-media interactions in virtually every case.

Manners, personality, emotions, and social roles were among the areas investigated by Reeves and Nash. They found, for instance, that people are polite to the computer they routinely use when asked to evaluate its performance using that same computer; they are less polite and more honest when they use a different computer to perform the evaluation. In terms of personality, we ascribe personality traits to almost anything that has the semblance of a face—the grill and headlights of a car, for instance. When the Neon car was first introduced in 1995, the ad campaign showed the front of the car, which appeared to be smiling, with the caption, "Say hello to Neon." Not surprising, then, we ascribe personality traits to our computers, our phones, and our other devices and get angry when Siri claims to know a better way home.

We also ascribe social roles to media—the computer is an expert, an ally, an enemy. The same television content shown on a news channel will be considered more credible than that same content on a general TV station; we attribute expertness or credibility to the form of the media itself as we might to a person. If working with a computer on a problem, we might begin to see it as a friend and ally or obstinate enemy. Similarly, we attribute gender roles to technology as well, responding to male-voiced computers as if they were men and often judging them to be more knowledge about technological issues than a female-voiced computer would be.[31]

Media equation theory is not an unusual phenomenon, according to Reeves and Nash. Rather our tendency to treat media as one of us—to react to a machine as if it has presence and human properties—is an automatic and natural response. Our brains cannot tell the difference between a real and a medi-

ated scenario, so we apply the rules of interpersonal relationships to human-technological interactions. Three explanations have been proposed for why this phenomenon occurs—anthropomorphism, the computer (or other technological device) as proxy, and mindlessness. Anthropomorphism suggests that we perceive the technological device as essentially human because that is the way we are used to responding to others in our environment. The computer as proxy argument suggests we see the computer as a human artifact; it represents a human being because it embodies the responses of the human producer or programmer. By contrast, mindlessness refers to the human tendency to act on autopilot—to react to certain cues that are humanlike without thinking about or realizing what we are doing.

From the Source . . .

Cliff and I came to Stanford at about the same time, separated in the department by what seemed to be two radically different interests—television (Byron) and computers (Cliff). In the early 1990s there was little recognition of convergence or similarity across technologies. As we kept talking about how people responded to interactions with these two technologies (easy because our offices were next to each other), we began to realize that the responses were identical. People treated pictures and words and interactions like counterparts in real life regardless of the technology used to deliver the content.

Byron Reeves

Daniel Johnson and John Gardner, interested in team formation and affiliation, use media equation theory to examine team performance when a computer is a member of the team.[32] They assigned students to all-human teams or human-computer teams and asked them to individually complete two tasks; they then asked them to compare answers with their other team members. The computer's scores were manipulated to always be at the same level of disagreement for each human score, and the differences were substantial. Participants who had high experience with computers enjoyed the tasks completed on the computer more than participants who worked on their own, suggesting a group affiliation effect. This was true no matter what team they were on. In terms of reaction to the computer scores, those with high experience with computers on the all-human team changed their responses to be like the computer's suggestions to a greater extent than participants on human-computer teams. Those on the human-computer team were less positive about the quality of information provided by the computer and described themselves as being less open to being influenced by the computer than participants working with only human team members. So despite responding positively to being on a team that included a computer, these participants marginalized and dismissed the computer's responses to the task.

These findings suggest evidence of media equation effects among those with more experience with computers. These participants were more likely to treat the computer as a human but to assign a negative value to the information it

offered. This is media equation because you must perceive the computer as a teammate for there to be any reason to act negatively toward it and the information it provides. Paradoxically, highly experienced computer users are easily able to accept the computer as a team member but to treat the computer as a "black sheep," an outlier whose views are derogated and dismissed. Perhaps participants generate this construction because it strengthens and protects existing team identity or perhaps because they see it as human or perhaps because they are simply mindless in their computer use. Regardless of the reason, high experience participants provide support for media equation theory. In contrast, participants with low experience with computers showed no evidence of media equation behavior.

From a human-human relationship, imposed onto a technological medium, we turn now to a dependency relationship with media. Humans come to rely on particular media, which determines how the content of those media affect them.

Media Dependency Theory

Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur originally proposed media dependency theory (also called media system dependency theory) to address theories that simplistically suggest media reinforce previously held attitudes.[33] Consistent with uses and gratifications theory (discussed in chapter 5), dependency theory claims that audiences depend on media information to meet certain needs and to achieve certain goals. But an individual does not depend on all media equally, and Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur developed dependency theory to sort out the relationship between audiences, media, and broader social issues and needs. In the most general terms, this theory states that the more dependent an individual is on a particular media source for having his needs fulfilled, the more important that medium will be to him. The audience-media-society relationship is key to media dependency theory; society is viewed as a structure in which individuals, groups, organizations, and other social systems are interrelated, and an audience is affected not only by media content but also by the environment in which they consume that content.

According to Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, two factors determine how dependent you will become on any given medium. First, you will be more dependent on media that meet a number of needs than on media that satisfy just a few. Media can serve a number of functions, such as monitoring government activities, reporting news, enabling you to keep in touch with friends, and providing entertainment. For any given group of people, some of these functions are more important than others, and your dependence on information from a given medium increases when it supplies information that is more central to you. If you follow sports carefully, you probably will become dependent on ESPN or SI.com (*Sports Illustrated online).* A person who is not interested in sports probably will not even know on what channel to find ESPN, may never have looked at *Sports Illustrated,* let alone SI.com, and typically skips the entire sports section of the newspaper.

The second source of dependency is social stability. During stable times, dependency on media may go way down. When social change and conflict are high, however, established institutions, beliefs, and practices are challenged, forcing a reevaluation and perhaps new choices in terms of media consumption.

At such times, reliance on the media for information increases. The use of and dependence on social media was critical during Arab Spring.[34] Cell phones, Twitter, Facebook, and email enabled protesters to organize demonstrations quickly, to monitor traffic and government activities, and to disseminate information about events to wide networks. Cell phone cameras also recorded the protests and instantaneously sent the images locally, nationally, and globally, raising awareness, encouraging conversations about, and mobilizing revolutionary sentiment.

Another tenet of media dependency theory is that individuals who grow dependent on a particular segment of the media will tend to be more affected, both cognitively and emotionally, by content from the media on which they depend. If you depend on a certain website for news, you will be more impacted by information from that source than from sources that do not matter much to you. Consequently, people are affected in different ways and to different degrees by the media. This is an important feature of media dependency theory because it suggests we each have a different relationship to a particular media source, and it is impossible to say that television affects everyone in the same way.

Of course, individuals' needs, motives, and uses of media are contingent on outside factors that may not be within their control. In other words, one's needs are not always strictly personal but may be shaped by the culture or by various social conditions. These outside factors act as constraints on what and how media can be used and on the availability of non-media alternatives. For example, an elderly person who does not drive and has few friends may depend on television in a way that other individuals, whose life situations are different, will not. A commuter may rely on radio for information and news. A teenager may become dependent on iTunes because of certain norms in his social group. In general, "the more readily available, the greater the perceived instrumentality, and the more socially and culturally acceptable the use of a medium is, the more probable that media use will be regarded as the most appropriate functional alternative."[35]

From the Source . . .

When I was in graduate school, I was well trained in all of the reasons why media have no or limited effects. In 1968, I received my PhD in the turbulent times of Vietnamese War and civil rights protests and went almost immediately to be a codirector of the Media and Violence Task Force of the Violence Commission. All of my training could not explain all of the media effects I was observing all around me (e.g., social movement formation and spread). So, I set out to try and develop a theory that could account for why and when media do and do not have important effects on individuals, groups, and societies. That theory became media system dependency theory.

Sandra Ball-Rokeach

Furthermore, the more alternatives an individual has for gratifying needs, the less dependent the individual will become on any single medium. The number of functional alternatives, however, is not just a matter of individual choice

or even of psychological traits; it is limited by factors such as availability of certain media. In the case of a natural disaster such as an earthquake, for instance, cell phones may not function, and individuals may be forced to rely on emergency broadcasting systems almost exclusively. On the other hand, many individuals today are highly dependent on their cell phones to manage all of their communication, from phone calls to email to texts to tweets.[36]

Using media dependency theory, Chei Sian Lee explored expressions of grief on YouTube sites following the death of Michael Jackson. With the advent of online Web memorials, individuals can share their thoughts, emotions, and experiences of grief publicly by posting comments, responding to videos, and liking or disliking what others have posted online. Media dependency theory explains how and why users turned to networking sites for information about Michael Jackson's death and as a place to express emotions of grief.

Data from 60 YouTube videos were collected and coded for emotions from June 25, 2009, the date of Jackson's death, to July 16, 2009, the date of his public memorial service. Four major emotion categories emerged: sadness/disappointment, anger/frustration/disgust, happy/joy, and love/pride. These differed across the weeks and by gender, with females posting more sadness comments over the weeks and posting almost all of the comments in the love/pride category. Males, on the other hand, posted more comments in the angry category across the weeks.

The comments revealed that the consumption of media content about Jackson triggered the expression of emotional responses, with YouTube providing a platform to address a dependency relationship. Such expressions helped YouTube consumers come to terms with Jackson's death, understand their emotions, and cope with how they felt. At the same time, the audience was empowered because they could rely on multiple sources for information—i.e., other users—as well as be the producers of information themselves.[37] The development of social networking sites and their interactive nature allows individuals to create information, not just consume it. This suggests a possible extension of media dependency theory. Those who turned to YouTube videos after Jackson's death felt more in control because they could do something to cope with his death. We turn next to games, another medium that generates a transference relationship with humans. The fact of playing as much as what is played substantially affects how individuals experience and relate to the medium of games and how they take those experiences into the offline world.

Digital Play and Media Transference

Frederik De Grove and his colleagues systematically examine digital games as a popular mediated format.[38] They have been concerned especially with what determines whether someone plays digital games and what constitutes a gamer identity. Thus, their work offers insight into the functions of playing digital games as well as the needs met in doing so and with the skills and practices that transfer from online to offline environments. Digital games are defined by five major characteristics: they offer (1) play and (2) stories within a (3) rule-based, (4) social environment. Furthermore, because players can (5) manipulate the rules of the system, players participate in shaping the content of the game, which distinguishes games from other popular entertainment media. De Grove and his colleagues suggest that a framework for gaming must take these defin-

ing aspects of games into account in addition to the game repertoire or game genres, individual expectations of game players, and the environment in which game playing occurs.

In-depth interviews with those who play digital games were used to generate the constructs for the framework of game use and motivation. De Grove and his colleagues sought diversity across interviewees in terms of sex, age, and playing frequency. The interviews yielded nine outcomes that account for game playing: (1) performance—how well a player expects to perform in the game; (2) agency—what a player expects regarding his ability to play the game according to his own preferences; (3) sociability—a player's expectations about being able to share the experience with friends; (4) status—what a player can expect about receiving respect from other players; (5) believability—a player's expectations about coherence and realism in terms of audiovisual aspects of story, setting, topic, and characters in the game; (6) involvement—how involved a player expects to be in the narrative of the game; (7) escapism—a player's expectations about leaving daily routine behind and experiencing things that would not be possible in real life; (8) pastime—a player's expectations about killing time when playing; and (9) moral self-reaction—how a player evaluates the activity of playing digital games. When these outcomes are examined in relation to game repertoires, playing time, and context, a better understanding of the gaming environment emerges. The large number of functions met by game playing mirrors the offline world; gaming appears to transfer to offline environments, offering many of the same expectations and rewards as nongaming activities.

Although digital games continue to reach a larger and more diverse audience, only a small portion of those who play games consider themselves gamers. Understanding why someone does or does not identify as a gamer adds insights about social identity and the digital environment—another avenue pursued by De Grove and his colleagues.[39] Interviewing 100 high school students who play digital games, the researchers asked about frequency of game play, friendship networks, and degree of association with a gamer identity.

The study identified several indicators pointing to the likelihood of classifying oneself or others in the category of gamer. Friendship networks were found to provide a context in which a gamer identity can flourish—if someone sees one's friendship network as comprised of gamers, he is more likely to consider himself a gamer. The frequency of play is the most important predictor of self-categorization as a gamer—the more frequently one plays digital games, the stronger one will, on average, identify as a gamer. In addition, the kind of games consumed are relevant indicators of gamer identity: people playing what are typically considered core genres tend to identify more strongly as gamers. Finally, age is significantly related to self-identification as a gamer. Younger male players tended to identify more strongly as gamers than did older or female players.

De Grove's research suggests the importance of theorizing gaming as contextual—in terms of both a social milieu and friendship groups. The indicators of a gaming identity and gaming outcomes provide the framework for understanding how and why individuals consume digital games, the social contexts in which that consumption occurs, and the meanings given to gaming activities. For our purposes, issues of identity, agency, and control clearly emerge when an individual

engages the game environment. Games provide much more than entertainment; within and beyond the gaming environment, they often affect friendship networks, levels of status and self-respect, and the ability to engage narrative. The gaming relationship, then, transfers in many ways to the offline environment.

Cuihua Shen, Peter Monge, and Dmitri Williams explore network structure and social capital in a virtual world, a study that offers insight into how one of De Grove's elements—social networks—function in a game environment.[40] Addressing concerns about the decline in collective activities and civic engagement in contemporary society, they asked whether new media technologies are weakening or strengthening social capital, defined as the social networks and resources that accumulate with those networks. These researchers distinguish *bridging social capital* from *bonding social capital: Bridging social capital* results from weak ties that cross disparate groups, while *bonding* results from strong ties that provide emotional and substantive support to a small, trusting, largely homogenous community. Processes of *brokerage* and *closure* define how the two types of social capital are realized. *Brokerage* refers to social structures where people build connections across groups to unconnected others; the more disconnected the contacts in a person's network, the more the individual is exposed to diverse opinions and practices. *Closure*, on the other hand, refers to a social structure where an individual links to already connected individuals; in such a closed network, existing knowledge and opinions are upheld and reinforced.

Shen, Monge, and Williams were interested in how brokerage and closure operate in online game communities and the consequences of each for game performance. They chose the game *EverQuest II* because it has several features that encourage social interaction. During play, individuals are able to join groups to accomplish tasks together—kill monsters, mount quests, and so on. Brokerage is encouraged; it is more efficient to play in a group consisting of diverse character classes because different classes have distinct abilities, knowledge, and skills that complement each other. Possibilities for mentoring are built into the system; helping a less experienced player is rewarded. Closure is also part of the system in terms of the guilds or groups that help coordinate action and accomplish joint tasks. Guilds provide a stable social backdrop within which players develop meaningful social relationships, not unlike bonding social capital in real-world environments. In addition, players can buy and furnish houses and can grant access to those houses to other players, analogous to entrusting a friend with a house key in the offline world, something indicative of closure and bonding processes.

Trade, mentoring, and housing networks were analyzed for the period between January and September 2006, using server logs of game play obtained from the company that owns *EQII.* Brokerage and closure were measured along with demographics, total play time, character level, character class, diversity, guild membership, task performance, and trust. Researchers found that brokerage in *EQII* (players reaching out to others outside of their own cliques) exposes players to new knowledge, skills, resources, and strategies—all contributing to their eventual success in the game. Players who spanned more groups and did so across their trade and mentoring networks reached higher character levels than those who stayed with redundant and interconnected contacts. Brokerage, then, was found to be positively associated with task performance. In contrast,

those players who engaged in closure, interacting with a small but dense network of players, were found to exhibit greater levels of trust in terms of the members of their communities. Both brokerage and closure operate in *EQII* similarly to offline environments, suggesting the transference of communication knowledge and practices from online to offline situations.

The next theory suggests that media transform humans. We examine Mark Poster's theory of media as transformation—a powerful relationship that stands the traditional sense of humans in control on its head.

Media Transformation

Mark Poster, a scholar of media, culture, information, and technology, is interested in articulating the important questions ushered in by the second media age.[41] In his book, *Information Please*, he argues that because of the increasingly complex coupling of humans and machines, digital and networked media are substantially different from the media that came before and result in several transformations of human beings. Media machines used to be separate from humans; they were tools to be used for designated ends. Digital media today, however, create a symbiosis of human and machine; there is no distance between human and machine because of how the media insinuates itself into or manipulates every aspect of the human who uses the technology. The intimate connection between media and human means the self is changed—structured differently—by use of the technology. Poster calls this reconfiguring of what once was the subject and the object a *humachine* to signal the intertwining of humans and machines in a configuration that cannot be called either a subject or an object.[42] For Poster, then, the impact of the media is much more than extension or dependency; it means significant changes to human identity and culture.

Digital media transform the nature of identity itself. Traditionally, identity was defined as "the sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality or personality."[43] Identity was considered an attribute of consciousness, with each individual distinguished by the particular personality characteristics that made up that individual, no matter where that individual was in space and time. Identity was conferred at birth, often cemented by social position, and consistent across time and situations.

With the advent of digital media, however, subjects are present and thus only constructed via their uploads. In other words, identity consists of the fragments of digital codes that emerge from an individual's choices and clicks on the Web. Digital subjects, then, are not stable, unified identities whose locations can be determined. Instead, identity is a constant task of invention and construction among subjects for whom it is virtually impossible to discern any traditional identity characteristics—age, gender, expertise, nationality: "the Net is an amorphous, myriad constellation of ever-changing locations and facilities that are subject to fundamental alterations by anonymous, undesignated, unsalaried, and unauthorized users."[44]

Ironically, while the kind of identity established via digital media is fragmented, anonymous, and always in flux, it can more readily be stolen than was possible with "identity" in the past. One could not really steal another's identity before the Internet—one could steal objects belonging to a person and represent

yourself as that person but one could not take away the consciousness that distinguished that individual from others. With identity theft today, however, what is stolen is the numerical indicators that comprise the self—the digital bits scattered across and in media. In this way, identity is defined as external to the consciousness of the self, altering what has long been considered the essence of identity.

In addition to transformations to what identity is, digital media transform users of media into producers. The process of downloading information turns the passive individual consumer that was present with earlier media into a producer or broadcaster—selecting, arranging, and distributing his work, ideas, and preferences to countless others via websites, blogs, and the like. Furthermore, because there are no limits to who can speak, and it is easier and more affordable to do so than any comparable form of participation in the past, the individual has a heightened sense of agency and control. Poster compares and contrasts speaking on the Internet with speaking in the Greek *agora*, the public square in ancient Greece where meetings and markets were held. To speak in the *agora*, you had to be a free citizen of Athens and a member of the upper class. With the Internet, however, one need not be from any privileged position or standpoint. Digital media open up possibilities for speaking for many who traditionally have been excluded from participation in cultural social life—children, those with disabilities, those who are not citizens, those of certain ethnic origins. Agency and voice, then, are substantially altered with digital media, and there is essentially a global public sphere in which virtually anyone can participate.

Finally, Poster discusses the way culture is transformed because of digital media. The ubiquity of information, available to everyone simultaneously around the world, means culture is global rather than national. Cultural objects—texts, sounds, and images—that are posted to the Internet not only exist everywhere at once but they also exist in a kind of disembodied digital domain that is removed from the cultural groups and societies that gave rise to them. Furthermore, they undergo continuous, unlimited alterations, appropriations and reappropriations, by means of networked computing. When information and cultural objects are transported across national and international lines because of digital media, traditional cultural distinctions—colonizer and colonized, First World and Third World—no longer apply. Despite the ongoing imposition and dominance of Western culture in the information being transported and exchanged, at the same time there are more opportunities for cultural mixing and exchange. Ultimately, more people in more parts of the world have the opportunity to consider a wider range of possible lives, made visible to them by media. Thus, what used to be a matter of citizenship, accorded to an individual who belonged to a particular nation state, should perhaps now be seen as a *netizen*, to acknowledge the ways structural features of the Internet encourage exchanges and movement across national borders.[45]

Tobias Raun illustrated transformation via media in an exploration of transgender identity as it emerges and develops in trans video blogs (vlogs) on YouTube.[46] He argues that vlogs serve as a medium of transformation in line with Poster's claims about how digital media function. While the importance of the Internet for the visibility and formation of trans communities is well documented, there has been limited attention to how trans people use online media in the process of transitioning. Using content analysis and interviews with fre-

quent trans vloggers, Raun examined trans YouTube vlogs for a three-year period. He suggests that the trans vlog is a way for trans individuals to work on, produce, and explore the self—a medium that assists their transformations.

The first type of transformation that was visible in the vlogs is mirroring. In vlogs, the mirror is literal because recording and uploading a video with a webcam enables one to look at one's own reflection during the recording process. Many trans vloggers indeed seem absorbed in their reflections; the mirroring function invites the trans YouTuber to attend to the representation they are offering, to try out different poses, and to evaluate self in the process. Vlogs, then, function as a medium that allows for experimenting with new identities as part of the self-invention process involved in transitioning. It appears to be a healthy narcissism in which the mirror marks the beginning of self-validation not possible before an individual began the trans process.

The mirroring qualities of the vlog also can function as an act of recognition and encouragement. Because these are public broadcasts, vloggers can achieve a sense of authenticity for themselves because they know that not only are they watching themselves but they also are being watched by others—others who acknowledge who they are and confirm that they are OK, attractive, and likeable. The mirror offered by the medium of the YouTube video literally assists in the trans vloggers' transformation, helping them develop and present their new identities in and to the world.

In addition, trans vlogs function as an online diary in which the trans individual constructs and archives bodily changes. Documenting and commenting on one's story as bodily and identity changes occur, these vlogs not only preserve and authenticate the vloggers' literal transformation but also offer a visual and narrative map for other trans vloggers. Trans stories, then, are transformative in another sense—they assist by providing information and guides to action to individuals considering transitioning. Trans vlogs, in other words, engender the ongoing process of becoming a man or woman as well as the process of learning, testing, and evaluating the act of gender in front of the camera. In this way, vlogs literally transform the identities of the individual using the medium for documentation.[47]

The relationship between humans and technology is complicated. Where once technology was a device to help humans get things done more easily, the relationship is today much more than that. We looked at four such relationships: seeing technology as human, depending on technology, transferring knowledge and skills from technology to the real world, and being transformed by technology. Yet another area of communication that is just beginning to be systematically explored by communication scholars is communication between humans and transcendent audiences. In the following section, we provide two theories of prayer as communication.

Communication between Humans and the Divine

Within communication, there has always been considerable interest in an examination of rhetoric and religion, especially preaching as a rhetorical form, the place of preaching in the public sphere, and sermons as a form of public

address. What has not received as much attention, however, is religion and spirituality as communication phenomena, which is surprising given the number of individuals who claim some religious affiliation or spiritual belief system. There are now some studies that examine various spiritual/religious phenomena as forms of communication.[48] Here we provide two theories that deal with prayer as a communication phenomenon: (1) prayer as rhetoric; and (2) a model of interpersonal Christian prayer. The first theory, by William FitzGerald, is comprehensive in addressing the act of prayer as a communication process.[49] James Baesler's model of interpersonal Christian prayer is a more narrow example of a theory that categorizes types of prayer, prayer progressions, and the developmental nature of prayer.

Prayer as Rhetoric

William FitzGerald, in his book, *Spiritual Modalities: Prayer as Rhetoric and Performance,* theorizes prayer as a rhetorical act.[50] Prayer is part of rhetoric or communication because it is a particular use of language for persuasive purposes. It consists of four primary aims: petition, praise, thanksgiving, and confession. Lament, accusation, blessing, and cursing are secondary purposes for which prayer functions as well. These are in essence speech acts by which humans size up a situation—soften an existential crisis or profound experience—and choose to respond with prayer. In this sense, prayer is a response to a crisis and simultaneously an opportunity to creatively act to address that situation; prayer is both a situated and situating discourse—it speaks from and to the conditions that give rise to its utterance, defining the situation at the same time it addresses that situation.

Having defined the situation that gives rise to prayer, FitzGerald makes use of three elements of Kenneth Burke's dramatistic pentad—scene, act, and agency—to articulate the basic nature of prayer and how it functions. By *scene*, FitzGerald refers to the scene of address and the fact that in prayer, humans seek to address and be addressed by the divine. Within this scene, divine beings are addressed as if they were human, capable of hearing and understanding the prayer being directed to them by their human petitioners. There is an assumption of shared linguistic ground, then, between human and divine. And although prayer projects linguistic capacities onto divine beings, it is also understood that they do not possess language in the way humans do. Rather they "hear," and this is what makes a prayer successful—it has been heard.

For the divine to be an audience, however, humans and divine beings must be in each other's presence, and this introduces the second part of the dramatistic pentad—the *act*. The basic act that establishes the parameters of the scene is an invocation—a summons that asserts a relationship between those who call and those who are called. The invocation, in other words, names the divine interlocutor and establishes that there is a relationship between the human who calls and the divine being. The invocation not only sets aside a different kind of space and different kind of relationship but it also indicates that the form of communication will differ from other conversations. The act is an assertion of *agency.* In offering an invocation and thus making a space in which a prayer will be offered, heard, and hopefully answered, the supplicant is aware of the power

of discourse to bring a state of affairs into being. Prayer, then, is not a mere act of supplication but is the creation of a scene and of discourse appropriate to that scene that has the power to substantially alter an existing state of affairs.

FitzGerald turns next to the proper attitude of prayer as reverence, and this attitude of gracious subordination bridges the divide between human and divine audiences. Reverence is appropriateness, and genuine prayer embodies and performs the reverence that says one knows, understands, and appreciates one's place in the hierarchy of the cosmos. Thus, despite the agency implicit in the act of prayer, it is balanced by an attitude of reverence.

The performance of reverence as important to successful prayer leads to FitzGerald's two remaining notions about prayer as communication—the canons of memory and delivery. Traditionally, the process of rhetoric or communication was described as consisting of five canons—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. These captured the process of constructing a speech or other kind of discourse. In turning to memory, FitzGerald argues that prayer is a vehicle of commemoration. Each time a formalized prayer is reiterated, it performs and deepens the tradition that gave rise to it. This is one of the functions of texts, candles, incense, bells, and other objects associated with prayer—to prompt recollection and to bring a person into a scene of prayer.

Finally, FitzGerald also asserts that prayer is "something said and something sent,"[51] which makes use of two meanings of delivery, the fifth canon. Prayer as performance, delivered in a particular place and designed for a particular audience, is always discourse in transit. FitzGerald uses virtual prayer sites on the Internet as visible illustrations of what has always been inherent in prayer as a form of delivery—composing a prayer and sending it off to the divine.

From the Source . . .

A mentor once remarked that rhetoric has no substantive treatment of prayer (i.e., communication with the divine). Seizing that insight and embracing my interest in religious rhetoric, I tried to develop such an account, one that identifies resources for communication in general employed in situations in which significant nonhuman audiences are figured as objects of address. This largely Burkean account recognizes prayer as a meta-rhetoric that tests the limits of symbolic action. In seeking to go beyond the bounds of human communication, prayer is a vital and necessary dimension of our nature as "languaged" beings.

William FitzGerald

Prayer as a significant domain of human experience is both a particular kind of discourse and a particular perspective on discourse. On the one hand, the essence of prayer is the essence of any discourse—to call situations into being through the force of utterance. On the other, prayer is a distinctive form of discourse that asserts similarities with the divine, making the act of prayer a powerful and agentic act on the part of a human being.

J. E. Sigler sought to examine half of the communication interaction involved in prayer—communication from the divine to the human—or what she

calls *direct divine communication* (DDC).[52] Sigler defines DDC as: "a phenomenologically intense or unusual experience that the recipient interprets without a doubt to be a direct communication from God, be it mediated or unmediated by worldly entities (e.g., other people, objects, circumstances, etc.), and regardless of whether the recipient understood/understands the meaning of the message clearly."[53] She is interested in how people arrive at interpreting an event to be communication from God rather than some other explanation, using factors within the event itself to make a determination that it is indeed DDC.

In a first study, she looked at existing empirical evidence to develop a list of criteria for judging an experience to be an instance of DDC. These criteria include (1) rarity—not an everyday experience; (2) briefness—lasts a moment or two; (3) spontaneity—comes suddenly out of nowhere; (4) is not distressing—as hallucinations and diabolical communications might be; (5) is stronger or louder than other communications—it commands one's attention and cannot be ignored; (6) is emotionally potent—is marked by strong feelings and positive affect; (7) is noetic—offers a deeper kind of knowledge than results from a process of reasoning; and (8) is not compelling—free will is left intact in contrast to psychotic episodes that often lead the individual to behaviors beyond his control.

In a second study, Sigler sought to determine how participants "knew" an experience was a DDC. She interviewed Catholic women from different religious orders. From these interviews she devised a set of four principles that DDC researchers can use to ensure that they include for study only experiences of comparable epistemological status: (1) the experience was instantly clear as a DDC in the moment; (2) the individual had no doubt the source was God; (3) participants used their own internal rules—how they felt after the DDC—rather than applying external rules after the fact; and (4) the DDC was identified using concrete criteria (such as those developed in Sigler's first study), rather than "I just knew." While focused on just one part of a religious event, these studies suggest a burgeoning interest in religious experiences as communication phenomena. In the next section, we discuss a particular model of prayer that also is grounded in communication literature.

Relational Prayer Theory

E. James Baesler is one of the few scholars in communication whose research program is devoted almost exclusively to exploring prayer as a communication phenomenon. He developed what he initially called a model of interpersonal Christian prayer, which he later renamed relational prayer theory (RPT). Baesler's starting point is that every major world religion includes some type of "prayer," which he defines as a specialized kind of communication that occurs in the context of a spiritual relationship.[54] By *spiritual relationship*, Baesler means a relationship between a believer and a divine being that is created and sustained by some type of spiritual communication. A model of prayer then, relies on certain boundary conditions: the existence of a God, the belief that communication with God is possible through prayer, and that prayer is a private personal act between the Christian and God.[55] Interpersonal communication provides a metaphor that can be used to investigate the context of Christian prayer because interpersonal communication assumes a dyadic relationship between entities that develops over the course of time, a purposeful and

intentional act of communication, and specific types of communication—talking and listening.

For his model of relational prayer, Baesler examined various typologies of prayer across 20 centuries of Christian prayers and synthesized major forms prayer takes: talking to God, listening, dialoguing with God, meditation, contemplation, and mystical union. The first two—talking to God and listening to God—are identified as one-way forms of communication. Dialogue with God suggests a progression to two-way communication. Meditation consists of discursive thinking about a religious topic and is most often nonverbal or mental in nature. Contemplation, designed to experience the presence of God, is similarly not an intellectual act but a feeling. The phrase *radically divine communication*, used to describe the final phase, suggests an ineffable (not describable in words) state of revelation and union with the divine—a feeling of loving and being loved. This typology progresses, then, from monologue through two-way communication to ultimate union, where there is no separation between the person praying and God.

Within these categories, active and receptive types of prayer can be identified. Talking, listening, and dialogue constitute active prayer—the individual praying identifies and describes wants and needs, listens for God's response, perhaps reads sacred scripture, and ultimately dialogues with God—all of which require some human effort in the act of prayer. Receptive prayer, in contrast, is characterized by radically divine communication. The emphasis is on the activity of God in the prayer process in contrast to an emphasis on the activity of the human being. The term *radical* suggests that the form of communication falls outside traditional communication concepts in privileging the reception of God's grace, presence, rapture, ecstasy, peace, love, and the like.

In elaborating the typology and its function in Christian life, Baesler suggests that Christian children are most likely to begin with active types of prayer. They often begin with memorized prayers, and they often pray to ask for concrete things. As they develop theological knowledge and have experiences related to God, the prayer relationship typically evolves to be less focused on the self (active prayer) and more focused on God (receptive prayer). Furthermore, Baesler predicts that there may be various conditions that facilitate movement from active to receptive prayer—a life-threatening illness, accident, death of a loved one, or some other dramatic event.

Baesler ends by posing twelve research questions for possible future research about prayer as communication: (1) How do Christians recognize and describe God's invitation to prayer? (2) What factors predict affirmative as opposed to negative responses to God's invitation to prayer? (3) What variables predict the frequency and duration of the prayer relationship? (4) How do Christians describe their experiences during prayer? (5) When Christians initially begin to pray, do they begin with active forms, as predicted by RPT? (6) How many different active prayer sequences do Christians report? (7) Is there a predictable time frame for the transition from active to receptive prayer forms for Christians who pray regularly? (8) What external events and/or internal experiences aid in describing the transition from active to receptive prayer forms? (9) What types of images, feelings, and words are used by Christians to recognize and describe receptive prayer experiences? (10) Are there predictable cyclical

patterns of active and receptive prayer within and/or between periods of prayer? (11) What variables predict experiences associated with highly intense experiences of receptive prayer? (12) To what degree is it possible to teach a method of receptive prayer?[56]

Baesler concludes by noting that it is interesting that the study of prayer is not more visible in the field of communication, given the obvious correlations between human and spiritual communication. That many academicians are uncomfortable talking about their faith may be one reason for the lack of attention to prayer. Yet prayer has begun to be studied extensively by medical professionals as a mechanism for healing for patients who have exhausted traditional medical treatments. Baesler suggests that if prayer is of interest to those "in a traditionally *hard* science, perhaps it is time that communication researchers begin to give prayer some priority in their research."[57]

From the Source . . .

Creator . . . God . . . Goddess . . . Holy Spirit . . . Mother Nature . . . Ground of Being . . . Ultimate Truth/Beauty/Love . . . however we name the Divine, *prayer is our human and graced attempts to connect and be in relationship with the Divine through spiritual communication*. I've come to understand this truth through reading/researching/teaching, dreaming/journaling/creating art, and most of all by praying. The interpersonal Christian prayer model, published in 1997, evolved into the current relational prayer theory that covers the types, functions, contexts, and effects of prayer in multiple religious/spiritual faiths/traditions.

E. James Baesler

Baesler and Kevin Ladd contributed a study of prayer research in communication that is connected to the theory of relational prayer. They investigated the relationship between prayer contexts and physical, mental, and spiritual health.[58] Prayer contexts were defined as follows: One person praying to/with God was labeled private/personal prayer; two people praying was designated interpersonal prayer; small group prayer was defined as between three and 12 people praying; and attendance at religious services was defined as large group prayer, since most religious services are attended by more than 12 individuals. Their first research question asked which of these contexts are associated with physical, mental, and/or spiritual outcomes and whether there were correlations between amount and type of prayer and health. The researchers also asked what types of personal relationships are represented in the interpersonal prayer context because this is an under-investigated area compared to other prayer contexts.

The researchers asked college and middle-aged adults, who identified as Christian, to describe their most recent prayer experience for each context in which they had prayed during the previous week. They also asked participants to assess their overall physical, mental, and spiritual health by completing the following statement: "Compared to other people my age, my [physical, spiritual, mental] health this past month has been" (followed by a seven-point Likert scale from poor to excellent).

While best prayer predictors of health included large group prayer for mental health and private and large group prayer for spiritual health, prayer in all contexts predicted better spiritual health. In terms of numbers, however, prayers for physical health were highest; the most common type of prayer for physical health was for those who were sick or about to undergo surgery. Prayers for mental health were lowest of all health categories; the most common dealt with stress and emotional and relational problems. Prayers for spiritual health fell between prayers for physical and mental health; the largest percentage of these occurred in the family context and were primarily table and bedtime prayers.

This study seeks to examine prayer as a communication phenomenon by elaborating the contexts in which prayer occurs and relating these prayer contexts to a holistic conceptualization of health that includes physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. As both of the theories in this section note, prayer, is a communication mode that suggests another relationship beyond the human-human one. Humans communicate with a divine being in order to have the assistance of a higher power in solving a problem or meeting a need.

Conclusion

The recognition that communication extends beyond human-to-human relationships and occurs between humans and nature, humans and objects, humans and technology, and humans and the divine is a major addition to this book. Recognizing the existence and availability of conversational partners who are "not human" not only shifts what counts as communication but also necessarily transforms humans in the process. This chapter has explored the ways the human subject is affected by these different conversational partners, and it means communication changes as well. Communication in each of these four contexts differs substantially from the traditional conceptualization of communication.

Chapter Map **THEORIES OF BEYOND HUMAN COMMUNICATION**

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Communication between Humans and Nature	Naturalizing Culture	Donal Carbaugh	Nature and culture mutually shape each other.
	The Materiality of Nature	Richard Rogers	Nature is not just a discursive construction but is material and can provide human experience with meaning.
	The Othering of Nature	Tema Milstein	Traditional binaries—mastery/harmony, othering/connection, and exploitation/idealism—perpetuate human dominance over nature.

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Communication between Humans and Nature *(continued)*	Animate Rhetoric	Natasha Seegert	Widening and wilding rhetoric to take more-than-human animals into account reconnects us to prelinguistic and prerational ways of being.
Communication between Humans and Objects	Actor Network Theory	Michael Callon, Bruno Latour, John Law, James Taylor, Elizabeth Van Every, François Cooren	Networks of people, objects, policies, and structures emerge in interaction, and agency is not the property of a single person but the collective network created by the interactions of the system.
	The Revenge of the Crystal	Jean Baudrillard	There is no longer a direct connection between an object and its original use; instead, the object is part of a system of consumption and possession.
Communication between Humans and Technology	Media Equation Theory	Byron Reeves & Clifford Nash	People respond and react to media the same way we respond and react to people.
	Media Dependency Theory	Sandra Ball-Rokeach & Melvin DeFleur	Audiences depend on media to varying degrees to meet certain needs and to achieve certain goals.
	Digital Play and Media Transference	Frederik De Grove	Digital game playing and gamer identities are created in interaction with games and other gamers in a specific social context that transfers to offline life.
	Media Transformation	Mark Poster	Digital and networked media are substantially different from traditional media and have transformed humans in several ways.
Communication between Humans and the Divine	Prayer as Rhetoric	William FitzGerald	Prayer is a particular form of communication intended to bring a state of affairs into being through petition, praise, thanksgiving, or confession.
	Interpersonal Christian Prayer	James Baesler	Interpersonal Christian Prayer offers a model of a dyadic relationship that progresses from monologic communication to dialogue and ultimate union with the divine.

NOTES

[1] For a discussion of many ways humans have been distinguished from animals, see Diane Davis, "Autozoography: Notes Toward a Rhetoricity of the Living," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 47 (2014): 533–53.

[2] Haraway is clear that the cyborg does not refer to any kind of human-machine relationship: "I am very concerned that the term 'cyborg' be used specifically to refer to those kinds of entities that became historically possible around World War II and just after. The cyborg is intimately involved in specific histories of militarization, of specific research projects with ties to psychiatry and communications theory, behavioral research and psychopharmacological research, theories of information and information processing. It is essential that the cyborg is seen to emerge out of such a specific matrix." See Donna J. Haraway, *How Like a Leaf: An Interview with Thyrza Nichols Goodeve* (New York: Routledge,1998),128–29. Haraway's other major works dealing with human–other communication include *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science* (New York: Routledge, 1989); *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991); *Modest_Witness@Second_Millenium. FemaleMan©_Meets_OncoMouse™: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997).

[3] John Durham Peters, *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 1.

[4] Peters, *Speaking into the Air,* 256.

[5] Suzette Haden Elgin, *The Judas Rose* (New York: Daw Books, 1987), 199–200.

[6] Emily Plec, ed., *Perspectives on Human-Animal Communication: Internatural Communication* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 5–6.

[7] For a summary of environmental communication as a field, see Tema Milstein, "Environmental Communication Theories," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 344–48.

[8] Kenneth Burke, "Poem," in *The Legacy of Kenneth Burke,* ed. Herbert W. Simmons and Trevor Melia (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 263.

[9] Donal Carbaugh, "Naturalizing Communication and Culture," in *The Symbolic Earth: Discourse and Our Creation of the Environment,* ed. James G. Cantrill and Christine L. Oravec (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 38–57. See also Donal Carbaugh, "Quoting 'the Environment': Touchstones on Earth," *Environmental Communication* 1 (2007): 64–73; and Donal Carbaugh and Tovar Cerulli (2013) "Cultural Discourses of Dwelling: Investigating Environmental Communication as a Place-based Practice," *Environmental Communication*, 7 (2013): 4–23.

[10] Carbaugh, "Naturalizing Communication and Culture," 46.

[11] Carbaugh, "Quoting 'the Environment.'"

[12] Donal Carbaugh, *Cultures in Conversation* (New York: Lawrence Erlbaum: 2005); and Donal Carbaugh and Sally O. Hastings, "A Role for Communication Theory in Ethnographic Studies of Communication, in Social Approaches to Communication, ed. Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz (New York: Guilford, 1995).

[13] Carbaugh, *Cultures in Conversation*, 128.

[14] Donal Carbaugh and Tovar Cerulli, "Cultural Discourses of Dwelling: Investigating Environmental Communication as a Place-based Practice," *Environmental Communication* 7 (2013): 4–23.

[15] Richard A. Rogers, "Overcoming the Objectification in Constitutive Theories: Toward a Transhuman, Materialist Theory of Communication," *Western Journal of Communication* 62 (1998): 244–72.

[16] Susan Griffin, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 226, quoted in Rogers, "Overcoming the Objectification," 255–56.

[17] Rogers, "Overcoming the Objectification," 254.

[18] Tema Milstein, "'Somethin' Tells Me It's All Happening at the Zoo': Discourse, Power, and Conservationism," *Environmental Communication* 3 (2009): 25–48.

[19] Tema Milstein, "The Performer Metaphor: 'Mother Nature Never Gives Us the Same Show Twice,'" *Environmental Communication* 10 (2016): 227–48.

[20] Tema Milstein, "When Whales 'Speak for Themselves': Communication as Mediating Force in Wildlife Tourism," *Environmental Communication* 2 (2008): 173–92.

[21] Michel Callon, "Struggles and Negotiations to Define What is Problematic and What is Not: The Socio-logic of Translation," in *The Social Process of Scientific Investigation,* ed. Karin D. Knorr (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1980); Bruno Latour, "On Actor-Network Theory: A Few Clarifications," *Soziale Welt* 47 (1996): 396–81; Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (London: Oxford University Press, 2005); and John Law, "Notes on the Theory of Actor Network: Ordering, Strategy and Heterogeneity," *Systemic Practice and Action Research* 5

(1992): 379–93. For a summary of actor network theory, see François Cooren, "Actor-Network Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 16–18.

[22] James R. Taylor, *Rethinking the Theory of Organizational Communication: How to Read an Organization* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1993); James R. Taylor and Elizabeth J. Van Every, *The Emergent Organization: Communication as its Site and Surface* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000); François Cooren, James R. Taylor, and Elizabeth J. Van Every, eds., *Communication as Organizing: Empirical and Theoretical Explorations in the Dynamic of Text and Conversation* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2006).

[23] Kristen Lee Cole, "Every 'One' and Every 'Thing' Can Be Loved": A Rhetorical Analysis of Networked Self-Representation by the Objectùm Sexuality Community," (PhD diss., University of New Mexico, 2013).

[24] Piotrowska, A. (director). (2008). *Married to the Eiffel Tower* [motion picture]. United Kingdom: Blink Films. For the website, see Objectùm-Sexuality Internationale, http://objectum-sexuality.org

[25] Among Baudrillard's many works are *Simulations*, trans. Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and Philip Beitchman (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983); *The Illusion of the End*, trans. Chris Turner (Cambridge: Polity, 1994); and *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, trans. Iain Hamilton Grant (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1993). For summaries of his work, see Sonja K. Foss, Karen A. Foss, and Robert Trapp, *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, 30th anniversary edition (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2002), 303–42. and Elizabeth A. Dickinson, "Simulation and Media," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 885–87.

[26] Jean Baudrillard, *The Perfect Crime,* trans. Chris Turner (New York: Verso, 1996), 55.

[27] Jean Baudrillard, *Fatal Strategies,* trans. Philip Beitchman and W. G. J. Niesluchowski, ed. Jim Fleming (London: Pluto, 1999), 198.

[28] Jennifer Stromer-Galley and Kirsten A. Foot, "Citizen Perceptions of Online Interactivity and Implications for Political Campaign Communication," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 8 (2002), http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol8/issue1/stromerandfoot.html

[29] Spike Jonze, *Her,* produced by Megan Ellison, Spike Jonze, and Vincent Landay (Annapurna Pictures; distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2013).

[30] Byron Reeves and Clifford Nash, *The Media Equation: How People Treat Computers, Television, and New Media Like Real People and Places* (Stanford, CA: CSLL, 1996). For an example of one of their studies, see Clifford Nash, Youngme Moon, and Paul Carney, "Are Respondents Polite to Computers? Social Desirability and Direct Responses to Computers," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 29 (1999): 1093–110.

[31] This summary is based on David Weiss, "Media Equation Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009): 635–37.

[32] Daniel Johnson and John Gardner, "The Media Equation and Team Formation: Further Evidence for Experience as a Moderator," *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies* 65 (2007): 111–24.

[33] Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach and Melvin L. DeFleur, "A Dependency Model of Mass-Media Effects," *Communication Research* 3 (1976): 3–21. See also Melvin L. DeFleur and Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, *Theories of Mass Communication* (New York: Longman, 1982), 240–51; and Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, "The Origins of Individual Media-System Dependency: A Sociological Framework," *Communication Research* 12 (1985): 485–510.

[34] Arab Spring refers to the popular, leaderless, democratic uprisings that spread across the Middle East in 2011, demanding social change. The movement began in Tunisia in December 2010 and spread to Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. See, for example, Philip N. Howard and Muzammil M. Hussain, "Digital Media and the Arab Spring," *Journal of Democracy* 22 (2011): 35–48.

[35] Alan M. Rubin and Sven Windahl, "The Uses and Dependency Model of Mass Communication," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 3 (1986): 193.

[36] For an interesting take on dependency on media, see James E. Katz, *Machines That Become Us: The Social Context of Personal Communication Technology* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2003). Katz discusses three ways that machines "become" us—they broaden our ability to communicate and to represent self to others; they become extensions of the body; and they serve as fashion accessories that are becoming to the wearer.

[37] Some use the term *prosumer* (a combination of *producer* and *consumer*) to describe the active role consumers play in producing content.

[38] Frederik De Grove, Verolien Cauberghe, and Jan Van Looy, "In Pursuit of Play: Toward a Social Cognitive Understanding of Determinants of Digital Play," *Communication Theory* 24 (2014): 205–23.

[39] Frederik De Grove, Cédric Courtois, and Jan Van Looy, "How to be a Gamer! Exploring Personal and Social Indicators of Gamer Identity," *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 20 (2015): 346–61.

[40] Cuihua Shen, Peter Monge, and Dmitri Williams, "Virtual Brokerage and Closure: Network Structure and Social Capital in a Massively Multiplayer Online Game," *Communication Research* 41 (2014): 459–80.

[41] Mark Poster, *Information Please: Culture and Politics in the Age of Digital Machines* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006). See also Mark Poster, *The Mode of Information: Poststructuralism and Social Context* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990); and Mark Poster, *The Second Media Age* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995).

[42] Poster, *Information Please*, 36.

[43] *Oxford English Dictionary,* cited in Poster, *Information Please*, 101.

[44] Poster, *Information Please*, 50.

[45] Poster, *Information Please*, 78.

[46] Tobias Raun, "Video Blogging as a Vehicle of Transformation: Exploring the Intersection Between Trans Identity and Information Technology," *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 18 (2015): 365–78.

[47] The vlog also can facilitate transformation in a very concrete way as well; many trans vloggers use vlogs to raise money for their medical transitions.

[48] See Laura Stafford and Prabu David, "A Special Issue on Religion and Spirituality," *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 39 (2011): 331–454. Case studies in this issue include how Christian Science practitioners use religion to maintain health, spiritual support for women living with HIV/AIDS, competing Christian discourses on health, views on spirituality within Alcoholics Anonymous, mindfulness as a communication practice, and competing interests in faith-based organizations. For an overview of the study of prayer in various academic disciplines, see E. James Baesler, "Prayer Research: Foundations, Review, and Agenda," *The Review of Communication* 12 (April 2012): 143–58.

[49] This is not the only form of communication with divine beings that has been investigated. Mailloux explores the role of angels in human-divine communication. According to Mailloux, angels have always served to make prayer a public event because angels are physical representations of the divine; God demonstrates his authority by being accompanied by a bodyguard of angels. Furthermore, the angels function as awakeners, reminding us to stay present and to pay attention. They function as mediators, then, between the rhetorical world of the human and the world of divine. See Stephen Mailloux, "Notes on Prayerful Rhetoric with Divinities," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 47 (2014), 419–33. As a different example of human communication with essences beyond the human, Edward Karshner explores magic and mysticism as constituting efforts to reach divine essence in the cosmology of ancient Egypt. See Edward Karshner, "Thought, Utterance, Power: Toward a Rhetoric of Magic," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 44 (2011), 52–71.

[50] William FitzGerald, *Spiritual Modalities: Prayer as Rhetoric and Performance* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012).

[51] FitzGerald, *Spiritual Modalities,* 2422 Kindle e-book.

[52] J. E. Sigler, "First, 'What Is Knowing?' Then 'How'd They Know?': Epistemological and Phenomenological Considerations in the Study of Direct Divine Communication (DDC)," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 37 (2014): 145–70.

[53] Sigler, "First, 'What is Knowing?,'" 149–50.

[54] E. James Baesler, "Interpersonal Christian Prayer and Communication," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 20 (1997): 5–13; E. James Baesler, "A Model of Interpersonal Christian Prayer," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 22 (1999): 40–64; and E. James Baesler, *Theoretical Explorations and Empirical Investigations of Communication and Prayer* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2003).

[55] Baesler recognizes other prayer contexts. See, for example, "An Introduction to Prayer Research in Communication: Functions, Contexts, and Possibilities," special issue on prayer research, *Journal of Communication and Religion* 35 (2012): 202–08; and E. James Baesler and Kevin Ladd, "Exploring Prayer Contexts and Health Outcomes: From the Chair to the Pew," *Journal of Communication and Religion* 32 (2009): 347–74.

[56] Baesler, "A Model of Interpersonal Christian Prayer," 58.

[57] Baesler, "A Model of Interpersonal Christian Prayer," 60.

[58] Baesler and Ladd, "Exploring Prayer Contexts and Health Outcomes."

PART THREE

Contexts of Communication

7

The Relationship

People are fascinated with relationships, in part because they are the contexts in which our most important communication occurs and because they differ so greatly. Relational (or interpersonal) communication scholars examine intimate/partner relationships, friendships, family relationships, and also the avoidance of relationships with others. Some of these relationships are easy and comfortable, and others are characterized by constant struggle. Relationships change and evolve as well, and communication has much to do with these changes. So whether relationships are positive or problematic, careful study helps us understand how they function, how they can be managed over time, and what characterizes productive relationships.[1]

How would you characterize some of the significant relationships you have had in your life? Which have been intimate? Which have been casual? In which relationships have you been a dominant influence, and in which relationships have you just gone along, letting others take the lead? Which relationships have been more egalitarian? What are the patterns of interaction in your relationship? How much information should you share about yourself and how much does your partner share? How much do you share with people outside of the relationship? Should we be dependent or independent, should we keep things the way they are or change them, and should we assert our individuality or be part of a couple? How can you allow for both difference and unity? How do we manage the differences and tensions in our relationships? Theories of relationship communication explore these questions and more.

Relationships have been an important subject related to interpersonal communication since the 1960s. In this chapter, we explore three broad topics: boundaries and connections, constructing and transcending difference, and tensions and challenges. In combination, these theories (summarized in the chapter map, pp. 258–259) help us understand many facets of relationships as well as relationships from many perspectives.

Boundaries and Connections

In relationships, deciding how much information to share with others is a constant tension. Sometimes you really feel like sharing something private with a friend; at other times, you feel more guarded. In some relationships, you share a lot of information about yourself, and in others, you do not. Even more interesting is the fact that over time within a relationship, you negotiate what topics you can talk about and what levels of information can be revealed—not only between yourselves but also with others outside the relationship.

These issues relate to the negotiation of boundaries and connections in our relationships. Boundaries are the limits we place on what we talk about, how we talk about it, who gets to determine what is talked about, and with whom we talk. Connections are the nature of the relationships that we have with others. This section introduces five theories that investigate the various aspects of boundaries and connections: (1) communication privacy management theory; (2) affection exchange theory; (3) dyadic power theory; (4) family communication patterns theory; and (5) queering family communication.

Communication Privacy Management Theory

Communication privacy management theory (CPM) builds on previous research about self-disclosure. Self-disclosure was an important theme in communication theory in the 1960s and 1970s.[2] *Social penetration* became the term used to identify the process of increasing disclosure and intimacy within a relationship. Spurred by the work of Irwin Altman and Dalmas Taylor, social penetration theory set in motion a long tradition of investigation into relational development.[3] Altman and Taylor argued that people have a highly organized system regarding information known to themselves and others. The core of the sphere contains information far removed from what others can see or detect—the most private aspects of your identity. Moving away from the core, the information is more available to others. According to the theory, you get to know another person by "penetrating" the sphere. The sphere contains both breadth and depth. You could learn a wide range of things about another person (breadth), or you could learn increasingly detailed information about one or two things (depth). As the relationship between two individuals develops, the partners share more aspects of themselves, adding both depth and breadth to what they know about one another.

Altman and Taylor's original theory was based on the economic proposition that human beings make decisions based on costs and rewards. In other words, if something will be very costly, you will think twice before you do it. If the results could be very rewarding, you may go ahead, despite the costs. Every decision is a balance between costs and rewards. When applied to human interaction, this process is known as *social exchange*.[4] Altman and Taylor suggests that people disclose information if they feel the rewards (such as getting closer) outweigh the costs (such as embarrassment).

Originally, social penetration theory was important in focusing our attention on relationship development as a communication process; however, it did not hold up very well to the actual experience of relationships in daily life. For exam-

ple, couples do not make a simple "disclose/not disclose" decision based only on individual costs and rewards. Instead, they must figure out together whether to reveal or conceal when there are good reasons to do both. Further, little work has been done in recent years with social penetration theory, and thus we only briefly introduce it here as a foundational theory in relational communication.

Communication privacy management theory (CPM) is a more recent and complex theory that addresses the tension between openness and privacy, between the "public" and the "private" in relationships.[5] According to Sandra Petronio, individuals involved in relationships are constantly managing boundaries between the public and private—between those feelings and thoughts they are willing to share with others and those they are not. Sometimes the boundary is permeable, meaning that certain information can be revealed; at other times, it is impermeable, and information is never shared. Of course, the permeability of a boundary will change, and situations may lead to opening or closing the boundaries. Maintaining a closed boundary can lead to greater autonomy and safety, whereas opening the boundary can promote greater intimacy and sharing but also greater personal vulnerability.

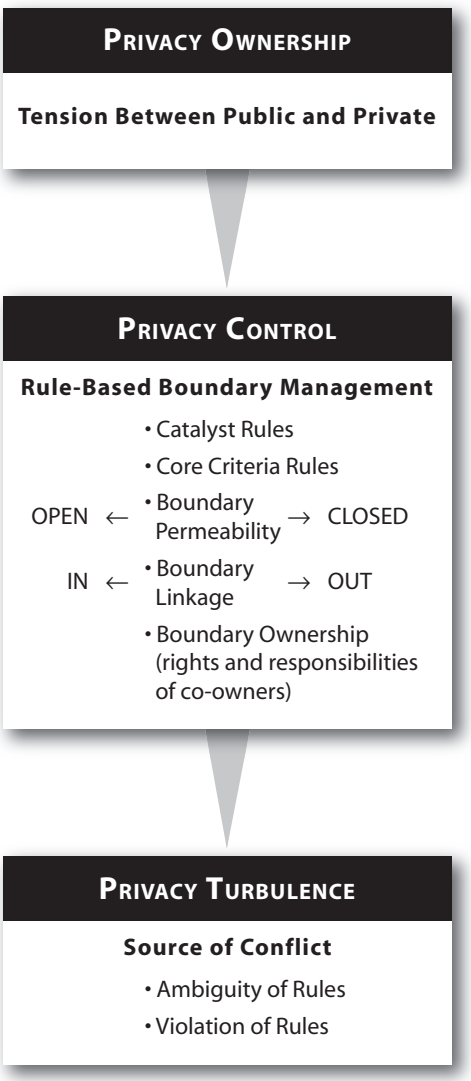
The tension between the need to share and the need to protect oneself is present in every relationship and requires persons to negotiate and coordinate their boundaries. When do you disclose and when do you not? And when your partner discloses personal information, how do you respond? We all have a sense of ownership of information about ourselves, and we feel we have the right to control that information. We are constantly making decisions about what to reveal, who should have this information, and when and how to reveal it. Petronio sees this decision-making process as a dialectic—an interplay between pressures to reveal and to conceal.

In a recent synthesis of communication privacy management theory, Petronio summarized the three key elements of the theory: privacy ownership, privacy control, and privacy turbulence.[6] Figure 7.1 displays a model of the relationship among these elements.[7] *Privacy ownership* refers to who owns the information about the person. Petronio argues that individuals feel that they are the sole owners of private information about themselves. However, when someone reveals private information to another, that person becomes a co-owner of the information, and co-ownership has its own set of negotiated rights and responsibilities. For example, a family may have an implicit rule that certain things, such as money, are not to be discussed with others outside the family. If a person wants to disclose such information, she must negotiate when, how, and to whom the disclosure is allowed. Thus, coordination between the persons in a relationship is essential. Part of what happens in defining a relationship, then, is establishing rules that govern how persons will manage and use the information they share with one another. Petronio therefore sees boundary management as a rule-based process, and this brings in the second key element of privacy management: *privacy control*. Self-disclosure is not merely an individual decision—"Do I tell or not?" Rather, it is a negotiation of the rules by which the information will be kept and managed. When a woman thinks she might be pregnant, she will usually consider when and how to reveal it. Some women choose to wait a while to make sure about the pregnancy and to make sure all goes well. Eventually, when the woman tells her husband, the information becomes co-owned,

and the couple will need to discuss when and how to make it known to others. Do they tell other family members first? Do they announce it to all of their friends and family at the same time? Some couples wait until "it shows." Others may rush to tell everyone as soon as the first test shows positive.

The rules for boundary management are developed, in part, with a kind of risk-benefit ratio. What do you have to gain from disclosing private information, and what risks come into play? Risk assessment means thinking about the costs and rewards of revealing the information. For example, if you have had a series of miscarriages, you may find that revealing a new pregnancy is very risky. On the other hand, if this is your first pregnancy, you may want to share your joy with your friends and family immediately.

Figure. 7.1 Model of Communication Privacy Management Elements



Other criteria are also used to make these rule decisions: for example, cultural expectations, gender differences, personal motivations, and situational demands. When a woman becomes pregnant, she probably will decide whom to tell and when based on her sense of privacy as a woman, how pregnancy traditionally has been handled in her family, how she personally feels about it, and/or how many children she already has.

Boundary rules do change as circumstances change, and these are called *catalyst rules*. Some rules are persistent, routine, and dependable, and these are called *core criteria rules*. Returning to the example of the rule among family members not to discuss family finances with others, this rule could last for years, so it is a core criterion rule. However, retirement could alter the implicit rule because the changed circumstances create more benefits to discussing money with friends—learning, for example, how they manage expenses on a fixed income. Discussing money then becomes a catalyst rule.

Negotiating the rules for co-ownership of information can be tricky. The various parties who share private information must coordinate and synchronize their behavior. Explicit and implicit agreements must be forged about how to manage shared information. Partners must negotiate rules about *boundary permeability*, or how open or closed the

boundary is supposed to be. This is why a married couple will discuss how and when to reveal that they are expecting a baby. Partners also need to negotiate rules about *boundary linkage*, which involves an agreement about who is included within their boundary and who is not. So, for example, the couple may agree that their parents can be told about the pregnancy but no one else. Third, partners must negotiate *boundary ownership*, or the rights and responsibilities of the co-owners. This is a clear concern when you tell someone something and then swear her to secrecy. Permeability, linkage, and ownership, then, are all part of boundary coordination.

The final core element of the theory of privacy management is *privacy turbulence*. Boundary rules are sometimes ambiguous; they may not be agreed upon, and sometimes those in relationships deliberately violate the rules. Gossiping about something you know is private is a good example of this type of violation that creates privacy turbulence. When this occurs, sanctions may be invoked. For example, you may be reluctant to reveal future private information to a person who violated your rules of privacy in the past. Such turbulence is frequently the source of conflict and presents the need for stronger or more careful action in establishing or changing the rules.

From the Source . . .

Communication privacy management is an applied theory grounded in empirical research so its principles have been tested for their robustness and validity in the everyday world. The theory is significant because it has been proven to have heuristic value and is used the world over. My reason for developing CPM was to fill a gap in the disclosure research because, from discovering the theory, I learned that disclosure is the "process" by which people talk about private information.

Sandra Petronio

Communication privacy management theory has been used to study privacy boundary management in a variety of contexts, including health, family relationships, online social media, and relational issues.[8] For example, a recent study used CPM to explore topic avoidance (death, future, and sexuality), open communication, and partnership burden in communication about cancer among partners.[9] The study included couples where one person was diagnosed or treated for some type of cancer. The authors proposed two models using CPM. The first model predicted that perception of own and partner levels of open communication leads to lower topic avoidance and consequently reduced partner burden. The second model made similar predictions and focused on a partner's topic avoidance rather than on one's own topic avoidance. The findings demonstrated support for both the models. In addition, both showed support for CPM because patients and partners displayed both openness and topic avoidance, thus demonstrating the dialectical tension between public and private. Further, the theory is used to explain why partners allowed topic avoidance even when it contributed to their own burden. Specifically, partners with cancer own that

information, and the situation of battling cancer creates catalyst rules for what can and should be shared in the relationship. The next theory moves from how and whether we talk about certain issues to the role of affection in relationships.

Affection Exchange Theory

Disclosure helps to construct boundaries and connections with partners, friends, and family. Another key component to relational connections is affection. Kory Floyd is a communication scholar who has developed affection exchange theory (AET) that explains how affection is shared and the impact it has on partners.[10]

Floyd argues that affectionate communication is an adaptive behavior (grounded in and selectively reinforced through evolution) that contributes to humans' deep-seated desires for viability and fertility. Further, Floyd assumes that human behavior is only partially subject to personal choice or social construction; he suggests that it is also driven by survival motivations and biological and physiological needs. Thus, people may not even be aware of some of their affection behavior. According to Floyd, affection is communicated in three ways. First, people communicate affection through nonverbal messages, including touch, smiles and vocalics (pitch, volume, rate, and tone of voice). Second, affection is verbally expressed—telling someone that we love them. Finally, we can offer support and do things for others that let them know we care about them.

The theory offers five postulates. The first is that affection needs and capacity are innate. Floyd argues that the need for affection is a basic human need, and we do not learn this by socialization or modeling. The second postulate is that feelings of affection and expressions of affection are related, but not the same thing. For example, you might feel affectionate toward a potential partner and not express it because of fear of rejection. Or, you might express affection because social norms suggest that you should, such as being nice to babies. The third, and Floyd proposes the most important, postulate is that affectionate communication increases survival chances and fertility for three reasons: (1) It contributes to the creation of connected relations to another person that in turn improves access to material and emotional resources that benefit survival; (2) the expression of affection increases a person's reproductive opportunities because it signals to potential partners that one would be a good parent; (3) exchanging affection is physically rewarding (that is, it feels good); not receiving affection is physically aversive. The fourth postulate suggests that there are differences among people in their tolerance for affection. Some of us are huggers and kissers, and others prefer less contact. Thus, all relationships cannot be judged by the same affection standards; rather they are specific to relationships and context. The fifth postulate is that people are averse to affectionate behaviors that violate this tolerance. If you meet someone who is too "touchy feely" or who wants to have physical intimacy much faster than you do, this feels "yucky," and you withdraw.

Floyd and his colleagues, along with other scholars, have tested the various postulates of the theory in more than 30 studies. The studies illustrate differences in who gives affection, the amount of affection, and to whom affection is given. The results demonstrate that parents and grandparents provide more affection to biological children than to step-children or nonbiological children. Further, these studies find that greater affection leads to greater relationship

satisfaction, management of stress hormones, reduced blood pressure and blood lipids, and a lower resting heart rate. For example, Horan explored whether affectionate messages would impact the perception of relational transgressions, such as infidelity or lying.[11] He surveyed nearly 180 college students in romantic relationships and found that the more affection in the romantic relationship, the lower the perceived severity of hurt feelings and ongoing thought and attention to the transgression.

Recently, Floyd added to affection exchange theory by introducing the concept of affection deprivation.[12] Affection deprivation is the desire to have more tactile affectionate communication than is currently received. He had adults complete an Internet survey and found that affection deprivation did not differ by ethnicity or age, but that men reported more deprivation than women. Further, as predicted by the theory, the more participants reported affection deprivation, the more they reported greater feelings of loneliness, depression, stress, fearful avoidant attachment styles, personality and anxiety disorders, and secondary immune disorders. Thus, the absence of affection hurts connection and health as much as the presence of affection helps. The next theory moves from affection to another key element in relationships—that of power.

From the Source . . .

In our close relationships, giving and receiving affection feels good—and not just psychologically or emotionally. Affection feels good physically, and that led me to consider the possibility that if it feels good TO us, it may be good FOR us, in the same way that eating feels good when we're hungry or sleeping feels good when we're tired. I believe that, like food and sleep, affection is a fundamental human need, and AET offers an explanation for why that is.

Kory Floyd

Dyadic Power Theory

The idea that relationships are formed systemically by interaction patterns across time has been the mainstay of our ideas about what relationships are, how they form, how they are maintained, and how they change. Power and dominance in these patterns has been another ongoing interest of interpersonal communication scholars. The Palo Alto Group, a group of scholars at Stanford University, established the foundation for how communication scholars approach the study of relationships. These ideas are most clearly laid out in the now-classic *Pragmatics of Human Communication.*[13] In this book, Paul Watzlawick, Janet Beavin, and Don Jackson explain that when two people communicate with each other—in addition to whatever else they may be doing—they are defining their relationship by the ways in which they interact.[14] As you talk with a friend, a coworker, a professor, or a family member, you are always creating a set of expectations for your own and the other person's behavior. Sometimes you reinforce old expectations; at other times, you engage in new patterns of interaction that may establish new expectations for future interactions.

Some of these expectations relate to how power is created in relationships. In a marriage, for example, a dominant-submissive relationship might emerge over time. Communication between coworkers might result in a status hierarchy, in which one person is more highly esteemed than the other. The interaction between neighbors might turn out to be an equal-and-polite relationship. Implicit rules are numerous in any ongoing relationship, be it a friendship, business partnership, love affair, family dynamic, or any other type. The rules can change as interaction patterns change.

Communication scholar Norah Dunbar developed dyadic power theory to explain communication patterns in the use of power and dominance and the impacts these patterns have on couples.[15] The theory makes a distinction between power and dominance. *Power* is the ability to influence the behavior of another person even in the face of resistance. For example, Sue asks her partner to take her to dinner, and even though her partner would prefer to stay home, she agrees to do so. *Dominance* consists of relationally based communication behaviors that are a combination of individual temperament and situational features. In the context of communication, dominance is more than a personality trait. It is a dynamic interaction in which one partner acquiesces to the assertion of control by the other. Dominance is both behavioral and relational. Dunbar explains that power provides the context for dominance.

Dunbar's starting point was social exchange theory (from social psychology) that she revised by emphasizing the role of communication.[16] Dunbar's theory also builds on the theory's proposition that human beings make decisions based on costs and rewards.[17] Individuals will act to maximize interpersonal rewards and to minimize interpersonal costs. Dependence is a key concept in the theory. Dependence is the degree to which your outcomes are contingent on your partner's action. Power is achieved when a person is valued as an exchange partner and dependent on the other for affection, connection, and other resources.

These resources and connections and the process of social exchange illustrate a further key aspect of the theory: that power and dominance are relative constructs. Power and dominance can only be measured relative to other people within a specific situation. As an example, a chilling effect occurs when one partner chooses not to say anything, even when they feel justified, because the other partner has more power.[18] Sue remembers her partner promised to take her to dinner last week and did not; yet, she may decide not to bring it up this week because her partner will withhold affection from her.

Dyadic power theory also uses research based on relational patterns and relational control to illustrate that the authority to use resources and connections is governed by societal norms as well as personal relational histories. For example, in our example above, societal norms suggest that it is not okay for Sue to hit her partner to get her way. At the same time, Sue and her partner may have negotiated their own rules for what is allowed or not (so name calling might be okay in their relationship, even if others think that is not acceptable).

Dyadic power theory suggests a number of propositions that illuminate how power interacts with communication in relationships. The first set of propositions predicts that increases in relative resources and authority result in increases of relative power. For example, a parent has authority and resources

over children and thus has greater relative power. Thus, parents are more likely than their children to use dominance as a strategy

Another set of propositions suggests a curvilinear relationship between relative power and dominance or control attempts. People who perceive their power as relatively high or low make fewer attempts than people who perceive their power as equal or nearly equal. People who have high relative power do not feel they need to exert dominance to maintain control. In contrast, people who perceive equal or lower power feel they need to use dominance behaviors to try to change the behavior of their partner.

A final key set of propositions relates to the relationship between power and relational satisfaction. People in relationships who perceive their power as relatively high or low are less satisfied compared to people who perceive their power differences as small or moderate. However, for interactions with people who are strangers, the greater the relative power, the more satisfied people are with an interaction.

From the Source . . .

Power is a fundamental part of all human relationships. Dyadic power theory assumes that when you are in a power-equal relationship, you are more free to express dominance than when you are constrained by power differences in an unequal relationship. The resources you each have access to and your level of dependence create boundaries through which you must interact.

Norah Dunbar

A recent study by Dunbar and Gordon Abra explored these propositions for people in interactions with strangers.[19] In the experiment, they manipulated the relative power that participants had with strangers by making participants believe they were in an unequal or equal power relationship with the other person. The authors found that people in equal-power and unequal high-power conditions were more likely to use dominance and were more satisfied with the relationship than people in unequal low-power conditions. Furthermore, the behavior of people in the unequal high-power conditions was less affected than the behavior of people in equal or lower power conditions; they were able to maintain control over the decisions of the partnership. These findings support the notions of relative power and the increased use of dominance with the increase of resources and authority. The next theory explores various patterns in family communication.

Family Communication Patterns Theory

Communication patterns in the family have been a popular topic for a number of years. While some of this focus has been on power and domination patterns—the focus of the theory above—the theory we explore here is a broader theory and one of the most popular theories of family communication. Family communication patterns theory (FCP) by Mary Anne Fitzpatrick and Ascan Koerner provides a set of terms to describe family types and the differences among them.[20]

Koerner and Fitzpatrick refer to the ways in which family members as individuals think about families as *schemas*, or more specifically, *relational schemas*.[21] Relational schemas consist of knowledge about yourself, others, and relationships, along with knowledge about how to interact in relationships. This knowledge provides an image of relationships based on your own experience and guides your behavior within relationships. A schema is an organized set of memories you use whenever you interact with other people. Since people have different experiences, and remember those experiences differently, their schemas will be somewhat different.

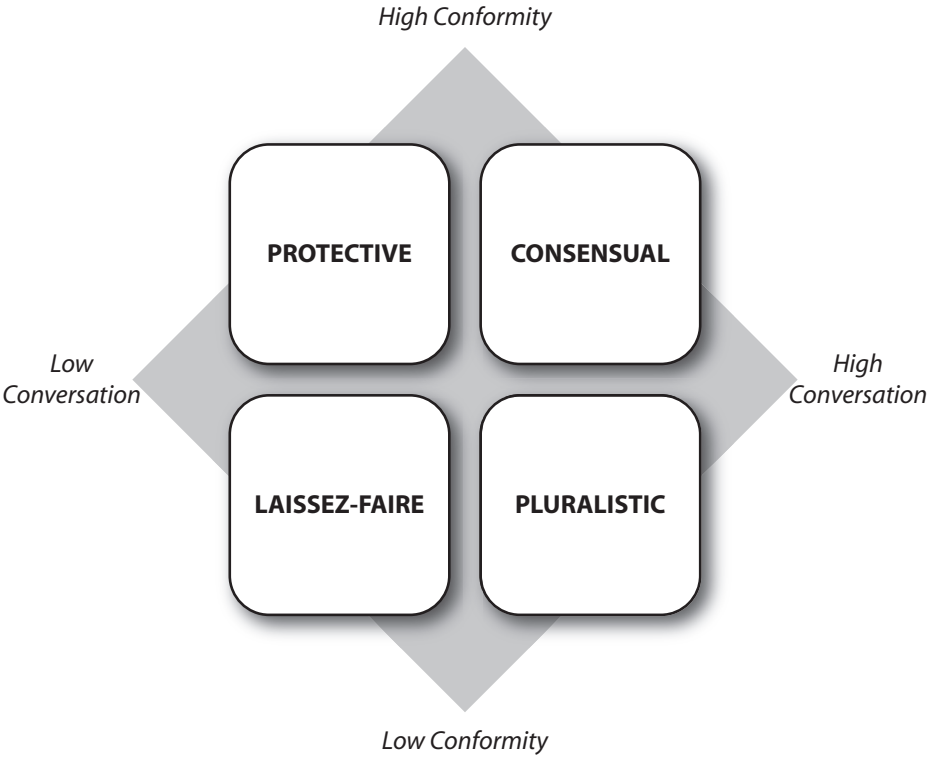
Your relational schemas are organized into levels from general to specific, including knowledge about social relationships in general, knowledge of types of relationships, and knowledge of specific relationships. Your family schema, therefore, includes (1) what you know about relationships in general; (2) what you know about family relationships as a type; and (3) what you know about your relationship with other members of your own family. Your interaction with other members of your family at any given time will be directed first by your specific schema, then by your family schema, and then by your general schema. In other words, when you and your brother interact, you will rely first on your knowledge of this particular relationship. If, for some reason, that does not work, you will fall back on your general knowledge of how family members should behave. If that fails, you will rely, as a last resort, on your knowledge of relationships in general.

Communication, then, is an important part of family schemas. Two orientations predominate: *conversation orientation* and *conformity orientation*. These are variables, so families differ in how much conversation and conformity the family schema includes. Families that have a high-conversation schema like to talk; in contrast, families with a low-conversation schema do not spend much time talking. Families with a high-conformity schema accept the authority of parents, while families low in this variable expect more individuality and autonomy. Your family's communication pattern will depend on where your schema fits within these two types of orientation.

Various schemas create different family types. Fitzpatrick and her colleagues have identified four types: (1) consensual; (2) pluralistic; (3) protective; and (4) laissez-faire. Each of these families has certain types of parents—determined by the ways in which they use their space, time, and energy and the degree to which they express their feelings, exert power, and share a common philosophy of marriage.[22] A certain type of family schema combined with orientation to communication or conformity results in a particular marriage type. The marriage types are (1) traditional; (2) independent; and (3) separate. Each marriage type functions in very different ways. Figure 7.2 illustrates the four family types.[23]

The first type of family is *consensual,* which is high in both conversation and conformity. Consensual families have a lot of talk, but the family authority—usually a parent—makes decisions. These families experience the tension of valuing open communication while also wanting clear parental authority. Parents in consensual families are *traditional* in marital orientation. This means that they have conventional views of marriage and place more value on stability and certainty in role relations than on variety and spontaneity. According to Fitzpatrick and

Figure 7.2 Family Types Resulting from Conformity and Conversation Orientations



her colleagues, a traditional wife: would take her husband's name; both members of the couple would have strong feelings about infidelity in the relationship; and they would share much time and space. They would try to work out a standard time schedule and spend as much time together as possible, and they probably would not have separate rooms for their own activities. The research data suggest that there is not much conflict in a traditional marriage because power and decision making are distributed according to customary norms. Husbands, for example, may be in charge of certain kinds of decisions and wives in charge of others. Consequently, there is little need to negotiate and resolve conflict in these marriages. At the same time, there is little impetus for change and growth in the relationship. A traditional couple can be assertive with each other when necessary, but each person tends to support the other's requests with appeals to the relationship rather than by refuting each other's arguments.

A family that is high in conversation but low in conformity will display characteristics of the second type of family, the *pluralistic* type. In this family, there will be a lot of unrestrained conversation, but everyone will decide for themselves what actions to take on the basis of that talk. Parents do not feel the need to control their children; instead, opinions are evaluated on the basis of merit, and everyone participates in family decision making. The parents in pluralistic fami-

lies are *independent*, and they usually are unconventional in their views of marriage. As independents, the husband and wife do not lean on each other very much, and they raise independent-thinking children. Although these types of parents may spend time together and share a great deal, they also value their autonomy and often have separate rooms in the house for their activities. They may also have separate interests and friends outside the family. Because they do not rely on conventional roles, independent marriages are constantly renegotiated. There is much conflict in a typical independent marriage; partners often vie for power, use a variety of persuasive techniques, and are not reluctant to refute each other's arguments. Like the traditionals, the independents are expressive. They respond to each other's nonverbal cues, and they usually understand each other well.

The third type of family is *protective*. This kind of family tends to be low in conversation but high in conformity; there is a lot of obedience but little communication. Parents in these types of families do not see why they should spend a lot of time talking things through, nor do they owe the children an explanation for what they decide. For this reason, such parents are labeled *separates*. These individuals seem to be ambivalent about their roles and relationship. They may have a conventional view of marriage, but they are not very interdependent and do not share much. Fitzpatrick refers to separates as "emotionally divorced." They have their opinions and can be contentious, but conflicts never last long because separates are quick to retreat from conflict. In some cases, there is little conflict simply because they do not coordinate their actions for very long and thus do not sustain conflicts. Their attempts to gain compliance rarely use relationship appeals and often mention the bad things that will happen if the spouse does not comply. Couples of this type have a watchful attitude. They ask many questions but offer little advice. Predictably, then, they are not very expressive, and they do not understand their partners' emotions very well.

Finally, the fourth type of family is *laissez-faire*—hands-off and low involvement in both conversation and conformity. Members of this family type really do not become involved much in what other members of the family do, and they certainly do not want to waste time talking about it. The parents in such families usually do not operate from the same schema. Instead, they may be a combination of separate and independent, for instance. About 40 percent of the couples Fitzpatrick tested display some combination of types—separate-traditional, traditional-independent, or independent-separate. The characterization of these mixed types is naturally more complex. Fitzpatrick and Koerner do not believe

From the Source . . .

I was always fascinated by the underlying mechanism of communication. What this theory shows more than others is that communication processes based on very pragmatic requirements, in this case, for families to share a social reality, have effects that go far beyond the requirement itself. Family communication patterns establish shared reality but also affect relationship quality, warmth, and affection and even very distal outcomes, such as mental and physical health, academic performance, and social success.

Ascan Koerner

that all of these forms of communication and marriage types are equally positive. Although different family patterns work well for different people, mixed and laissez-faire families tend to be more dysfunctional than the other three types.

Family communication patterns continues to be a very popular theory for exploring family communication patterns, their impacts, and the consequences for relationships.[24] For example, Andrew High and Kristina Scharp used FCP to examine how people seek social support.[25] Social support is the perception that one is cared for or that aid is available or provided. Seeking social support is an important element in positive family communication and for positive mental and physical health; more information on social support is provided in chapter 10. The authors found that family communication patterns lead to different levels of communication ability and motivation to seek support. Specifically, conversation orientation is positively associated with ability and motivation, while conformity orientation was negatively associated with ability but positively associated with motivation. The authors also found that ability and motivation are positively associated with the use of direct strategies for seeking support. Thus, consistent with the theory, the laissez-faire pattern (low conformity and low conversation) is not conducive to seeking support from others. The next theory explores a different approach to understanding family communication.

Queering Family Communication

While FCP continues to be popular, it is also addresses mainstream approaches to traditional families. Modern families reflect various arrangements, including same-sex relationships, single-parent, and multi-generational families. To be fair, scholars have used FCP to study these various family types. However, Roberta Chevrette argues that even though people might study lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ) relationships, they compare these relationships to a heterosexual norm.[26] As a result, she argues that these theories misunderstand and even misrepresent LGBTQ relationships. Further, because these theories influence the way that scholars and sometimes popular media label and talk about these relationships. These misunderstandings and misrepresentations can have negative impacts for those in nonnormative relationships.

Chevrette uses feminist and queer theory to critically question and explore difficulties in constructing inclusive theories of relational and family communication. Queer theory arose in the 1990s and directs attention to the performative and socially constructed features of sexuality and to heterosexual privilege. Queer theory questions binary sexuality (homosexual/heterosexual) and examines the discourses that construct heteronormativity—the perception that heterosexual is "normal" or the standard by which to compare other sexualities.

Chevrette's approach suggest four ways to "queer" family communication research. The first is to reveal assumptions of heteronormativity underlying relational and family communication. In particular, she questions the focus on the dyad in many existing models and theories. She understands the importance of focusing on dyads and yet thinks not enough emphasis is placed on the larger social system and the support system surrounding relationships. For example, in all relationships, there are people around who support that relationship and others who look down on it. These people might be close friends and family members or simply neighbors or coworkers. Further, Chevrette argues that dyadic

models perpetuate the focus on gender differences and opposite sex in relationships. She argues that to begin to theorize in a different way, we have to understand that the focus on heteronormative approaches to the study of relationships constrains us from thinking about different types of relationships, ways of being, and larger social systems that frame relationships.

The second element is to challenge the binary of public and private. Chevrette argues that most relational communication research treats sexuality as a personal issue rather than a public or political one. She argues that this focus on sexuality as personal and apolitical reinforces heteronormative approaches to the study of relationships. She proposes instead that sexuality should be treated as belonging to the public sphere where assumptions about relational norms and communication patterns stereotypically associated with men and women can be viewed more clearly. Her goal is not to force everyone to change the way they do relationships; rather, it is to put relational issues and communication patterns more in the open so the privilege that occurs for some is exposed and then can be either accepted or changed as appropriate.

The third component of Chevrette's approach to queering family communication is to complicate the construct of identity. Chevrette advocates for a view of identity in relationships beyond types. Types include categories such as gay, straight, or queer. She feels that when you put relational identities into types, scholars (including many queer theorists) create fixed and stable categories that make it difficult for people to change. For example, someone who is perceived as the breadwinner and authority in a family may find it difficult to play other roles or show vulnerability by displaying emotion or crying. Further, Chevrette argues that categorizing people into types encourages comparisons of differences and encourages viewing certain types as better. Her solution is to consider identities as socially constructed and constantly changing, which enables heteronormative patterns to be more easily visible

The final aspect Chevrette advocates for queering family communication is to emphasize intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to seeing the connections between various constructs such as sexuality, class, gender, ethnicity, and other positions and identity markers. Chevrette notes that previous scholarship tends to look at these constructs in isolation from each other—ethnicity does not have anything to do with sexuality. Chevrette argues that this approach marginalizes certain groups and glosses over the ways in which LGBTQ relationships are likely distinct for different ethnic groups and social classes.

From the Source . . .

I noticed early in my graduate studies that a lot of theories about family communication and relationships didn't reflect my experiences as a queer-identified person from a nontraditional family. And so I wondered, how are our classrooms and the ways we think and write about LGBTQ experiences impacted by assumptions about "normal" relationships and families? Queering family communication requires challenging ideas frequently taken for granted and thinking about sexual identities as more than check marks.

Roberta Chevrette

Chevrette's approach to theorizing about interpersonal and family communication is distinct from the other theories presented in this section. It emphasizes critical and social construction approaches to the family while still exploring issues of boundaries and connections. CPM also recognizes aspects of social construction and the use of relational rules to identify boundaries between public and private and how those boundaries can shift over time. AET, dyadic power theory, and FCP identify specific patterns of interaction in relationships and show how these patterns impact the quality of the relationships, the quality of communication, and the health and social impacts on individuals.

Constructing and Transcending Difference

In the previous section, we explored ways that people construct boundaries and connection in relationships. In some cases, the way we relate to others means constructing the other as different, which may mean we maintain distance, do not establish a relationship at all, and perhaps even construct the other as an enemy. These constructions and relationships can have negative societal impacts; thus we need to consider ways that communication is used to negotiate, manage, and ideally transcend these differences. In chapter 3, we introduced theories that examine ways that identity construction contributes to the construction of "us" and "them." The theories in this section further develop those points by illustrating how interpersonal communication contributes to this construction of difference. This section explores two theories that examine the ways we construct differences in our relationships with others: (1) moral conflict theory; and (2) performing foreignness. We also describe two theories that deal with transcending difference: (3) theory of coalition and alliance building; and (4) dialogue as building a culture of peace.

Moral Conflict Theory

Conflict is a normal part of relationships. Different desires and goals can create conflict with our relational partners, friends, family members, coworkers, and neighbors. Managing these conflicts can be difficult; there are, however, communication patterns that help us resolve differences effectively. However, some conflicts do not lend themselves to straightforward resolution or even management. Moral conflict is the clash that occurs because of deeply held philosophical beliefs. Barnett Pearce and Stephen Littlejohn developed moral conflict theory to explain how moral conflict emerges and the characteristics of moral conflict that construct and reinforce difference.[27]

For Pearce and Littlejohn, personal action is always based on moral orders. Moral orders are assumptions about the world: "what is real, how we know reality, and what is right."[28] That is, moral orders are the set of ideas that we rely on to make sense of the world and what is going on—it is our common sense understanding about the nature of the world.

These moral orders are sometimes the basis of moral difference. When one person's moral order clashes with another person's moral order, fundamental differences become apparent. A classic example of moral difference is pro-life/pro-choice. The moral orders that guide the position of whether abortion should

be legal or not are very different from one another. One position is based on when life begins and religious doctrine, while the other position emphasizes freedom of personal choice and medical science. Pearce and Littlejohn describe these as incommensurate moral orders. *Incommensurate* means that the moral orders cannot be directly compared to one another because the belief about reality and right and wrong are at different levels—they are simply different systems for making sense of the world.

Pearce and Littlejohn identified several patterns associated with moral conflicts. First, the language of the two parties differs; even if they have the same terms, they use them differently. Second, the parties perceive they are stuck in dispute and have no choice but to fight. Third, attempts to resolve the conflict actually exacerbate the conflict. The assumption that if people keep talking they will learn about others and ultimately resolve the conflict does not hold during moral conflict; more communication usually makes things worse. Environmental advocates and business developers provide an example of moral conflict in action. Both groups may talk about sustainability, but they use the word differently—an instance of the first communication pattern. The environmental advocates focus on ensuring the sustainability of the environment, and the business people emphasize jobs and development to ensure a sustainable economy. Environmental advocates raise money and take developers to court in order to block development efforts because they feel that if they do not stand up and fight, the environment will suffer. In the process of these interactions, the conflict worsens: business people learn what "radicals" the environmentalists are, and the environmentalists learn what "cutthroats" the business people are.

These three patterns of communication lead to mutual frustration, and the parties begin to become entrenched in their positions. This entrenchment results in conflicts that are intractable, morally attenuated, and rhetorically ineloquent. An *intractable* conflict is one that lasts for a long time, and there seems to be no way to resolve the issues. During the 2016 US presidential election, the issue of abortion came up once again, with arguments very similar to

From the Source . . .

Barnett Pearce was puzzled in the early 1980s about strident conflicts between parties that held very different political views. After several case studies of this problem, he and I, along with a team of interested scholars, formulated the idea of moral conflict, or disputes arising from deeply held philosophical assumptions about reality and personhood. We found that such conflicts are very difficult to resolve because participants are either unwilling or unable to talk about their incommensurate assumptions. This discovery led to a thirty-year exploration of practical methods of dialogue that hold out the hope that parties embroiled in moral conflict might achieve some level of mutual understanding, if not resolution. A profound understanding of one's own and others' moral positions can reduce the hostility and potential violence of these struggles. Pearce and I came to call this effort the *transcendent communication project*, which entailed both theoretical and practical innovations.

Stephen Littlejohn

those in past presidential elections. *Morally attenuated conflicts* refer to conflicts in which parties violate their own moral orders because they feel justified in fighting the other. For example, a radical environmentalist may destroy a tree to cause damage to a developer's property. Or, a Christian may say hateful things to someone who holds different views on abortion. *Rhetorical ineloquence* refers to using strategies that are not sophisticated. These strategies, such as name calling, chants, slogans, and diatribe often occur after sophisticated arguments in a conflict are rejected.

Littlejohn and Kristen Cole used the cancellation of Pornotopia in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to illustrate moral conflict.[29] Pornotopia was a pornographic film festival that was held in Albuquerque from 2007–2009. The city had tried unsuccessfully to cancel the event each of those three years; in 2010, Albuquerque succeeded by stating that the event could take place only in an area zoned for showing adult films. Such zoning did not exist in a venue that could hold the event. The organizers tried to host a censored version of the event, but it was cancelled the night before its scheduled date.

The authors identified two different worldviews in the conflict. The organizers held a worldview of free speech, a position grounded in key assumptions: pornography is not always violent, women can elicit pleasure from the nonnormative sexual practices portrayed, and regulation of pornography violates constitutional principles. In contrast, the city held a worldview grounded in privacy and zoning. They argued that sex and sexuality should be a private matter (mainly between husband and wife), and the government's job is keep the public and other institutions safe from such public acts (and hence the need for zoning). Conversations between the two parties further distanced the two sides. For example, organizers of the event accused city officials of bullying and intimidation, while city officials defined the organizers as publicly indecent.

In moral conflicts, one party cannot understand why the other does not see the validity of the arguments that have been offered; therefore, the other must be ignorant, stupid, wrong, or evil. The more the parties talk to each other, the more difference is reinforced and reconstructed. The patterns of communication are low in quality and/or focus on positions of advocacy in order to defeat the other party. The next theory further illustrates how difference is constructed through everyday communication performance to build communities of those who belong and those who do not.

Performing Foreignness

As we interact with others in schools, neighborhoods, and organizations, communities emerge. A community is a sense of fellowship among those who share similar characteristics, interests, and/or goals. By definition, a community has people who belong to it and those who do not. Sometimes it can be quite difficult to discern who is in the community and who is foreign to it. We may have come from outside ourselves and now are accepted, or we are reminded at times that we do not fully belong. Rahul Mitra's approach to performing foreignness explains different ways that we use ordinary acts, discourses, and interactions to construct both community and foreignness.[30]

Mitra uses Giorgio Agamben's[31] notion of potentiality to frame his theory. Potentiality includes two aspects: something that is or is not being done (or may

or may not be done), and something that one may not be capable of doing at the present time (because of lack of a skill). Mitra suggests, then, a complex interrelationship between foreignness and community: foreignness exists because of community and also reconstitutes and is a part of community. As Mitra states, "all humans exist in the mode of potentiality (foreignness), from which they draw strength and organize community, which in turn preserves and generates new potentialities, in a never ending cycle."[32] In other words, foreignness and community are always possible and are always being performed. This is why we might be part of the community in one instance and not at another time.

Mitra makes three claims about foreignness and community. First, they are both ordinary and inescapable. He shares his own stories about being from India and studying for his PhD in the United States to illustrate how common these experiences can be. He talks about sharing his research at conferences, talking with students in the classroom, and interacting with his partner's family at Christmas as everyday instances where issues of foreignness and community came up. Second, foreignness and community are constructed and reconstructed by everyday interactions, discourses, and materials (e.g., clothes). He mentions a family member who suggested that he could use the "foreign card" anytime he wants by wearing the right clothes, a comment that hurt him and made him feel different from the family. Later that same evening, he was included in the family picture and again felt like a part of the family. So both foreignness and community were constructed simultaneously. Third, community is also open, formative, and potential. Mitra's previous example illustrates how there is always a potential for him to be a part of the family and also not part of the family.

Mitra also describes two different types of performative moves to illustrate these processes: normalized meaning and performance ambiguity. *Normalized meanings* are performances that either erase foreignness or create spectacle; the result of both is construction of difference and othering. When erasing foreignness, a person acts in ways to pass as someone she is not. For example, imagine that you think your friends would make fun of the food you eat for lunch, so you make sure to bring a sandwich like everyone else. Or, perhaps, just to fit in, you talk about activities, such as a rugby match, even though you do not really like the sport. These performances erase foreignness in the moment, and yet Mitra asserts that they stereotype both the actor and the recipient and further reinforce foreignness because the connection is a false one. Perhaps your colleague would rather talk about something besides rugby and would enjoy getting to know the real you.

Spectacle occurs when we highlight something to draw attention to it and amuse others but do not provide any true depth of information about it. For example, Mitra shares a story where he dressed in a "flaming" outfit to bring attention to a research poster he presented at a conference on heteronormative communication in the classroom. He regretted the decision later because, although he brought attention to himself, it did not facilitate an authentic discussion about the topic. His outfit further reinforced the foreignness or difference between LGBTQ students and straight ones.

Performance ambiguity is the type of performance that Mitra argues encourages fluidity and offers the potential for moving smoothly between for-

eignness and community. In contrast to efforts to erase foreignness and engage in spectacle, performance ambiguity is not as easy to pinpoint—it is ambiguous and thus can assume many different forms and involves co-performance between the conversational partners. Performance ambiguity often arises out of an interaction that starts with a focus on foreignness and difference. Someone might say, for instance, "Why does your family do *that* for the holidays?" The indignation with which the question is offered highlights difference. Asking a question in return ("What are some ways that your family does holidays?") or offering a statement that allows for exploration of the topic and negotiation would be possibilities to encourage both difference and connection rather than difference and defensiveness. Mitra's approach to difference and foreignness is designed to illustrate how foreignness is constructed in relation to community and how it can be performed fluidly to create connection and community. The next theory explores the use of alliances as a way to help bridge differences.

From the Source . . .

It was an argument in the car with my ex that got me thinking about how we understand what makes us "different" and what that difference really means. In my case, my difference became most meaningful when I engaged simultaneously with my sexual orientation, my native origins, the color of my skin and accent—rather than piecemeal. That realization helped me understand what others felt when they thought about someone being "foreign" to them. Thinking through my past and present interactions with students, colleagues, friends, and family, I realized that being foreign or being part of a community is not something that is easily settled but continues throughout our lives as we move in and out of being "strange" and "familiar," through our everyday communication.

Rahul Mitra

Theory of Coalition and Alliance Building

In her book *Power Lines: On the Subject of Feminist Alliances*, Aimee Carrillo Rowe offers a theory of feminist alliance building based on relationships. This theory is one approach for transcending differences. Rowe suggests that how feminists form alliances is indeed an act of rhetorical invention—self-chosen, strategic, and productive. She uses as her starting point the metaphor of literal power lines that crisscross the globe "through which people are joined and power is transmitted."[33] Similarly, feminist alliances connect women to one another and to circuits of power in the academy. Rowe's contention is that women often do not recognize the choices that go into such alliances. If they become aware of their assumptions and choices, they can address power issues in their alliances mindfully, perhaps even transforming power and how it functions in the process. Thus, power contributes to the construction of difference, and mindful alliances can help transform and transcend these power issues.

Based on interviews with academic women—white women and women of color—about their efforts to build alliances across race, Rowe crafts a "politics of relation."[34] By this she means that the conditions and effects of academic feminists' commitments are visible in the relational ties and alliances they make, constituting how they see the world, what they value, and the possibilities for what they can become. These relational ties, Rowe argues, cannot be separated from those whom we love, by which she means not just lovers and friends but all those "whose lives matter to us" and whose well-being is crucial to our own.[35] Thus, the sense of belonging and alliance building are intertwined: "Where I place my loyalties, the ways in which I fit in and stand out, the moments I can speak and those in which I cannot—the accumulation of those moments is who I am becoming."[36] Alliance building, then, is collective and collaborative, a process of decentering the individual and focusing instead on the various ways she belongs to multiple communities, the ways these serve as entry points into power dynamics, and how alliances are continually evolving processes of becoming.

Rowe's interviews suggest that white women and women of color do indeed approach alliances within academic institutions from different starting points because of different sets of experiences and different communities of belonging. White women typically form alliances with those who have something to offer them in terms of institutional power; women of color, on the other hand, build alliances on the basis of honesty and loyalty. The recognition of these differences is a step in self-reflexively creating different kinds of alliances—alliances that rely on accountability; responsibility; and new ways of listening, speaking, and nonspeaking in the relational intimacy that develops. Rowe hopes feminists ultimately will ask questions of their alliances, including who is and will be included in the circuits of power created by feminists, what kind of power is being created, and whose interests are served in that process. The result might be ways of relating and building alliances that truly create a transracial feminist project composed of multiple ways of consciousness, of multiple ways of radical belonging.

Rachel Levitt provides further insight about alliance building using silence, particularly with Deaf and Deaf-allied people.[37] She shares personal narratives to illustrate ways that silence can be used strategically to build alliances. First, she suggests that silence can be used to refuse hearing people's expectations for Deaf and Deaf allies to accommodate to hearing people rather than the other way around. For example, she shares a story about a girl expecting her to talk because she had heard her speak, and Levitt chose silence to show agency. Second, silence can be used to show solidarity with others. Levitt explains that hearing entitlement is a taken-for-granted privilege, as race, gender, and social class sometimes are. Third, silence can be used as pedagogical practice. She argues that moments of reflection are useful ways to explore and grapple with power structures and discourses that construct hearing entitlements. Finally, silence can be used as resistance. Silent protests, such as not explaining what was signed or participating in rallies, can be useful to resist hearing entitlements and also to build alliances. Levitt's work is an example of being mindful about communication strategies in processes of alliance building and thus illustrates key points of Rowe's theory. The next theory examines the use of dialogue to build peaceful relationships.

Dialogue as Building a Culture of Peace

Dialogical theory suggests that relationships integrate a mix of diverse "voices" that pull and push on the relationship over time. Dialogue often is argued to be an effective approach for transcending differences, otherness, and foreignness. There are many approaches to dialogue, and many of the current forms have foundations in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and Martin Buber. We provide a brief overview of these foundational scholars and then briefly introduce several examples of modern approaches to dialogue, focusing on Benjamin Broome's approach to intergroup dialogue in building a culture of peace.

Bakhtin was a Russian philosopher and teacher who wrote and published in the 1920s and 1930s. Today, his ideas are known across disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Bakhtin begins with the notion that everyday life (what he calls the *prosaic*) requires a constant effort to reintegrate diverse forces.[38] Bakhtin also believes that the world is not only messy and chaotic but genuinely open and free—nothing is yet decided (what he called *unfinalizability*). In other words, we do not enter a complete and static world; rather, we help construct all of the events and contexts that make the world a complex one. This world is made up of multiple voices—what Bakhtin calls a *heteroglossia* (literally, "many voices")—all of which contribute to the constant change and flux of the world. Against the context of everydayness, the concepts of unfinalizability and heteroglossia comprise the basis for Bakhtin's *dialogue*. Dialogue, then, is something that happens within a specific situation among specific participants, like a discussion in your communication theory class.

At the heart of Bakhtin's conception of dialogue is the *utterance*—a unit of exchange, spoken or written, between two people. An utterance refers to language spoken in context. It contains a theme—the content of the conversation, the communicator's attitude toward that subject, and some degree of responsiveness on the part of the person being addressed. The speaker not only anticipates the viewpoint of the other and adapts her communication on the basis of that anticipation, but the addressee also participates by responding, evaluating, and initiating utterances of her own. Thus, dialogue represents a contextualized, ongoing, and evolving subject matter that contributes to the constant redefinition of the participants in the dialogue as well.

Dialogue embodies a special kind of communication that Martin Buber labeled the *I–Thou* relationship.[39] In such relationships, you see yourself and others as whole persons who cannot be reduced to any simple characterization. Communication in Buberian dialogue, or in an I–Thou relationship, is tricky. Because you are a whole person worthy of your own experiences, opinions, ideas, and feelings, you must stand by what is important to you. At the same time, however, you must also acknowledge the full life experiences of others and allow them to express what is important to them. This is what Buber calls *the narrow ridge*. In the genuine dialogue of relationships, we walk the narrow ridge between self and other. In a good dialogue, you stay on the ridge of honoring yourself and the other, even though substantial differences may be present. This means clearly expressing your own ideas but listening well to and honoring the ideas of others.

Much of the time, however, we do not treat others as worthy individuals. In an *I–It* relationship, you think of the other person as an object to be labeled, manipulated, changed, and maneuvered to your own benefit. In an I–It relationship, you privilege yourself over the other. Buber identified three types of interaction within an I-It frame: monologue, technical dialogue, and monologue disguised as dialogue. *Monologue* exists when you simply monopolize the conversation. *Technical dialogue* is an exchange that is mostly about information rather than about participants' experiences. *Disguised monologue* is communication in which participants talk around the issues without honestly and directly engaging the self and other in their complexity; it is communication that is neither appropriate nor honest.

There are many modern approaches to theorizing and application of dialogues to relational communication, including dialogue to address relational differences, moral conflict, intergroup issues (interaction between people who see themselves as coming from different standpoints such as culture, race, age, etc.).[40] Broome uses the foundational work of Buber to develop his approach to dialogue for building a culture of peace when addressing intergroup relationships that have been fraught with (intractable) conflict and difference.[41] Broome suggests that dialogue makes possible five relational features that create a culture of peace. First, dialogue can promote sustained contact. Broome notes that conflict continues because of limited contact between groups; however, sustained contact must be under the right conditions. Gordon Allport originally proposed the contact hypothesis—that under certain conditions (such as equal status among the participants), intergroup contact can be effective in reducing prejudice.[42] Broome uses this hypothesis as a starting point to argue that sustained contact should be encouraged when it is likely to have positive effects and discouraged when negative effects are likely (as in the case of moral conflict). Second, dialogue can reduce deep-seated hostilities. Walking the narrow ridge through dialogue allows participants to reduce the fear, anger, and hatred that have resulted from violent conflicts such as those in Northern Ireland, Rwanda, and South Africa. Dialogue creates a culture of safety that allows validation and transformation of these emotions.

Third, dialogue nurtures respect for the other. Broome notes the psychological tendency to create ingroups (us, allies) and outgroups (them, enemies). Intergroup dialogue provides the opportunity to sit with the enemy, learn about history and personal experiences, see others as human, and possibly build a relationship. Fourth, dialogue develops a narrative of hope and peace. Intergroup dialogue allows us to begin to move beyond past hurt and think about a transcendent future. Participants begin to tell stories about the past, present, and future that do not include conflict with the others. Finally, dialogue establishes a basis for cooperation. Cooperation is fundamental to resolving conflicts effectively; yet cooperating with the enemy when there is a lack of trust is difficult. Broome notes that each of these five elements moves sequentially to build on the previous element; each depends on a successful realization of the earlier stages. Furthermore, dialogue is usually engaged with the help of trained facilitators because it is difficult to accomplish when a conflict has been sustained and intractable. Broome recognizes, then, the difficulties with and challenges to establishing dialogue, particularly in violent conflicts.

From the Source . . .

Conflicts are inevitable in any society. In fact, they are key elements of changes that lead to a better future for everyone. But all too often differences are met with psychological, structural, or physical violence. When this happens, the potential for creativity and learning is replaced by defensiveness, revenge, retaliation, and destroyed relationships. However, if we can respond to conflict through empathy and dialogue, we will usually find creative ways to overcome differences and promote cooperation. Our goal is to build a "culture of peace," which is characterized by norms that value diversity and mechanisms that help us deal effectively with differences. More than ever, we must move away from violence and toward a culture of peace. Only then can we realize our potential in a world that increasingly confronts incompatible views of the past and conflicting visions of the future.

Benjamin Broome

This section introduced several theories that illustrate how and why differences are constructed through communication. In these situations, establishing relationships is difficult because conflict has constructed an "enemy." At the same time, theories of alliance building and dialogue illustrate possibilities for transcending difference and constructing new kinds of relationships. These relationships may not be close or intimate, and yet they can contribute to creating a peaceful society.

Tensions and Challenges

The previous section presented the construction and transcendence of difference. The focus was on differences between people in early stages in relationships or differences that prevent positive relationships from developing. Difference, however, is an ongoing aspect in all relationships, and this section explores specific tensions and challenges that occur in ongoing relationships. Over time, people in relationships develop different interests, goals, and desires, and these issues create hurdles or barriers for couples, families, friends, and co-workers to manage and navigate. Four theories are advanced in this section that deal with the management of relational difficulties: (1) relational dialectics theory; (2) identity management theory; (3) theories about relational maintenance; and (4) interpersonal deception theory.

Relational Dialectics Theory

For a number of years, Leslie Baxter and her colleagues have explored the complex ways in which people in relationships use communication to manage the naturally opposing forces that can impinge on their relationship at any given time. Relational dialectics theory (RDT) advances the idea of relationship as a dialogical and dialectical process, following the work of Bakhtin.[43] Over the years, Baxter has identified Bakhtin's dialogics as a way to better understand the flux and flow of relationships—they are defined through a dialogue among

many voices. At the same time, Baxter also characterizes her theory as *dialectical*, meaning that relationships are a place where contradictions are managed through discourse.[44]

For Baxter, *dialectic* refers to a tension between opposing forces within a system. Dialectics are sites of struggle among meanings that arise in various and not-always consistent discourses. In our lives, we often experience equally compelling "voices" that impinge on our decision making. For example, you may want to achieve material success, but your humanitarian and environmental values make you question this goal. This contradiction is serious because you realize that in order to achieve your humanitarian and environmental goals, you must achieve material success to provide the resources to allow you to have an impact. You may go back and forth about this tension, confused about how to proceed. While this is a psychological contradiction within the self, it is also more than that, and RDT refers to the *discursive struggles* that we have in resolving these contradictions. RDT focuses in particular on the interactions we have with others about these contradictions and the competing types of discourses that come into play as we attempt to manage these contradictions. For example, in the struggle between materiality and humanitarianism, we might discuss with our partner the need to make more money to support our children's activities and future education. In another instance, we might talk with our friends, who are focused on ways to make the planet a better place, and this conversation encourages us to do more for the community. The dialectic is presented and managed through these various discourses, some of which may compete with each other.[45]

In addition to the notion of dialectic, Baxter and her colleagues describe the process of dialogue. In general, a *dialogue* is a coming together of diverse voices in a conversation. The term *dialogue* is actually a metaphor from literature and theatre, referring to the lines of dialogue of the characters. Following Bakhtin, Baxter sees dialogues as conversations that define and redefine relationships as they emerge in actual situations over time. When Baxter writes that relationships are both dialogical and dialectical, she means that the natural tensions of relationships are managed through coordinated talk.

Relationships are dynamic, and communication is what manages both similarity and difference. Indeed, communication draws us together through similarity, while creating, maintaining, and managing areas of difference as well. Relational communication creates forces that give a sense of order while managing forces that lead to change. This idea of relationships is multidimensional. In order to really see a relationship, you have to move around and take several perspectives on it, as you would when looking at a sculpture in a gallery. Baxter provides vantage points for viewing the process of relational dialogue.

Baxter's first vantage point refers to how your ideas about *self*, the *other*, and the *relationship* are constructed in talk, which happens in several ways. You create moments, often turning points, which you later remember as important. You retell old stories from the relationship that bring a sense of similarity or shared experience over time. Baxter calls this *chronotopic similarity.* At the same time, you identify differences between yourself and the other person in the relationship, which enables you to set yourself apart and to develop as a person, a concept she calls *self-becoming*. In other words, both similarity and difference

are made in the conversations of a relationship over time. This happens in conversations within the relationship and with people outside of it.

Imagine for a moment that you joined your university's tutoring program and are matched up with a freshman looking for help in her basic communication courses. You meet with her a couple times a week throughout the semester to help her organize speeches, prepare for exams, and plan projects—a job you very much enjoy. By talking together about courses and assignments as well as things going on in your personal lives, you create shared moments that you will look back on in the future. She might call you excitedly after the fall semester to let you know that she got an A on a final exam for which the two of you prepared together. From the first vantage point, then, you literally make your relationship within dialogue.

At the same time, many differences are accentuated in the tutoring relationship. You are older, more familiar with the requirements of the major, and more knowledgeable than your new friend about the expectations of various professors—and you are planning your future after graduation this coming spring. Even though you and your tutee feel quite close to one another and enjoy the shared moments you create together, each of you also acknowledges and appreciates that you are in different places in terms of your life trajectories. These points are made even clearer when you talk with your friends about the relationship you have with your tutee.

Baxter's second vantage point tells us that we manage the dynamic interplay between forces—those that push us apart and those that pull us together, those that create a sense of chaos, and those that provide a feeling of coherence—through dialogue. These opposing forces are dialectical in that they involve a tension between two or more contradictory elements of a system. RDT asserts that relationships provide a context in which we manage *contradictions* or *discursive struggles*.[46]

Although discussion of bipolar opposites such as dependence-independence or stability-change is frequent in the literature on relationships, Barbara Montgomery and Baxter feel that bipolar opposites oversimplify the much more complex process of contradiction, in which various forces tug at one another. Montgomery and Baxter see these as a cluster of forces or a "knot of contradiction."[47] The discursive struggles over these knots sometimes compete with each other, and often one of these forces can be more central to a relationship than another.[48]

Each cluster consists of a variety of related discursive struggles that can occur in relationships. One cluster, for example, is *integration-separation,* or the tension between feeling close and feeling more distant. You and your partner may struggle with decisions about whether to be in relationship or to assert your freedom and individuality as unique individuals. A second cluster is *expression-nonexpression*. When you and your partner talk about how much to share or whether it is OK to keep secrets, you are engaging in this discursive struggle.

A third cluster is *stability-change,* or the tension between being predictable and consistent versus being spontaneous and different. Often couples experience a quandary about whether to keep doing the same old thing or to try new things. When this happens, they are feeling the stability-change contradiction,

which has a significant impact on relationship development. How do you interact in a way that keeps things somewhat predictable and stable while allowing the relationship to change and grow?

Baxter's third vantage point centers on aesthetics; this is a vantage point that involves a sense of balance, coherence, form, and wholeness. The mere fact that you can say that you are having a relationship means that there is some pattern there that, like a portrait, gives the relationship identity, uniqueness, and wholeness. You are not only able to name the relationships in which you take part but you also can describe them, characterize them, and tell stories that show what the relationships are like. The character of a relationship is a reflection of its aesthetic, which is created in dialogue.

Thus, although social life is "messy" in many respects, we are able to provide a sense of order through dialogue. Communicators in a relationship can construct a feeling of wholeness and unity, a momentary feeling of completion, an aesthetic through dialogue. This can happen in several ways. You can, for example, create a feeling of temporal continuity, or a sense that what is happening now is logically connected to what happened before. You also can create a feeling of a unified relationship, so that despite your differences, you are able to get a sense of "being together" as a couple. This can happen, for example, when conversation feels like an effortless flow or when you easily participate in a common ritual within the relationship.

Baxter's fourth vantage point refers to the idea that the practical and aesthetic outcomes are not things in themselves but are created in communication. As did Bakhtin, Baxter reminds us that dialogue is conversation. Relationships are never a series of single-person statements but consist of an ongoing back-and-forth process that occurs over time. Important, then, are the actual behaviors or practices in which communicators engage along the trajectory of a relationship. In relationship theory, this idea is very important because it means that some relational pattern and definition arises in the give-and-take of action. Relationships are not something you work out cognitively in your head; they are produced through discourse. By definition, every interaction occurs within a larger context; it is always understood in part by what came before, and it sets the stage for new turns to happen in the future. Discourse, then, is ongoing—an unending conversation.

From the Source . . .

Relational dialectics theory (RDT) grew out of dissatisfaction with the mono-logic biases of traditional interpersonal/family communication research in which discourses of openness, certainty, and connection were privileged while competing discourses of nonexpression, unpredictability, and autonomy were muted. It has evolved from its early focus on bipolar contradictions to its current articulation as a constitutive theory of communication centered in the struggle of competing discourses.

Leslie Baxter

Numerous scholars have used relational dialectics theory to study communication in various relationships, including end-of-life care, community organizing, organizational sense making, and provider-patient interactions.[49] For example, Marnel Niles Goins found four dialectical conversational tensions in Black female friendship groups: finances (spending/saving), language ("good"/"bad" English), appearance (satisfaction/dissatisfaction), and race (acceptance/rejection of otherness).[50] Niles Goins suggests that the interaction among these tensions enable the members of these friendship groups to express their culturally based truths freely; thus, the groups offered a place where they could center marginalized rather than dominant discourses. Further, Niles Goins suggests that the dialectic of integration and separation, as the dominant cluster in these conversations, reinforced the focus on marginalized discourses and set clear boundaries between the group and outside communities. The next theory examines different types of challenges that occur as we manage identities in relationships.

Identity Management Theory

In chapter 3, we discussed communicator identity at some length. However, identity is not limited to individual communicators but involves relationships as well. Identity management theory, developed by Tadasu Todd Imahori and William Cupach, shows how identities are established, maintained, and changed within relationships.[51] With the important people in your life, you will constantly negotiate mutually acceptable answers to the question, "Who are we, and what is the nature of our relationship?"

Imagine an intercultural marriage between a Native American wife who grew up on the reservation and an Anglo husband from New York City with Italian immigrant grandparents. Like all couples, these individuals will be engaged in a constant process of negotiating their relational identity—who they are as a couple. This entails knowing who they are culturally and individually. For example, the wife's Native heritage will be very important to her at certain times and in certain situations, but other aspects of her background—like her level of education or personality—may assume greater importance at other times. We could make the same generalization about the husband. However, this couple is more than their individual identities; they must attend to their relational identity as well. And although we have used an example in which there is considerable ethnic and geographic diversity, even couples who are fairly homogenous—who grow up in the same town with parents of similar backgrounds and values, for example—still need to attend to their relational identity as a couple.

When constructing a relational identity, cultural differences sometimes stand out starkly, and partners will find themselves engaged in *intercultural communication* as they work out the cultural aspects of their relationship. Within a relationship, this happens when the partners must work through salient cultural differences such as different ways to celebrate holidays. Other times, certain common cultural qualities will take over, necessitating *intracultural communication,* which happens when common cultural identities become salient. For example, two friends may have learned that they have the same religious background and thus go to services together. On other occasions, a couple's greatest concern will be their own unique characteristics as a married couple, apart from cultural concerns, which requires *interpersonal communication.* All three types of com-

munication are relevant for negotiating relationship identities with relational partners—whether family, friends, or coworkers. People move through each of these types of communication as they develop their relationships.

We refer metaphorically to our desired identity as *face*; the work we do to establish our own face and that of our relational partners is called *facework*.[52] One's desired identity, or face, can be supported or threatened, and in the negotiation of relational identity, you can expect some of both. Most people, however, make a good faith effort to support the face of a partner by accepting and approving of the desired identity and allowing a certain amount of autonomy and freedom without intrusion or interference. Facework is further discussed in chapter 11.

Identity management theory has much to say about relationships in which cultural differences are important and obvious. Negotiation is not limited to what the partners may want for themselves and for the relationship (although this is always part of the negotiation); it is also about support and/or threat to cultural identity. Because cultural identity is often intense in such relationships, there is much potential for face threats related to culture.

Our Native and Italian American couple may have many cultural challenges as they work through such issues as spirituality and religion, ties to the land and nature, music and dance, role of elders, childrearing, cultural rituals, and so forth. When either asserts cultural preferences in situations like these, the face of the other is likely to be threatened because of challenging cultural forms that are valued, even sacred, to the other. This can happen in one of four ways.

First, one partner may feel constrained or stereotyped into certain cultural forms and not accepted as a complex and whole person. The tendency to simplify a partner of a different culture is common in the early stages of a relationship when partners do not yet know each other very well. Imahori and Cupach call this *identity freezing*. People cope with this in a variety of ways, such as (1) showing support for oneself by highlighting some positive aspect of their own cultural identity; (2) showing mutual support by laughing and humor; (3) modeling support for the other; or (4) avoiding. In the movie *Something New*, a relationship develops between Kenya, a black professional woman, and Brian, her white male landscaper. At one point, Kenya describes the "black tax" to Brian—she has to work twice as hard as her white counterparts to be seen as competent. At a gathering of her friends, he makes a comment that he knows about the "black tax," a move by which he tries to show support but just succeeds in identity freezing instead.

Second, partners sometimes find that their cultural values are ignored. This is the *nonsupport* problem. This too is a face threat and is often handled in many of the same ways as freezing. Also in *Something New*, Brian asks Kenya about her hair weave. Whether he is curious or making a judgment is not clear, but she takes it as a sign of nonsupport and gets angry.

The third problem experienced in intercultural identity negotiation is the tension (dialectic) between supporting one's own face and supporting that of the other. This problem, which Imahori and Cupach call the *self-other face dialectic*, occurs when you want to support the other person's cultural identity but you also want to assert your own and find it difficult to do both. To assert or support your own cultural ways, you simultaneously deny or minimize those of the other

person. Methods of coping include holding one's own ground, giving in, alternating between supporting the two identities, and avoiding the issue altogether. An African American man we know is married to a Chinese woman. He is fluent in Mandarin, so they can speak easily to each other, but she knows very little English. Thus, when they are in the United States interacting with his friends, she refuses to speak English and wants him to translate everything into Mandarin for her. In this case, he cannot easily assert his own identity—American, black—and support hers at the same time because he is busy translating for her.

Fourth, intercultural couples sometimes experience a tension between wanting to affirm a cultural value (positive face) but not wanting to constrain or stereotype (negative face). This is the *positive-negative face dialectic.* In our earlier example, the Native American wife might say something like, "I think we should have pasta at least once a week because I know your family always serves it." The Italian American husband could be offended, "What? You think that's all we eat! I wish you would stop thinking of me as some kind of spaghetti lover." Partners can cope with this problem in a variety of ways. For example, they can stay in a confirmed comfort zone based on what they have already learned about each other (don't mention food), use explicit or implicit warning signs to determine what to say or not say (oops, better not say anything like that again), stay away from cultural attributions altogether (just don't mention anything Italian), or provide nonverbal support (just serve pasta occasionally and don't say anything about it).

Of course, identity management is never ending, but Imahori and Cupach have noticed that couples deal with it differently at different stages of the relationship. Specifically, they address three relational stages: (1) trial; (2) enmeshment; and (3) renegotiation. In the *trial* phase, intercultural partners are just beginning to explore their cultural differences and what cultural identities they want for their relationship. Cultural difference is usually salient at this point and, indeed, stands as a barrier in the relationship. At this stage, the challenge is to manage the self-other and positive-negative face dialectics while avoiding falling into freezing and nonsupport. In other words, the couple will dance around possible mistakes in handling their respective cultural identities. In this stage, the couple will risk face threats as a natural part of discovering the balance necessary if they are to have a relationship.

In the *enmeshment* phase, a certain relational identity, with commonly established cultural features, will emerge. Here the couple finds a level of comfort in who they are as a couple; they come to share rules and symbols, and they develop common understandings of one another and of the relationship. In other words, they have less need for intercultural communication but rely on intracultural interaction. A Jewish-Christian couple's decision to have a Christmas tree with a Star of David on top is one example of an agreement that might characterize the enmeshment phase.

In the *renegotiation* phase, the couple proceeds to work through various identity issues as they come up, making use of the common relational history they have already developed. They have a strong relational identity at this point, and they are able to rely on this to a greater extent than in earlier times. By this time, cultural differences are easier to manage because there is already a common basis for doing so. The couple easily can attend family gatherings because

they know what to expect and have established ways of negotiating the diversity of events and expectations. Also, cultural difference itself has already been defined as part of the relationship, so there is a larger frame in which to understand the differences. The couple can now deal constructively with cultural issues that previously were hard to discuss—and perhaps even avoided—at earlier stages of the relationship.

From the Source . . .

Identity management theory is designed to explain communication competence in intercultural encounters. The theory treats intercultural interactions as a special case of interpersonal interactions, thereby drawing on concepts from both intercultural and interpersonal communication traditions. The view that competence is mutually negotiated complements traditional views of acculturation and cultural assimilation. The management of cultural identities by intercultural communicators is seen as part and parcel of the development of an intercultural/interpersonal relationship. As the relationship evolves, so does the nature of identity management.

William Cupach

A study by Pei-Wen Lee helps to reinforce these relational phases and also illustrates transitions between the phases.[53] Lee conducted a study of 15 intercultural friendship dyads—people who had been friends for more than a year. Using the participants' narratives, Lee found three phases in the friendships of the dyads that were consistent with Imahori and Cupach's phases. At the same time, Lee also identified two transition phases. The first transition occurred between the first and second phases and included needs/interests. In these friendships, there was always some need or interest that allowed them to move to the second phase. In some cases, it was a common interest in a subject that encouraged the friends to continue to interact. The second transition was a turning point—some significant event and action that moved the friendship closer. For example, one friend reported receiving a phone call from her friend after a loved one had died. She was overseas and had not expected that, and she realized this was a person to whom she wanted to be closer. The next theory explores the idea of maintaining relationships, especially through various types of challenges.

Theories of Relational Maintenance

One of the most popular topics in relational communication is that of relational maintenance. People are fascinated with the characteristics of relationships that last a long time and how people stay together. Laura Stafford and Dan Canary identified five relational maintenance behaviors that have stimulated a great deal of research and thus serve as a foundation for theorizing in this area.[54] The five strategies are positivity, openness, assurances, sharing tasks, and social networks. *Positivity* refers to interactions in which criticism is limited, the relationship is generally enjoyable, and partners encourage the other. *Openness* is sharing

thoughts and feelings and discussions about the relationship. *Assurances* are behaviors that show affection and commitment to the relationship. *Shared tasks* include equal responsibility for tasks, such as housework and care of children. *Social networks* refer to having common friends and shared support systems.

While these five behaviors characterize relational maintenance, they do not explain what leads to relational maintenance. Three theories are often used for this purpose: equity theory, uncertainty management theory, and self-expansion theory. Equity theory, also called social exchange theory, was briefly introduced earlier in this chapter. Stafford and Canary were among the first who suggested that relational maintenance behaviors occur because there is relative equity in the costs and benefits of the relationship.[55] Uncertainty management theory was presented in chapter 3. In brief, relational maintenance behaviors result because they help partners manage and/or reduce uncertainty about the relationship and its future. For example, one such strategy might be telling a partner that you love her; doing so makes you both more secure and certain about your future together.

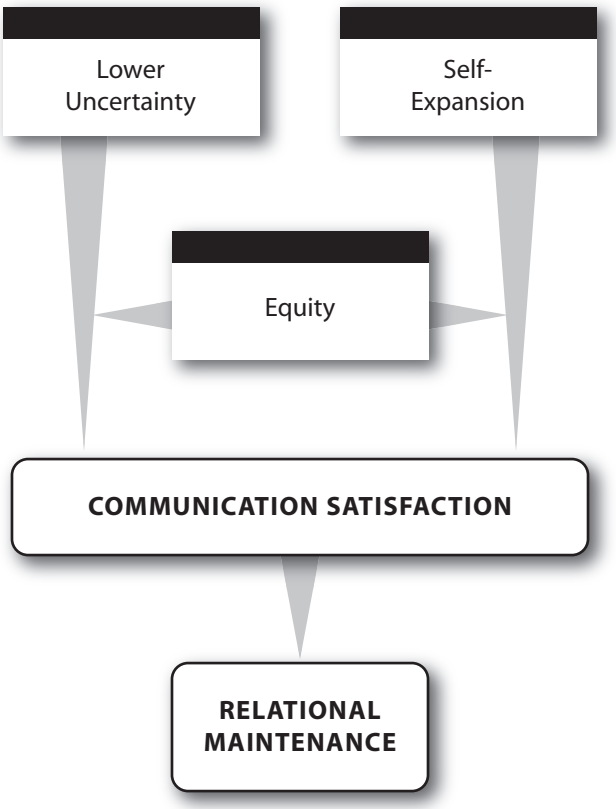
Self-expansion theory is the third theory that helps explain what leads to relational maintenance, and this theory is unique to the study of relationships.[56] The theory suggests that relational partners are oriented toward communal goals. Partners are motivated to expand the self to include the other by disclosing information, sharing resources, and developing shared identities. In other words, partners begin to develop a "we" identity instead of an "I" identity. Relational maintenance behaviors are thus used to continue the communal bond rather than manage uncertainty or maintain equity.

Katherine Forsythe and Andrew Ledbetter conducted a study of friendship maintenance to test these three theoretical explanations and to introduce a fourth explanation as well—communication satisfaction.[57] They termed this factor "interaction enjoyment." Specifically, they proposed a model that makes use of all three theories to predict relational maintenance, with communication satisfaction as a mediator. That is, equity, self-expansion, and uncertainty management lead to satisfying communication, which leads in turn to relational maintenance. The authors found that support for lower uncertainty and self-expansion did lead to satisfying communication and then to relational maintenance. They also found that lower uncertainty and inclusion of self in other had direct effects on relational maintenance. In other words, these explanations lead directly to relational maintenance as well as result in enjoyable interactions, which also lead to maintenance. Figure 7.3 displays a model of their findings.

Equity did not have the expected impact on relational maintenance. Nonetheless, its impact was interesting for what it says about relationships. Specifically, equity had what is a called a moderating effect; it changed how uncertainty and self-expansion affect maintenance, depending on whether a person is in an equitable or inequitable relationship. In an equitable relationship, lower uncertainty and self-expansion leads to satisfying communication and then to relational maintenance. In an inequitable relationship, the patterns are different depending on whether the person was over or under benefited. In the under-benefited relationship, where you are getting less than your partner, greater levels of maintenance behaviors were evident if the friendship lacked uncertainty or had high self-expansion. However, in an equitable relationship in which uncertainty and self-expansion were lacking, maintenance behaviors were quite low.

The authors called this a "three strikes" rule—friendship can handle low levels of two characteristics, but not all three.[58] For example, if you have a friend who is unpredictable, you get less rewards than she does, and you really do not see yourself connected to her, your friendship likely will not last. However, if your friend is unpredictable and you get less rewards but you see yourself as connected to her (e.g., because you grew up together), maintenance of the friendship may be possible.

Figure 7.3 Model of Theoretical Explanations for Relational Maintenance



From the Source . . .

Ever wonder why friendships sometimes get "stormy?" Our study suggests that when a relationship seems inequitable, the "climate" of the relationship may strengthen other factors that influence our desire to maintain the relationship. In fact, we found a "three strikes" rule—if we feel under benefited (equity theory), uncertain (uncertainty management theory), and unconnected (self-expansion theory) we may pull back from the friendship. These three factors working together might be the recipe for the "perfect storm."

Katherine Forsythe and Andrew Ledbetter

In the over-benefited relationship (you get more than your partner), experiencing high uncertainty leads to below average maintenance, often associated with guilt. In the over-benefited relationship, experiencing low uncertainty and high self-expansion leads to above average maintenance behaviors, reflected as appreciation of the friend. In short, this study demonstrates the complexity of these theoretical explanations and shows the necessity of looking at multiple factors to understand relational maintenance. The next theory explores another challenge that makes it difficult to maintain a relationship—the presence of deception in the relationship.

Interpersonal Deception Theory

Unfortunately, not every interaction we have with relational partners or in general interpersonal contexts is truthful. People use deception to avoid the consequences of a relational transgression, to protect the feelings of others, and to avoid getting caught for various wrongdoings. Deception involves the deliberate manipulation of information, behavior, and image in order to lead another person to a false belief or conclusion. Typically, when someone deceives, that person engages in strategic behavior that distorts the truthfulness of information or conveys incomplete, irrelevant, unclear, or indirect information. Disassociating self from the deceptive information may be one of the strategies used. Listeners often detect the use of these strategies and become suspicious that they are being deceived.

David Buller and Judee Burgoon see deception and its detection as part of an ongoing interaction between communicators involving a back-and-forth process; they developed interpersonal deception theory to explain these processes.[59] The deceiver may experience a certain amount of apprehension about being detected, and the receiver may experience a certain amount of suspicion about being deceived. These "internal" thoughts often can be seen in "outward" behavior—so receivers look for signs of lying, and liars look for signs of suspicion. Over time, in this back-and-forth process, the sender may come to perceive that the deception was successful (or not), and the receiver may come to see that the suspicion was warranted (or not).

Deception apprehension and suspicion can appear in strategically controlled behaviors, but they are more apt to show up in nonstrategic behaviors, or behaviors that are not being manipulated. This is a process called *leakage.* You might be suspicious that you are being lied to because of behaviors of which the other person is not aware. If you are trying to deceive another person, you may experience apprehension based on the fact that the receiver could detect it through some behavior you are not controlling. For example, you might have perfect control of your voice and face, but movements of your feet or hands give you away. As we learned in chapter 3, communicators' expectations are significant anchors from which to judge behavior. Not surprising, then, expectations play a definite role in deception situations. When receivers' expectations are violated, their suspicions may be aroused. Likewise, when senders' expectations are violated, their concern about possibly being deceived may also be aroused.

Many factors affect this ongoing process—for example, the degree to which the communicators can interact fully. This variable is called *interactivity.* Talking face-to-face is more interactive than talking on the telephone, which is more

interactive than communicating by email. Interactivity can increase *immediacy*, or the degree of psychological closeness between the communicators. When we have high immediacy, we pay close attention to a variety of live cues. We may stand closer, look more attentively at what is going on, and generally avail ourselves of a richer set of actions, such as the ways the eyes look or whether the cheeks turn red. You might predict that the more access communicators have to one another's behavior, the more cognitive data they have to assess one another's intentions or suspicions in regard to deception. Research seems to indicate, however, that the opposite can also happen. Immediacy and relational closeness can cause you to feel more engaged with fewer suspicions of others.

When we are relationally close, we have a degree of familiarity. In a close relationship, we have certain biases or expectations about what we are going to see. A *truth bias* makes us less inclined to see deception. Most married couples, for example, do not expect, and thus do not see, deception—adding to the devastation that occurs when learning about an extramarital affair or other deception. In a positive relationship, communicators more or less assume that they are telling one another the truth. They are unlikely to be suspicious about lying and may not pay close attention to behavioral deception cues. On the other hand, a *lie bias* may accentuate our suspicions and lead us to think people are lying when they may not be. If someone repeatedly lies to you, you are likely to be suspicious about everything that person says.

Our ability to deceive or detect deception also is affected by *conversational demand*, or the amount of demands made on us while we are communicating. If several things are going on at once or if the communication is complex and involves numerous goals, we cannot pay as close attention to everything as we would if the situational demands were light. Two other factors that affect the deception-detection process are the level of motivation to lie or to detect lying and the skill in deception and deception detection. Where motivation is high, our desire to deceive may override our apprehension about being caught. At the same time, if the receiver knows that our motivation is high, her suspicions will be increased. Some people are more skilled at deception than others because they have a larger range of behaviors they can perform. This could be counteracted, however, by the other person's ability to detect deception.

Remember, however, that communicators engage in both strategic and nonstrategic behaviors. When we lie, we typically exert a great deal of control over how we manage information, behavior, and image (all strategic behaviors); at the same time, some of our behavior that is not being controlled (nonstrategic) is sometimes detected by others, depending on their motivation and skill. In highly interactive situations—those in which we are fully engaged with one another—deceivers are able to better hide deception because there is a lot of exchange and deceivers are able to adjust their strategic and nonstrategic behaviors to hide their deception.

The purpose of deception also seems to enter the formula. Those who deceive for personal gain may have a harder time hiding it than those who deceive for more altruistic purposes. Of course, the results of deceptive behavior depend in part on how motivated the receivers are to detect deception. If the receivers are suspicious or attuned to the possibility of a particular lie, they probably will put considerable effort into detecting it. Many professors, for example, are extremely

bothered by student deception about absences, missed assignments, and the like. In these cases, they scrutinize students very carefully in an effort to detect a lie.

From the Source . . .

> Birds do it. Bees do it. All manner of creatures do it, and humans are especially adept at doing it. "It" is deception. As a powerful resource in our communication repertoires, deception needs to be understood as a communication phenomenon, not just a psychological one. Interpersonal deception theory takes the bird's eye view of examining the who, what, how, when, and why of interpersonal deception and proposing testable relationships among the key context, actor, relationship, message, interaction, and outcome factors. It is a "big picture" theory.
>
> Judee Burgoon

Interpersonal deception theory continues to be a popular theory. For example, Lina Zhou and colleagues used the theory to explore deception in an online community.[60] They examined factors that affected both the effectiveness and the efficiency in detecting deception in this group. They found that familiarity with the other's behavior has a positive effect on detecting deception, but gender diversity in the group has a negative effect on detecting deception. That is, people in a mixed group of men and women are worse at detecting deception than people in a group of all men or all women. Further, familiarity with the other's behavior has a negative effect on the efficiency in detecting deception, and functional diversity (i.e., different roles in the group) has a positive effect on efficiency.

Interpersonal deception theory does have its detractors resulting in alternative models. Hee Sun Park and Timothy Levine developed a probability model for detecting deception; they argue that it is more accurate than interpersonal deception theory because truthful statements are more prevalent than deception, and people have a truth-bias.[61] These authors have had debates with Burgoon about the validity of the probability model compared to interpersonal deception theory.[62] Interested readers can analyze the studies and debates and make their own decisions about the accuracy and utility of the two theories.

This section presented different theories that explore the management of tensions and challenges such as dialectics, identities, relational maintenance, and deception. These theories illustrate the breadth of topics related to relational communication and the complexity of managing challenges. They also illustrate the role of communication in constructing and managing these tensions and demonstrate the dynamic nature of relationships and the agency we have in coordinating and constructing satisfying (or dissatisfying) relationships.

Conclusion

We explored a number of key aspects about communication in relationships in this chapter. First, relationships are formed, maintained, and changed through communication. Over time, our communication with another person

creates a relationship. Whether the relationship is functional or dysfunctional, it is made through our interaction with the other. Boundaries and connections are a natural part of our relationships and are constructed through various patterns of communication. Second, relationships are dynamic. Although a desire for at least some degree of stability in our relationships is common, relationships are constantly evolving. Third, communication enables us to construct and transcend difference. Through our communication, we identify ways that we are similar and ways that we are different from those with whom we have relationships and those with whom we do not want a relationship. Communication makes salient these differences and yet also provides opportunities to bridge and transform differences. Finally, people in relationships actively manage tensions and challenges. Tensions occur because of different relational desires, different boundaries, different identities, and deception. Managing these tensions and dialectics is key to constructing and maintaining satisfying relationships.

Chapter Map **THEORIES OF THE RELATIONSHIP**

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Boundaries and Connections	Communication Privacy Management Theory	Sandra Petronio	People use rules to manage boundaries between public and private information.
	Affection Exchange Theory	Kory Floyd	Affectionate communication is driven by biological and evolutionary needs.
	Dyadic Power Theory	Norah Dunbar	Power and dominance are relative and determined by resources, norms, and relational histories.
	Family Communication Patterns Theory	Mary Anne Fitzpatrick & Ascan Koerner	Family communication patterns vary by conversation and conformity orientation.
	Queering Family Communication	Roberta Chevrette	To queer family communication means to question binary orientations to relationships and discourses that reinforce heteronormativity.
Constructing and Transcending Difference	Moral Conflict Theory	Barnett Pearce & Stephen Littlejohn	Incommensurate moral orders create intractable, morally attenuated, and ineloquent conflicts.
	Performing Foreignness	Rahul Mitra	Difference and foreignness are constructed through everyday performances.
	Coalition and Alliance Building	Aimee Carrillo Rowe	Strategic relationships can be used to bridge historical differences if they are constructed mindfully.
	Building a Culture of Peace	Mikhail Bakhtin; Martin Buber; Benjamin Broome	Dialogue provides opportunities for participants in intergroup conflicts to establish contact, explore problems, and find a basis for cooperation.

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Tensions and Challenges	Relational Dialectic Theory	Mikhail Bakhtin; Leslie Baxter & Barbara Montgomery	Relationships are marked by contradictory and competing discursive struggles that are managed through dialogue.
	Identity Management Theory	Tadasu Todd Imahori & William Cupach	Intercultural relationships involve managing cultural and relational identities through facework.
	Theories of Relational Maintenance	Laura Stafford & Daniel Canary; Katherine Forsythe & Andrew Ledbetter	Maintaining relationships involves a combination of developing communal identities, satisfying patterns of communication, and low uncertainty while also considering issues of equity.
	Interpersonal Deception Theory	David Buller & Judee Burgoon	Detecting deception is influenced by pre-interaction factors, familiarity with others, and the way we exchange messages with others.

NOTES

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8

The Group

If you were to count the number of times in a week that you are involved in group communication, you might be surprised. Meetings alone would number quite a few, and if you expanded the count to include social groups, the number would balloon. Of course, the number of hours per week that we spend communicating in groups tells only part of the story. Groups take up time, but they also help to structure time. They sap our energy, but they also energize. They can be deadly boring, but they provide much enjoyment as well. They create constraints on what we can do, but they can also shape future directions that open opportunities in our lives.[1]

Because you spend so much time in groups, it is natural to question their effectiveness. Is it better to do things by yourself or to work with a group? The answer, of course, depends on how well the group works together, how focused it is, and how much creative and critical thinking the group allows. How well does the group weigh information, how effectively does the group create options, and how critically does it evaluate ideas?

Groups vary in their ability to do these things well, and the theories in the chapter help us see what works and what does not. The theories in this chapter also help illustrate why we interact in groups as we do. The chapter is divided into three main sections: (1) foundational approaches to the study of group communication; (2) group context; and (3) group process and effectiveness (summarized in the chapter map, pp. 297–298).

Foundational Approaches

We offer four theories that provide a foundation for theorizing about group communication: (1) interaction-process analysis; (2) interaction analysis and group development; (3) input-process-output model; and (4) symbolic convergence theory. These four theories have influenced much of the thinking about group communication research and theory, and they address many topics related to groups. Several of the theories continue to be used regularly in research and practice.

Interaction-Process Analysis

Robert Bales's *interaction-process analysis* is a classic in the fields of psychology and communication.[2] Using his many years of research as a foundation, Bales created a unified and well-developed theory of small-group communication to explain the types of messages that people exchange in groups, the ways in which these messages shape the roles and personalities of group members, and the ways messages affect the overall character of the group. Bales notes that individuals can show positive or mixed attitudes toward others by (1) being friendly; (2) dramatizing (telling stories); or (3) agreeing. In contrast, they can show negative or mixed attitudes by (1) disagreeing; (2) showing tension; or (3) being unfriendly. In accomplishing the group's task, individuals can (1) ask for information; (2) ask for opinions; (3) ask for suggestions; (4) give suggestions; (5) give opinions; and (6) give information.

These types of messages in groups reveal whether groups will have certain types of problems. For example, if people do not adequately share information, they will have what Bales calls "problems of communication"; if they do not share opinions, they will experience "problems of evaluation"; if they fail to ask for and give suggestions, the group will suffer from "problems of control"; if the group cannot come to agreement, the members will have "problems of decision"; and if there is insufficient dramatizing, there will be "problems of tension." Finally, if the group is unfriendly, it will have "problems of reintegration," by which Bales means that the group will be unable to rebuild a feeling of unity or cohesiveness among members.

You can easily see the logic of Bales's scheme. Suppose, for example, that you are a member of a project team in a class. The job of this team is to decide on a project, execute it, and write a report that summarizes and evaluates the project. If group members withhold information from one another, they will not communicate very well and will have little idea of what each person could contribute. If they fail to share opinions, they will inadequately evaluate ideas, and the group may end up doing a terrible job. If group members give very few suggestions, the group has problems of control, with no one wanting to tell other group members what to do. If the members of your project group agree too much, ideas will not be tested, and you will make poor decisions. On the other hand, if you all disagree too much, there will be too much conflict, and you won't be able to make decisions at all.

Further, if people concern themselves only with task issues and not interpersonal ones, tensions can build among members, creating a poor interpersonal climate (tone of the relationships) and an unproductive group. This latter notion—of unrelieved tension in groups—was one area that assumed special importance in Bales's theory. He developed the notion of *dramatizing*, which means relieving tension by telling stories and sharing experiences that may not always relate directly to the task of the group. For example, let's assume that you are in a group with two people who are having trouble working together. You decide to tell a story about how your two best friends did not like each other when they started working together. They kept at the group work and eventually were very successful with the project, which made them realize that they respected the skills and contributions each made in working toward the group goal.

Bales's theory includes two general classes of communication behavior, a division that has had immense impact in the small-group literature. The first includes *socioemotional* behaviors, such as *seeming friendly, showing tension,* and *dramatizing*. The second category is *task behavior,* represented by *suggestions, opinions,* and *information*. In investigating leadership, Bales found that the same group will have two different kinds of leaders. The *task leader* facilitates and coordinates task-related communication and directs energy toward getting the job done. Equally important is the *socioemotional leader,* who facilitates improved relations in the group, concentrating on interpersonal interactions that could affect the group's climate positively or negatively.

Usually the task and socioemotional leaders are different people. In a group that is working on a class project together, for example, you may have one member who calls meetings, makes sure everyone gets there, prepares the agenda, makes follow-up calls, and shows great concern for the quality of the project. This will be your task leader. There may also be someone who attends to the relationships in the group—a socioemotional leader. This is the individual who encourages others, smooths over conflict, praises people for good work, and generally facilitates positive relationships among group members.

According to Bales, an individual's position in a group is a function of three dimensions: (1) dominant versus submissive; (2) friendly versus unfriendly; and (3) instrumental versus emotional. Within a particular group, any member's behavior can be positioned in this three-dimensional space (for instance, one member might be dominant, friendly, and instrumental). The way you appear to other members of a group is very much determined by how you combine these three dimensions in your communication. If your talk tends to be dominant, unfriendly, and emotional, you will probably be perceived as a hostile, abrasive person. On the other hand, if you are dominant, friendly, and instrumental, you will probably be appreciated for your helpful task leadership. If you are submissive, unfriendly, and emotional, you will probably be perceived as negative and uncooperative. Since these factors are variables, you can score high, medium, or low on any of them, creating blended composites of characteristics rather than absolute category types. When all group members' behavior types are plotted on the three-dimensional graph, their relationships and networks can be seen. The larger the size of the group, the greater the tendency for subgroups of individuals with similar characteristics and values to develop.

The key foundations of Bales's theory were the distinction between task and socioemotional (relational) behavior, the focus on distinct types of messages, and the importance these messages have on group work. However, the focus on individual behavior in Bales's theory limited the ability to take into account larger systemic concerns and the dynamics of group interaction. The next theory focuses on those aspects of group communication.

Interaction Analysis and Group Development

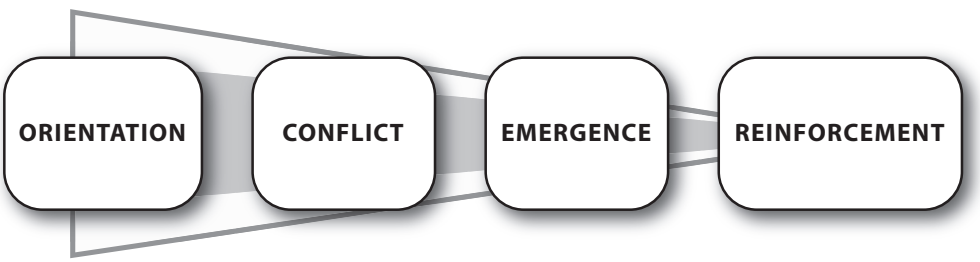
Because Bales's theory looks at individual acts, B. Aubrey Fisher and Leonard Hawes refer to his approach as a *human system model*, by which they mean a model that looks at individual human behaviors. They are critical of this approach and advocate instead an *interact system model*.[3] An *interact* is the act of one person followed by the act of another—for example, question-answer,

statement-statement, and greeting-greeting. Here, the unit for analysis is not an individual message, like making a suggestion, but a contiguous pair of acts, like making a suggestion and responding to it.

Interacts can be classified along the *content dimension* and the *relationship dimension.* For example, if someone were to ask you a question, you would probably answer it, but the manner in which you stated the answer might tip off the group that you thought it was a dumb question. In such a case, your answer is the content dimension and your nonverbal manner the relationship dimension. Despite the potential utility of analyzing the relational dimension in a group discussion, Fisher concentrates on the content dimension. Because almost all comments in a task group are related in one way or another to a decision proposal—to coming up with an action or outcome on which all can agree—Fisher calls his theory *decision emergence* and classifies statements in terms of how they respond to a decision proposal.[4] Statements might agree or disagree with a proposal, for example.

In his theory of decision emergence, Fisher outlines four phases through which task groups proceed: orientation, conflict, emergence, and reinforcement.[5] Fisher observes the distribution of interacts across these phases and how interactions change as a group decision is formulated and then solidified. Figure 8.1 display a model of these phases.

Figure 8.1 Model of Decision Emergence



The *orientation phase* involves getting acquainted, clarifying, and beginning to express points of view. People are generally agreeable in this stage, but their positions are qualified and tentative. They are testing the group and do not quite know what to expect; people grope for direction and understanding. The *conflict phase*, on the other hand, includes a great deal of dissent. People in the second phase of decision emergence begin to solidify their attitudes, and much polarization results. Here, interaction includes more disagreement and unfavorable evaluation. Members argue and attempt to persuade, and they may form coalitions with other like-minded individuals in the group.

These coalitions usually disappear in the third phase, which Fisher labels *emergence*. Here, the first inklings of cooperation begin to show. People are less tenacious in defending their viewpoints. As they soften their positions and undergo attitude change, their comments become more ambiguous. The number of favorable comments increases until a group decision begins to emerge. In the

final phase, *reinforcement*, the decision of the group solidifies and is reinforced by group members. The group comes to agreement and stands behind its solution, and comments are almost uniformly positive and favorable. The ambiguity that marked the third phase largely disappears in the unity that characterizes the fourth phase.

To illustrate the phases of group development, Fisher presents an analysis of a mock jury deliberation in a lawsuit over an automobile-pedestrian accident. In the first phase, the jury explores its responsibility: What is it supposed to do, and how is it supposed to do it? What are the possible verdicts? Much uncertainty is expressed until clarification emerges. Considerable disagreement arises in the conflict phase as the jury argues about whether the defendant is negligent and about the criteria by which the jury should decide. Here, the interaction tends to be somewhat emotional and heated. In the emergence phase, the jury begins to agree that the defendant is not negligent, and that the pedestrian could have avoided the accident. This agreement is somewhat tentative, and the jurors go back and forth on the issue, but the emotionality and debate definitely subside during this period. In the final reinforcement phase, the jury is convinced about the issue of negligence, and all members affirm their agreement with the verdict. The phases of group decision making characterize the interaction as it changes over time.

An important related topic is that of *decision modification*.[6] Fisher finds that groups typically do not introduce only one idea at a time, nor do they introduce a single proposal and continue to modify it until consensus is reached. Instead, decision modification is cyclical. Several proposals are made, each is discussed briefly, and some are reintroduced at a later time. Discussion of proposals seems to proceed in spurts of energy. Proposal A will be introduced and discussed. The group will suddenly drop this idea and move to proposal B. After discussion of B, the group may introduce and discuss other proposals. Then someone will revive proposal A, perhaps in modified form. The group finally settles on a modified plan that often is a consolidation of various proposals. According to Fisher, discussion proceeds in such an erratic fashion because the interpersonal demands of discussion require "breaks" from task work. In effect, the group attention span is short because of the intense nature of group work, and "flight" behavior helps manage tension and conflict.

Fisher finds that in modifying proposals, groups tend to follow one of two patterns. If conflict is low, the group will reintroduce proposals in less abstract, more specific language. For example, in a discussion about a public-health nursing conference, an original idea to begin the conference program "with a nonthreatening something" was modified to "begin with a history of the contributions that public health has made to the field of nursing."[7]As it successively returns to a proposal, the planning group follows the pattern of stating the problem, discussing criteria for a solution, introducing an abstract solution, and moving finally to a concrete solution. In all likelihood, however, the group will not move through these four steps smoothly—they move sporadically as members depart from and return to the proposal in a stop-and-start fashion. When conflict is higher, the group will not attempt to make a proposal more specific. Because disagreement exists on the basic idea, the group introduces substitute proposals of the same level of abstraction as the original one.

Fisher's approach to decision emergence has a parallel track in other disciplines that is called group development. There are several approaches to group development; all include four phases that are consistent with those of Fisher's model. The most often remembered (because it rhymes) is Bruce Tuckman's model of forming, storming, norming, and performing. Susan Wheelan's model (dependency and inclusion, counterdependency, trust and structure, and work) is frequently referenced in modern applications of group development.[8]

Group communication scholars also have expanded the concepts of decision emergence and group development. Marshall Scoot Poole and his colleagues propose that groups can follow a variety of paths in the development of a decision, depending on the *contingencies* with which they are faced.[9] Groups sometimes follow standard agendas; on other occasions, they are unsystematic and even develop their own pathways in response to unique needs. Three general types of paths have been identified. Some groups follow a *standard unitary sequence* (similar to the models of Fisher, Tuckman, and Wheelan), although not always in exactly the same way. Several groups follow a *complex cyclic sequence*—a problem-solution cycle in which the group's concentrated efforts go back and forth between defining the problem and generating ideas for solutions (much as Fisher envisioned with the emergence phase). The third type of sequence is *solution oriented,* in which the group did not really discuss or analyze the problem before trying to solve it.

The type of path a group takes depends on three sets of contingencies. The first is *objective task characteristics,* which are the standard attributes of the task, such as the degree to which the problem comes with preestablished solutions, the clarity of the problem, the kind of expertise it requires, and whether the solution is a one-shot action or will have broader implications and require more long-term attention. The second set of variables that affects the group's decision path is *group task characteristics,* which vary from group to group. They include the extent to which the group has previous experience with the problem, the extent to which an innovative solution is required as opposed to adoption of a standard course of action, and the urgency of the decision. The third group of factors affecting the path taken by a group is *group structural characteristics,* which include cohesiveness, power distribution, history of conflict, and group size. These three sets of contingencies influence the process adopted by the group—including whether it uses a standard or a unique path, the complexity of the decision path, the amount of organization or disorganization with which the task is handled, and the amount of time devoted to various activities.

Group development and decision emergence theory describe how groups operate as they prepare for their work and identify what group members need at different points in time. Historically, this research did not try to explain the various patterns that emerge. The work of Poole and his colleagues on contingencies is one exception; it illustrates types of inputs necessary for group process. This topic is a key focus of the theory discussed in the next section.

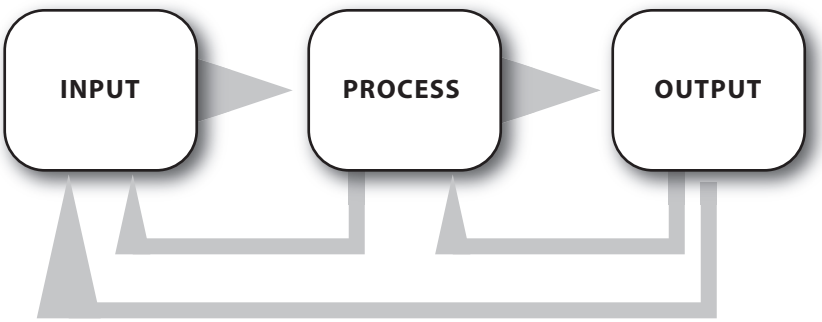
Input-Process-Output Model

Groups often are viewed as cybernetic systems in which information and influence come into the group (input), the group processes this information, and the results circulate back out to affect others (output). The foundation of this

work is biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy's general systems theory; collectively, this idea is known as the *input-process-output model*.[10] A simple example of the input-process-output model is a study group in which the members bring information and attitudes about the course to the group, the group talks about this material and provides mutual assistance, and the result is higher—or lower—grades in the course. The output of the study group provides feedback that affects future content as well as feelings about the group in the future.

The basic idea of input, process, and output in groups has influenced how we look at them, and most of the research over the years has followed this model. Researchers look at the factors that affect the group (input), what happens within the group (process), and the results (output). For example, one of the theories we review later in this chapter, effective intercultural workgroup community theory, considers the effects of heterogeneity of group members (input variable) on the amount of talking in a group and the effect of interaction patterns (process variables) on member satisfaction (output variable).[11] Figure 8.2 illustrates the input-process-output model.

Figure 8.2 Input-Process-Output Model



Resonating with Bales's approach to groups, the input-output-process model highlights the two types of problems—task and interpersonal obstacles—that groups confront. *Task obstacles* are the difficulties encountered by the group in tackling its assignment, such as planning an event or approving a policy. Group members deal directly with the problem by analyzing the situation, suggesting possible solutions, and weighing alternatives.

Whenever two or more people come together to handle a problem, *interpersonal obstacles* arise. Such obstacles include the need to make ideas clear to others, to handle conflict, to manage differences, and so forth. Thus, in any group discussion, members will be dealing simultaneously with task and interpersonal obstacles. The basic distinction between task work and interpersonal relations has been an overriding concern in the research and theory on small-group communication. Both types of behavior are important to productivity, and any analysis of group problem solving must deal with both.[12] When task and interpersonal work is integrated effectively, an *assembly effect* occurs in which the group solution or product is superior to the individual work of even the best

member. So, for example, if a club meets to plan a picnic and handles its interpersonal relations and task work well, the event should turn out better than if just one person planned it.

Group rewards can be positive or negative, and this holds true for both task and interpersonal work. A successful class project, for instance, is a task reward, and the fun involved in planning it is an interpersonal reward. If the job is well done and enjoyed by the members, their future work together will be affected in a positive way. If the task was not well done or the members did not handle their differences well, negative feedback may make it more difficult next time.

Think of group effort as a kind of energy. Some of this energy goes into solving task obstacles, and some goes into dealing with interpersonal ones. Raymond Cattell uses the term *synergy* for this group effort. The amount of energy devoted to interpersonal issues is called *intrinsic synergy,* and the remaining energy available for the task is *effective synergy.* If effective synergy is high, the task will be accomplished effectively; if not, it will be done poorly.[13] The level of synergy in a group results from the attitudes of the members toward one another. Conflict requires that a great deal of energy be devoted to group maintenance, leaving little for task accomplishment. On the other hand, if individuals possess similar attitudes, there is less need for an interpersonal investment, and the effective synergy will be greater.

Think again about your class project group. Imagine that you discover that the members of your group have different attitudes toward the subject matter, different levels of motivation about the project, and different styles of working. One member, for example, is gung ho, plans ahead, likes to get things done in advance, and has little tolerance for the competing demands experienced by other group members. Another member, by contrast, is laid back, not terribly interested in the class, and procrastinates. In your meetings, you may end up wasting a lot of time arguing about how to organize your efforts. You will be frustrated by the fact that not everyone is contributing equally to the group effort. All of the hassles around these interpersonal issues constitute its intrinsic synergy. After getting your grade, you sense that the group failed to achieve the goal of mutual benefit, and you decide to suggest to the professor that the next project be done individually rather than in a group. In this case, the effective synergy of the group was so low that it did not accomplish more than you could have done by yourself.

Now imagine a different scenario. Suppose that your group agrees immediately on how to proceed and gets down to work. Because the interpersonal barriers are few, the group is cohesive. The effective synergy is high, and group members do better on the project than they would have done by themselves. Experience in these two groups shows the importance of interpersonal energy (intrinsic synergy) and its relationship to outcome (effective synergy). The next theory examines a different type of synergy in groups.

Symbolic Convergence Theory

Symbolic convergence theory, often known as *fantasy-theme analysis,* is a well-developed theory by Ernest Bormann, John Cragan, and Donald Shields that deals with how individuals, in groups, come to a shared reality through communication.[14] The starting point for the theory is that individuals' images of reality are guided by stories reflecting how things are believed to be. These sto-

ries, or fantasy themes, are created in symbolic interaction within small groups, and they chain out from person to person and group to group to create a shared worldview. In essence, then, conversations create and sustain shared narratives for a group that constitute their reality.

Fantasy themes are the building blocks of the drama (view of reality) a group creates. Fantasy themes consist of characters, plot lines, scenes, and a sanctioning agent. The *characters* can be heroes, villains, or other supporting players. The *plot line* is the action or development of the story. The *scene* is the setting, including location, properties, and sociocultural milieu. The *sanctioning agent* is a source that legitimizes the story. This source may be an authority who lends credibility to the story or authorizes its telling. It might be a common belief in God, a commitment to justice or democracy, a cadets' code, or even a shared enemy.

Fantasy themes that develop to a high degree of familiarity are known as *fantasy types*—stock situations told over and over within a group. Often these retold stories relate to personal, group, or community achievements and take on the form of a *saga.* You probably have sagas within your family and your work organization, and you have certainly heard many national and societal sagas such as George Washington and the cherry tree, why John Hancock signed the Declaration of Independence in such large handwriting, and how Bill Gates dropped out of Harvard in his junior year to devote his time to developing the computer company that became Microsoft.

Imagine a group of executives gathering for a meeting. Before, during, and after the meeting, members will converse with each other, sharing experiences and stories. Each story will have a cast of characters, a plot, a scene, and sanctioning agents. In many cases the sanctioning agent will be the company itself. The telling and retelling of these stories involve many fantasy types, which contribute to creating and maintaining cohesion within the group.

Fantasy themes are part of larger dramas that are longer, more complicated stories called rhetorical visions. A *rhetorical vision,* which is the composite vision for a group created by its particular formulation of characters, plots, actions, and sanctioning agent, is the drama the group sees as playing out again and again as "reality." In rhetorical visions that are well established, the participants in that drama no longer need to tell all the particulars of the fantasy themes that comprise it. Instead, they can present just a "trigger" or *symbolic cue.* This is precisely what happens with an inside joke. An executive might say, for example, "Yeah, that's just like the *Survivor* episode!," and everyone will laugh, knowing just what he is referring to. When the group Karen hung out with in college gets together, rhetorical visions can be quickly triggered by phrases like "French Pete," "Sweet Red Grape," and "Fifth Floor Boynton." These undoubtedly have no meaning to you, but they refer to specific shared fantasy themes among that particular group of students.

Most rhetorical visions fit one of three types: the righteous, the social, and the pragmatic.[15] Rhetorical visions that are *righteous* at their core privilege a moral sensibility; those that have a *social* deep structure depend primarily on social interaction for the success of the rhetorical vision; and those with a *pragmatic* focus have a practical base as the motivating source of the vision.

The sharing of fantasy themes within a group establishes a rhetorical vision, which fulfills a consciousness-creating function. Rhetorical visions make people

aware of a certain way of making sense of things. In other words, they build or maintain a group or community's *shared consciousness.* There seems to be a critical mass of adherence at which widespread dissemination of the rhetorical vision takes place. After this happens, the rhetorical vision begins to fulfill a *consciousness-sustaining* function that maintains commitment. In a group or a company, a shared consciousness or rhetorical vision can engender loyalty, pride, and commitment. You adopt the rhetorical vision, and this means you accept the themes, values, and goals implicit in it. Rhetorical visions are not just narrative stories—they have a deep structure that reflects and influences our sense of reality. For example, the Bill Gates/Harvard/Microsoft story (depending on which version you hear) has a deep structure of individual ingenuity, hard work, success, and doing good in the world.

From the Source . . .

Symbolic convergence theory grew out of my small-group studies at the University of Minnesota. The theory is based on the model of general Newtonian theories of the natural sciences, in that it sought to find outcomes that were replicable in all cultures at all times. This has proven to be the case as the theory has continued to work successfully throughout the world over the years and continues to grow as a research theory.

Ernest Bormann

Symbolic convergence theory continues to be used in the study of groups and in other contexts. For example, Alaina Zanin and colleagues explored the rhetorical visions of an all-female club rugby team.[16] These authors found that two visions—belong and triumph—were constructed through the chaining of fantasy themes. However, in extending the theory, Zanin and colleagues found that there was ongoing tension in the construction of the vision. That is, to belong and triumph do not always fit together and require ongoing negotiation and construction of fantasy themes. This study contributes to symbolic convergence theory by illustrating that meaning convergence is not a unitary and always consistent process. Multiple identities exist in groups, and tensions result from these identities as rhetorical visions are constructed.

The four foundational theories in this section provide a number of key elements of the study of groups: task and relational/socioemotional communication, the nature of group development and decision emergence, how group inputs shape group process and subsequently group outcomes, and how group members come to synergy through a shared understanding of their work and the nature of the group. The next two sections expand on these core building blocks of group communication theories.

Group Context

Group communication scholars and other group researchers long have been interested in the relationship between group context and group communication.

There are any number of contextual features that might be factors for group communication—so many, in fact, that opinions have been voiced about the difficulty in synthesizing research about context. Two recent studies identify a model of group context that includes four key elements: skill differentiation, authority differentiation, temporal stability, and virtuality.[17]

The following subsections introduce four group communication theories (listed in the parentheses following the descriptions) that address primarily one of these four contextual elements. *Skill differentiation* refers to any social or informational characteristic that may result in unique perspectives on the team and can include features such as personality, knowledge, and culture (effective intercultural workgroup communication theory). *Authority differentiation* is the range of authority over a group, ranging from leader control to self-managed teams (theory of concertive control). *Temporal stability* is the degree to which teams are stable and ongoing or just short-term (bona fide group perspective). *Virtuality* is defined by the physical distance among team members. However, this definition ignores the communication elements of distance; thus, we also include the degree to which team members utilize communication technologies to support their work, particularly when working from a physical distance (adaptive structuration theory). The theories are not inclusive of all the ways that these elements can be considered, but they do illustrate and explain some aspects of the four key contextual factors.

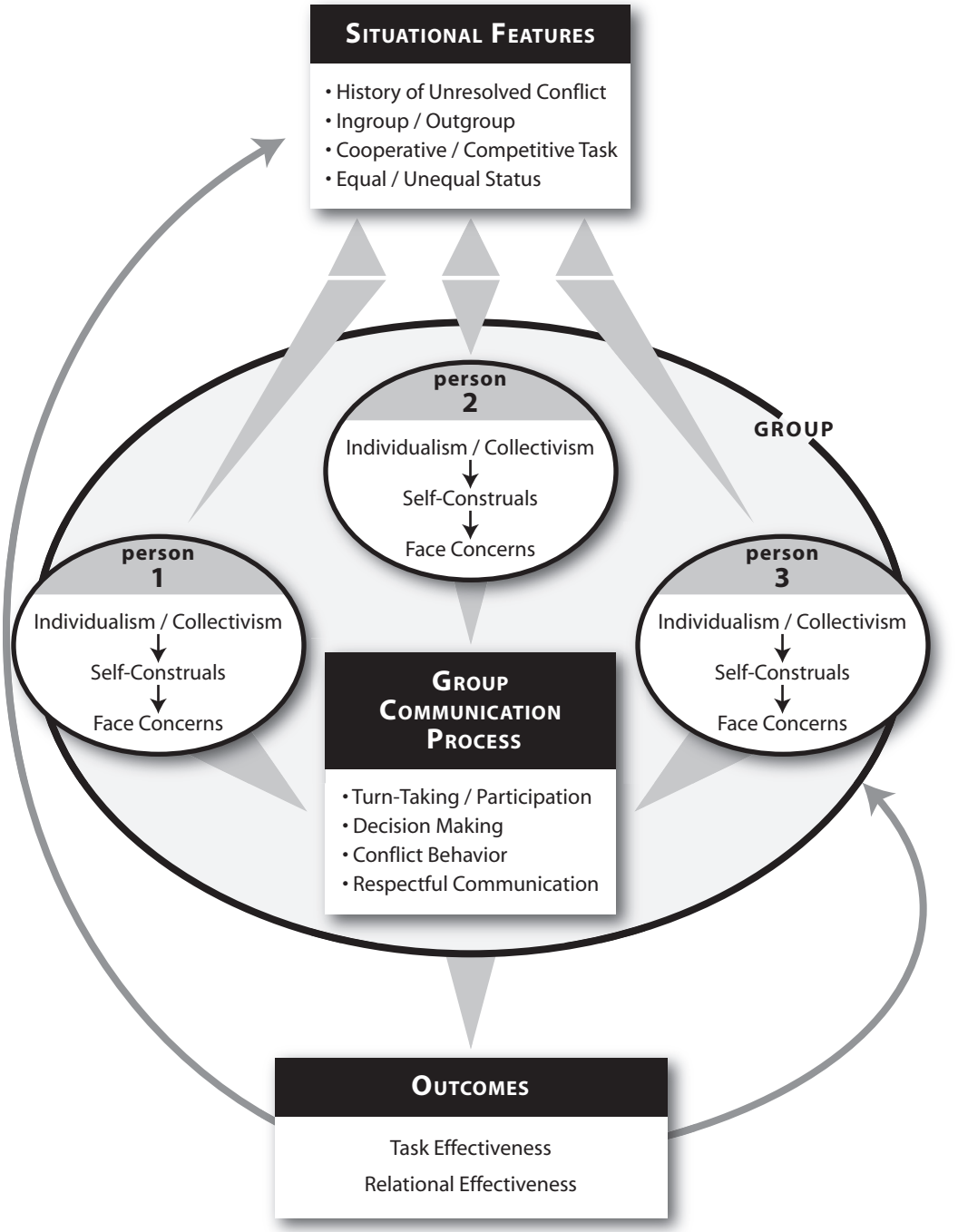
Effective Intercultural Workgroup Communication Theory

There are many elements of skill differentiation that group scholars have explored. Given the diversity in the world, culture is a key element. John Oetzel employs the foundational input-process-output model in his effective intercultural workgroup communication theory. The theory explains how culture and cultural diversity shape group communication, which in turns impacts group outcomes such as decision-making quality, satisfaction, and workgroup productivity.[18] Oetzel is concerned with culturally diverse groups, meaning that the cultural differences among members—nationality, ethnicity, language, gender, job position, age, disability, and others—are important in some way to the functioning of the group. Figure 8.3 (on p. 274) displays a model of this theory.[19] The most important cultural differences cluster in three areas: (1) individualism-collectivism; (2) self-construal; and (3) face concerns (another theory of face concerns is face-negotiation theory discussed in chapter 11).

The first area of difference is the *individualism-collectivism* continuum. Many cultures can be characterized as primarily individualistic in orientation. Members of individualistic cultures think of themselves as independent and give priority to their own goals over group goals. In contrast, collectivist cultures think of themselves as part of a community and give priority to collective goals rather than personal ones. For example, one group member with an individualistic cultural background may assume that each member will voice an opinion; that group member, then, will weigh what each person says individually. Another member from a collectivist society, however, might "beat around the bush" instead of stating an opinion, preferring to defer to the views of the group as a whole.

The second cluster of differences is *self-construal*, or how members think about themselves. There are two general types—independent and interdepen-

Figure 8.3 Model of the Effective Intercultural Workgroup Communication Theory



dent. If you think of yourself in *independent* ways, you will see yourself as a unique person, with thoughts and feelings that are very different from the thoughts and feelings of others. On the other hand, if you think of yourself in *interdependent* ways, you will focus more on how you are connected to others. Clearly, independent self-construals are common in individualistic cultures, while interdependent construals are more common in collectivist ones. You can imagine the problems that might occur when some group members evaluate success in terms of how well they achieve their personal goals, while other members of the group evaluate success in terms of the achievement of overall group goals.

The third cluster of difference is *face concerns*, or differences in how members manage personal image. *Self-face* is concern for one's own image, *other face* is concern for the image of other people, and *mutual face* involves concerns about the relationship. Cultures differ in terms of how they manage these three types of face. Some, for example, are somewhat self-effacing, preferring to build the face of the other over asserting self-face. Other cultures focus on self-face, sometimes at the expense of others. A culturally mixed group could have some members who constantly try to make themselves look good, other members who work to make others look good, and still others who want the group as a whole to look good.

These kinds of cultural differences necessitate effective communication but also make it difficult. In other words, the very thing that diverse groups need—effective communication—is also very difficult for them to accomplish. The more heterogeneous the group, the harder it will be to communicate effectively in terms of (1) equal participation; (2) consensus-based decision making; (3) cooperative conflict management; and (4) respectful communication. Of course, an intercultural group is not necessarily a heterogeneous group; potential difficulties increase, depending on how important the cultural differences turn out to be. Equally true is that the cultures represented in a diverse group may share the same orientation in terms of individualism-collectivism, self-construal, and/or face.

The degree to which a group is able to manage intercultural diversity is determined by several situational factors, including (1) a history of unresolved conflict among the cultural groups in society at large; (2) in-group–out-group balance, determined by the number of group members representing the different cultures; (3) the extent to which the group's task is cooperative or competitive; and (4) status differences. If the cultures represented in the group have a history of good conflict resolution, are proportionally well balanced, and members have more or less equal status, then they will usually communicate effectively on many tasks. If culturally diverse groups are able to achieve effective communication, it will have a higher probability of accomplishing its task effectively and the opportunity to build positive relationships.

Suppose, for example, you attend a university that is highly diverse in race, ethnicity, and culture, and you are accustomed to working in classes with individuals from various backgrounds. At least in recent years, there has been little ethnic conflict on campus, and people have learned to work effectively with one another in student government, activities, sports, and academics. A class-project group under these circumstances would probably work well, if everyone

were committed to the project. On the other hand, if recent religious tensions had broken out on campus, making it uncomfortable for, say, Jews and Muslims to interact equally and productively, then the group could fail. This situation could be exacerbated if one group felt superior to the other, if the two groups were not equally represented in the class-project group, or if the task itself were competitive in nature (such as seeing who can get the best grade on an exam).

The effectiveness of a group is determined by several factors. One is the degree of negativity in the group. If, for example, the group is working in a disrespectful environment, it may have trouble achieving effective communication. Under these circumstances a culturally heterogeneous group would generally experience less effective communication. Further, highly individualistic (independent) groups will display dominating conflict strategies, while more collectivist (interdependent) groups will use collaborative ones. Collectivist groups also have more equal participation. In addition, greater concern with the face of other people or with mutual face correlates with effective communication.

Using an input-process-output model, Oetzel shows that the quality of communication affects both task and relational effectiveness. In general, he believes that if a culturally diverse group has good communication, the effectiveness of the task and relationships among group members will increase. More specifically, Oetzel found that if a group has equal participation, cooperation, and respectful communication, members will be more satisfied and will be more likely to participate fully in the group effort.[20]

From the Source . . .

I grew up in New Mexico and went to a multicultural high school. I was struck by the fact that my friends and classmates from different cultures had different ways of communicating and different cultural values that teachers sometimes devalued and sometimes misunderstood. When I started to learn about explanations for some of these patterns, I sought to create a theory that would judge what it means to communicate effectively from standards that are fair and appropriate for all cultures, not just the dominant culture.

John Oetzel

Oetzel and his colleagues tested and extended the theory in a study of established workgroups in a manufacturing organization.[21] Their research supports the propositions about interdependence, other-face, and mutual-face being positively related with effective communication. Further, effective communication is positively related to effective outcomes. The study also provides insights about the impact of group composition on process and outcomes that relate to situational features. The organization is predominantly male and ethnically diverse (with large percentages of European and Hispanic Americans). The workgroup members normalize ethnic diversity, and thus it positively impacts communication. However, the male imbalance results in a negative impact on communication. Thus, the situational features shape how heterogeneity relates to communication.

Further, the study supports the theory by examining whether the group's composition has differential effects for members. Ethnic diversity was a positive factor for effective communication overall, but for European and Hispanic Americans, greater levels of diversity leads to slightly lower ratings of the communication and the satisfaction of the groups. For others, more diversity results in slightly higher ratings of communication and satisfaction. These findings are consistent with the idea of ingroup/outgroup balance. Groups that have large numbers in the organization have a slight negative reaction to diversity, while groups that have fewer numbers have a slight positive reaction to diversity. Overall, this study illustrates the importance of situation to the theory and the complex impact of culture and cultural diversity on communication in intercultural workgroups.

Concertive Control and Self-Managed Teams

Teams work under various types of authority. James Barker offers a theory explaining control that exists in one aspect of the authority spectrum, specifically, self-managed teams.[22] Self-managed teams consist of a small number of members (somewhere around 10 and 15) that complete a specific and clearly defined job function, such as a service or production. For example, a team may process insurance claims or build a specific product. Rather than having a manager or leader directing the team, the team organizes and manages itself. Team members figure out their own rules for working (within organizational constraints) and develop their own standards for evaluating the work. These types of teams differ, then, from the traditional approach to management and transform the traditional, hierarchical organization into a flat configuration that emphasizes democratic principles and a participatory approach. In addition to being consistent with democracy, the benefits of self-managed teams include cost savings by eliminating the need for lower-level managers; freeing the team from bureaucracy, which allows the team to be creative and innovative in its approach to tasks; and fostering high commitment from workers. However, there are also costs of self-managed teams because workers are asked to give more of themselves—more of their time and energy. Team members also need to develop skills in collaboration and self-management.

Barker's concertive control theory focuses on how self-managed teams control the behavior of team members. To understand concertive control, it is important to understand three other types of control. Barker uses a model of three broad strategies of control of organizational member behavior: (1) simple; (2) technological; and (3) bureaucratic.[23] *Simple control* is the direct and personal control offered by an authority figure. Simple control is implemented by the company's owner or hired bosses (such as found in small businesses). With simple control, workers do what the boss asks them to do. There is a danger with simple control in that the worker is subject to the whims of the owner, and the owner may abuse the position or implement biased decisions. *Technological control* developed because of technological advances and also because of worker dissatisfaction with simple control. Originally, technological control was based on assembly lines found in manufacturing in the early twentieth century. The assembly line required workers to perform specific actions, and thus it controlled behavior. Today, we have information and communication technology

that can be used to monitor worker behavior and thus "ensure" that people do their work. Technological control has disadvantages in that workers can become disenfranchised and figure out ways to sabotage the work.

Bureaucratic control was developed to combat limitations in the prior two approaches by developing a hierarchy and a set of rational rules and consequences (rewards and punishments) to control behavior. It is designed to be a fair system that rewards and punishes people in a transparent manner that emphasizes organizational goal achievement. Bureaucratic control is not without its challenges, and many workers often complain of "bureaucratic red tape." The bureaucracy is applied even when no one knows exactly its purpose. Most of us can think about a workplace that requires us to fill out numerous forms even though no one can explain exactly why they are important. The rules also are used as the justification for the organization rather than the importance of people, social relationships, or even organizational goals.

Self-managed teams were developed to help eliminate some of the problems with bureaucracy; these teams use what Philip Tompkins and George Cheney call concertive control to achieve their ends.[24] *Concertive control* results from worker consensus to develop normative rules that guide behavior based on values established by the workers themselves. In other words, team members identify common perspectives and rules that they feel are important and then use these rules to monitor their behavior. The control is with the workers themselves and not with managers. Team members negotiate the rules for behavior by determining what is valued and important for achieving the tasks assigned to them.

Barker bases his theory on the idea of *generative discipline*, which is grounded in two assumptions. The first assumption is that organizational culture includes a set of discourses that are used to make work sensible and rational. That is, the organization provides a value base for what is important and how work should be done. The second assumption is based on concertive control, which means these value bases generate everyday rules and practices that discipline or guide the work in the organization. This might mean that we show up on time, do not shirk our work, and do whatever it takes to meet the team goal.

Barker's research illustrates that generative discipline is developed in three phases. In the first phase, the team develops a value consensus and consolidates its rules. The team members identify highly with the team—even more highly with the team than with the organization itself. In the second phase, the team experiences an emergence of normative rules. In this phase, there is a turn from meeting team values to obeying rules. People who follow the rules have a feeling of belonging, while those who do not experience guilt and peer pressure. Normative rules provide ways to self-monitor and to discipline (including punish) each other. In the third phase, the team stabilizes and formalizes the rules. Penalties are identified for these rules as well. The control system resembles a bureaucratic one, and employees report feeling greater stress with the new system than with the old one. In fact, they report feeling under greater scrutiny in the self-managed team than in a traditional organization. Barker describes this as a price of identification; team members are so committed to their work and their goals that they develop strong rules for controlling each other's behavior to ensure that the team goals are met. The team members feel ownership and thus want to control each other. This is a potential dilemma of self-managed teams:

team members get to create a work structure and climate that they want, and yet their commitment encourages them to over control. Barker suggests that concertive control is inevitable, and the key is for teams to include a review of their control practices as part of their ongoing work. Rather than let the rules be the basis for the work, teams need to ensure that the rules continue to allow the team to function effectively and still be supportive of team members.

From the Source . . .

The application of concertive control in my research was one of those pure epiphany moments that you hear about and hope for. The teams I was studying were acting in concert to control how they worked together, naturally, easily, and rather effectively.

James Barker

A number of studies have examined concertive control in self-managed teams in a variety of contexts. Beverly Hawkins explores how concertive control in two self-managed teams in an international recruitment agency is gendered—how gender is used as a resource for concertive control processes.[25] She identifies three such resources. First, team members make assumptions about men's and women's relative skills and capabilities. In one of the teams tasked with recruiting possible employees to work in transportation (e.g., truck drivers), both male and female workers framed male team members as having more knowledge about the section and therefore more control of the work. This framing occurs even when male workers do not have good attention to detail and commit certain rule violations more frequently than women.

Second, "tough" masculinity impacts the team processes Team members recognize sexism and swearing as a part of the transportation industry; therefore, team members have to adapt to fit the culture. Overall, then, the concertive control processes emphasize masculinity and the need to be tough—whether male or female. Third, teams regulate performance of heterosexuality during interactions with customers. The team members suggest the importance of bantering with clients and each other about heterosexual sex, sexualizing women, and engaging in other sexist behaviors. Some women even report that looking good and using sexual banter is an advantage to sales when coupled with knowledge about the industry. Thus, the team values encourage behavior that is sexualized, tough, and privileges male perspectives. This study illustrates some unique ways that concertive control processes are developed and reinforced through gendered notions of work.

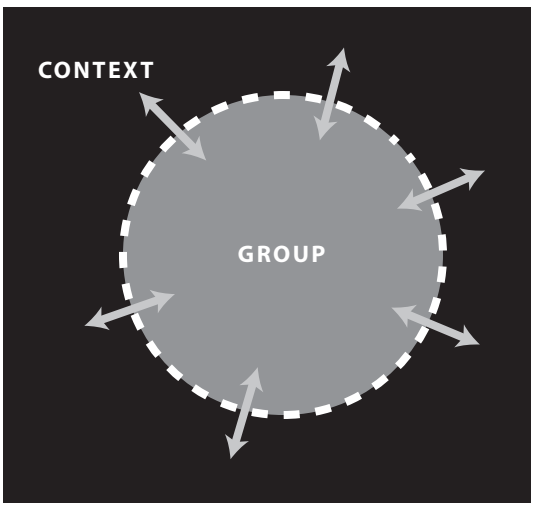
Bona Fide Group Perspective

Many of the early theories of groups use a "container" metaphor, likening groups to a bottle separated off from the environment. In fact, groups are not separate from the larger environment, and Linda Putnam and Cynthia Stohl started a line of thinking called the *bona fide group perspective* as a response to this critique.[26] A *bona fide group* is a naturally occurring group. In this sense, all

groups, unless they are artificially created in a laboratory, are bona fide, because all groups are part of a larger system. Instead of thinking of a bona fide group as a type of group, think of it as a perspective—a way of looking at all groups.[27] This perspective has been used to study groups such as juries, surgical teams, management groups, fund-raising committees, and teen-support groups. It attempts to explain multiple contextual aspects including external, historical, technological, and temporal features. Thus, while it is a good example of explaining temporal stability, it also includes other contextual elements as well.

Bona fide groups have two characteristics: they have permeable boundaries, and they are interdependent with the environment or context. Permeable boundaries mean that what is defined as "in" the group or "out" of the group is sometimes vague, always fluid, and frequently changing. At the same time, you cannot have a group without some sense of demarcation, meaning that the group does recognize a dividing line in relation to an environment, but it is a boundary that is always being negotiated. Further, group membership changes with people coming and going temporarily (e.g., illness) or permanently (e.g., quitting a job). Therefore, groups need to socialize new members and adapt to changes in this membership. Figure 8.4 illustrates the bona fide group perspective.

Figure 8.4 Model of the Bona Fide Group Perspective



The permeability of a group's boundaries is obvious when you consider that members are always part of other groups as well. They bring into a group roles and characteristics established in other groups; you cannot separate group members from the other groups to which they belong. Sometimes, the varying group roles conflict, and members must resolve differences between what they are supposed to do in one group versus what is expected of them in other groups. You might have had the experience of being part of a hiring committee in an organization. This committee had discussions that were confidential, but you were a member of other groups as well—groups curious about what happened in meetings of the hiring committee. In this situation, you encountered the need to manage the curiosity of other groups against the confidentiality requirements of the hiring group.

Further, as a group member you rarely represent only yourself. Instead, you have other people's interests at stake. Outside interests will influence what you do and say within the group. If you are elected to a student council or to a neighborhood association, for example, you are always aware of the larger interests involved. Also, group members change, so that someone who was outside the group at one time becomes a member at another time and vice versa. Because of

multiple group memberships, you may not be equally committed to every group, and not all members of a group show the same amount of loyalty or sense of belonging to a group.

From a bona fide group perspective, the group always is interdependent with its environment. In other words, the environment influences it, and the group, in turn, affects the relevant contexts in which it works. The environment is a system of interacting groups. Groups communicate with one another; they coordinate their actions; they negotiate which group is responsible for what; and they interpret the meaning of intergroup relationships. The point of contact or overlap between two or more groups is a *nexus*; it is in the nexus that interdependence is evident.

Among its many functions—such as accomplishing tasks and resolving internal conflicts—a group also must adjust and adapt to the situation or context in which it is working. The group must relate its work to an ongoing history of accomplishment within the larger system and to larger institutional opportunities and constraints. There may be moments when the group feels that it is "in transition," when it is not clear just how it does relate to its history or the institutions of which it is a part. These moments, referred to as *liminality*, create feelings of being in a suspended state. At these moments, groups work to define themselves vis-à-vis other considerations. For example, a few years ago, our building at the university was remodeled. During the period of the remodel, 20 or so faculty and 65 graduate students were essentially "sent home" at the end of the spring semester, to exist in "virtual" space until the project was finished. It was interesting to see how this rather cohesive group of staff, faculty, and students managed this state of liminality and how the group worked to preserve a sense of "groupness" when there was no building to facilitate regular interaction. Both grad students and faculty hosted social gatherings of various kinds—brunches, weekly lunches, shopping trips, and the like—to ensure that the group did not lose its center.

Gaming methodology offers an opportunity to see the interdependence of bona fide groups. Gaming methodology is a planning tool in which "players" from stakeholder groups are brought together for several days to simulate an environment in which they must work with other groups to plan a future of mutual concern.[28] The players—usually 50 to 150 professionals—are assigned to stakeholder groups to engage in strategic planning around an issue like health care, homeland security, technology, or water quality.

Although they begin their planning in isolated stakeholder groups, the players in such games quickly learn that they cannot go very far without thinking about the larger system of groups of which they are a part. This realization occurs in a moment of liminality in which they must think about their role in the larger system, talk about how they want to relate to this larger context, determine the specific other groups with which they want to interact, and decide what they hope to accomplish by doing so. After a short team-planning period, players leave their team areas and begin to interact with individuals from other stakeholder teams, forging agreements, sharing information, establishing partnerships and alliances, and creating plans larger than any one stakeholder group could do by itself. Sometimes teams compete with one another, sometimes they collaborate, and at other times they complement one another. Each of these points of contact in the game is a nexus of opportunity, and it is always fascinating to watch the play unfold in these ways.

From the Source . . .

> Whether we were participating in a Blue Ribbon Committee or in community groups, we realized that we couldn't explain the group process by relying on what was happening inside the group. In our experience, natural groups did not match what the existing literature said about group dynamics. Thus, we sought to integrate structural and relational processes from organizational life to rethink the very nature of what constitutes a group.
>
> Linda Putnam and Cynthia Stohl

The bona fide group perspective is a theory that has stimulated a considerable amount of research. An example of this perspective was a study that examined two collaborative relationships in the engineering research sector. Collaboratives are temporary cooperative ventures between multiple organizations to respond to rapid technological and economic change and to ensure the organizations remain competitive. Kasey Walker and Cynthia Stohl investigated the task communication and resource dependency networks (among students, teachers, and researchers) across the lifespan of the collaboratives.[29] These collaboratives were formed to facilitate the development of new research. The authors found that the networks within the collaboratives experienced a high degree of volatility given their permeable boundaries. People tended to make and break connections with other people frequently. Further, these networks tend not to be hierarchical given their fast-paced work and short-term deadlines. The authors note that the study stands in contrast to mainstream studies of groups that suggest there will be consistency and hierarchy present in collaboratives. They argue that this demonstrates the importance of understanding the interdependence with context and permeable boundaries of the bona fide group perspective. The next theory explores another element of bona fide groups—that of technology and virtuality.

Adaptive Structuration Theory

Marshall Scott Poole and Gerardine DeSantis developed adaptive structuration theory to explain how information and communication technologies (ICT) are used by groups and organizations.[30] Specifically, the theory finds that the same ICT is used differently by different people, groups, and organizations. Originally, the theory was used to explain the technologies that help a group brainstorm and evaluate ideas. These technologies help face-to-face groups structure their work and make decisions effectively. Since its inception, adaptive structuration theory (AST) has been applied to social networks, billing systems, and virtual teams—people who primarily work at a geographic distance and use communication technologies for their work.

Adaptive structuration theory is grounded in structuration theory, which is the brainchild of sociologist Anthony Giddens and his followers; it is a general theory of social action.[31] Structuration theory states that human action is a process of producing and reproducing various social systems through the appropriation of rules and resources in ordinary practice. This process is called *structuration*. *Systems* are observable patterns of relationships ranging from

large social and cultural institutions to smaller groups. *Structures* are the rules and resources people use in their work that give the system its pattern.

Let's say that you join a Habitat for Humanity group in your church that builds homes for low-income families. The group has some land but needs materials donated so that construction can begin. Your aunt owns a building supply store, and you suggest to the group that you might "at least check to see if she would be willing to donate some lumber." Everyone happily agrees, and you call your aunt that evening. She is delighted to make the donation, and your group is thrilled. Because of your action, the group solved an immediate problem. A little later, the group needs some roofing materials, so they naturally turn to you. You are hesitant to ask your aunt a second time, but you agree to visit various supply stores to see what you can do. Over time, the group comes to rely on you as the person who can get them materials, and a role is created for you in the group. You never intended to take on this role, but it happened because of expectations created in the process of taking local action. This is the process of structuration. We will have more to say about structuration theory in chapter 9. With this foundation in mind, we now focus on the aspects of adaptive structuration theory.

AST argues that the effects of information and communication technologies on group processes and outcomes result from the structural potential of the technology and the emergent or adaptive features of the technology as group members interact and use it. AST includes two key elements: structural features and spirit. *Structural features* are the specific resources and capabilities designed into the technology. *Spirit* is the underlying principle that guides a technology. The spirit provides guidance for the members in making sense of and using the technology. For example, a project management tool may have a discussion board and file-sharing tool (structural features) to facilitate open exchange of information (spirit).

Structural features and spirit are produced and reproduced as group members appropriate their use. *Appropriation* is the process of members using the structures in their everyday work; in other words, team members make the technology their own. Appropriation can be *faithful,* when a rule or element is used as intended—when the group shares information consistent with the spirit in which the group was designed. Appropriation also can be *ironic*, used in contradictory ways to the design, such as creating subgroups in the system in order to share information only with some people. Ironic appropriation can lead to novel and improved ways of using technology, or it can sabotage the technology or damage the team and organizational goals. Ironic appropriation is the adaptive aspect of structuration. For example, we worked at a university where a new information and technology system was implemented, designed to improve efficiency in business processes and create a paperless environment. Administrative staff were required to learn and use the system, but they were not consulted about its features. Staff created paper copies of everything and obtained signatures for even the most mundane of tasks because they did not trust the system. The result of the implementation was slower decision making and increased paperwork. The appropriation was ironic and led to frustration on the part of users and nonusers alike, not just because of the technology but also because of how it was implemented and carried out by staff.

Several factors influence the structuration process: characteristics of information and communication technologies, factors external to the system, and factors internal to the system. ICT can be restrictive (how much freedom is available in using the technology), sophisticated (how much intelligence is built into the system), and complex. Adaptations in ICT teams can happen when there is freedom, sophistication, and complexity. External factors include the nature of the task, general technology trends, and intergroup dynamics (for example, group dynamics might be affected by mistrust of people from certain cultures with whom you are working). Internal factors consist of the organizational and group climate and leadership. AST suggests that these factors combine to influence the way that technology is used in the group. For example, one of your team members is aware of a better discussion and file-sharing tool and is distrustful of management. If the team has the freedom to choose and adapt technology, it may select a new information system that helps the team share information effectively and yet inhibits their interaction with others in the organization. There is a complex array of possibilities, and the theory does not try to predict how these features influence adaptation.

Adaptive structuration theory also is interested in the ways that the structuration of technology influences decision processes and outcomes. Extensive research has led to two general conclusions about ICT use and outcomes. First, if the ICT is appropriate to the task at hand—for example, the task requires open sharing of information and the ICT has tools for sharing information—and group members consensually appropriate the technology, the group is likely to achieve good outcomes. Second, team members generally resist sophisticated and complex technology. However, if they appropriate them in a way that is consistent with the spirit of the technology, and the task demands and context support them, positive outcomes result.

Multiple studies illustrate the application of AST to teams. For example, Martha Maznevski and Katherine Chudoba use AST to study virtual teams and specifically to explain how virtual teams communicate to enhance their effectiveness.[32] They studied three global virtual teams for a period of 21 months and found two key principles consistent with AST. First, virtual teams include a series of communication incidents that are shaped by the team's internal and external environments. The team is effective when there is fit among communication form, decision process, and complexity. Second, effective virtual teams are able to sequence their communication incidents so that there are regular face-to-face events with high levels of intense interaction and decision making interspersed with less intense communication that makes use of ICT in between these face-to-face events.

The four theories discussed in this section illustrate the importance of understanding context for group communication. The theories cover a range of contextual factors and illustrate that context is not a determining factor per se; rather, context shapes group interaction, and group interaction produces and reproduces context. For example, Oetzel's theory illustrate how diversity leads to challenges for groups, and yet also that a diverse group of people working together results in diversity being a positive for some groups. Poole and DeSantis's theory illustrates that team-member interactions and choices influence how ICT is used and how it impacts people. The interaction between context and

group communication process is complex, but an understanding of the relationship is important for the focus of the next section.

Group Process and Effectiveness

Group communication scholars center their interest on group process. Process is where the interaction or communication takes place. As with theories of context, some group communication scholars are interested in what input factors shape group process. Another set of scholars is interested in explaining patterns of group process with an eye toward outcomes. That is, how does the interaction of group members shape decisions that are made, changes to individual opinions, and the quality of work that is produced? These functions can be loosely described as *group effectiveness*, which is the ability of a group to meet its goals. Much work on group effectiveness focuses on goal achievement related to the work or task at hand although some (such as the effective intercultural workgroup communication theory discussed above) include relational goals as well. This task bias relates to the preponderance of research on work groups and applications to business and other organizations.

The following subsections explore five theories that explain group process and effectiveness: (1) simplified model of social influence process; (2) socio-egocentric and group-centric model of influence; (3) transactive memory theory; (4) groupthink; and (5) vigilant interaction theory. The first two theories explore issues related to social influence or the influence that members have on each other. The last three theories explore factors related to information sharing and its impact on the quality of group work.

Simplified Model of Social Influence Process

Social influence is one of the most frequently examined group processes. Social influence refers to the degree to which people change their preferences related to a group's work. For example, a group of people is considering three different health insurance options and trying to decide the best one for the company. At the beginning of the group discussion, you might prefer the first option of lower co-pays and higher premiums. If there is social influence in the group, two things have to be present. First, you will either change your mind to one of the other options, or you will convince other people to change their minds and select your option. Further, the final decision of the group has to be different than the average of the group members if social influence is operating. If the other five members wanted option two—higher co-pays and lower premiums—and that was the group's decision, there likely was not much social influence—you were outvoted and complied with the others.

There is a long history of research and theory attempting to explain how and why social influence occurs in groups, including work on group polarization—the tendency for groups to make extreme decisions—and hidden profile—a situation where information known jointly favors one position but information held uniquely favors a different position.[33] Charles Pavitt presents a simplified model of social influence processes to attempt to integrate various theoretical perspectives and research on these processes.[34] Pavitt identifies three types of

social influence processes: argumentation, comparison, and compliance. *Argumentation processes* lead group members to discuss decision-related information and to be influenced by the knowledge shared by others. For example, the task force discussing health options noted above might offer information about the likely increase in premiums in future years. *Comparison processes* lead group members to offer their preferences and be influenced when hearing others' preferences. For example, one member says he prefers option one over two and wants to know where others stand. *Compliance processes* lead group members to state preferences they feel will gain approval by others. For example, one members says, "I prefer option one," because he heard the team leader voice that preference before the meeting.

Pavitt's model is based on the input-process-output model (figure 8.3). He identifies three types of input factors: situational, group, and personal. Situational inputs include the task type (whether there is a correct answer or a clear problem to be solved rather than a judgment to be made) and time pressure. Group factors include the pre-discussion distribution of preferences, group cohesion around the task and the relationship, and directiveness of a leader on process and outcome. Personal factors consist of status, demonstrated expertise, talkativeness, the need for cognition (being able to understand an ambiguous problem), and the need for approval. Each of these inputs affects the level of argumentation, comparison, and compliance in a group. Argumentation processes are likely to occur when the task has a correct answer, there is substantial pre-discussion disagreement, group task cohesion is high, the leader is directive of the process, a high status member is not present, talkative members are present, and there is a high need for cognition. Comparison processes are likely to occur when there is time pressure for a decision, general pre-discussion agreement, the leader is directive on the process, a high status member is not present, and a person with demonstrated expertise is present. Compliance processes are likely to occur when there is time pressure to make a decision, there is high relational cohesion, the leader is directive of the outcome, a high-status member is present, and there is high need for approval.

Pavitt describes how these social influence processes develop over time in a group. Prior to illustrating these process, he suggests that most of the input factors have a consistent effect on members over the life of a group except for time pressure, presence/absence of a high-status member, and the distribution of preferences in the group. The addition or removal of one of these factors changes how this factor and other factors operate. If time pressure or a high-status member is added to a group at any point, the tendency is for the group to use compliance processes. Further, if the group ever experiences unanimity in preferences, the group process concludes, and the group makes a decision.

The group begins its pre-discussion preferences with people sharing their perspectives. For example, our group of six people discussing health insurance options finds they have two votes for each of the three options (with the third option a compromise of the other two options). Since the group does not have unanimity, information (argumentation) and preferences (comparison) are exchanged depending on the various input factors. Argumentation processes prevail because there is not a majority viewpoint or any compliance pressures (no high-status members or time pressure). Let's assume at one point, there is a 4-2

vote for option one. At this point, information and preferences support the majority viewpoint, and minority viewpoint members may choose to remain silent. However, if new information supports the minority viewpoint, and compliance pressures are not present, the argument processes may lead to a change of position. Finally, a group has to make a decision, and Pavitt argues that this reflects the discussion content. Since our group is now at a 4-2 vote, option three is off the table. Generally, the vote favors the option that has had the greatest preference throughout the discussion unless there was a "correct" answer and the minority position was able to adequately demonstrate why that was the best option.

From the Source . . .

For years I taught small group communication and observed groups navigating a class exercise pitting risky versus cautious decision options against one another. I observed that if group members all favored the same option, but with differing amounts of strength, during discussion, every one of the reasons they mentioned for their preference supported the favored option; the disfavored option was never mentioned. For me, this demanded explanation.

Charles Pavitt

Pavitt's model attempts to explain the complexity of social influence processes and the various inputs that influence these processes. The combination of these inputs and processes lead to a specific decision or output. Pavitt also identifies specific propositions about the influence of single and the combination of multiple input factors (we only discussed the single factors) in this model. The next theory further explores social influence and introduces a model questioning the presence of social influence in groups.

Socio-Egocentric and Group-Centric Model

Not every theory of group communication assumes that communication is a vital element for group effectiveness. Dean Hewes is a group communication scholar who questions the evidence used to suggest communication is an important influence on decision making.[35] Hewes created the socio-egocentric model to explain communication as largely a function of individual interests and beliefs rather than collective discussion and construction of decisions. He challenges group scholars to provide evidence that communication in groups actually makes a difference on outcomes (that is, does it really exhibit social influence). In recent years, Joseph Bonito and his colleagues have picked up this challenge and developed a model that accounts for socio-egocentric communication along with group communication influence.[36] This section reviews Hewes's foundational work and then introduces the model proposed by Bonito and his colleagues.

Hewes argues that there is no unambiguous evidence to suggest that group communication affects group outcomes. He defines communication in this instance as having a contribution in a group that is related to what precedes it as well as affecting the contributions that follow it. For example, if we return to the group of six discussing health insurance policies, social influence only occurs if

we can show that a group member changed his mind because of the discussion of the other members. Hewes suggests that group member contributions can be accounted for by factors such as group composition, the nature of the task, individual preferences, and turn-taking rules. He terms his approach *socio-egocentric* to suggest that the conversations people engage in during group meetings reflect individual interests rather than a true dialogue. He explains that people have difficulty focusing both on what they think and what others think (or want, believe, etc.). Given this difficulty, people focus only on what they want and are polite to others to make it feel like a conversation. For example, I offer my opinion about the health insurance policies. You quickly respond, "Yes, but I think the other option does that better." Your "yes but" actually discounts what I'm saying. Even in situations where you might agree, Hewes suggests such agreement is more along the lines of politeness rather than true listening and in-depth agreement.

Groups are usually engaged in some sort of problem-solving or decision-making tasks that compete for the cognitive resources of team members. To address these tasks, Hewes argues that individual team members use cognitive shortcuts and prior experiences to reduce the cognitive processing load. In addition to having to process information to solve a problem, members are trying to interact with others in the group. Hewes suggests that the conversation management required in these situations is too difficult, and thus members give the appearance of listening and reacting to other team members without truly paying attention or adjusting behavior. He further explains that turn taking is structured around such features as agendas, expertise in the group, where people are sitting, or group factions rather than the content of the conversation. Hewes reports that 84% of the sequence in group interaction is accounted for by turn taking rather than by content contributions. For example, in our health policy group discussion, we might find that we are thinking so much about our own preference that we really do not listen to what others say. We simply take turns out of respect for others and to follow some rule, such as going around the circle so that everyone gets a chance to offer opinions. This contrasts with the idea that what others say influences and changes our positions.

Not surprisingly, many group communication scholars find Hewes's theory to be overly dismissive of the role of communication. Most communication scholars believe that communication is important to group processes. Bonito and his colleagues use the socio-egocentric approach not to discount the role of communication but to explain that groups can have both egocentric and group-centric communication. That is, sometimes the communication in a group reflects individual preferences and does not really influence others; at other times, individuals come together to truly share, learn, and change their opinions. Bonito and colleagues advocate a convergence theory of group participation that includes both egocentric and group-centric communication. Specifically, they propose that inputs such as culture, gender, and individual differences lead a group to egocentric communication and stability in the way the groups interacts. For example, a person who is argumentative can be expected to be argumentative and participate a lot in a group discussion. That same argumentative person may stop participating for a long period of time, however, because the others in the group have sanctioned him, or he learned something new and now questions his original argument. Group process, then, contributed to this individual's behavior in the group.

From the Source . . .

Meetings are often a chore because it's not clear if people are talking to or past one another. And nothing positive gets accomplished when people talk past one another. The socio-egocentric model positions egocentric speech (i.e., people talking past one another) as a "baseline" and identifies how it differs from group-centered speech. Essentially, group-centered speech is the result of mutual influence—what I was going to say changed because of what you just said and what I think you might say in response. Individual agendas give way to collaborative interaction—people talking to rather than past one another.

Joseph Bonito

Bonito and colleagues studied previous group data sets on social influence, including negotiating groups, information-sharing groups, group argument, proposal sequencing in groups, and group deliberations.[37] Some of the groups met a single time, and some groups were studied over time. The goal of these researchers was to identify the presence of both group-centric and egocentric communication and also to explain what factors might explain an increase in these two types of communication. They identified several contextual factors that lead to increases in egocentric communication and group-centric communication: task type, group type, content of statements, group development, group members, and group history. Increased egocentric communication occurs when the task is simple, groups are laboratory based, content is focused on information and procedures, the discussion occurs early in group development, group members have low involvement, and group members do not have a history of working together. Increased group-centric communication occurs when tasks are complicated, groups are naturally occurring, content is focused on problem solving and arguments, the discussion occurs in the middle or later stages of the group, members have high involvement, and group members have an extensive history of working together. This approach looks at factors that shape the presence or absence of social influence in a group. The next theory explores the conditions under which group communication leads to the development of a transactive memory system for sharing information.

Transactive Memory Theory

When group members work together, they rely on each other's expertise for information and the sharing of this information. Groups that operate effectively are able to develop a collective memory that is greater than the sum of the individual members' memories. One way to think about an effective group's memory is like a network of computers. A single computer has certain structures and capacities. Combine that single computer with other computers, and you can develop exponentially stronger computing power. This notion of supercomputing in a group is called *transactive memory* and is explained by transactive memory theory.[38] This theory was originally developed by psychologist Daniel Wegner and adapted by communication scholars Andrea Hollingshead and David Brandon.

Transactive memory occurs when individuals are able to support their own memory by using other people as memory aids (much like we use our smart

phones to store numbers, notes, and meetings in a calendar). To develop a transactive memory system in a group, individuals divide responsibility for the necessary information—a division of labor. Each individual remembers his share of the information, and also knows who knows what and can ask for that information. This also results in a cognitive benefit to the members; they do not feel like they have to remember everything. For example, imagine you are in a group developing and evaluating an anti-smoking campaign. One of your group members may know a lot about developing communication campaigns because he had a class in it. Another may know a lot about the medical effects of smoking and how providers address smoking cessation. Another person may know about behavior-change theories, which will be important for developing effective campaign messages. Finally, another person has some background in evaluation research. Each of the members has individual information strengths that make the group potentially effective. However, a transactive memory system is only a possibility at this stage; it has not yet been established.

Transactive memory theory introduces three key concepts to explain how communication can facilitate the development of a transactive memory. First, a group needs to establish directory updating. *Directory updating* is identifying who knows what; it is constantly refined as new information is found out. In our prior example, the group working on smoking cessation needs to clearly identify each of the areas of expertise of group members and make sure that is known by the others. Sometimes we make assumptions about people based on appearances, stereotypes, or attributes. For example, if one of the group members has a book on behavior-change theory, we might assume he is an "expert" in this area. In fact, it may be that he found the book and needs to turn it in to lost and found. People can also use third parties to establish knowledge. We might learn from a friend or a teacher that one of our group members had a prior class in communication campaigns or works in that field. Finally, we can directly talk about the skills and expertise we have.

Second, a group needs to determine an effective strategy of *information allocation*—who gets assigned what information. For example, during our interaction, we might learn that none of us knows anything about research evaluation. In that case, one of us might agree to lead that part of the project—whether because of personal interest or simply drawing the short end of the straw. Or, perhaps we all agree to train together by attending a two-hour workshop and then have one person take primary responsibility once we find out who is best at it. Communication among group members not only is important for information allocation but also helpful for getting information and figuring out the best places to store it.

Third, the group needs to engage in *retrieval coordination.* In order for us to use the information in our group, we need to remember who has the information and stimulate recall of that information. For example, you might be the behavior-change theory expert for the group, and yet you have forgotten that was your role. A simple reminder might cue your recall. Or, as your group talks about the theories, another member might remember that you were talking about the theory of reasoned action a couple of weeks ago, and that reminds you about what you thought might work for the campaign. More than simple recognition and recall, transactive retrieval results in new, shared interpretations of informa-

tion. Thus, as the group talks about the theories, we realize there might be benefits in using a combination of theories rather than just one.

Prior research has found a lot of support for the benefit of communication in groups to develop transactive memory. However, some researchers argue that transactive memory cannot really be developed and that communication actually results in problems in information sharing.[39] Specifically, some research shows that communication is an imperfect means to pool ideas and that a group is unlikely to know more than the sum of the individuals. There are a number of reasons why communication can result in poor recall of information including: (1) the group relies on one person because that person seems to be an expert on everything; (2) group members do not share everything they know because they feel there is personal benefit to holding back information; and (3) group conflict discourages effective sharing of information.

Even advocates of transactive memory theory recognize that communication is an imperfect means for achieving group success. Under the right conditions, however, it does help to develop shared memory of a group problem. First, using the same communication strategies for directory updating/information allocation appears to help transactive memory. Thus, if we work together to develop directory and information allocation, we should also work together when retrieving information. In the group project, it means working together to write the essay and to create the presentation for the project at the end rather than dividing responsibilities and not really talking about the essay. Second, learning new information together as a group appears to facilitate future group performance. It might be tempting to have one person solely responsible for an assigned task. However, if the group learns the required information together and then makes one person the primary custodian, group members will be more competent at stimulating recall. The collaborative work allows the group to develop a shared understanding of the problem and the information.

Recent research has expanded the understanding of transactive memory theory in work on cross-functional teams. Cross-functional teams are composed of members from different disciplines. For example, a team may be made up of an engineer, a sales person, a marketing person, and an IT person. Each brings specific expertise to the team and yet also different ways to make sense of a project or problem. Julia Kotlarsky and her colleagues examine three different types of knowledge boundaries and how they impact transactive memory systems: syntactic boundaries (resulting from different vocabularies), semantic (resulting from different interpretations), and pragmatic (resulting from different interests and assumptions about practice).[40] All three boundaries are interrelated (having one means you likely have the other two) although only syntactic and pragmatic boundaries inhibit the development of transactive memory. This research demonstrates that the development of transactive memory is not just about figuring out how to share and recall information—it is also about using the local and situated knowledge that is a part of the way people do their work (for example, engineers and marketers are likely to approach the same project in different ways). Communication under the right conditions is key to learning about effective groups, and the next two theories continue this line of thinking by focusing on what type of communication leads to group effectiveness.

Groupthink Theory

The work of Irving Janis and his colleagues has been immensely influential within the group communication literature, particularly for those who focus on group effectiveness.[41] The *groupthink hypothesis* developed by Janis and others emerged from a detailed examination of the effectiveness of group decision making.[42] Emphasizing critical thinking, Janis shows how certain conditions can lead to high group satisfaction but ineffective output.

Groupthink is a direct result of cohesiveness in groups. Kurt Lewin first discussed cohesiveness in some depth in the 1930s; the concept eventually was recognized as a crucial variable in group effectiveness.[43] *Cohesiveness* is the degree of mutual interest among members. In a highly cohesive group, a strong mutual identification keeps a group together. Cohesiveness is a result of the degree to which all members perceive that their goals can be met within the group. This does not require that members have similar attitudes, but members of a cohesive group exhibit a degree of interdependence, relying on one another to achieve certain mutually desired goals. The more cohesive a group, the more pressure it exerts on the members to maintain that cohesiveness.

Cohesiveness can be a good thing because it brings the members together and enhances the group's interpersonal relationships. Although Janis does not deny the potential value of cohesiveness, he also recognizes its dangers. One hazard is that highly cohesive groups may invest too much energy in maintaining goodwill in the group to the detriment of decision making. Members invest much intrinsic energy in groups because of the potential rewards for doing so: friendship, prestige, and confirmation of one's self-worth. Because our self-esteem needs are high, we sometimes will devote too much energy to establishing positive bonds, and this can lead to groupthink. Groupthink is especially likely when high cohesiveness is combined with structural faults such as insulation, inadequate counsel, poor decision-making procedures, closed mindedness, and/or a provocative situation causing much stress in the group.

Janis found six negative outcomes of groupthink:

1. The group limits its discussion to only a few alternatives without considering a full range of creative possibilities. The solution may seem obvious and simple to the group, and there is little exploration of other ideas.
2. The position initially favored by most members is never restudied for less-obvious pitfalls. In other words, the group is not very critical in examining the ramifications of the preferred solution.
3. The group fails to reexamine the alternatives originally disfavored by the majority. Minority opinions are quickly dismissed and ignored, not only by the majority but also by those who originally favored them.
4. Expert opinion is not sought. The group is satisfied with itself and its ability to make decisions and may feel threatened by outsiders.
5. The group is highly selective in gathering and attending to available information. The members concentrate only on the information that supports the favored plan.
6. The group is so confident in its ideas that it does not consider contingency plans. It does not foresee or plan for the possibility of failure.

All the negative outcomes result from a lack of critical thinking and from overconfidence in the group. Janis maintains that these outcomes are predicted by a number of symptoms that effectively summarize the essence of the groupthink phenomenon. The first symptom is an *illusion of invulnerability,* which creates unfounded optimism. There is a strong sense that, "We know what we are doing, so don't rock the boat." Second, the group creates collective efforts to *rationalize* the course of action they choose. It creates a story that makes the group's decision seem absolutely right and literally talks itself into thinking it did the right thing. Third, the group maintains an unquestioned belief in its inherent *morality,* seeing itself as being well motivated and working for the best outcome. That leads the group to soft-pedal ethical and moral consequences.

A fourth symptom is that out-group leaders are *stereotyped* as evil, weak, or stupid. Fifth, *direct pressure* is exerted on members not to express counter opinions. Dissent is quickly squelched, which leads to the sixth symptom—the *self-censorship* of disagreement. Individual members are reluctant to state opposing opinions and silently suppress their reservations. Thus, seventh, there is a shared *illusion of unanimity* within the group. Even if the decision is not unanimous, the group rallies outwardly around a position of solidarity. Finally, groupthink involves the emergence of self-appointed *mindguards* to protect the group and its leader from adverse opinions and unwanted information. The mindguard typically suppresses negative information by counseling participants not to make things difficult. Figure 8.5 (on p. 294) illustrates a model of groupthink.

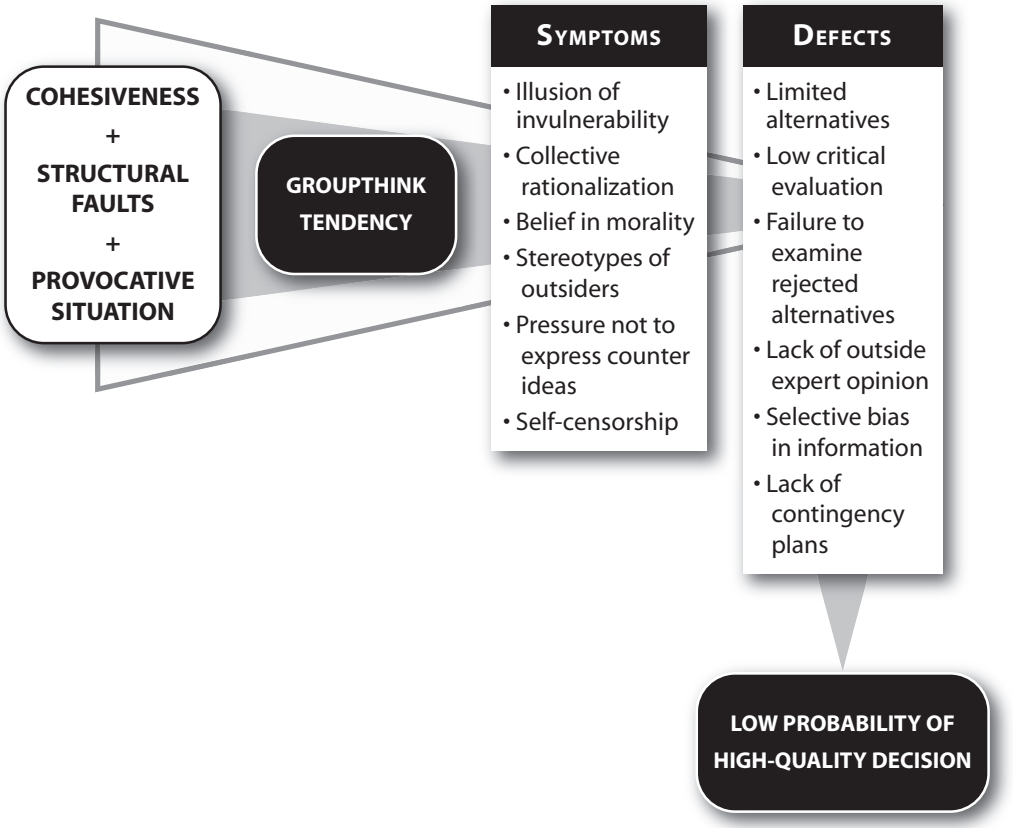
Janis believes the following steps will solve the problem of groupthink in decision-making groups:

1. Encourage everyone to be a critical evaluator and to express reservations during the decision-making process.
2. Do not have the leader state a preference up front.
3. Set up several independent and separate policy-making groups.
4. Divide into subgroups.
5. Discuss what is happening with others outside the group.
6. Invite outsiders into the group to bring in fresh ideas.
7. Assign an individual at each meeting to be the devil's advocate.
8. Spend considerable time surveying warning signals.
9. Hold a second-chance meeting to reconsider decisions before finalizing them.

Janis uses historical data to support his theory, analyzing six national political decision-making episodes in which outcomes were either good or bad, depending on the extent of groupthink. The negative examples include the Bay of Pigs invasion, the Korean War, Pearl Harbor, and the escalation of the Vietnam War. Positive examples include the Cuban missile crisis and the Marshall Plan.

One of Janis's cases of successful decision making is the Kennedy administration's response to the Cuban missile crisis. In October 1962, Cuba was caught building offensive nuclear weapon stations and arming them with Soviet missiles. President Kennedy already had suffered through one instance of groupthink in the Bay of Pigs invasion the year before, and he seemed to have learned

Figure 8.5 Model of Groupthink



what not to do in these kinds of international crises. In the missile crisis, Kennedy constantly encouraged his advisors to challenge and debate one another. He refrained from leading the group too early with his own opinion, and he set up subgroups to discuss the problem independently so as not to reinforce members' opinions. Various members, including Kennedy, talked with outsiders and experts about the problem to make sure that fresh opinions were heard. In the end, Kennedy successfully invoked a military blockade and stopped the Cuban-Soviet development.

Groupthink theory continues to stimulate research in groups. For example, Dejun Kong and his colleagues studied the relationship between team-member satisfaction and team performance of senior-level professionals in self-managed teams.[44] Specifically, they were interested in the relationship between these two constructs depending on the level of team agreeableness, or the extent to which the teams have high levels of trust, altruism, and friendly behavior. This notion is similar to the idea of group cohesion. The researchers found that team-member satisfaction is positively related to team performance when team agreeableness is low. When team agreeableness is high, there is no relationship between satisfaction and performance. These findings are consistent with groupthink

because it shows that a lack of agreeableness encourages the group to be critical and work through problems rather than simply trying to maintain a friendly atmosphere. The next theories build on parts of groupthink theory and other theories to explore how communication helps a group make effective decisions.

Vigilant Interaction Theory

Vigilant interaction theory focuses on the communication processes that result in effective decisions and grew from two foundational perspectives: functionalism and John Dewey. Functional theories of group communication view interaction as an instrument by which groups make decisions, emphasizing the connection between the quality of communication and the quality of the group's output.[45] Communication does a number of things—or *functions*—in a number of ways to determine group outcome. It is a means of sharing information, is the way group members explore and identify errors in thinking, and is a tool of persuasion.[46]

The functional approach to groups has been strongly influenced by the pragmatics of teaching small-group discussion. It is based in large measure on the work of philosopher John Dewey, which, since the publication of *How We Think* in 1910, has greatly influenced twentieth-century pragmatic thought.[47] Dewey's version of the problem-solving process has six steps: (1) expressing a difficulty; (2) defining the problem; (3) analyzing the problem; (4) suggesting solutions; (5) comparing alternatives and testing them against a set of objectives or criteria; and (6) implementing the best solution. The theories of the functional tradition address the ways communication affects each of these elements.

Randy Hirokawa and his colleagues use the foundations of functionalism and Dewey to craft the vigilant interaction theory. This theory argues that a group that *talks* about problems in a thorough and critical manner also is able to *think* about problems in a thorough and critical manner—and thus make better decisions. Their work looks at key communication elements that contribute to effective decisions and also a variety of mistakes that groups can make in the decision-making process.[48]

Groups normally begin by *identifying and assessing a problem.* Hirokawa and his colleagues identify a variety of questions common to this stage: What happened? Why? Who was involved? What harm resulted? Who was hurt? Next, the group *gathers and evaluates information* about the problem. As the group discusses possible solutions, information continues to be gathered because the group thinks more critically about what is known and not known. The group then generates a variety of *alternative proposals* for handling the problem and discusses the *objectives* it wishes to accomplish in solving the problem. These objectives and alternative proposals are *evaluated,* with the ultimate goal of reaching consensus on a course of action. The talk about the evaluation helps the group think more critically about whether the alternatives address the problem.

The factors contributing to faulty decisions are easily inferred from this decision-making process. The first is *improper assessment* of the problem, which stems from inadequate or inaccurate analysis of the situation. The group may fail to see the nature of the problem, or it may not accurately identify the causes of the problem. The second source of error in decision making is *inappropriate goals and objectives.* The group may neglect important objectives that ought to

be achieved, or it may work toward unnecessary ones. The third problem is *improper assessment of positive and negative qualities,* ignoring certain advantages, disadvantages, or both of various proposals. Or it may overestimate the positive or negative outcomes expected. Fourth, the group may develop an *inadequate information base,* which can happen in several ways. Valid information may be rejected, or invalid information may be accepted. Too little information may be collected, or too much information may cause overload and confusion. Finally, the group may be guilty of *faulty reasoning* from the information base.

Consequently, Hirokawa and colleagues have identified several *functional requisites* for effective decision making: (1) clarify the type of issue or question being addressed; (2) look for answers that match the type of questions being asked; (3) generate an appropriate range of alternative answers; (4) critically examine alternatives for strengths and weaknesses; (5) select solutions most appropriate to the kind of problem being addressed. Three obstacles can stand in the way of developing these requisites. These include overconcern with relationships within the group, poor information processing, and the domination of personal interests over the group task. The theorists refer to these obstacles as *affiliative*, *cognitive*, and *egocentric* constraints, respectively. To counter these obstacles, groups members should: (1) clarify their interests; (2) find adequate resources for making a decision; (3) recognize obstacles; (4) consciously manage the process or procedure; (5) create ground rules; (6) intervene effectively to eliminate constraints; and (7) review and reconsider the decision as needed.

Vigilant interaction theory continues to be used and has been applied to the study of virtual teams.[49] Poppy McLeod included three types of groups in her study: all members are located in the same place, all members are geographically displaced, or two members are together and two are displaced. Regardless of the type of group, groups that display vigilant interaction (discussion of task information, attention to other member information, discussion of positive and negative aspects of the alternatives, and systematic information processing) made better decisions than groups that did not display vigilant interaction. Further, receiving reminders to share information helped to make up for deficiencies in information sharing. Finally, the study illustrates that mixed-located groups were able to establish higher levels of vigilance and to maintain it over time. Completely dispersed groups have challenges in sharing information and thoroughly evaluating the information.

From the Source . . .

While we all intuitively recognize that communication plays an important role in "good" or "bad" group decision making, exactly how communication leads to good or bad decision making has not been entirely clear to us. I developed the functional perspective to explain how the communication of group members works to affect the quality of decisions they reach as a group. Initially developed as a descriptive theory, the theory has become more prescriptive over time as those working with small groups have used it to teach groups how to make better decisions.

Randy Hirokawa

Conclusion

This chapter has explored a number of key aspects about group communication. First, the theories illustrate that groups cannot be separated from the context in which they work. Understanding various contextual factors is critical to understanding the ways that groups interact both in effective and ineffective ways. There are a number of key contextual factors that can be considered, and most of the theories included in this chapter talk about some aspect of context. Second, the quality of communication in a group is important for group outcomes. Effective outcomes result from good information sharing, appropriate forms of social influence, and vigilant review of information. Third, group communication is influenced by multiple levels. Individual preferences and cultural backgrounds are important for groups; however, group interaction itself can shape and change people's preferences. Further, the organizational context has an influence on the work and communication of the group. Finally, group development and group structure are created through interaction and also shape interaction. Group members use communication to help them create certain roles and norms for their work and to develop effective decisions.

Chapter Map **THEORIES OF THE GROUP**

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Foundational Approaches	Interaction-Process Analysis	Robert Bales	Group communication messages address task and socioemotional (relational) functions.
	Interaction Analysis and Decision Emergence	B. Aubrey Fisher & Leonard Hawes	There are four phases of decision emergence in group interactions: orientation, conflict, emergence, and reinforcement.
	Input-Process-Output Model	Ludwig von Bertalanffy	Groups are systems where information and inputs shape group process, which subsequently affects the output.
	Symbolic Convergence Theory	Ernest Bormann; John Cragan & Donald Shields	Fantasy themes, or stories, chain out from person to person to create a shared reality in a group.
Group Context	Effective Intercultural Workgroup Communication Theory	John Oetzel	Cultural values and cultural diversity affect group communication, which in turn influences task and relational effectiveness.
	Concertive Control Theory	James Barker; Phillip Tompkins & George Cheney	Self-managed teams develop control systems based on value consensus of members, and the control can be more stringent than in traditional, bureaucratic systems.

(continued)

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Group Context *(continued)*	Bona Fide Group Perspective	Linda Putnam & Cynthia Stohl	Groups have permeable boundaries and are interdependent with their contexts.
	Adaptive Structuration Theory	Marshall Scott Poole & Gerardine DeSantis	Groups use and adapt information and communication technologies based on features of the technology and the ways that group members use and adapt the technology.
Group Process and Effectiveness	Simplified Model of Social Influence Processes	Charles Pavitt	Various types of inputs influence how groups use argument, comparison, and compliance processes over time.
	Socio-Egocentric and Group-Centric Model	Dean Hewes; Joseph Bonito & Renee Meyers	Egocentric (individual-based) and group-centric communication are factors in group communication and social influence.
	Transactive Memory Theory	Daniel Wegner; Andrea Hollingshead & David Brandon	Under certain conditions, group communication results in a group memory system that is greater than the sum of the memories of individual members.
	Groupthink	Irving Janis	High levels of cohesiveness among group members, under certain conditions, can lead to lower critical thinking and poor decision making.
	Vigilant Interaction Theory	Randy Hirokawa	The more thoroughly and critically a group talks about a problem, the more thoroughly and critically the group thinks about the problem, thus increasing the likelihood of making quality decisions.

NOTES

[1] A number of sources on small groups reflect the breadth of work in this area. See, for example, John Gastil, "Group Communication Theories," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 455–60; Lawrence R. Frey, ed., *The Handbook of Group Communication Theory and Research* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999); Randy Y. Hirokawa, Abran J. Salazar, Larry Erbert, and Richard J. Ice, "Small Group Communication," in *An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research*, ed. Michael B. Salwen and Don W. Stacks (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1996), 359–82; John F. Cragan and David W. Wright, "Small Group Communication Research of the 1980s: A Synthesis and Critique," *Communication Studies* 41 (1990): 212–36; Marshall Scott Poole, "Do We Have Any Theories of Group Communication?" *Communication Studies* 41 (1990): 237–47.

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munication Theory, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 528–29.

[3] B. Aubrey Fisher and Leonard Hawes, "An Interact System Model: Generating a Grounded Theory of Small Groups," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 57 (1971): 444–53.

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[7] Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making,* 155.

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9 The Organization

Every form of society requires organization. Whenever we collaborate to achieve collective action or goals, organization emerges. Organizations are "symbolically achieved cooperation,"[1] and organizational communication is the field that studies how that cooperation is achieved or how organizational form is created. But form is more than lines of connection on some organizational chart. It also implies directions of influence within a complex system, so that certain individuals exert influence over others; certain groups exert influence over other groups, and certain systems exert forces that control or manage other systems.

Hierarchies of forces and connections do not do justice to organizations. Organizations consist of human beings, after all, and every organization has a certain tone, attitude, or feel to it. Further, organizations are constructed in different ways depending on goals, attitudes, and principles. As we think about organizations, we can consider a number of questions. What are you able to do within an organization? What are you constrained from doing? What do you like and appreciate within an organization? How do people communicate in the organization? Is there a sense of formality or informality to the organizations to which you belong?

A large body of literature has emerged in organizational communication that answers these questions and more.[2] This is not surprising given how much time each of us spends in various organizations, particularly at work. This chapter introduces theories about organizational communication in three main sections representing three core areas of scholarship. The first section explores how communication is key for organizing and structuring work. The second section includes issues of control and resistance found in organizations. The final section discusses relationships with external stakeholders. The chapter map (pp. 341–342) summarizes the theories presented in each of these sections.

Organizing and Structuring

Many organizational communication scholars theorize about the role of communication in organizing and structuring the work of organizations. These

theories place primacy on the role of communication above many of the facets found in business and management literature. In short, these theories take communication seriously by, as Timothy Kuhn explains, emphasizing four key principles.[3] First, communication creates social realities. Second, organizations are not merely containers where communication takes place; rather, organizations *are* communication. Third, organizing is accomplished through communication, and that communication is contextual, historically situated, and political. Fourth, communication is complex, fraught with tensions, misunderstandings, and problems—rather than a simple process of creating shared meanings. This section presents five theories that take communication seriously as a means of organizing and structuring work: (1) theory of organizing; (2) structuration theory and the four flows model; (3) Montreal School approach to communicative constitution of organizations; (4) network theory; and (5) organizational culture.

Theory of Organizing

Karl Weick's theory of organizing is foundational in the communication field because it uses communication as a basis for human organizing and provides a rationale for understanding how people organize.[4] According to this theory, organizations are made through communication activities; they are not structures made of positions and roles. It is more proper to speak of "organizing" than of "organization" because people construct organizations through a continuing process of communication. When people go through their daily interactions, their activities *create* organization. Behaviors are interlocked, since one person's behavior is contingent on that of others. Further, organizing is a *sense-making process.* As we interact, we look back on what we have done and assign meaning to our actions retrospectively.[5]

Organizing interactions and the sense-making process reduce the uncertainty of information. Weick's key theoretical term for uncertainty, complication, ambiguity, and lack of predictability is *equivocality.* All information from the environment is equivocal (ambiguous to some degree), and organizing activities are designed to reduce this lack of certainty. Not all interaction is equally important in reducing uncertainty, but every effort contributes. The degree of equivocality experienced will vary from situation to situation. Often it is quite large, and reducing it will have major organizational implications.

For example, suppose that you get an email from your boss indicating that there is a safety problem in the plant. As you read the email, you see that your boss is asking you to take leadership in solving this problem. You are faced with a situation that is full of equivocation. What is the nature of this safety problem, and how should you go about solving it? Have others also been asked to help address this issue? What kind of timeline does your boss have in mind for solving this problem? The answers to these questions are not clear, inasmuch as the problem can be defined and solved in a number of ways. You will reduce the confusion by communicating with others—your boss, others involved in plant safety, and so on. Over time, through interaction, you will move from high equivocality to lower equivocality, which helps you to make sense of the situation and solve the problem.

This process of removing equivocality is an evolutionary process with three parts—enactment, selection, and retention. *Enactment* is the definition of the

situation—registering the presence of equivocal information from outside. In enactment, you pay attention to certain stimuli and eliminate other possible issues; you also acknowledge that ambiguity exists. When you accepted the task of dealing with safety problems in the plant, you focused on one issue (which Weick refers to as *bracketing)*; this removed some uncertainty from the field of all possible problems that you could have addressed.

The second process is *selection,* in which organizational members accept some information as relevant and reject other information. Selection narrows the field, eliminating alternatives with which the participants do not wish to deal at the moment. This process thus further reduces equivocality. For example, in dealing with the safety problem, you may decide to consider only the aspects of safety that present serious hazards and to delay work on situations that are only minor. Notice that you have moved already from a fuzzy, highly equivocal situation to a much clearer one.

The third part of the process of organizing is *retention*—certain things are saved for future use. Retained information is integrated into the existing body of information from which the organization operates. Your group may decide to deal with safety problems that are caused strictly by machinery, rejecting all other kinds of causes. Information on how to deal with machine safety becomes part of the organization's knowledge, able to be used in solving future problems. As you can see, the problem has become much less ambiguous; it has moved from equivocality toward greater clarity.

After retention occurs, members of the organization face a *choice point.* They must decide first whether to look again at the environment in a new way—to return to issues they chose not to focus on as they proceeded through the enactment-selection-retention process. Here, they address the question, "Should we attend to some aspect of the environment that was rejected before?" You may decide, for example, to have your safety group review the rate of accidents caused by human error, not machinery.

Thus far, this summary may have created the impression that organizations move from one process of organizing to another in lockstep fashion: enactment, selection, retention, choice. Such is not the case. Individual subgroups in the organization continually are working on activities using these processes for different aspects of the environment. Although certain segments of the organization may specialize in one or more of the organizing processes, nearly everybody engages in each part at one time or another. While one group is concentrating on one of the factors, another group may be working on a second one.

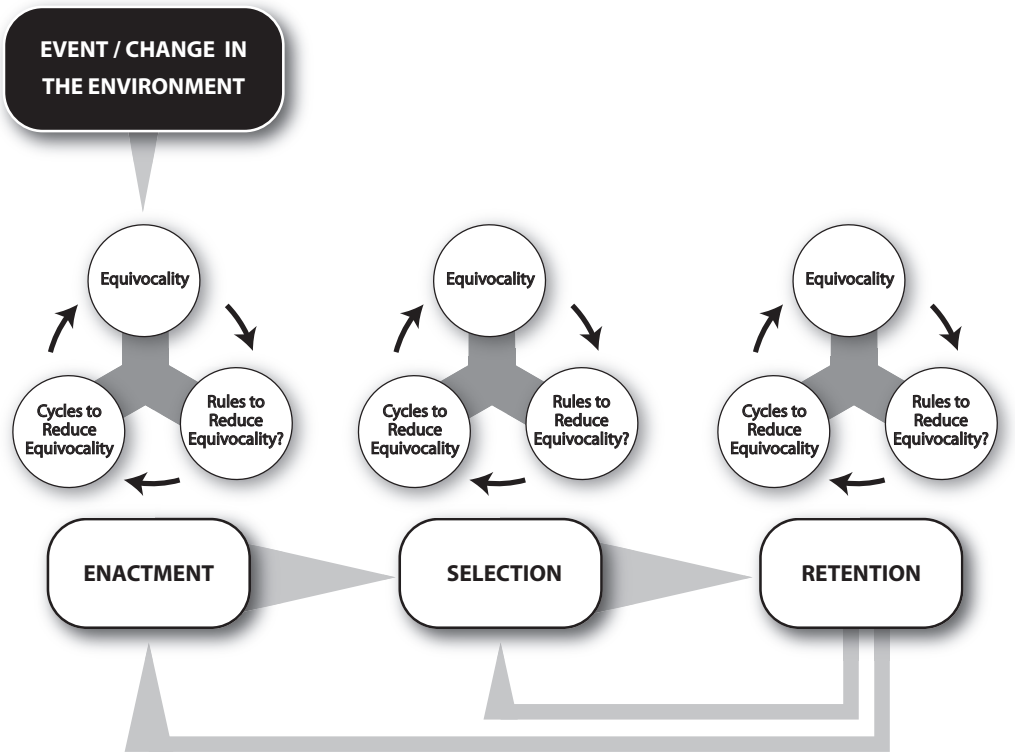
As people communicate to reduce uncertainty, they go through a series of *behavior cycles*—routines that facilitate the process of clarification. Thus, for example, you might set up a series of meetings to discuss safety problems and decide how to proceed. Behavior cycles are elements in all the process of organizing—enactment, selection, retention, and choice. They institutionalize the processes, which become regular and routine activities.

Within a behavior cycle, members' actions are governed by *assembly rules* that guide the choice of routines used to accomplish a process. Rules are sets of criteria organizational members use to decide what to do to reduce equivocality. The question answered by assembly rules is this: Out of all possible behavior cycles in this organization, which will we use now? For example, in the selection

process, you might invoke the assembly rule that "two heads are better than one," and on this basis, you decide to call a meeting of plant engineers.

The basic elements of Weick's model—environment, equivocality, enactment, selection, retention, choice points, behavior cycles, and assembly rules—all contribute to the reduction of equivocality. Figure 9.1 displays a model of this theory.[6] Weick envisions these elements working together in a system, with each element related to the others. Weick's model continues to be popular in both teaching and research about organizing. Many of the theories presented in this section use key elements of the theory of organizing. We turn now to a theory that focuses on how social systems and organizational structures are produced.

Figure 9.1 Model of the Theory of Organizing



Structuration Theory and the Four Flows Model

Structuration theory was briefly introduced in chapter 8. This theory states that human action is a process of producing and reproducing various social systems through ordinary practice. In other words, when we communicate with one another, we create structures—patterns of rules and norms—that range from large social and cultural institutions to smaller individual relationships.[7] Recall that two key aspects of structuration are systems (observable patterns of behav-

ior and relationships) and structures (rules and resources that members rely on to do their work). Structuration theory has been applied frequently to the study of organizational communication because of the importance of structures and systems for organizing.

As communicators act strategically to achieve their goals, they do not realize that they are simultaneously creating forces that return to affect future actions. Structures such as relational expectations, group roles and norms, communication networks, and societal institutions affect and are affected by social action. These structures provide individuals with rules that guide their actions, but their actions in turn create new rules and reproduce old ones. Anthony Giddens calls this back-and-forth process the *duality of structure.* Interaction and structure are so closely related that Donald Ellis calls them "braided entities."[8] In other words, we act deliberately to accomplish our intentions, but at the same time, our actions have the *unintended consequences* of establishing structures that shape our future actions.

Giddens believes that structuration always involves three major dimensions: (1) an interpretation or understanding; (2) a sense of morality or proper conduct; and (3) a sense of power in action. The rules we use to guide our actions, in other words, tell us how something should be understood (interpretation), what should be done (morality), and how to get things accomplished (power). On the system level, Giddens refers to these respectively as *signification*, *legitimation*, and *domination*.

Imagine a work team that has created an atmosphere in which everyone is expected to speak up on every topic. Like all processes of structuration, this was not planned but emerged as an unintended consequence of the actions of group members over time. In this scenario, a norm of *interpreting* emerges in which the group is understood as egalitarian. It is considered proper for everyone to address every issue and not remain quiet on any subject. And *power* is granted to speech, as individuals use language to share their perspectives and attempt to persuade one another.

In actual practice, your behavior rarely is affected by a single structure such as the role of "supply chain manager" or the norm/rule of "speaking-up." Rather, your acts are affected by and affect several different structural elements at the same time. Two things can happen. First, one structure can *mediate* another. In other words, the production of one structure is accomplished by producing another. For example, the organization may produce a communication network that governs who can talk to whom by establishing individual roles. This is why the custodian in an organization may not feel free to file a complaint directly with the CEO. The role structure mediates the communication network.

The second way structures relate to one another is through *contradiction*. In this case, the production of a structure requires the establishment of another structure that undermines the first one—a classical paradox. Contradictions lead to conflict; through a dialectic or tension between the contradictory elements, system change results. The old problem of task and relationship work in organizations is a good example of contradictory structures. To accomplish a task, an organization (or team) has to work on its interpersonal relationships, but working on relationships detracts from accomplishing the task. Concentrating too much on task does not leave enough time to mend fences and work on relationships, which must be done for high-quality task accomplishment.

Robert McPhee and colleagues' four flows model is grounded in structuration theory assumptions about organizations.[9] *Flows* are communication episodes that involve multiway messages or texts that reproduce and resist the rules and resources in an organization. McPhee and Pamela Zaug identify four communication flows that collectively perform key organizational functions and distinguish organizations from less formal social groups: (1) membership negotiation; (2) reflexive self-structuring; (3) activity coordination; and (4) institutional positioning.

Membership negotiation is communication that socializes individuals (especially newcomers) and negotiates boundaries. Membership negotiation is completed through such communication events as induction ceremonies, instruction, and storytelling. For example, when you start a new job, a trainer or manager tells you what members of your organization do (and don't do). She may tell you stories about past and current workers who do a good job so you can emulate them. She is teaching you how to be a "true/good" member of the organization and what behaviors and people to avoid.

Reflective self-structuring is communication that establishes formal structures, shapes operations, and allocates resources. Reflexive self-structuring occurs through such communication activities as the presentation of organizational charts and vision statements. For example, the head of IT retired from the organization for which John currently works. The business manager sent a message that contained the current organizational chart and responsibilities but described the structure as temporary while the school considered changes. The administration was trying to show how the IT duties were going to be absorbed by others and that a new organizational structure was under consideration, given changes happening university-wide.

Activity coordination is the negotiation of work roles, the division of labor, and collaboration with others who are in different roles. Activity coordination might involve communication about the key functions you are to perform, formal job descriptions, and interpersonal negotiation among roles. For example, imagine you are assigned to a new project team. This newly formed group will likely discuss who is to do what work and how the project will be accomplished in the time allotted.

Institutional positioning is communication that situates the organization in relation to the larger social order. Institutional positioning includes functions such as public relations, investor relations, and strategic goals vis à vis the outside world. This positioning helps to identify the organizational identity and face to various stakeholders. For example, John's organization is engaged in a strategic planning process to identify what is unique about the school relative to other schools so that it can better present its strengths to students, employers, and donors.

These four flows intersect, and communication can contribute to more than one flow at a time. For example, a communication event may induct new members and also serve as a way to distinguish the organization from competitors. Further, the four flows collectively constitute an organization as consisting of both emerging relationships and relatively stable structures in the organization. In short, communication is an ongoing process of creating and recreating the organization through the four flows. Figure 9.2 displays the four flows model.[10]

Figure 9.2 Four Flows Model



From the Source . . .

Early in my career, organizational communication was split between researchers studying formal, authoritative messages and others studying "cultural" communication, seen as more essential. I found a way to explain the power of formal communication using "cultural" [or "structurational"] assumptions—actually a complicated problem. Then, when the field began studying how communication was the "essence" of organizations, I realized formal communication was one "essence"—along with three other coequal processes *operating essentially differently*. Voilà, four flows.

Robert McPhee

Numerous communication scholars have utilized structurational theory assumptions and principles to develop additional theories and to conduct research about organizational communication.[11] For example, Clifton Scott and Karen Myers developed a model of member negotiations.[12] They identified a number of factors important for these negotiations: role expectation, organizational norms, structure, and power relationships for how members (and particularly new members) negotiate their membership in the organization. At the same time, there are critiques of the structuration approach, particularly from scholars of the next approach, the Montreal School. Nonetheless, it is a mature theory that has been very popular and fruitful in generating knowledge about structuring and organizing.

Montreal School Approach to Communicative Constitution of Organizations

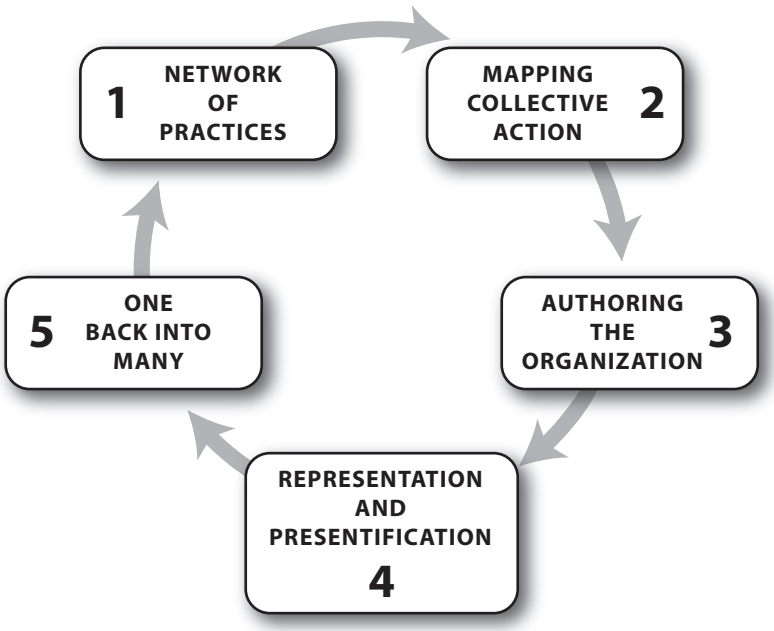
Much of the focus in the organizational communication literature is not on the organization but rather on how communication creates organizations. The communicative constitution of organizations (CCO) explores the ways that organizations are created and how they produce and reproduce themselves. Specifically, this approach considers the discursive features and configurations that create organizations through ongoing interactions. McPhee's four flows model presented in the previous section is one such CCO approach. Another popular approach comes from the Montreal School.[13]

The Montreal School is a collection of organizational communication scholars at the University of Montreal who collectively have developed a constitutive model of communication. James Taylor, François Cooren, Daniel Robichaud, and Boris Brummans are four key scholars in the school, although much of the work is built around Taylor's original model.[14] The approach is built on five translations and the connections among the translations. When actors speak for a group, organization, or institution, they always must translate meanings originating in basic (micro) interactions in ways that can be understood and used by actors outside the network. Thus, translation is a key process involved in all organizing, and communication itself is an act of translation. Figure 9.3 displays a model of these translations.[15]

The first translation is *organization as a network of practices and conversations*. Organizations are created through a network of people and practices, the activities that accomplish the work of the organization. Two key elements of these linkages are co-orientation and worldviews. Taylor begins with the idea that organizing happens when two people interact around a particular focus of concern.[16] Taylor calls this process *co-orientation*—the idea that two people orient to a common object (a topic, issue, concern). When co-orienting to a shared concern, communicators try to negotiate a coherent meaning toward that object. Sometimes they are successful in doing so, and sometimes they are not. It can take considerable interaction to achieve common meaning. Nevertheless, persons become connected to one another in what Taylor calls an A-B-X triad. *A* refers to the first person, *B* is the second person, and *X* is the shared concern or focal object of their interaction.

In most cases, the two individuals bring different perspectives to the encounter. Taylor describes these as differing *worldviews*. A manager, for exam-

Figure 9.3 Model of Five Translations



ple, may feel that a policy change is vital, while an employee feels that it would be harmful. The manager brings the worldview of operational success, while the employee brings a worldview of workload. The manager thinks the policy change is needed to improve the process, but the employee resists because it would mean an increase in her workload. Each is evaluating the policy on the basis of different perspectives. These varying orientations toward the shared concern are natural because people have different spheres of concern and differing interests.

The second translation is *organization as mapping collective action through distanciation* introduced in chapter 4). Once a "positive co-orientation" gets established, two individuals move from being individual agents to collective ones; they then enter into interactions with other individuals and groups about objects of common concern. Indeed, whole networks of actors can attempt co-orientation with other networks. The organization thus is built in a process of "scaling up" interaction on interaction repeatedly. Taylor uses the analogy of interlinked tiles to explain this idea. Each interaction is connected to others, just as one tile is connected to others in tile work. Taylor calls this process *imbrication*. Collective action begins to distance the original co-orientation from its source. Distanciation is the process through which ordinary actions and decisions are separated in time and space from their creations and consequences. Distanciation is also an element in the next translation.

The third translation is *organization as authoring the organization and its purposes through textualization*. During the "scaling up" process, certain prac-

tices are codified as policies, rules, or visions of the organization. Through distanciation, the policies become distant from the specific interactions that led to the co-orientation and the creation of the policy. These policies, codes of conduct, etc. become texts that are taken for granted as "what the organization" does. They enable the organization to communicate what the organization is and does to varied audiences.

The fourth translation is *organization as representation and presentification*. Now that the texts are authored, they are used to represent the organization and what is does. An annual report or a job description is a text that represents particular aspects of the organization. These texts also are used to present the organization, its vision, and its work to organizational members and to the outside world. The manner in which these texts are used by members to present and represent the organization recreate the organization and its purposes.

The final translation is *translating the one back into the many.* This translation focuses on moving from the representation and presentation of the organization back to the specific practices of the organization. The individual members of the organization get their direction about their everyday work and co-orientation activities from the texts of the collective. The individual members gain authority by talking and acting in ways that are consistent with the organizational representation. In sum, these translations work in the following manner: practice leads to voicing the practice; voicing the practice leads to authoring the organization; authoring the organization leads to articulating the organization's purpose; the organization's purpose leads to practice.

As one example of how the theory works, imagine that you are a firefighter and work about 40 hours a week for the city fire department. What are your daily activities? You talk with other fire fighters and other city workers, give and take directions, maintain the station and equipment, give fire permits, visit schools, respond to emergency calls, and engage in many other regular activities. Each of these activities is done in a series of conversations in which you must arrive at co-orientation with others. The fire department as an organization is more than just its collective actions. Something results from all of this that defines and structures the organization itself. Something bigger is happening.

How do you know, then, exactly what characterizes the fire department as an organization? This question shows why text is so important. It is the texts—written and spoken—that represent symbolically how members are defining the organization. Theoretically, you could "listen in" to what people are saying to get a sense of the way they understand the structures and functions that exist within the organization. In addition to these more or less ephemeral forms of interaction, you also could look at more permanent texts. Certain individuals will take the role of agent for the organization and codify aspects of the organization in a more or less formal text that is taken as a map of some aspect of the organization. For example, those in the human resources department might write an employee manual, the executive committee might draft an organizational chart, the fire chief might give a speech to a community group, a department might write an annual report, a hiring committee might write up a description of a job, a work group might keep a log of what they do, or an outside researcher might write a book about the fire department. These textual maps provide a generally accepted picture of the organization's boundaries, activities, and the roles of members.

From the Source . . .

The idea of communicative constitution of organization (CCO) actually comes from a quote from John Dewey's 1916 book, *Democracy and Education*, in which he insightfully writes, "Society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication" (p. 4). Rather than considering communication as something that happens in organization, Dewey thus invites us to paradoxically find organization in communication, which is what James R. Taylor started to investigate both theoretically and empirically from 1988. Since then, this communicative constitutive thesis has been extended to a more general position: communication constitutes the building blocks by which reality comes to be what it is.

François Cooren

Cynthia Stohl and Michael Stohl used the Montreal approach to examine clandestine organizations such as al Qaeda.[17] They note that CCO is rooted in an implicit assumption of organizational transparency—a formal evolving system that is knowable through conversations across multiple communities of practice—which they call the embedded transparency principle. They argue that clandestine organizations are not readily accessible because conversations and structures are not transparent (e.g., there isn't an organizational chart or website to study). When voices are hidden, misdirected, or systematically isolated (as happens in clandestine organizations where members agree to keep affiliations, internal activities, and governance structures outside the public realm), detecting community identity through texts and conversations is difficult. The self-reflexive secrecy of clandestine organizations creates a context in which metaconversations take different forms than those that have generally been considered important. Studying a clandestine organization involves fragmented and contested conversations, records, archives, and structures. Coming to know how communication constitutes these organizations involves greater emphasis on the social-historical context. Stohl and Stohl suggest that this contribution will make the CCO an even richer approach to the study of organizational structure. The next theory continues the focus on organizational structure by identifying the connections among people.

Network Theory

You can easily see from previous theories presented in this section that patterns of communication will develop over time within an organization. One way of looking at organizational structure is to examine these patterns of interaction to see who communicates with whom. Since no one communicates equally with all other members of the organization, you can detect clusters of communication relationships that link together to establish overall organizational networks. Network theory consists of a set of ideas to which many researchers have contributed. Here we feature the work of Peter Monge and Noshir Contractor.[18]

Networks are social structures created by communication among individuals and groups.[19] As people communicate with others, links are created. These

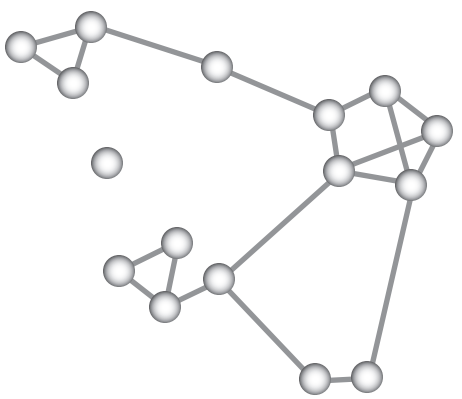
are the lines of communication within an organization. Some of these are prescribed by organizational rules (such as the bureaucratic structure advocated by Weber) and constitute the *formal network*, but these channels reveal only part of the structure of an organization. In contrast, *emergent networks* are the informal channels that are built—not by the formal regulations of an organization but by regular, daily contact among members.

We used to participate in creating emergent networks by putting memos in interoffice envelopes, picking up the phone, or walking down the hall to talk to other employees. Today, our capability of generating links beyond the physical office has exploded with email, texting, Twitter, Facebook, online meeting sites, and other technologies. Relationships constantly are formed through ongoing communication, and there is no way to capture this ephemeral and dynamic state of affairs in an organizational chart. Researchers, however, do take snapshots of organizational networks and have been able to delve into complex, emergent networks.[20]

The basic structural idea of network theory is *connectedness*—the idea that there are relatively stable pathways of communication among individuals. Individuals who communicate with one another are linked together into groups that in turn are linked together into the overall network. Every person has a unique set of connections with others in the organization. These are *personal networks*. Your personal network is the connections you have among the many others with whom you communicate within an organization, and your set of personal networks will look at least a bit different from those of your coworkers.

Because individuals tend to communicate more frequently with certain other organizational members, *group networks* form. Organizations typically consist of many smaller groups, linked together in larger groups in *organizational networks*. Figure 9.4 is a simple drawing of a network. Notice that individuals are linked into groups, and groups are linked into a larger organization.

Figure 9.4 A Simple Network



If you were to analyze a network, you would be able to look at several things. For example, you could look at the ways in which any two persons are linked together. This would be an analysis of *dyads*. You could look at how three individuals are linked, focusing on the *triad*. Beyond this, you might look at *groups* and how these are divided into *subgroups*. Finally, you could look at the ways in which groups link to one another in a *global network*. Analyzing a network into its parts is helpful, but network analysis can do much more. For example, beyond identifying parts, it can look at the qualities of those parts or actually describe the multiple functions that the same links within a network can fulfill, such as friendship, information sharing, or influence. This aspect of networks is called *multiplexity.* In addition, networks can be *multidimensional*; multidimensional networks involve multiple functions

(multiplexity) and also multiple nodes (the unit of connection in a network such as individuals, groups, or organizations).

The basic unit of organization, then, according to network theory, is the *link* between two people. The organizational system consists of innumerable links that cluster people into groups and connect them to the organization. A link can be defined by its purpose(s), how much that purpose is shared, and its functions within the organization. Most links have more than one purpose. You might, for example, use a link for both information sharing and friendship. This is certainly the case in our organizational lives. For example, a few members of our department meet outside of the university as part of a knitting group—only one of many informal groups that form from within the department for various reasons. Occasionally, a link may be exclusive, but usually it is shared with many others.

Links can also define a particular *network role*, meaning that they connect groups in particular ways. As the members of an organization communicate with one another, they fulfill a variety of roles vis-à-vis the network. For example, a *bridge* is a member of a group who is also a member of another group. A *liaison* connects two groups but is a member of neither. An *isolate* is an individual who is not linked to anyone else. You can also look at the *degree* to which one is linked to others. *In-degree* reflects the number of contacts other people make with you, while *out-degree* involves the number of links you initiate with others. *Centrality* is the extent to which you are connected to everyone else. Network researchers have looked at many variables related to individuals' connectedness within the network.

Researchers also analyze certain qualities of the links among persons. For example, links can be *direct*, involving a straight link between two people, or *indirect*, in which case two people are connected through a third person. The number of links between you and any other person is called *degrees of separation*. You might have heard it said that there are only six degrees of separation between you and any other person in the world—in other words, it would require only six links to locate any other person you are looking for. Links also vary in terms of *frequency* and *stability*—how often they occur and how predictable they are.

A network can be characterized by a number of qualities. One is *size* (the number of people); another is *connectedness*, which we discussed briefly above. Connectedness is measured by the ratio of actual links to possible links. A highly connected network is strong and close, and such networks can exert much influence by establishing norms for thought and behavior. You will feel closer to and will be more influenced by a group of students you see and interact with daily in the residence hall than you will by students you see only occasionally in classes.

Another characteristic of a network is its *centrality*, or the degree to which individuals and groups are connected to just a few go-betweens. A highly centralized organization has lines going from groups into a small number of hubs. A *decentralized* system has more connectedness among members overall, with no one group controlling those links. If you have to go through the same small group of individuals every time you need something, you will not be very connected to other members of the organization. On the other hand, if you have freedom to contact just about anyone, you will be more connected generally throughout the organization.

There is a great deal of theoretical work addressing the ways in which networks function in organizations.[21] For example, networks can (1) control information flow; (2) bring people with common interests together; (3) build common interpretations; (4) enhance social influence; and (5) allow for an exchange of resources. Network theory paints a picture of an organization or, perhaps more accurately, a variety of pictures, each capturing an aspect of organizational functioning.

Given this variety of functions and pictures, Contractor and his colleagues advocate for a multitheoretical, multilevel framework.[22] They identify a number of theories that have been used to explain some aspects of the connections of people in networks, including uncertainty reduction theory (chapter 3), social exchange theory (chapter 7), balance theory, spatial proximity theory, activity focus theory, and gender homophily theory. Contractor and his colleagues examined an organization in the public works division of a military base to identify the emergent networks over a two-year period. They found support for the multitheoretical approach in that emergent networks are constructed for a variety of reasons including friendship, workflow connection, spatial proximity, and sharing a supervisory/subordinate relationship. These networks are generally reciprocal and transitive (a triad where A is connected to B, B is connected to C, and A is connected to C).

Network theories help to explain how organizations get constructed from the connections among the various nodes in the organizations. The focus of this theory is on the relationships that emerge through interaction and how those relationships structure and organize the work of an organization. The next theory illustrates not how organizing and structuring is done but rather how the members construct organizational reality.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is one of the most popular approaches to scholarly research and teaching about organizations. The organizational culture movement has become incredibly broad, touching on almost all aspects of organizational life.[23] Many companies not only sell products and services but also sell their culture. When you interview for a job, you probably want to find out what it really is like to work at X—exploring aspects of the organizational culture provides this type of information. Similarly, you have probably seen a list of the "best companies to work for," which usually includes cultural aspects of the various organizations.

From a scholarly approach, organizational culture looks at the meanings, values, and assumptions of an organization's members as they emerge in interaction. Joann Keyton is a theorist who examines and describes the communication approach to organizational culture.[24] From this perspective, organizations do not have cultures, they *are* cultures. In other words, organizational culture is the way individuals use stories, rituals, symbols, and other types of activity to produce and reproduce a set of understandings. Organizations present opportunities for cultural interpretation, and culture is a root metaphor; each organization creates a shared reality that distinguishes it from organizations with other cultures. Gareth Morgan explains: "Shared meaning, shared understanding, and shared sense making are all different ways of describing culture. In talking

about culture we are really talking about a process of reality construction that allows people to see and understand particular events, actions, objects, utterances, or situations in distinctive ways. These patterns of understanding also provide a basis for making one's own behavior sensible and meaningful."[25]

Keyton describes five different lenses that communication scholars use to explore organizational culture. First, the *lens of narrative reproduction* emphasizes the importance of storytelling for making sense of the organization and instilling organizational values. Second, *the lens of textual reproduction* focuses on the recorded aspects of organizational culture, such as email messages, mission statements, and websites that typically express the management perspective of the culture. Third, the *lens of power and politics* examines the normative practices of power to understand who benefits from or is harmed by the organizational culture. Fourth, *the lens of technology* emphasizes tools to do work, and studies from this lens explore ways that technology creates cultures and sometimes subcultures (such as telecommuters and traditional employees). Finally, *the lens of symbolic performance* looks to everyday and unique communication events that create and perform organizational culture.

From the Source . . .

From my work experience, it was clear that there was something different about each place I worked. At the time, organizational culture was primarily a management construct or theory that explained those differences in structural ways or through the behavior of the leader. Through extended observations in organizations, I discovered that a communication focus on symbols, messages, and meanings provided a richer description of what organizational culture is and a better explanation of how organizational culture develops and changes.

Joann Keyton

One of the original approaches to organizational culture focuses on symbolic performance. Michael Pacanowsky and Nick O'Donnell-Trujillo examine what organizational members use to create and display their understanding of events to uncover cultural patterns in an organization.[26] According to Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, there are many indicators of culture, including relevant constructs and related vocabulary; perceived facts, practices or activities; metaphors; stories; and rites and rituals. All of these are performances because they display the lived experiences of the group. However, performances, like stage plays, are also accomplishments. They bring about the reality of the culture: "performance brings the significance or meaning of some structural form—be it symbol, story, metaphor, ideology, or saga—into being."[27]

Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo outline four characteristics of communication performances. First, they are interactional—more like dialogues than soliloquies. In other words, they are social actions, not solitary ones. Organizational performances are something people participate in together. Second, performances are contextual. They cannot be viewed as independent acts but are always embedded in a larger frame of activity; the performance, in other words, both reflects

and produces its context. Third, performances are episodes. They are events with a beginning and an end, and the performers can identify the episode and distinguish it from others. Finally, performances are improvised. There is flexibility in how a communication episode plays out, and although the same performances may be given again and again, they are never repeated in exactly the same way.

Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo describe a number of organizational communication performances. The first is *ritual*—something that is repeated regularly. It is familiar and routine, such as staff meetings or company picnics. Rituals are especially important because they constantly renew understandings of our common experience in the organization, and they lend legitimacy to what we are thinking, feeling, and doing. For example, when the general manager of a car dealership opens his own mail and personally distributes the mail to employees, he is communicating his desire to stay in touch with them. This is an example of a personal ritual. Another type is a task ritual, which is a repeated activity that helps members do their jobs. A good example occurs when a patrol officer follows a routine questioning sequence after stopping a driver for a traffic violation: "May I see your driver's license? Your registration and insurance?" Social rituals are not task related, yet they are important performances within organizations. The after-work drink is a good example. Finally, organizational rituals are those in which an entire work group participates with some regularity, such as an annual picnic. We worked in a department where there was an annual fall ball and spring fling—occasions for socializing among faculty and graduate students that served as organizational rituals.

The second category of performances is what Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo call *passion.* Here, workers put on performances that make otherwise dull and routine duties interesting or passionate. Perhaps the most common way this is done is by storytelling. Almost everybody tells stories about their work, and the telling is often lively and dramatic. Further, these stories are told over and over, and people often enjoy telling one another the same stories again and again. New members of an organization quickly hear about the time the manager forgot to come to the monthly staff meeting, about how the CEO unexpectedly inherited the company from her grandfather, or the time the boss let everyone go home early one day because he won a big award. We tell stories about ourselves (personal stories), about other people (collegial stories), or about the organization (corporate stories). Another way drama is created on the job is by means of passionate repartee, which consists of dramatic interactions and the use of lively language, which may be quite earthy in some organizations.

A third category of performance involves *sociality,* which reinforces a common sense of propriety and makes use of social rules within the organization. Courtesies and pleasantries are examples. Sociabilities are performances that create a group sense of identification and include things like joking, "bitching," and "talking shop." Privacies are sociality performances that communicate sensitivity and privacy. They include such things as confessing, consoling, and criticizing. The department administrator who tells her manager on Monday morning about the difficulties she had with her teen-aged son that weekend is engaging in privacies.

A fourth category of performance involves *organizational politics*, which create and reinforce notions of power and influence (for example, showing per-

sonal strength, cementing allies, and bargaining). These performances typically involve moves designed to position oneself strategically in a certain way within the organization for political reasons. The individual who aligns with a new member of the organization in a disciplinary matter is an example of organizational politics.

A fifth category is *enculturation,* which involves "teaching" the culture to organizational members. Enculturation is ongoing, but certain performances are especially vital to this process. Orientation of newcomers is an example. On a less formal scale, "learning the ropes" consists of a series of performances in which individuals teach others how things are done. Although this can be accomplished by direct instruction ("That's how we do it here"), most often this kind of learning occurs when people talk about things that happened in a way that helps other individuals learn how to interpret events. A faculty member recently hired in our department asked a colleague whether she was going to the department's graduation. The colleague, who had to be out of town, said no, and the new professor formed the mistaken impression that attendance at graduation was optional. She ended up sitting in her office during the ceremony, thinking it no big deal, and planned instead to attend the reception afterward. She later learned that, in fact, graduation is required for faculty except when there is some extenuating circumstance, like a professional conference or event.

The theories in this section all emphasize the core aspect of communication as organizing and structuring. Rather than focus on the organization as a place, they focus on how communication constructs meanings, structures, and values for members. Communication is the organization; it is the culture, the process of making sense of the work and of the organization. However, these meanings, values, and sense making are not always shared equally, and they are not mutually beneficial. The next major section explores issues of control and resistance that occur when there is not shared agreement on organizing, values, or meanings.

Control and Resistance

One of the distinguishing features of an organization is the coordinated work to achieve collective goals. Organizing and structuring are key activities for the achievement of organizational goals. As a result, organizational members seek to control behavior in order to achieve these goals (and sometimes personal goals as well). *Control* includes various facets such as monitoring and evaluating employee performance, communicating targets for production and sales, and encouraging employees to espouse the organization's culture. Control is a normal and necessary part of organizations. At the same time, control can become overbearing and constraining in the best of situations. For example, let's say that you want be trusted to do your job well, and you have a micromanaging boss. In a situation like this, you probably would come up with some ways to resist the micromanagement, such as trying to work at a time when your boss is out of the office or perhaps talking with her about how her micromanagement impacts you.

Resistance also comes in various forms such as the indirect and direct resistance identified in the above example. It might also include passive-aggressive

attempts, such as talking trash about your boss behind her back. Resistance might also be necessary to protect yourself from a bad situation or to combat inequalities. This section presents five theories that discuss aspects of organizational control and/or resistance: (1) theory of bureaucracy; (2) organizational control theory and organizational identification; (3) discourse of suspicion; (4) corporate colonization theory; and (5) gender and race theories of resistance.

Theory of Bureaucracy

As organizations become more complex, they are perceived as highly structured systems that require managerial leadership, and communication is viewed as the effective top-down transmission of information designed to keep the organization functioning. Such communication is seen as fulfilling management's responsibility for control, which was modeled largely from an engineering perspective. Perhaps the most striking example of this thinking is Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy.[28] Weber, who was most concerned with how human beings act rationally to achieve their goals, linked individual human motivation to social outcomes. Weber provides a framework for the traditional view of organizational structure as hierarchical and rule driven. As you read through Weber's principles, you will recognize immediately that these principles are alive and well in organizations today, almost a full century after they were written. You will also notice that they do not say much about communication per se, but they do provide a base of powerful assumptions that has affected the image of communication in organizations.

Weber defines an organization as a system of purposeful, interpersonal activity designed to coordinate individual tasks.[29] This cannot be done without three principles: authority, specialization, and regulation. *Authority* comes with power, but in organizations, authority must be "legitimate" or formally authorized by the organization. Organizational effectiveness depends on the extent to which management is granted *legitimate power* by the organization. You do what your boss says because the organization grants your boss the legitimate authority to give orders. In other words, managers do not necessarily have power because of birth, intelligence, persuasiveness, or physical strength (as might be the case in other settings) but because the organization gives them authority. When you "report to" someone, you understand that this individual has the authority to tell you what to do because her power is formally authorized.

When you become a member of the organization, you "agree," at least tacitly, to follow the rules that establish and grant organizational authority. The organization is established as a rational system, and rules determine authority. The best way to organize *rational-legal authority*, according to Weber, is by hierarchy. In other words, bosses have bosses, who themselves have higher bosses. This hierarchy is carefully defined by regulation within the organization. Each layer of management has its own legitimate authority, and only the head of the organization has ultimate, overall authority.

The second principle is *specialization*. Division of labor assigns various responsibilities, and people know their jobs within the organization. The proliferation of titles and job descriptions is a perfect example. Think about the difference between a bureaucracy and other types of organization. In a small hardware store, employees may do everything from running the cash register to cleaning

the toilet. Once the store reaches a certain size, however, it begins to take on bureaucratic characteristics, so that one person may be hired just to stock shelves and sweep the floor; someone else is hired to be a cashier; and others are salespersons. In very large organizations, division of labor is often extensive, resulting in employees having little or no idea what their task contributes to the overall organization. When Stephen was in college, his dad got him a job at North American Rockwell, and he spent eight hours a day for three months copying numbers onto tags. Only much later did he find out that these tags identified various parts and wires for the space capsules used on the Apollo missions.

A third aspect of bureaucracy is the necessity of *rules*. What makes organizational coordination possible is the implementation of a common set of regulations that govern everyone's behavior. Organizational rules should be rational, which Weber defines as designed to achieve the goals of the organization. In order to track everything that happens, careful records must be kept of all organizational operations.

As we noted, these three principles still govern many larger organizations today and guide communication in the organization. Weber's theory of bureaucracy illustrates ways the behavior of organizational members can be controlled in order to maintain a rational and goal-directed approach to the work. The next theory illustrates other ways that organizational behavior is controlled more subtly.

Organizational Control Theory and Organizational Identification

Phillip Tompkins, George Cheney, and their colleagues are interested in the ways in which ordinary communication establishes control over employees.[30] In chapter 8 and earlier in this chapter, we introduced these types of control. Recall, that the first is *simple control,* or use of direct, open power. The second is *technical control,* or use of devices and technologies. The third form of control is *bureaucratic,* which involves the use of organizational procedures and formal rules. Fourth, *cultural control* rests on the values and common practices that make up the organizational culture itself. Such control induces members to subscribe to organizational values and to establish relationships around common interests and ideas.

The fifth, and most interesting to Cheney and Tompkins, is *concertive control*—the use of interpersonal relationships and teamwork as a means of control. Concertive control is a natural extension of cultural control. It is the subtlest form of control because it relies on a shared reality and shared values:

> In the concertive organization, the explicitly written rules and regulations are largely replaced by the common understanding of values, objectives, and means of achievement, along with a deep appreciation for the organization's "mission." This we call . . . the "soul of the new organization."[31]

In other words, concertive control is accomplished by "normalizing" behaviors—making certain ways of operating normal and natural so that organizational members want to enact them. In chapter 8, we discussed the concertive control theory of self-managed teams; in this section we discuss another way to elicit concertive control.

According to Tompkins and Cheney, organizational decision making follows a syllogistic pattern: participants reason deductively from general premises,

and choices are based on those premises. Control is exerted when workers, who accept certain general premises, reason to the conclusions desired by management. The premises are accepted because of incentives like wages and the authority of people with legitimate power—very much in line with Weber's notion of bureaucracy. This acceptance does not come automatically, however, because conflict often results from differences between employees' personal beliefs and the premises of the organization. Indeed, a substantial amount of industrial strife results from such differences. How, then, do organizations achieve concertive control in the face of potential conflict? The answer lies in the process of constructing personal identity.[32]

Among many things created through interaction in organizations is identity. Naturally, we have complex personal identities, and much of who we are is based on the relationships we establish with others within groups and organizations. One's identity is tightly connected to identification. *Identification* is a process of linking oneself with others; in organizational life, we identify, or link ourselves, with many different sources. Here, theorists rely largely on the work of Kenneth Burke (chapter 4).[33] *Identification* occurs when individuals become aware of their common ground. We identify with individuals with whom we share something in common; and the more we share with one another, the more the potential identification between us. When employees identify with the organization, they are more likely to accept the organization's premises and to make decisions consistent with organizational objectives.

Who we are in the organization, our identities, determines to a certain extent the identifications we forge. At the same time, our identifications shape our identities. This two-way street is referred to in the theory as the *identity-identification duality.* Tompkins and Cheney believe that the identity-identification process is structurational. That is, in the process of actively seeking affiliations with others, we unwittingly create structures that in turn affect our identities. The path to professorship provides an example. A student finds a professor she really likes, identifies with that person, establishes a relationship with the professor, starts to take on academic values, and becomes the professor's research assistant. The effect of all of this is a set of expectations between the student, the professor, and perhaps others that lead to the student's development of an academic identity, which leads to the student's decision to go to graduate school to become a professor and teach in a university, where the pattern continues.

What will begin to happen within an organization over time is that members create a mutual identification with the organization. Because their personal identity is shaped in part by this identification, they begin to take on the values, ideas, and ideals of the organization. This identification shapes members' assumptions and behaviors, and this is the essence of concertive control, in which members come to "reason" jointly with shared premises. The acceptance of organizational premises is part of a process of organizational identification.

Once a certain amount of identification is achieved, organizational enthymemes make concertive control possible. Described by Aristotle more than 2,000 years ago, the *enthymeme* is a rhetorical device used to involve audiences in the advocate's reasoning process.[34] In an enthymeme, one or more premises in a reasoning chain are left out and supplied by the audience. In organizations, members are a kind of audience that reaches particular conclusions based on

shared implicit premises. Sometimes the suppressed premises are widely accepted cultural values; other times they are inculcated through persuasion.

For example, a speaker advocating the prohibition of offshore drilling might reason that (1) offshore drilling endangers the fragile coastal ecology; (2) coastal ecology is valuable and should be protected; and (3) therefore, offshore drilling should be prohibited. In addressing fellow members of an environmental organization, this speaker would not need to be explicit about this argument and could rely on members' acceptance of these premises, leading to an almost automatic acceptance of the claim. The members would readily work against offshore drilling because of their identification with the environmental organization.

Tompkins and Cheney are especially interested in how enthymemes are used in organizations for unobtrusive control of decision making. These authors point out that when members display loyalty and behave "organizationally," they are essentially accepting key organizational premises. Often organizations directly sell their premises to employees through company newsletters, training programs, and the like. Other times, organizations employ a variety of incentives to induce employees to become loyal. In any case, once employees accept certain premises, their conclusions and decisions are controlled.

From the Source . . .

When I was an undergraduate at Youngstown State in my hometown, I noticed how much of the identity of the community as well as the identities and livelihoods of workers were bound up with the steel industry, until the mills were closed in 1977. At the same time, I was intrigued by how differently friends related to their jobs (i.e., ranging from "just a job" to a core part of them). For better and for worse, identity is a major "problem" for individuals and organizations in our world, and the issue has to be addressed and managed.

George Cheney

To explore organizational identification, Michael Papa, Mohammad Auwal, and Arvind Singhal studied the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh.[35] Grameen (meaning *rural bank*) was founded in 1976 as an experiment in rural development and empowerment. It was designed to extend banking services to the poor; eliminate exploitation; create an employment base; and establish small, local banking institutions run by the people themselves.

From the beginning, participants, including loan applicants, were recruited to support the mission of the bank. Through inspirational talks, new employees were induced to establish identification and buy into the values and goals of the organization. They were invited to buy into a team concept, in which all employees, and even clients, were to work together to achieve the permanent elimination of poverty. The bank has been very successful and has received international acclaim, an honor that is shared with employees at every level. The workers are the strongest advocates for the mission and values of the organization, and they enforce very high standards (not mandated by management) on themselves and other employees.

From the Source . . .

Our theory of organizational identification surfaced, in part, upon reflecting on our extensive interviews with Grameen Bank loan recipients. What became clear is that when organizational membership brings with it emancipation from poverty and human suffering, a palpable connection is formed between member and organization such that the member attributes all they have gained to the organization. They feel as if they are an intricate part of that organization and want to stay connected to it for their entire lives.

Michael Papa

The organization represents the epitome of concertive control through identification. Members work hard to ensure that loan recipients make their payments. Because employees' identities are so wrapped up in the bank, they exert tremendous peer pressure for everyone to work hard on behalf of the organization. Employees, then, identify both with the bank mission of uplifting the poor and with other employees at their local branch office. This very strong level of concertive control is paradoxical. It seems to empower employees to establish their own standards. In the process, however, their procedures and work ethic have become institutionalized, which ironically disempowers employees who might otherwise want to establish new ways of working. Employees are emancipated from oppression, but they are oppressed anew by the very forms they themselves have created.

Concertive control is one of several mechanisms used by organizations to manage multiple identities. The complex organization today does not have a single image with a single set of consistent interests. Rather, it is a complex system of interacting identities, sometimes quite contradictory, and organizational communication must manage this multiple state of affairs. George Cheney explains the difficulty.

> To speak of collective identity is to speak of collective or shared interests—or at least of how the interests of a collective are represented and understood. This is a fundamental concern of contemporary organizations. Large bureaucratic organizations are in the business of identity management; their controlling members must be concerned about how to (re)present the organization as a whole *and* how to connect the individual identities of many members to that embracing collective identity.[36]

Thus the organization must have a way of inducing individuals, with all their variable interests, into a common identification with the organization. A diversity of identities, even conflicting ones, can be handled if there is at least some level of overall identification with the organization as a whole. Sometimes organizations must change, which means altering an identity, but to survive, the organization must create a new identity based in part on the interests of a substantial portion of its membership. For these reasons, unbridled pluralism and diversity cannot be tolerated by an organization, and concertive control through identification is therefore essential.

Organizational identification continues to be a topic of great interest to a number of communication scholars.[37] However, not all efforts to foster identifi-

cation are successful, and some organizational members resist identifying with the organization and the control instituted by the organization. The next section explores a theory that examines control and resistance and issues of power through a critical theory lens.

Discourse of Suspicion

The critical tradition in organizational communication is concerned with the power relations and ideologies that arise in organizational interaction.[38] Critical/cultural scholars recognize that mainstream organizational research dealing with organizational structures privileges managerial interests such as productivity and effectiveness. Questioning this stance, these scholars began to cast a light on such powerful interests. Dennis Mumby states: "One of the principal tenets of the critical studies approach is that organizations are not simply neutral sites of meaning formation; rather, they are produced and reproduced in the context of struggles between competing interest groups and systems of representation."[39]

Mumby's work in organizational communication embodies a shift from approaches that attempt merely to describe the organizational world to an approach that highlights the ways in which the organizational world creates patterns of domination. Mumby calls for a *discourse of suspicion*, or an attitude of questioning about and an examination of the deep structure of ideology, power, and control within the organization. Adapted from Paul Ricoeur's phrase, "hermeneutics of suspicion," Mumby uses the phrase *discourse of suspicion* to suggest how surface meanings and behaviors obscure deep-structure conflict and constraints that limit the possibilities of a democratic society.[40] In other words, such discourses are suspicious of the normal order within organizations, seeking to understand the underlying structures and especially the power relations at work.

It is one thing to describe an organization as having a certain structure, function, and culture; it is another to question the moral correctness of that structure, function, and culture. For example, you might question the highly valued Weberian bureaucracy as antithetical to the interests of workers; you might challenge a process of concertive control because it subverts what employees most want and need; or you might criticize the culture of an organization as promoting the power of one group over another. All of these are examples of a discourse of suspicion.

Mumby himself undertakes such a critical examination using the concept of hegemony from classical critical theory. *Hegemony* in organizational communication involves "relations of domination in which subordinated groups actively consent to and support belief systems and structures of power relations that do not necessarily serve—indeed may work against—those interests."[41] For example, in traditional capitalism, companies work to reduce costs and increase profits. Within this scheme, employees are a "cost," and one way of increasing profitability is to downsize or lay off employees. Notice that this practice is not value neutral but reflects a particular way of thinking about human beings. The corporation reasons that by increasing profits, the organization actually helps people in the long run. The profits the company will make are not just profits but are resources for the future expansion and development of the organization. As the organization grows, increased profits mean more jobs in the future, which mean more people can be hired. The narrative ignores the employees who lose their jobs in the ini-

tial downsizing. This is a classic example of hegemony, a "story" or set of understandings that promote the interests of one group over those of another.

Hegemony is rarely a brute power move but is instead a "worked out" set of arrangements in which stakeholder buy-in actually contributes to domination. Power is established within an organization by the domination of one ideology over others. This occurs through rituals, stories, and the like, and Mumby shows how the culture of an organization involves an inherently political process. Through storytelling, for example, narratives form certain kinds of texts that create and perpetuate ideologies.

For example, there is a story that has been repeatedly told and retold at IBM. As the story goes, a 22-year-old female security guard stopped the chairman of the board because he did not have the appropriate badge to enter the area she was guarding. Although you might think that the boss would pull rank, he quietly secured the proper badge and gained entry.[42] One reading of this story is that the chairman was a nice guy who wanted to follow the rules. But the story would not be noteworthy at all if power relations were not important. The immense power difference between these two individuals, built into the system, is evident when the chairman of the board can choose to go along rather than pull rank. If he had not been in a high position of authority, there would have been no power differential, no choice, and thus no story.

In a recent exploration of the history of research on communication, organizing, and power, Mumby explores some of the broader aspects of control and hegemony and the changes these processes have undergone over time.[43] Specifically, he explains that Weber's bureaucratic and coercive control gave way to consensus-based forms of control such as concertive control and organizational identification. Further, in what he calls the post-Fordist period (Henry Ford being the creator of the assembly line), Mumby asserts that control is shaped by government forms of control as well as identification with neoliberal principles of organizing. For example, today's workers are seen as having freedom and agency to move freely among companies. At the same time, these assumptions benefit organizations as they can easily fire or lay off workers in the spirit of efficiency and cost savings.

Hegemony normally is considered a negative influence in the critical tradition, but Mumby suggests that we have forgotten that resistance and transformation also are involved in organizations. Viewed in this way, hegemony can provide a more nuanced way to understand conflicting interests as they play out in organizations. The introduction of resistance shifts attention away from structures of domination that control to the productive ways organizational members resist, reconfiguring the terrain of struggle in the process.

It would be a mistake, however, to think of organizations as huge playing fields consisting of two teams—domination and resistance—with each trying to "beat" the other. More accurately, hegemony involves a continuum between a single, all-encompassing ideology at one end and widespread resistance on the other; it is a process of struggle rather than a state of domination, which ultimately offers scholars a more adequate way to discuss this dynamic. Critical communication scholars are more concerned with the everyday hegemony and resistance that happens in ordinary organizational life than with the more obvious forms of resistance. For example, a manager may tell her employees, "If you have too much to

do, just come to me, and I'll give you a set of priorities." For many employees, this is a solution to the workload problem: let management decide. This is a minor example of hegemony in operation. However, if you talk to other employees, they may tell you that they want more control over prioritizing their own work and may resist asking the manager for help. This is a small act of resistance.

Mumby's notion of hegemony, then, is a pragmatic, interactive, and dialectical process of assertion and resistance. Hegemony is not so much a question of an active and powerful group dominating a passive and less powerful one but rather a process of power arrangements emerging as an active process of multigroup social construction. Hegemony is a necessary result—neither always bad, nor always good—of struggle among stakeholder groups in everyday situated action.[44]

From the Source . . .

I am continually fascinated by the subtle and complex ways in which communication symbolically constructs organizational realities that both enable and constrain people. This construction process doesn't just happen but involves a complex and ongoing "struggle over meaning" in which different groups compete to define what counts as "reality." The "hermeneutics of suspicion," as Ricoeur described it, allows us to get beneath the everydayness of communication to understand its deeper connection to the dynamics of control and resistance.

Dennis K. Mumby

Mumby's perspective in the discourse of suspicion illustrates the dialectic of control and resistance and has been used by a variety of researchers. For example, Samula Mescher and her colleagues explored the messages on websites related to work-life balance using a focus on hegemonic power processes.[45] The authors found that many of the work-life balance messages are ambiguous; explicit messages support balance and arrangements to achieve balance, while implicit messages present work-life balance as a privilege. These implicit messages reproduce a traditional norm about ideal workers—that is, they put work first and life balance second. Further, Mescher and colleagues identify these issues as gendered in that only women are presented as having care duties as part of their balance. Further, these messages present only men as being able to live up to the ideal of working full-time and doing whatever it takes to get the job done. This study illustrates issues of control as constructed within the hegemony of the organization. The next theory explores control and resistance from a different angle; it provides a picture of an ideal of organizational empowerment. This theory represents another aim of critical theories—to envision how emancipation might occur and what it might look like.

Corporate Colonization Theory

Corporate colonization refers to the domination of corporate interests over those of the individual, especially how corporations have taken over functions that in earlier times would have been performed by family, community, and reli-

gious institutions.[46] Although this domination is not without positive features, domination can impact people and the environment negatively when unchecked. It also can cause people to lose touch with their deepest interests and lose their voice in making fundamental decisions in their lives.

Calling for a democracy of everyday action, Stanley Deetz shows that contemporary organizations privilege managerial interests over the interests of identity, community, or democracy.[47] Small examples such as setting daily work priorities are part of a larger picture in which the interests of management dominate those of workers. Deetz imagines democracy as an alternative "ongoing accomplishment" in which stakeholders can reclaim responsibility and agency in the corporation. Democracy, in other words, should occur in the daily practice of communication, and it is here that change in organizational cultures begins. For example, a manager could invite employees to set workplace goals and negotiate priorities. Deetz believes, however, that this kind of effort is not typical or normal in today's organizations.

In contrast to a democratic value, the normal discourse of organizations, according to Deetz, tends to be one of domination. Normal discourse in organizations embodies four dimensions of domination—naturalization, neutralization, legitimation, and socialization. *Naturalization* is the assumption of truth on the part of powerful stakeholders. Players assume that what they believe about organizations, the goals of organizations, and the structure of organizations is natural, normal, and accepted by all. The organizational ethic that management sets priorities is a clear example. *Neutralization* is the idea that information is neutral, or value free. For example, when the human resources department sends out an email describing a new health-insurance program, the assumption is that this is just "neutral" information that in no way asserts power. *Legitimation* is the attempt of the organization to privilege one form of discourse as the voice of authority within the organization. Weber's idea of legitimate authority, defined earlier in the chapter, is exactly this: The management perspective is considered authoritative over other perspectives. Finally, *socialization* is the ongoing process of "training" employees to accept and follow the moral order of the organization. Cheney and Tompkins's idea of concertive control, discussed earlier in this chapter, is one example of this. Explicit indoctrination and training programs are also examples.

These processes—naturalization, neutralization, legitimation, and socialization—constitute a *systematically distorted communication* that serves the interests of managerial capitalism. *Managerial capitalism*, which permeates the modern organization, aims to reproduce the organization for the ultimate survival of management itself. Notice the difference between managerial capitalism and traditional production capitalism. The goal of traditional capitalism was the expansion of production to make a profit. While this interest is still alive and well, Deetz is concerned with a different set of interests that serve management as a stakeholder group. More than a conspiracy of self-aggrandizement, this managerialism is infused throughout the organization—in its forms, rules, codes, and policies. Managerialism is an overlay of arrangements that prevents conflict and inhibits what Deetz calls emancipatory democracy.

The solution to this state of affairs is a constant, everyday effort to create an "ideal speech situation" within the organization. The *ideal speech situation*,

originally proposed by critical theorist Jürgen Habermas, is an ideal for communication in society, in which all discourses are legitimized in open dialogue.[48] Real democracy as manifest in the ideal speech situation is a "balanced responsiveness"; it does not involve trying to create any kind of permanent structure but is the enactment of an attitude of constant critique and empowerment in everyday life. Unlike processes such as collective bargaining or other structures established in the organization to implement democratic processes, organizational democracy happens each day in small ways. For example, a manager who invites employees to collaborate on goal setting and negotiating work priorities is engaged in democracy of this kind.

From the Source . . .

To study communication, for me, is to study the constitution of human experiences—how meanings and experiences are interactionally produced—rather than how they are expressed. While the opportunities for expression are protected in our society, the communication processes of producing our experiences are often very unbalanced and favor specific, relatively narrow interests. Communication systems thus display much systematic distortion. I study how these distortions occur and how we can form systems that give a greater opportunity for diverse interests to influence the formation of our personal identities, knowledge, values, and decisions.

Stanley Deetz

The corporate colonization theory was used in a study of the care of older people in residential homes. Paula Hyde and her colleagues examined the way that grouping people in assisted-living homes results in the colonizing of the aged body.[49] The authors' fieldwork revealed that conversations in these homes focus on the decline of older people and results in three aspects to the colonizing process: (1) social and physical practices of placing older people in residential homes; (2) separating older people from their previous identities (e.g., moving them from independent to a "resident"); and (3) resistance of older people to being characterized in mental or physical decline. This study illustrates that corporate interests are represented primarily in the conversations about older people, although older people can resist these constructions. However, the need for resistance by older people reflects the corporate colonizing perspective that has been instituted in residential homes. The next section offers three critical perspectives from feminist scholarship that help to elaborate on the perspectives introduced in the previous two sections.

Feminist Theory in Organizational Communication

Mumby's and Deetz's efforts to understand the control-resistance continuum have been enhanced by feminist scholarship in organizational communication. Karen Ashcraft reviews five different strands of feminist theory that explore gender in organization(s) and gendered organizations. Feminist organizational scholars argue that organizations are not neutral constructions; rather,

they are built on gendered (and usually masculine) principles.[50] First, *liberal feminism* focuses on equality of opportunity and standardization. This approach accepts many bureaucratic principles including clear rules and boundaries and reforming (rather than radically changing) practices in order to assure equality of opportunity for women. Second, *cultural feminism* perceives women as different. To achieve equity, gender needs to be acknowledged and taken into account rather than ignored. The focus here is looking at how gender differences construct organizations and, to some extent, how these constructions privilege men.

Third, *standpoint feminism* emphasizes that women are different from men and that they are also different from each other—each women has a specific standpoint arising from her history, race, and social class. Fourth, *radical feminism* suggests that gender is a fundamental difference and that dominant institutions (e.g., bureaucratic) are masculine and thus repressive. According to radical feminism, alternative ways of organizing are needed to bring about equality, and women who develop a feminist consciousness are best suited to develop these alternative ways of organizing. Fifth, *postmodern feminism* emphasizes gender as a socially constructed through discourse, knowledge, and power. These discourses construct a situated notion of gender and power. From this perspective, the question isn't "Are we different?" but rather "How did these differences become constructed in this particular organization?"

Ashcraft explains that each of these approaches has contributions to make to the understanding of feminist theory and gendered organizations and that much of the current work by feminist organizational communication scholars is postmodern feminism (see chapter 12 for more on postmodernism). This section explores three examples of feminist scholarship that emphasize standpoint and postmodern approaches to feminist theory: (1) feminist resistance; (2) gender and race; and (3) voice and silence.

Feminist Resistance. Angela Trethewey is a feminist organizational communication scholar who has articulated the notion of organizations as gendered sites in a series of research studies. In each case, she goes into an organization and talks to women about their experiences rather than viewing the organization from the outside. In one study, for example, she interviewed professional women, seeking to understand how women perceive their professional bodies and the strategies they use to manage those bodies.[51] Among her findings is "a tendency to overflow"—that "women never know when their bodies may display messages and meanings that were not intended."[52] Trethewey found that the majority of these unintended messages have to do with femininity—whether expressing emotions, sexuality, pregnancy, or menstruation. For these women, not being in control of bodily presentations of self was really about revealing a feminine body because it exposed gendered differences and could destroy a woman's credibility. To succeed professionally, then, is a paradox of embodied experiences for women.

Trethewey has been particularly influential in theorizing resistance within largely female organizations and the forms such resistance assume. In one study, she looked at client resistance to a social-services organization designed to assist low-income single parents in obtaining the education and work necessary to support their families without the assistance of welfare.[53] Positioned as

passive and deficient by the organization, the clients in fact found a variety of ways to resist this construction. Among many different forms of resistance, they made fun of the organizational mandate that they participate in counseling, suggesting that the organization simply make a cardboard cutout of Freud to whom they could talk; they "bitched" about their social workers and the organization; and they transformed client-client relationships into mentoring ones, not sanctioned by the organization. Trethewey suggests that these forms of resistance enabled the women to feel empowered about themselves and to envision alternatives to the conditions of their everyday lives.[54]

Trethewey adds to her work on resistance by explicitly articulating a theory of contradiction for organizational life. Using as a case study the same social-services organization described previously, Trethewey describes the paradoxes present in the organization.[55] For instance, while the organization's goal is to empower its clients to be self-sufficient, the organization only selected as clients individuals who already demonstrated a considerable degree of self-sufficiency. This leads to yet another paradox: although selected on the basis of self-sufficiency, clients accepted into the program are defined as incapable of determining appropriate plans of action or monitoring their own progress toward goals. Instead, a social worker is considered necessary in order for the clients to realize these goals. In complex organizations, understanding the role irony plays in allowing different discourses to remain present at the same time is a way to capture and analyze the complexities, ambiguities, and diversities of contemporary organizational life. Trethewey, then, has taken seriously the call to examine organizations as gendered sites that contain often overlooked hegemonic practices.

Gender and Race. Karen Ashcraft and her colleague Brenda Allen extend the feminist work on organizations, suggesting not only that organizations are fundamentally gendered but also "fundamentally raced."[56] Examining organizational communication textbooks because they disseminate the canons of the field, Ashcraft and Allen found that these books offer several implicit messages about race: (1) race is a separate, singular concept, of interest only to people of color, with the result that issues of race often are segregated in textbooks and confined to a chapter at the end; (2) race is relevant when it serves organizational interests such as creativity or productivity; (3) cultural/racial differences are seen as synonymous with international differences; (4) racial discrimination stems from personal bias and the lack of racial minorities in the workplace (as

From the Source . . .

Over the years, we had heard many calls for closer attention to gender and race in organizational communication studies. Yet despite repetitive summons, we didn't see issues of race finding much traction. Instead, we began to notice how Brenda Allen's work was cited as evidence that organizational communication scholars did study race (ironically, most touted was a piece in which she criticized the dearth of such work). Meanwhile, studies of gender enjoyed a sharp rise. So our intent was to invite us all to take a closer look at how our own system turned good intentions into silence.

Karen Ashcraft

numbers increase, discrimination will naturally diminish); and (5) white workplaces and workers are the norm. Ashcraft and Allen explicitly center issues of race, adding to the intersection of gender and race in organizational communication. They call attention to the ways race continues to be largely dismissed in organizational communication textbooks.

Ashcraft recently further develops this need for more attention to gender and race by exploring the separation of work and diversity found in most management literature.[57] Specifically, she explains that most managerial scholarship sees work as independent from social identities such as race and gender. She argues that most scholars use a unilateral view of work and identity—people derive identity from work. However, she explains that it is a bilateral relationship in that work also derives identity from associated people.

Ashcraft introduces a new metaphor to explain the work identity relationship: the glass slipper, which illustrates that certain occupations appear to be possessed of distinctive aspects that make them suitable for some people and implausible (or at least difficult) for others. Further, she argues that the glass-slipper metaphor allows scholars to expose the systematic advantages and disadvantages of this identity alignment that is constructed in our discourse. For example, she reviews a study that explains that men and women use gendered discourse in the medical professions to align with certain specialties. Surgeons have forceful hands and sizable "balls," while pediatricians offer caring and emotional connection with patients. Not surprisingly, surgeons have more prestige and pay than pediatricians.

Voice and Silence. Robin Clair's work extends the interest in the complexities of organizational life and the ways gender, race, and other identity categories play out strategically in response to the various layers of meaning. Beginning with the silence-voice binary, she uses narratives of the Cherokee nation to show how narratives are embedded in one another—there always are layers of potential contradiction to be addressed.[58] For instance, in one of these narratives, a British philanthropist attempts to save the Cherokees by providing one Cherokee boy with an education. Paradoxically, of course, the education meant to save the Cherokees from destruction forced the boy to silence his Cherokee heritage. Silence and voice exist in a complex tension, and there can be voice in silence and silence in voice: "interests, issues, and identities of marginalized people are silenced and . . . those silenced voices can be organized in ways to be heard."[59]

Clair continues her work on the paradoxes of the voice-silence tension with the issue of sexual harassment. In her analysis, she found that resistance and oppression are a particular kind of voice and silence—complicated communication phenomena that simultaneously contain and oppose the organization in which they occur. In an account of a male nurse's experience with sexual harassment, for example, Clair found that "Oppression becomes resistance when the female nurses *oppress* Michael through sexual harassment in order to *resist* being infiltrated by a male. Furthermore, the female nurses contribute to their own oppression through their reliance on and use of sexual orientation as well as racism to taunt Michael."[60] There is not just oppression and just resistance, in other words, and scholars of organizational culture are finding ways to study the shifting terrains of organizational life.

Critical feminist scholarship has led the way in investigating the pitfalls and possibilities of organizational control and resistance. These approaches illustrate that control and resistance are constructed in communication. Further, these theories remind us that organizing and structuring are not neutral actions. They are based in values and principles that benefit some and disadvantage others. Further, control, resistance, and organizing have gendered and raced dimensions and illustrate the interlocking ways communication functions to preserve and oppose dominant organizational ideologies. This section explored control and resistance within the organization. The next section identifies communication with stakeholders that are generally seen as external to organizing and the organization. These relationships are important to understand as organizing and organizations do not exist in a vacuum; in order to survive the organization has to adapt to changing circumstances and meet external stakeholder needs and expectations.

External Stakeholder Communication

External organizational communication is a key function for organizational survival. An organization needs to be able to manage issues, problems, and crises in order to reach its goals. All of these challenges involve interacting with stakeholders—constituents who are connected to or have a vested interested in the work of the organization. These stakeholders include such people as government officials, customers, service providers, and neighborhood members. Often the work of stakeholder engagement is completed by public relations professionals. Indeed, the theories in this section are from the subdiscipline of public relations.

Theories of external stakeholder communication generally come from two different lenses. On the one hand, some theories identify ways that organizations can use communication strategically to manage reputations and maintain competitive advantage. On the other hand, theories explore how organizations can interact with stakeholders to create effective and sustainable relationships in order to "do good" for society. In this section, we introduce three theories of external stakeholder communication: (1) situational crisis communication theory; (2) corporate social responsibility communication model; and (3) fully functional society theory.

Situational Crisis Communication Theory

Organizations sometimes have to respond to a specific crisis, an unexpected event that threatens the company's reputation, profits, and/or the safety of participants and the public. For example, in 2013, Fonterra, a large cooperative dairy corporation in New Zealand, announced a widespread recall of its whey products because a suspected botulism-causing bacterium was found during safety tests. The whey product was sold to other parties who used it to make infant formula. The bacteria turned out not to cause botulism, although 1,000 tons of product were recalled. Many companies have faced crises like this, and there is a vast literature that examines crisis communication and provides suggestions for companies on how to communicate effectively during crisis. One

theory that specifically examines this type of communication is situational crisis communication theory.

Timothy Coombs developed situational crisis communication theory to enhance a topic that was dominated by case studies and to provide a framework for understanding how to protect organizational reputation during crisis.[61] Coombs identifies several key objectives for the theory. First, it illustrates how components of the crisis affect attributions made by various stakeholders. Second, the theory offers postcrisis communication recommendations based on how people are likely to respond to the crisis. The theory has a foundation in attribution theory, which was introduced in chapter 3. Specifically, the theory identifies factors that are associated with attributions that people make about the crisis and the accompanying emotions of anger and sympathy. Additionally, the theory proposes that these attributions and emotions impact behavioral intentions.

There are three factors that influence stakeholder attributions, emotions, and behavioral intentions related to a crisis. First, *initial crisis responsibility* focuses on who is to blame or who is responsible for the crisis. This factor is influenced by media framing (see chapter 5) and includes three categories: (1) victim cluster; (2) accident cluster; and (3) preventable cluster. With the victim cluster, the organization is a victim of a natural disaster, rumor, workplace violence, or product tampering. For example, in 1982, someone in Chicago spiked bottles of Tylenol with poison, resulting in several deaths; Johnson & Johnson, the makers of Tylenol, was victimized by this action. With the accident cluster, the organization did not intend harm and had a technical error, accident, or product harm resulting from an equipment failure. The Fonterra example fits in this category. With the preventable cluster, the organization knowingly put people at risk, took inappropriate action, or violated a law; this cluster includes events such as human-error accidents or product harm resulting from organizational oversight, shortcuts, and organizational misdeeds (with or without injury). The British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion and oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 is an example of this type. Investigations of the explosion concluded that British Petroleum engaged in cost-cutting measures and had insufficient safety measures that led to the spill.

Stakeholders attribute more blame/responsibility to the organization with the preventable cluster than with the accident cluster and more blame/responsibility with the accident cluster than with the victim cluster. Further, the more responsibility placed on the organization for the crisis, the more anger and less sympathy stakeholders feel. Finally, anger and attributions of blame lead to negative behavior on the part of stakeholders, such as not purchasing the company's product.

The second factor influencing attributions is *crisis history.* Crisis history is whether the organization has experienced a crisis before and whether it is similar to the current crisis. The third factor is *prior relational reputation*. Prior relational reputation is how well or poorly an organization is perceived by its stakeholders. If an organization has a similar crisis history and/or a poor relational reputation, the attribution of crisis responsibility intensifies. An organization that experiences a victim crisis and has a prior crisis history will be treated

as if it has an accident crisis. Similarly, the accident crisis is perceived as a preventable crisis when there is a similar crisis history or poor relational reputation.

The final element of the theory is the response strategies for the organization. Response strategies include three primary strategies and one secondary one. Primary strategies are to *deny*, *diminish*, and *rebuild*, and the secondary strategy is to *bolster. Deny strategies* are used to suggest that there is no crisis or that it is not the organization's fault. These strategies are effective with a victim crisis. *Diminish strategies* are used to provide excuses or justifications that suggest the organization did not mean to do harm or that the damage is minimal. These strategies are effective with an accident crisis. *Rebuild strategies* are used to improve the organization's reputation by offering compensation and/or apologizing for the harm. These are effective with a preventable crisis. *Bolstering strategies* are used to remind stakeholders of past good works or to thank stakeholders for their efforts. Bolstering strategies are effective if there is past goodwill to build on. Figure 9.5 displays a model of the theory.[62]

Figure 9.5 Model of the Situational Crisis Communication Theory



From the Source . . .

The first writings about crisis communication were the result of practitioners developing lists built from personal experience. Those lists included crisis types and crisis response strategies. The problem was there was not theoretical linkage between the two lists that could help crisis managers understand what response was appropriate for what crisis type. I developed situational crisis communication theory to fill that gap and to create evidence-based crisis communication advice.

Tim Coombs

The situational crisis communication theory has been used by a number of researchers to examine specific crisis case studies and to assess the crisis communication practices of organizations. For example, Skye Cooley and Asya Cooley use the theory to analyze the communication strategies selected by General Motors when the company filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, despite the large financial support of the US government after the 2008 recession.[63] The authors demonstrate that this crisis is framed as a combination of accident (recession) and preventable (poor organizational response), and thus the company was held highly responsible for the failure and for the major damage to its reputation. The researchers also illustrate that the company predominantly used diminish and rebuild strategies as consistent with situational crisis communication theory.

The situational crisis communication theory is a practical theory that identifies the reasons stakeholders react to an organization during a crisis and also how the organization should respond postcrisis to rebuild its reputation. The theory has been used frequently in both communication practice and research. The next theory explores another aspect of the relationship between the organization and the stakeholders by focusing on the concept of social responsibility.

Corporate Social Responsibility Communication Model

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) encourages businesses to have a socially responsible approach for addressing environmental and social needs and changes.[64] It is an approach that blends image management and reputation building with being a good corporate citizen. CSR includes a variety of efforts. One popular approach in the United States is corporate philanthropy, such as Target Corporation giving a percentage of its profits to local charities. Another popular approach to CSR is cause promotion, such as Microsoft increasing awareness and concern for literacy. Still another aspect of CSR is addressing issues of environmental sustainability and sustainable development, a popular approach in New Zealand.

Corporate social responsibility traditionally has been the domain of business and management scholars. Steven May and Juliet Roper review four strands of theories about CSR.[65] First, *shareholder value theory* suggests that CSR is important to a company only to the extent that it helps the company make a profit for its shareholders or is required by law and thus helps to avoid costs. Second, the *corporate social performance* perspective argues that businesses

have both economic and social responsibilities. In addition to the wealth created for investors, a business has ethical responsibilities to address negative consequences beyond economic and legal costs. Third, *corporate citizenship* is a theoretical perspective that suggests corporations are citizens of their communities and thus need to attend to a variety of stakeholder interests and to promote goodwill. Finally, *stakeholder theory* includes the perspective that corporations have an obligation to interact with and respond to constituent groups (stakeholders) beyond just shareholders.

These theories do not necessarily include communication, although communication scholars recently have contributed to the literature on corporate social responsibility. May and Roper identify literature from various theoretical perspectives addressed in this chapter, including dialogue theory and critical theory. More specifically, Øyvind Ihlen, Steve May, and Jennifer Bartlett identify four key contributions of communication theory to the study of CSR.[66] First, communication theory illustrates how meaning is constructed; it recognizes that different stakeholders have different views and meanings of CSR and of a company's activities. Second, communication theory demonstrates how transparency helps organizations construct a trustworthy image. Third, communication theory illustrates that taking a complex view of CSR is fruitful. Finally, communication theory illustrates how a dialogue should unfold; for example, it should be a two-way process that ensures that stakeholders are included and empowered, and a discussion of issues (and differences) should be encouraged and tolerated. Thus, communication theory and communication perspectives are beginning to contribute to the CSR literature.

Ralph Tench and his colleagues introduce a theoretical model of the key communication factors for CSR from the company's perspective (that is, how to engage in more effective CSR communication).[67] The model includes four key elements: (1) communication; (2) communication subjects; (3) communicative forms; and (4) communication content. *Communication* refers to whether information is communicated at all and, if so, whether it is a two-way process. Tench and his colleagues emphasize the importance of two-way exchanges to reflect the multiple meanings about CSR. For example, a company develops a philanthropy project where a percentage of profits is given to the community. If no one is aware of this project, this is what Tench and colleagues call *information lost*. Even if people are aware of the project, there might be multiple perspectives about it—some may like it, some may think the company is just trying to get on the public's good side, and others may not like it because their causes are not supported.

Communication subjects—the second dimension in Tench's model—refer to the multiple stakeholders (receivers) and the corporation (sender of information about CSR). The right message to the right stakeholder is a key element of the model. For example, for the people who like the company's project, it is important that they continue to receive information about the good the company is doing. For the stakeholders who do not like the project because their cause is not being supported, the company may want to open a dialogue about those causes and whether they should be supported in the future.

Third, *communication forms* are the various means that companies use to communicate with stakeholders, including CSR report, social media, advertising, and direct dialogue. For example, many companies engaging in CSR often

produce an annual report about their efforts. A key element is making sure that the right form is used to convey the right message to the right stakeholder.

Finally, *communication content* includes four aspects: (1) the CSR perspective held by the company, including its values and beliefs; (2) motivations and purposes of the CSR program and actions; (3) measurement and evaluation of the goals of the CSR program; and (4) how key concerns and issues from stakeholders will be addressed. For example, a typical annual report will identify each of these key elements.

Corporate social responsibility is an easy-to-use model for understanding how a company can enhance its strategic communication efforts. It also takes a company perspective rather than the perspective of the public. Other research and theoretical efforts identified by May and colleagues provide additional perspectives about corporate social responsibility communication and how it helps to constitute the organization and the relationships the organization has with external stakeholders. The next theory moves from the strategic perspective of the organization to how communication constructs relationships with stakeholders.

Fully Functional Society Theory

The previous two theories focused on the organizational perspective for managing reputation related to crisis and on to corporate social responsibility. These are important functions for organizations and demonstrate ways that communication can construct a positive reality for organizations. As the CSR section introduces, some theories of external stakeholder engagement also emphasize the ethics of corporate citizenship. The focus of these theories is understanding how propositional communication is used to construct positive (as well as dysfunctional) relationships with stakeholders; an ultimate goal of such theories is enabling organizations to be positive citizens in the communities in which they operate. One of these theories is Robert Heath's fully functional society theory.[68]

Heath's goal is to understand how organizations use propositional discourse constructively and destructively to define their legitimacy. Legitimacy is part of interacting effectively within a sociopolitical space; in other words, it is a rhetorical space involving politics and society. A legitimate organization meets its own goals while also contributing positively to social and political goals. Thus, the organization contributes to a more fully functioning society. Heath's approach places rhetoric in the forefront when considering external stakeholder communication. Specifically, the approach includes four principles.

The first principle is that rhetoric is the discursive enactment of political economy. Political economy is the interplay between politics and the economy and includes aspects of public policy and capitalism. For Heath, *political economy* is the "alignment of interests and coordinated choice-making needed for enacting society."[69] For example, a dairy organization wants to maximize milk production and profits, and the communities near the farm want clean river water for recreation, fishing, and other industries. Exploring the commonality of the interests and identifying appropriate political, organizational, and individual choices is rhetorical enactment of political economy.

Organizations engage with external stakeholders to facilitate the alignment of needs. Organizations use various communication structures such as public policy debates, crisis communication, and issues management. These discourses

are strategic and enable the formation of contracts among the organization and its stakeholders. Contracts, which are not necessarily formal contracts, are the alignments between the organization's interests and those of community members, however richly layered. Heath also notes that there are competing interests among stakeholders who balance competition and collaboration in organizations. Rhetoric operates to facilitate both collaboration and competition and function and dysfunction. Heath suggests that much of the managerial literature emphasizes the organization's strategic choices rather than a mutual sharing and construction of goals and interests. Further, there is an emphasis on rhetoric as persuasion at best and manipulation at worse, and he suggests the need to be wary of both the good and the bad in rhetoric. The organization can use rhetoric narrowly for its own interests (i.e., rhetoric as manipulation) or broadly to achieve multiple stakeholder interests (i.e., rhetoric as relationship building).

The second principle of Heath's model is that an ethical and socially responsible view of rhetoric and public relations is that it needs to lead to enlightened choices. Sound arguments and effective public relations enable stakeholders to advance societal goals. Rhetoric should be constructive dialogue—communication that enables people to wrestle with choices, ideas, and preferences. There should be multiple voices expressing competing interests. Public discourses should make available facts, evidence, identifications, and interests and enable all stakeholders to effectively argue for positions. Heath suggests that there is a dialectic of cooperation and competition such that all stakeholders get to argue for their positions and yet do so in a way that allows all voices the opportunity to be heard. There will be winners in the debate, and yet everyone should have had a chance to win. Organizations need to balance the rhetoric offered by stakeholders so minority stakeholders have a voice, and enlightened choices can be made.

The third principle is that external stakeholder relationships result from and lead to social capital. *Social capital* is the collective value of networks, or what the organization's network of relations enables us to do (for ourselves and for others). For example, if a public relations practitioner has a relationship with a community advocate, these two parties may be able to help both the organizational reputation and the community's goals. Developing relationships with stakeholders enables organizations to gain social capital—but only if the organization aligns its interests with that of society. In this manner, the organization moves beyond simply managing and building reputation; the focus is on building sustainable and trusting relationships that enable all parties to leverage relationships for the benefit of all. Returning to the above example, the public relationship practitioner can leverage the relationship with the community advocate only if trust and mutuality are part of the relationship. If the organization takes advantage of or manipulates the community advocate, short-term gain may happen, but social capital will not develop in the future. The advocate will feel taken advantage of and withdraw from future participation.

The final principle, according to Heath, is that language and power are intertwined. Consistent with the communicative constitution of organizations perspective, Heath argues that language constitutes organizational reality. Different stakeholders interpret messages in idiosyncratic ways, and thus no voice can dominate in all situations. Further, consistent with critical theory, language produces the vocabulary by which power is defined and can be both empower-

ing and marginalizing. Imagine a university working with local community organizations. If the university discusses the issues using formal concepts and theories, it may be off-putting and disadvantage rather than help the community organizations. However, if the parties agree to speak in a language that is shared and understood by all, a strong relationship can be developed.

From the Source . . .

Fully functioning society theory grew out of two decades of pondering and an off-handed question. Visiting in David McKie's office at the University of Waikato, he asked, "Where is public relations theory going?" I said, flippantly, "It is shifting from a corporate-centric paradigm to one that features the agency of society. Organizations must contribute to others' well-being and engage with them for long-term success. We're in this together." David said, "Write it."

Robert Heath

Heath's perspective focuses on how external rhetoric is used for both positive and dysfunctional purposes. Rhetoric is the way we come to understand and study the relationships between organizations and community as well as create change in society. His approach also encourages organizations to take an ethical stance that emphasizes both societal and corporate good in order to foster legitimacy. Heath's approach is consistent with the corporate social responsibility philosophy to some extent, although the CSR communication model and situational crisis communication theory are much more functional in nature and have an organization-centric approach. They are geared toward helping organizational practitioners use communication to help achieve organizational goals.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we see a number of key principles about communication and organizations. First, communication socially constructs organizations. Rather than communication occurring in an organizational container, communication is organizing. Second, communication creates patterns and structures that provide a means to achieve organizational and individual goals. Third, communication creates a culture that provides meaning and sense making for organizational members. Fourth, communication facilitates the control of work through various means, including shared culture and identification. Fifth, organizations are based on ideologies, and the structures, cultures, and control represented by these ideological positions can disadvantage some individuals and benefit others. Sixth, gender, race, and class, as well as other identity markers, are important ideological components and should be considered when theorizing organizational communication. Seventh, communication enables individuals to resist control and hegemony. Eighth, organizations construct relationships with external stakeholders and those relationships are managed through communication.

Chapter Map	THEORIES OF THE ORGANIZATION		
Topic Addressed	**Theory**	**Author(s)**	**Brief Summary**
Organizing and Structuring	Theories of Organizing	Karl Weick	Organizing is a sense-making process made possible through communication that reduces uncertainty.
	Structuration Theory and the Four Flows Model	Anthony Giddens; Robert McPhee	Organizational communication includes four flows: membership negotiation; reflexive self-structuring, activity coordination, and institutional positioning.
	Communicative Constitution of Organizations (Montreal School)	James Taylor, François Cooren, Daniel Robichaud, & Boris Brummans	Communication constructs organizations through five translations: co-orientation, distanciation, textualization, presentification, and back to the specific practices of the organization.
	Network Theory	Noshir Contractor & Peter Monge	Networks emerge from communication connections among people, serve a variety of functions, and make possible different network roles—bridge, isolate, or liaison.
	Organizational Culture	Joann Keyton; Michael Pacanowsky & Nick O'Donnell-Trujillo	Organizational cultures are shared values and perspectives created through communication activities.
Control and Resistance	Theory of Bureaucracy	Max Weber	Organization is best achieved through the principles of authority, specialization, and regulation.
	Organizational Control Theory and Organizational Identification	Phillip Tompkins & George Cheney; Michael Papa	Organizations establish control over members by creating shared values so that members link themselves to the organizational mission and goals.
	Discourse of Suspicion	Dennis Mumby	Organizations should be approached with a discourse of suspicion, which critically challenges the ideology, power, and forms of resistance available within an organization.
	Corporate Colonization Theory	Stanley Deetz	Processes of naturalization, neutralization, legitimation, and socialization constitute a worldview that serves the managerial interests in an organization.
	Feminist Theory: Feminist Resistance	Angela Trethewey	Organizations are gendered sites, but women find ways to resist the gendered constructions and envision alternatives for themselves.

(continued)

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Control and Resistance *(continued)*	Feminist Theory: Gender and Race	Karen Ashcraft & Brenda Allen	Organizations and occupations are gendered and raced such that white workplaces continue to be the norm, with issues of race only a concern of people of color.
	Feminist Theory: Voice and Silence	Robin Clair	Silence and voice exist in a complex tension in organizations, both of which can serve as sources of resistance.
External Stakeholder Communication	Situational Crisis Communication Theory	Timothy Coombs	Attributions of blame for an organizational crisis dictate certain response strategies by the organization.
	Corporate Social Responsibility Communication Model	Ralph Tench, Brian Jones, & William Sun	Organizations can be strategic about their corporate social responsibility platforms by attending to key communication functions.
	Fully Functional Society Theory	Robert Heath	Organizational rhetoric has the power to meet ethical responsibilities of organizations to do good for society.

Notes

[1] David Carlone and Bryan Taylor, "Organizational Communication and Cultural Studies: A Review Essay," *Communication Theory* 8 (1998): 339.

[2] For various characterizations of organizational communication theory, see Eric M. Eisenberg, "Organizational Communication Theories," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 700–05; Peter Monge and Marshall Scott Poole, "The Evolution of Organizational Communication," *Journal of Communication* 58 (2008): 679–92; *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*, ed. Linda L Putnam and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014).

[3] Timothy Kuhn, "Negotiating the Micro-Macro Divide: Thought Leadership from Organizational Communication for Theorizing Organization," *Management Communication Quarterly* 26 (2012): 543–84.

[4] Karl Weick, *The Social Psychology of Organizing,* 2nd ed. (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979). For brief summaries, see Deborah Dunn, "Organizing, Process of," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 724–26.

[5] Brenda Dervin and Charles M. Naumer, "Sense-Making," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 876–80.

[6] Adapted from Gary L. Kreps, *Organizational Communication: Theory and Practice* (New York, Longman, 1990).

[7] For a review of this theory in the context of related work, see Marshall Scott Poole and Robert D. McPhee, "Structuration Theory," in *Engaging Organizational Communication Theory and Research: Multiple Perspectives*, ed. Steve May and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 171–98.

[8] Donald G. Ellis, *Crafting Society: Ethnicity, Class, and Communication Theory* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1999), 123.

[9] Marshall Scott Poole and Robert D. McPhee, "Group and Organizational Structuration Theories," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss

(Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 450–55; Robert D. McPhee and Pamela Zaug, "The Communicative Constitution of Organization: A Framework for Explanation," *The Electronic Journal of Communication/La Revue Electronique de Communication* 10 (2000): 1, 2.

[10] Adapted from McPhee and Zaug, "The Communicative Constitution of Organization."

[11] See for example, Robert McPhee, Marshall Scott Poole, and Joel Iverson, "Structuration Theory," in *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*, ed. Linda L Putnam and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 75–99.

[12] Clifton Scott and Karen Myers, "Toward an Integrative Theoretical Perspective on Organizational Membership Negotiations: Socialization, Assimilation, and the Duality of Structure," *Communication Theory* 20 (2010): 79–105.

[13] Boris H. J. M. Brummans, François Cooren, Daniel Robichaud, and James R. Taylor, "Approaches to the Communicative Constitution of Organizations," in *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*, ed. Linda L Putnam and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 173–94; Kuhn, "Negotiating the Micro-Macro Divide," 550–67. There are other approaches to the communicative constitution of organizations including the Luhmannian systems approach; the interested reader can explore this approach more fully in the two sources included in this endnote.

[14] For a thorough discussion of the details of this theory and its antecedents, see James R. Taylor and Elizabeth J. Van Every, *The Emergent Organization: Communication as its Site and Surface* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000). A brief summary is provided by James Taylor, "Organizational Co-Orientation Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 709–13. See also James R. Taylor, "Engaging Organization Through Worldview," in *Engaging Organizational Communication Theory and Research: Multiple Perspectives*, ed. Steve May and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 197–222.

[15] Adapted from Brummans et al, "Approaches to the Communicative Constitution of Organizations."

[16] This idea is adapted from the work of social psychologist Theodore Newcomb. See, for example, "An Approach to the Study of Communicative Acts," *Psychological Review* 60 (1953): 393–404.

[17] Cynthia Stohl and Michael Stohl, "Secret Agencies: The Communicative Constitution of a Clandestine Organization," *Organization Studies* 32 (2011): 1197–1215.

[18] See, for example, Peter R. Monge and Noshir S. Contractor, *Theories of Communication Networks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Michelle Shumate and Noshir S. Contractor, "Emergence of Multidimensional Social Networks," in *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*, ed. Linda L Putnam and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 449–74.

[19] This metaphor is suggested by Cynthia Stohl, *Organizational Communication: Connectedness in Action* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1995). See also Peter R. Monge, "The Network Level of Analysis," in *Handbook of Communication Science,* ed. Charles R. Berger and Steven H. Chaffee (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1987), 239–70.

[20] For summaries of network theories, see Monge and Contractor, *Theories of Communication Networks*; Peter R. Monge and Noshir S. Contractor, "Emergent Communication Networks," in *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods,* ed. Fredric M. Jablin and Linda L. Putnam (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 440–502.

[21] For a detailed account of network functions, see Monge and Contractor, *Theories of Communication Networks*; Shumate and Contractor, "Emergence of Multidimensional Networks."

[22] Noshir S. Contractor, Robert C. Whitbred, Fabio Fonti, and Christian Steglich, "Understanding the Ties that Bind: A Longitudinal Investigation of the Evolution of a Communication Network," *Western Journal of Communication* 76 (2012): 333–57.

[23] For an overview, see Sarah J. Tracy, "Organizational Culture," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 713–16; For an excellent discussion of the breadth of this field, see Eric M. Eisenberg and Patricia Riley, "Organizational Culture," in *The New Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods,* ed. Fredric M. Jablin and Linda L. Putnam (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001), 291–322.

[24] Joann Keyton, "Organizational Culture: Creating Meaning and Influence," in *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*, ed. Linda L Putnam and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 549–68; Joann Keyton, *Communica-*

tion and Organizational Culture: A Key to Understanding Work Experiences (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011).

[25] Gareth Morgan, *Images of Organization* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1986), 128.

[26] Michael E. Pacanowsky and Nick O'Donnell-Trujillo, "Communication and Organizational Cultures," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 46 (1982): 115–30; Michael E. Pacanowsky and Nick O'Donnell-Trujillo, "Organizational Communication as Cultural Performance," *Communication Monographs* 50 (1983): 126–47.

[27] Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, "Organizational Communication as Cultural Performance," 129.

[28] Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations,* trans. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947). A lengthy interpretation and discussion of Weber's theory can be found in Parsons's introduction to the book. For a more complete bibliography of primary and secondary sources on Weber see Samuel N. Eisenstadt, *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).

[29] Weber, *Theory of Social and Economic Organizations,* 151.

[30] George Cheney and Phillip K. Tompkins, "Coming to Terms with Organizational Identification and Commitment," *Central States Speech Journal* 38 (1987): 1–15; Phillip K. Tompkins and George Cheney, "Communication and Unobtrusive Control in Contemporary Organizations," in *Organizational Communication: Traditional Themes and New Directions,* ed. Robert D. McPhee and Phillip K. Tompkins (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1985), 179–210. For an overview, see Loril M. Gossett, "Organizational Control Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009).

[31] Tompkins and Cheney, "Communication and Unobtrusive Control," 184.

[32] This process is detailed in Craig R. Scott, Steven R. Corman, and George Cheney, "Development of a Structurational Model of Identification in the Organization," *Communication Theory* 8 (1998): 298–336. For a recent review of organizational identification and identity, see George Cheney, Lars Thøger Christensen, and Stephanie J. Dailey, "Communicating Identity and Identification in and around Organizations," in *The Sage Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods*, ed. Linda L Putnam and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014), 695–716.

[33] See George Cheney and Daniel J. Lair, "Theorizing about Rhetoric and Organizations: Classical, Interpretive, and Critical Aspects," in *Engaging Organizational Communication Theory and Research: Multiple Perspectives*, ed. Steve May and Dennis K. Mumby (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005), 55–84.

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[35] Michael J. Papa, Mohammad A. Auwal, and Arvind Singhal, "Organizing for Social Change within Concertive Control Systems: Member Identification, Empowerment, and the Masking of Discipline," *Communication Monographs* 64 (1997): 219–49.

[36] George Cheney, *Rhetoric in an Organizational Society: Managing Multiple Identities* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 14.

[37] See for example, Karen K. Myers, Courtney W. Davis, Emily Richardson Schreuder, and David R. Seibold, "Organizational Identification: A Mixed Methods Study Exploring Students' Relationship with their University," *Communication Quarterly* 64 (2016): 210–31; Martha J. Fay and Susan L. Cline, "The Influence of Informal Communication on Organizational Identification and Commitment in the Context of High-Intensity Telecommuting," *Southern Communication Journal* 77 (2012): 61–76.

[38] Shiv Ganesh, "Critical Organizational Communication," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 226–31.

[39] Mumby, "Critical Organizational Communication Studies," 21.

[40] Dennis K. Mumby, "Modernism, Postmodernism, and Communication Studies: A Rereading of an Ongoing Debate," *Communication Theory* 7 (1987): 1–28; Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), 32–36.

[41] Dennis K. Mumby, "The Problem of Hegemony: Rereading Gramsci for Organizational Communication Studies," *Western Journal of Communication* 61 (Fall 1997): 344.

[42] Dennis K. Mumby, "The Political Function of Narrative in Organizations," *Communication Monographs* 54 (1987): 120–25; and Dennis K. Mumby, *Communication and Power in Organizations: Discourse, Ideology, and Domination* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1988), 115–24.

[43] Dennis K. Mumby, "Organizing Power," *Review of Communication* 15 (2015): 19–38.
[44] Mumby, "The Problem of Hegemony."
[45] Samula Mescher, Yvonne Benschop, and Hans Doorewaard, "Representations of Work-Life Balance Support," *Human Relations* 63 (2010): 21–39.
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10 Health Contexts

Health contexts are the various situations in which the health of individuals, communities, and the population as a whole are the focus. *Health* is a composite state of physical, mental, and social well-being, not simply the absence of disease.[1] Our well-being is critical to many facets of our lives including happiness and productivity and thus is the subject of much research. Further, it is a big business with large shares of gross national product being spent on health and health systems.

Health communication is an important element for both prevention and treatment; it is the exchange of symbolic messages related to personal, organizational, and public health. *Personal* health relates to communication with family, friends, and clinical providers such as doctors and nurses. *Organizational* aspects include the relationships that care providers have with each other. For example, we expect that our doctor will communicate effectively with those running diagnostic tests (such as blood work) and the specialist or hospital to which we might be referred. *Public* health communication includes media messages such as a public-service announcement or health communication campaign. For example, perhaps you are a smoker and you want to quit. Personal health communication might include supportive messages from your family to encourage you to quit as well as advice from your doctor about how to quit. Organizational health communication might involve teamwork among providers to ensure there are information brochures that identify agencies to help you quit. Public health communication might include information about a support group for people wanting to quit.

Health contexts are unique compared to other contexts presented in this book. Rather than relating to a specific level of communication, health contexts involve individual communicators, messages, personal relationships, and relationships with clinicians, groups, organizations, culture, media, and society. In fact, some approaches to the study of health and health communication include multiple levels.[2] Our approach in this chapter is to identify common themes found in theories of health communication: (1) messages and behavior change; (2) relationships; (3) managing information and risk; and (4) health disparities.

The chapter map (pp. 381–382) summarizes the theories presented in each of these sections.

Messages and Behavior Change

The study of messages in health communication is quite popular, with much research and theorizing in this area. Messages are studied from two predominant perspectives. First, messages construct the nature of health and illness. That is, we understand what it means to be healthy or ill through the stories we tell. Second, messages are used to encourage healthy behavior choices in individuals. Health communication campaigns involve messages that seek to change attitudes and behaviors by addressing various personal, psychological, and social factors in people's lives. More of the theorizing in health communication focuses on the second aspect, so the majority of theories in this section focus on messages and behavior change. In fact, there are additional theories of message effects often applied to health contexts that are included in other chapters of this book, suggesting the popularity of this area of study See the theory of reasoned action (chapter 3), media framing theory (chapter 5), and diffusion of innovations theory (chapter 11). This section introduces four theories that explore various aspects of messages: (1) narrative theory; (2) entertainment education; (3) extended parallel process model; and (4) inoculation theory.

Narrative Theory and Health

Narratives are a key facet of life. Walter Fisher described people as *homo narrans* or inherent storytellers.[3] We tell stories about a wide range of topics and situations. Narratives include elements about heroes, villains, and victims along with a plot that unfolds. Health narratives paint pictures of what it means to be healthy or ill and the consequences of illness and health. This section introduces Fisher's narrative paradigm and then specifically explores the narrative theory work of Barbara Sharf, Marsha Vanderford, Lynn Harter, and colleagues in the health context.

Fisher's theory of the narrative paradigm is a complement to the focus on rational argument that has dominated the communication discipline. From the time of Aristotle, much focus of human communication has been on the ability to argue effectively. However, Fisher believes that argument is not the only form of rationality operating in messages. For him, narrative is a different and equally valid way of thinking about human communication. Fisher's starting point for a narrative paradigm is the innate nature of narration to humans. Storytelling is a universal function, a natural human capacity that crosses time and culture; humans comprehend their actions and those of others in the form of stories.

Narrative rationality is different from traditional rationality and is determined by narrative probability and narrative fidelity. *Narrative probability* has to do with whether the narration offered is a coherent story—characters behave in consistent ways, plots unfold in understandable sequences, and the narrative makes sense as one way to understand and explain the world. *Narrative fidelity*, on the other hand, refers to whether the story told rings true with the stories already accepted as true. For one individual, stories of government conspiracy

make total sense and affirm a rather paranoid conception of the world. For someone else, such conspiracy tales are dismissed outright as having no fidelity whatsoever; stories that affirm openness, positive intent, and well-being resonate instead. All individuals have the capacity to be rational within the narrative paradigm because everyone can tell stories and assess their value based on fidelity and probability.

Fisher thus suggests that identification, not deliberation, is the hallmark of meaning-creation in the narrative paradigm; the communicator and the audience are equally active in co-constructing a shared story that makes sense to them by identifying together the "good reasons" for that interpretation. Similarly, the narrative paradigm is descriptive rather than normative. One does not need to use argumentative processes or assess an argument by particular standards of logic; instead, in the narrative paradigm, understanding is the goal. Does a story make sense as an interpretation of a particular event or experience? Within the narrative paradigm, then, rhetoric consists of a vast array of stories—some competing, some affirming; all of which offer various "truths" about the human condition.

Building off this work, Sharf, Vanderford, Harter, and colleagues describe more specifically how narrative operates and functions in health and illness.[4] They explain that narratives have multiple functions. First, narratives are used as a sense-making process. When a person is diagnosed with a serious health condition, narratives help participants create meaning and help explain uncertain circumstances. Usually, this sense-making process is done retrospectively as people retell the story. For example, Jane was diagnosed with breast cancer. She tells her friends about how scared and confused she was when she received the diagnosis and wondered, "Why me?" During her journey, she realized that she was going to be OK and that the reason this happened to her was so that she could become a powerful advocate for women to get mammograms.

Second, narrative is a means of asserting control. When people are diagnosed with some health condition, they experience a loss of control. It may be a literal loss of control (e.g., prostate cancer can lead to problems of bladder control), or it may mean surrendering control of daily activities (e.g., doctors issue prescriptions and schedule tests, therapy, operations). Narratives can help people reassert control in their lives. For example, Jane's sense of purpose in telling other women her story gives her a sense of control about the future; it provides her with something she can do to fight cancer even if she cannot do something related to her own body.

Third, narrative transforms identities. Narrative not only allows people to assert control, it also can function to repair and recreate their identities. Some health conditions result in changes in self-perception and changes in roles. One person might move from caregiver to care receiver. Another might shift her perceptions of what makes her beautiful from physical to more internal elements. Stories allow the storyteller to understand the altered situation and come to know one's new role. For example, Jane may have a mastectomy and wonder if her partner and others are going to find her attractive. Perhaps she decides to celebrate her changing body by taking nude photos to show how proud she is of her body and who she is now. She may also tell others about how she is a breast cancer survivor rather than a victim.

Fourth, narratives warrant decisions by indicating certain choices and rationalizations. During changing health conditions, numerous decisions need to be made from among current treatment options, current living conditions, and future steps to maintain health and well-being. Narratives display the values and beliefs of the storytellers, which help the storyteller figure out the right course of action. Listening to others' stories also reveals the consequences of certain actions. For example, Jane talks to her friend Pam, recently diagnosed with breast cancer, who is wondering if she should have a lumpectomy or a mastectomy. Pam wants to find out how Jane's life has changed since she had a mastectomy. Jane tells her that it was a shock at first and yet now finds it freeing—she does not worry about cancer recurring as much, she does not have to deal with breasts, and she has the love and support of her partner. Pam can use this story to help decide what is the best treatment for her.

Fifth, narrative builds community. People who have experienced the same health challenges often feel a sense of kinship. They know that there are others who understand what they have gone through and how it has affected their lives. The stories they tell each other help to reinforce this common perspective and help them learn from each other. The commonality that develops from storytelling is one reason why support groups are so important for people. For example, Jane and Pam's storytelling helped them to connect with each other, and they continue to meet with other breast cancer survivors on a regular basis. They cherish their friendship and the closeness that came from sharing their challenges, the changes in their lives, and the ways they have become better people because of this experience.

From the Source . . .

I became a fortunate witness to and participant in a major paradigm shift. The "narrative turn," omnipresent in literature and history, emerged simultaneously in medicine, in rhetoric and communication, and throughout the qualitative social sciences. The Chicago Study Group on Narrative & Medicine, an interdisciplinary, interinstitutional, monthly get-together of medical humanities scholars, provided an invaluable postgraduate education that emboldened me to publish my understandings of how stories create, function within, and influence communication about health.

Barbara Sharf

Finally, narrative helps to humanize health care. When we go to a doctor, we tell our stories about what has happened and what we have been doing to address our health or illness. These stories encourage providers to see us as complete human beings who face challenges, do our best, and sometimes make mistakes. Providers also tell us stories about their own experiences, those of other patients, and hypothetical "what happens next" stories. These stories help us to create connections and to move away from the purely clinical (diagnosis-and-treat) focus of medicine.

Jill Yamasaki and Shelly Hovick use narrative theory to identify the perspective of older African Americans about family health history and whether to share this information with others.[5] The authors interviewed older adults who revealed that their parents tended to keep health histories of the family a secret, with detrimental outcomes. The participants also disclosed that they were breaking this pattern of secrecy by sharing information with their children and grandchildren and encouraging them to seek out health information. In short, these narratives demonstrate the moral and practical reasons for sharing family histories.

Narratives function in diverse and important ways to provide insights into ourselves, our decisions about health and illness, and our health care. Stories are what enable us to make sense of, frame, and share our experiences of health with others. The next section explores how narratives in entertainment can be persuasive in producing positive social and health outcomes.

Entertainment Education

Entertainment education is the process of combining education and entertainment in specific media messages. Often this involves integrating education messages within television and radio dramas and soap operas (as well as other media forms) in order to increase knowledge, create prosocial attitudes, and influence individual behavior and cultural norms.[6] The first instance of entertainment education was accidental, emerging from the response to a Peruvian soap opera, *Simplemente Maria*. The soap opera ran from 1969 to 1971 in Peru, with reruns in other Latin American nations after that and a remake in Mexico in 2015. The story is about a poor girl, named Maria, who moves to the capital city of Lima. After being swept off her feet by a man she met shortly after her arrival, she becomes pregnant and is abandoned by her lover. Forced to figure out how to survive on her own, she decided to enroll in a literacy class and became a seamstress, which led eventually to a successful business. In the process, Maria fell in love with and married her literacy professor. Her success was attributed to her literacy class.

Simplemente Maria was widely popular, with ratings of the show averaging over 50% of the potential audience at a given time and sometimes reaching an 85% share. On the day of the filming of the wedding, more than 10,000 people showed up at the filming location to give the happy couple wedding gifts. More importantly, the show resulted in vastly increased attendance in adult literacy classes. Sales of Singer sewing machines (used by Maria in the soap opera) also soared. A television producer named Miguel Sabido used the show as a basis for developing the platform for entertainment education. Since that time, entertainment education has been used for a variety of health and social issues, including family planning, cancer, and substance use.[7]

Building off the foundational work of Arvind Singhal, Michael Cody, Everett Rogers, and Miguel Sabido, Emily Moyer-Guse developed a theory explaining the persuasive effects of entertainment-education messages, which she called the entertainment overcoming resistance model.[8] In particular, the theory explains how the messages overcome resistance and produce the intended outcome. *Resistance* to persuasion is the refusal to make changes, which can mean embodying the opposite of the intended behavior. The most prominent form of resistance is *psychological reactance* or the resistance resulting from having one's freedom of

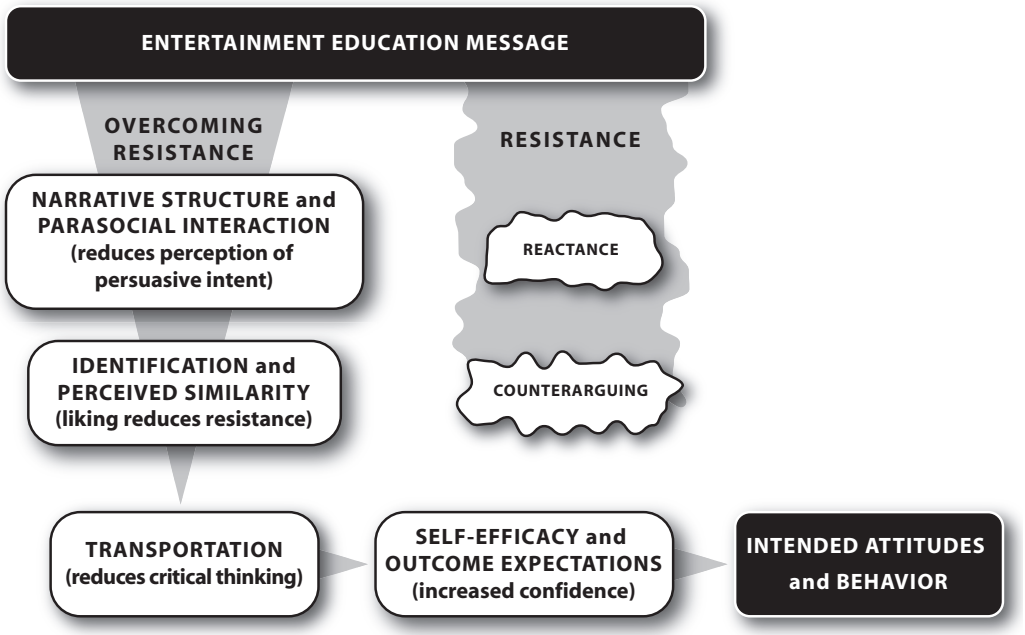
choice threatened.[9] In order words, we reactive negatively to being told what to do rather than being able to choose for ourselves. Another form of resistance is *counterarguing*, which occurs when people raise points against the intended action. For example, a person may come up with reasons why he should not use condoms during sexual intercourse (e.g., it doesn't feel natural).

Moyer-Guse identifies a number of theoretical principles that explain why entertainment messages avoid or minimize reactance and counterarguing. The narrative structure of entertainment messages—the fact that it is presented as a story—and the parasocial interaction diminishes the viewer's perception that the message is meant to persuade. *Parasocial interaction* is the perceived relationship viewers have with characters in the drama. For example, if we talk about a character like Maria as if she is real, or bring gifts to her wedding, we are engaged in parasocial interaction. Narratives and parasocial interaction allow people to be enthralled with the messages offered through the vehicle of entertainment and thus less aware of the persuasive element of the messages. As a result, recipients of these messages feel less threatened by them and do not see their freedom to choose as an issue.

A second set of elements that helps explain how entertainment education avoids reactance and counterarguing is liking and identification. Liking of and identification with characters reduces reactance because we feel connected to the person. Identification also reduces the likelihood we will avoid the message itself. Narrative structure, liking, and identification also results in *transportation*, or being swept up in the story. Transportation leads to not thinking critically about the persuasive message (see chapter 5 for more about transportation theory). This aspect of the theory has a foundation in the elaboration likelihood model (chapter 3), which finds that counterarguments are less frequent when people are not carefully processing messages.[10]

The entertainment overcoming resistance model also illustrates why people perform the intended actions or have attitudes consistent with the intended outcome (e.g., use condoms and/or think that using condoms is a good idea). The theory has a strong foundation in Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (SCT), which illustrates why people adopt the intended behavior (and not just avoid the intended message).[11] SCT proposes that people learn by direct experiential learning but also by vicariously observing others. People do not model every behavior they observe but rather need to be motivated to perform the behavior. Motivation is influenced by outcome expectations and self-efficacy. *Outcome expectations* refers to the belief that a certain behavior will lead to the intended outcome. For example, believing that using a condom during sexual intercourse will prevent pregnancy is an outcome expectation. *Self-efficacy* is the confidence in being able to perform that action. For example, are you confident that you will use a condom every time you have sexual intercourse? Moyer-Guse explains that audience members who perceive similarity and can identify with the characters in the story who are performing the desired action (e.g., you see yourself as similar to and connected to Maria) experience increased outcome expectations and self-efficacy. These qualities in turn result in attitudes and actions consistent with the intended purpose (e.g., taking a literacy class if you can't read, or using condoms during sexual intercourse). See figure 10.1 for an illustration of the model.[12]

Figure 10.1 Entertainment Overcoming Resistance Model



Juan-Jose Igartua and Jair Casanova conducted a study to explore the effects of entertainment-education messages on identification and cognitive elaboration.[13] These authors suggest that narratives actually can induce cognitive elaboration—critical thinking about an idea—and not produce greater resistance and counterarguments. They had 14-to-20 year-olds view a Colombian drama in which the characters made direct and explicit endorsements of a prosocial message in their dialogue. Igartua and Casanova found that greater identification with the characters led to greater cognitive elaboration of the message. This elaboration further led to more favorable attitudes toward the topics addressed, whether dealing with partner violence, same-sex relationships, or safe sex. Thus, their study helps to elaborate the entertainment overcoming resistance model by illustrating that under certain conditions, entertainment messages can both stimulate cognition in audiences and also result in intended behaviors. The explicit statement of persuasion results in cognitive elaboration, and the implicit messages of many entertainment messages result in transportation. Together, they provide a comprehensive approach to persuasion. The next theory explores a model that further looks at how messages can persuade people, specifically exploring fear messages in general health communication contexts.

Extended Parallel Process Model

Kim Witte developed the extended parallel process model (EPPM) to explain how people manage fear generated from messages about a threat.[14]Fear is a key motivator of health behavior and is often used in messages found in

communication campaigns to encourage prosocial and healthy behavior or discourage antisocial and unhealthy behavior. For example, there are many campaigns that discourage drinking and driving by suggesting that people will get caught by police or they will cause significant harm to self and others if they drink and drive. These are outcomes that many people fear—theoretically, the fear will influence the actor not to drink and drive to avoid the outcome. However, we know that many people continue to drink and drive, so these messages are not always persuasive in changing behaviors. The EPPM attempts to explain how fear can be channeled to produce proactive, healthy, and self-protective actions on the part of those exposed to such messages.

Witte's theoretical model explains that people have three responses to messages based in fear. First, people can choose not to respond to the message at all. For example, a person who hears the "don't drink and drive" commercials may not even listen to such messages because he doesn't drink. Second, people can adopt fear control. *Fear control* is a response that involves controlling fear about the threat. This response is taken when people do not feel they can control what happens to them. Instead, they control the fear they have by ignoring messages so it does not affect their everyday lives. Fear control may look like no response, but in fact people are actively ignoring messages and using denial. In the no-response condition, people are not worried about the problem in the first place because it truly does not pertain to them. The third response is danger control. *Danger control* is a response people take when they feel they can control what happens to them; they take action to mitigate the threat creating the problem. This could take the form of seeking out information, talking to family members and/or health providers about a problem, or taking specific action to prevent the problem from occurring. For example, a person who drinks a lot and hears the commercials about drinking and driving could make a decision to limit how much he drinks when he goes out, to party with a designated driver, or to take Uber home when he drinks too much.

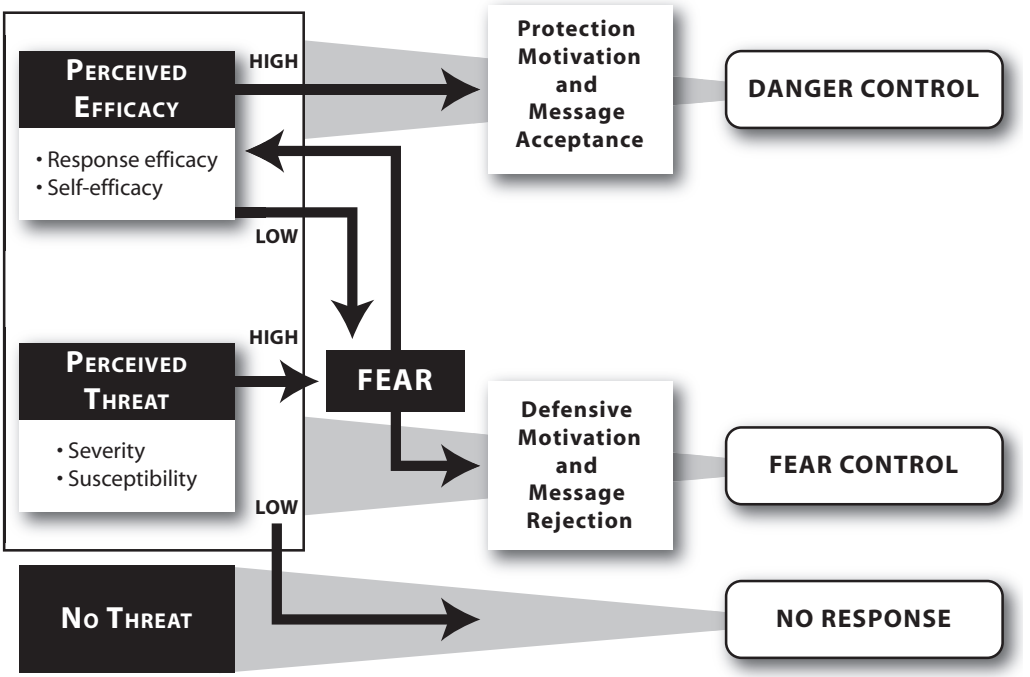
Witte explains that there are two key factors, each with two parts, which explain how people will respond to a fear message. *Perceived threat*, the degree to which people feel susceptible to a harm, consists of two elements: severity of and susceptibility to threat. *Severity of threat* is how serious the harm or threat may be. For example, if you drink and drive, do you feel there will be serious consequences such as having an accident or hurting someone? *Susceptibility to threat* is the perceived likelihood of experiencing the harm. For example, if you drink and drive, do you feel there is a chance that you will get caught by police or have an accident?

Perceived efficacy, the second factor, is the degree to which a person feels able to perform certain behaviors to avoid the threat; this factor also consists of two parts. *Response efficacy* is whether we believe a certain action will or will not avoid the threat. For example, do you think not drinking and driving will enable you to avoid an accident? *Self-efficacy* is the belief that you can perform the recommended action. For example, do you think you can go out and get drunk and not drive home?

The combination of perceived threat and efficacy influence which of the three responses—no response, fear control, or danger control—people have to

the situation. When a person has a low perceived threat, there is no response to the message. A person who does not drink or who only drinks at home likely does not see any threat related to drinking and driving and so ignores the messages about "don't drink and drive." When a person perceives a threat, he is motivated to take action. The greater the perceived threat and the more susceptible a person is to the threat, the more likely he wants to act to avoid the negative feelings related to fear. Perceived efficacy determines whether the response takes the form of fear or danger control. People who feel they can do something about the threat are likely to use danger control, as when a person perceives he can easily go to a bar and drink and then walk home, take a taxi, or ride with a designated driver rather than drive home. People who feel they cannot perform a specific recommendation are likely to respond with fear control. For example, someone may feel the need to drive into town to be with friends and drink (to be accepted by his social network). He may use defensive mechanisms such as denial ("I won't get caught" or "I'm a good drunk driver") or avoidance ("I won't think about it"). Therefore, to persuade people to act, the model suggests that messages need to make people aware of a threat and also enhance their efficacy to take action to mitigate the threat. See figure 10.2 for an illustration of the extended parallel process model.[15]

Figure 10.2 Extended Parallel Process Model



From the Source . . .

My father lived fast and dangerously. It started with motorcycles and dune buggies, then speedboats, on to acrobatic airplanes and heli-skiing. He drank like a fish, smoked like a chimney for a good 25 years, ate prime rib and ice cream with abandon, and would drive 200 feet instead of "hoofing it." Throughout all of these risky enterprises, the **only** thing that would shift his behavior to something more safe and sane was a shockingly frightening experience. He decided roll bars were a good idea after his dune buggy turned end over end down a sand dune. Fishing became more appealing after witnessing a speedboat accident in which people were impaled with fiberglass strips. He quit smoking almost immediately after he found his chain-smoking friend crumpled on the floor, dead of a heart attack at 42. (He even took up jogging for a month after this.) Thus began my interest in how fear sometimes is the only thing that pushes someone into a significantly different behavior pattern. I set out to find out when fear motivated and when fear inhibited behavior change. From this the EPPM was born.

Kim Witte

Nick Carcioppolo and his colleagues advanced the extended parallel process model by testing the most effective ratios of threat and efficacy messages for danger control.[16] Specifically, they examined ratios of messages related to threat and efficacy about human papilloma virus (HPV) and the impact of those message ratios on women's intention to get the HPV vaccination. The authors used an experimental design to test the ratios and found that the best ratio is a 1:1 threat-to-efficacy ratio for increasing intentions to vaccinate. Message ratios with low-threat messages did not establish fear or susceptibility, while ratios with low efficacy or greater efficacy than threat (two efficacy messages for a single threat message) did not establish susceptibility. The lesson from this study is that messages need to establish threat and efficacy equally to be most effective, a finding consistent with the extended parallel process model. Too much or too little focus on efficacy is not effective because it induces fear control (in the case of too little efficacy) or overconfidence (in the case of too much efficacy). The next theory continues to address the impact of messages on persuasive impact with an emphasis on how to counter resistance.

Inoculation Theory

The previous theories have explored different reasons why people do not respond to persuasive messages and sometimes actively resist persuasive efforts. William McGuire began a line of research and theory building designed to look at one aspect of resistance, which he termed *inoculation*.[17] The word was selected deliberately as an analogy to biological immunization; McGuire believed resistance to messages can be built up through pre-exposure inoculation. The idea is that a mild dose of an attack on one's beliefs will build resistance to future persuasion, just as a mild dose of a virus will build the body's resistance to a disease. Inoculation theory has remained popular and has been extended considerably since its inception.[18]

Originally, McGuire suspected that inoculation would work best on beliefs that are rarely tested or challenged, such as the value of brushing your teeth, because people never have to think about how they would defend themselves against a counterargument. People are so certain that the belief is true that they are not motivated to think about it critically. However, this line of work has been extended well beyond "cultural truisms" and found to be effective even against controversial beliefs.

McGuire conceives of two kinds of inoculation—refutational and supportive. *Supportive inoculation* involves a pretreatment in which the individual is given arguments supporting the belief. For example, to combat a government-sponsored health insurance option, private insurance advocates might create messages telling people who already have good private programs why the current system of private insurance is good. *Refutational inoculation* involves first an attack on the belief and then a refutation of the attack. For example, in inducing resistance to a public health insurance option, insurance companies might warn policyholders that pro-reform advocates will try to persuade them that a public option is best (attack on belief) and also provide these policyholders with arguments to counteract this claim (refutation). In general, the refutational approach seems superior in inducing resistance because it motivates audiences to develop their own arguments. A combination of the two types of inoculation is an even better approach.

McGuire found that inoculation is more effective when a belief is genuinely threatened. In other words, if people are persuaded that there are viable arguments against a private insurance system, they will be more motivated to develop defenses. When people perceive a threat by those who oppose their beliefs, they are motivated to defend themselves, but they also must be armed with good arguments to help them resist. Thus, the two key factors in successful inoculation are threat and the availability of refutation: if you want to build someone's resistance to persuasion, you must forewarn them that a threat is coming and provide them with refutational arguments.

There are three stages in the inoculation process.[19] First, advocates offer a warning that people will try to persuade you. This warning is important to create awareness and stimulate resistance. For example, let's assume you want to try to discourage binge drinking on campus. You might tell young college students that there is a lot of binge drinking on campus and they will encounter peer pressure to participate. Second, you offer weak arguments against the desired behavior: for example, "it is harmless fun to binge drink" or "we're young, our bodies can take it." Weak counter arguments ideally bring up the resistance of the individual with little effort; for example, a student hearing these messages might think, "I know binge drinking causes lots of problems." The active defending stage is where individuals develop the resistance on their own and resist persuasive attempts. Supportive and refutational inoculation help provide specific responses for people to resist persuasion. For example, a residence hall leader might provide a set of responses to resist encouragement to binge drink.

Of course, inoculation is not always such a simple process; other factors do enter the picture. The strength and impact of resistance is a direct function of the length of time the individual remembers the pretreatment material. Resis-

tance to persuasion decays over time, although "booster sessions" can be effective in renewing resistance. A second factor is source credibility. If you perceive the source of the inoculation to be a trustworthy expert, the inoculation will be more effective. A third important factor is issue involvement—the degree to which the individual is interested in or affected by the issue. In general, the more involved you are in an issue, the more motivated you are to resist counterattack. Attitude confidence is yet another factor—how strongly you hold an attitude makes a difference in how resistance holds up.[20]

Joshua Compton and Michael Pfau explored the use of inoculation to foster resistance among college students to credit-card marketing.[21] Credit-card debt is an increasing problem for college students, and Compton and Pfau were interested in whether inoculation strategies could be used to keep students from signing up for credit cards. They showed students a typical credit-card advertisement and offered four sets of responses, each of which involved refutation of the actual ad as well as counterarguments to it in varying combinations: strong counterarguments and strong refutations, weak counterarguments and weak refutations, and counterarguments mismatched both ways.

The authors hypothesized that matched argument strength inoculation treatments (strong counterarguments paired with strong refutations and weak counterarguments with weak ones) would confer resistance to credit-card marketing. Compton and Pfau also hypothesized the reverse: that weak counterarguments and strong refutations would fail to generate enough sense of threat to serve the inoculation function, while strong counterarguments and weak refutations would undermine resistance to credit-card messages and tend to boomerang. Finally, in terms of spreading inoculation interpersonally, they hypothesized that people inoculated by matching treatments are likely to share negative information about credit-card usage, thereby spreading resistance. People receiving an unmatched treatment of strong counterarguments with weak refutations, they suggest, are more likely to share positive information about credit-card usage, thus undermining resistance.

In general, their hypotheses were supported. Compton and Pfau found that inoculation could protect college students against succumbing to credit-card marketing, protect their healthy attitudes about such debt, and offer them a range of counterarguments to use against targeted marketing. In addition, inoculation influenced word-of-mouth communication about credit-card deb. In the cases where strong counterarguments were matched with strong refutations, participants told others negative things about credit cards, possibly spreading inoculation via interpersonal networks.

Theories about messages and behavior change explain how messages, and especially narratives, construct notions of health and illness and how those constructions function to create a sense of identity, provide sense-making about an event, suggest possible decisions relating to health care, and humanize health care. These theories also illustrate a variety of ways that messages can be persuasive or even anti-persuasive. Using fear appeals, identifying threats, creating identification with others, encouraging self-efficacy, and supporting resistance are a few of the ways that the theories in this section help to encourage health behaviors and prevent the onset of negative health conditions. The next section moves from the focus on messages to a focus on relationships.

Relationships

The second key theme in health communication focuses on relationships, including relationships with people in our social networks, with providers, and between providers. As we noted in chapter 7, relationships are critical to our well-being and thus to our health. Our relationships influence our health behaviors by showing what is expected and also by encouraging positive and negative behaviors. This section explores four theories of how social relationships are related to health: (1) theory of normative social influence; (2) social support theory; (3) patient-centered communication; and (4) structurational divergence theory.

Theory of Normative Social Influence

People around us can influence our behaviors. We often imitate what we think many others are doing, and we are also influenced by what we think others want us to do. The study of the influence of other people on our attitudes and behaviors often focuses on the role of *social norms*. Other theories, such as the theory of reasoned action discussed in chapter 3, include social norms as variables. The theory of normative social influence takes a richer view of social norms, addressing different types of norms that play various roles in influencing behaviors.[22]

Rajiv Rimal, Kevin Real, Maria Lapinski, and colleagues developed the theory of normative social behavior (TNSB); they conceptualize social norms as a function of interpersonal or mediated communication about behavior among a group of people in a particular cultural context.[23] Because the TNSB is concerned with perceptions of socially normative behavior rather than the behavior itself, it highlights the communicative nature of normative belief development. That is, communication has the power to influence what people see as normal. It is also through communication that people learn what behaviors are expected and the social punishments that will be incurred if norms are violated. Norms are distinct from laws in that they are socially negotiated, contextually dependent, uncodified rules of conduct; they differ from traditions in that they are less stable. For example, a social norm around interacting with others might be that we do not yell or swear at them.

Central to the TNSB is the relationship between *descriptive norms* and behavior; further, the theory explains how perceptual variables moderate this relationship. *Descriptive norms* are conceptualized as perceptions about the prevalence of a behavior among members of a referent group. For example, how many in your peer group smoke marijuana or use sun screen? You might think a lot or a little. This amount matters because perceptions that many others engage in a behavior can have direct effects on our own behavior. If we think all our friends smoke marijuana, we may be induced to try it. However, this effect can also be influenced by other factors in the theory. The TNSB explains that we do not always follow what others are doing; it is important to find out the conditions under which people are susceptible to normative influences. The focus is on factors that might enhance or reduce the influence of descriptive social norms. The variables that moderate this relationship are *injunctive norms*, *outcome expectations*, and *group identity*. Recent theorizing indicates that certain *behavioral attributes* might also moderate the effect of norms on behavior.

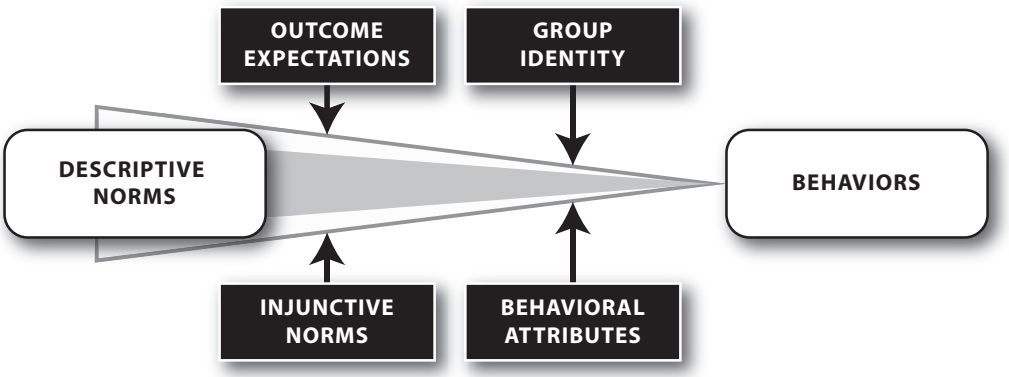
Injunctive norms refer to beliefs about what ought to be done by others. Injunctive norms are accompanied by social sanctions for noncompliance and approval for compliance. In other words, there are social consequences associated with adhering (or not) to the injunctive norms of a group. When injunctive norms interact with descriptive norms, they heighten the effect of descriptive norms on behavior. For example, when a person believes that many others around them smoke marijuana, and that others approve of their smoking, that person is more likely to smoke marijuana. Important to note is that findings from research do not always show that injunctive norms heighten the impact of descriptive norms; some studies show the injunctive norms mediate the impact of descriptive norms on behavior or that both norms have independent influence on behavior. Mediation happens when we start with a descriptive norm (we believe smoking marijuana is prevalent), then assess the injunctive norms (is this approved by others around me?), and then consider behavior.

Outcome expectations (the second moderator specified in the theory) refer to the belief that enacting a given behavior will confer desired results for oneself or others. This construct was identified as part of social cognitive theory mentioned earlier in the chapter. It also refers to anticipated social benefits of a behavior. Outcome expectations enhance the magnitude of the relationship between descriptive norms and behavior. When a person sees many others engaging in a behavior and also believes good things will come from it, he will be more likely to follow suit. For example, if we think most of our friends use sunscreen, and we believe it will protect us from skin cancer, we are likely to use sunscreen too.

Group identity also moderates the relationship between descriptive norms and behaviors. Group identity refers to feelings of affinity with one's social group, and the desire to be connected to that group. In the theory of normative social behavior, group identity is conceptualized as encompassing both perceived similarity (the extent to which one is thought to be like members of one's group) and aspiration (desire to be like members of a group). The concept of group identity draws from the social identity perspective, which asserts that individuals develop at least part of their self-concepts from their communication with social groups and subsequent self-categorization into certain groups.[24] If strong group identity is paired with the belief that many or most others are engaging in a particular behavior (perceived descriptive norms), then people are more likely to engage in those behaviors themselves. For example, if we feel closely identified with the group of friends that uses sunscreen, we likely will use sunscreen too. On the other hand, when people are not closely identified with a group, then whether few or many in the group engage in the behavior should have little bearing on what they decide to do.

Finally, *behavioral attributes* are conditions under which normative influence should be either enhanced or reduced. Public-private is one key behavioral attribute. Behaviors that are largely enacted in public are more susceptible to normative influence than those enacted in private. For example, if we see everyone in public using sunscreen, we are more likely to use it too. However, if people only use sunscreen in their own yards, we may not be aware of this norm and will not use sunscreen. Figure 10.3 displays a model of the theory.[25]

Figure 10.3 Theory of Normative Social Influence



From the Source . . .

I had always worked to build theory in my previous work, but our paper on the theory of normative social influence was my first formal theory paper and the first paper Rajiv Rimal and I ever published together. We cooked the ideas up at a conference in Mexico; we had a great time writing this and spent hours (largely on the phone) arguing about the ideas in it. We were inspired by our understanding of the important role norms play in risky behaviors; he came at it from public health, and I thought about it in relationship to environmental conservation issues. We now are arguing over whether we are "done with norms" but keep coming up with new ideas to test so can't seem to shake the concept!

Maria Lapinski

Lapinski and colleagues used the theory of normative social behavior to promote better hand washing among college men.[26] Undergraduate male students were exposed to two levels of social-norm messages when they entered a public restroom. First, the authors developed two posters that showed different levels of descriptive norms. In the high descriptive norms condition, posters showed five men facing urinals wearing backward baseball caps. The bottom of the poster read: "Four out of five college students wash their hands every time they use the bathroom." Four of the men wore caps from the home university (to show high group identity), while one wore a hat from a rival university. The low descriptive norms message contained the same text except it indicated that only one out of five men wash their hands; it showed four men from the rival university and one from the home university. Second, when the students entered the restroom, sometimes someone else was there and other times no one was. Thus, there were six conditions in the study: (1) high norm and public; (2) high norm and private; (3) low norm and public; (4) low norm and private; (5) no norm message and public; (6) no norm message and private.

Unbeknownst to the participants at the time (although they were made aware later), a male research assistant was in a restroom stall to determine whether the men washed their hands following Centers for Disease Control standards. The study generally found support for the importance of descriptive norms in that a high or low descriptive norm message improved the quality of men's hand washing. However, whether the behavior was enacted with a confederate present or not did not change the quality or quantity of hand washing. The next theory explores further relationships among people specifically looking at the importance of positive and negative communication for health.

Social Support Theory

In many situations, including some health challenges, we often need help from others to meet our needs. This type of help is called *social support*; it consists of actions and information that lead individuals to perceive that they are cared for because of the receipt of aid, assistance, and comfort from others when they need it.[27] Some researchers make a distinction between enacted and perceived social support. *Perceived support* is the belief that support is available if and when it is needed. For example, if you have HIV/AIDS and think about future challenges you might have getting to the doctor, can you think of someone you could call to get you there? *Enacted support* is the actual receipt of support. For example, did you actually get a ride to the doctor? Social support, and especially perceived social support, is positively related with health and well-being and thus is often studied to understand how and why it works for positive health outcomes. Social support is an umbrella term for various theories and concepts about supportive communication and social networks rather than a single specific theory. This section introduces theoretical models that explain why support is associated with health.

There are two theoretical explanations for the positive relationship between social support and health outcomes.[28] First, some scholars suggest that social support has a *direct effect* on health outcomes. In other words, the perception and/or provision of social support stimulates positive constructions of health and even actual chemical changes in the body that result in positive health. Direct effects for social support are often attributed to the level of social integration in a person's social network. Thus, the more we are connected to others, the more access we have to various types of resources. Second, other scholars argue that social support has a *buffering effect* in response to trauma or stress. Essentially, supportive communication buffers the physiological reactions to stress that affect physical health. In other words, in the face of a stressful situation, we are healthier because positive communication helps us to feel better. For example, social support from friends and doctors buffers the stress of living with HIV/AIDS and with the negative interactions with others in our networks. Most of the research evidence suggests that the buffering model is the stronger of the two explanations.

Daena Goldsmith and Terrance Albrecht offer a framework of four explanations why social support has direct and buffering effects.[29] First, social support provides feedback about risky and unhealthy behavior and encourages us to exercise social control. People who are isolated have no one to tell them they should talk to their doctor about their HIV medication. Of course, there is a

caveat—that the people in the network adhere to a positive and not a negative norm in terms of behavior. For example, if your social network encourages risky sexual behavior (such as unprotected intercourse with multiple partners), you are following negative norms, and you may be putting yourself at risk for contracting HIV. Second, social support provides information about health care and where to seek it. Those in a network help manage the uncertainty of health conditions and offer suggestions as to where to go to get the needed services. For example, a person newly diagnosed with HIV needs to know how the virus impacts him and where he can go for help. With the right information and care, it is a very manageable chronic condition, and a social support network can play an important part in its management.

Third, social support can provide tangible support to address health issues. Tangible support might be a ride to the doctor or money to buy HIV medications if finances are tight. Finally, social support helps to communicate coping assistance. In the face of a traumatic or uncertain event, people need help figuring out how to cope with the problem. Social support that leads to problem-focused coping can lead to positive health outcome. *Problem-focused coping* is taking an active stance to address the tangible and emotional aspects of a condition. For example, a person newly diagnosed with HIV may need help to deal effectively with the challenges of talking about their condition with others; learning to do so may help them deal with emotional strain. In contrast, social support that leads to avoidance-focused coping is detrimental to health. *Avoidance-focused coping* is denial of the problem or use of distractors to avoid thinking about the problem. For example, becoming a drinking buddy of the newly diagnosed person with HIV may help them to stop thinking about their condition but introduces a new health problem rather than doing anything about living with HIV.

From the Source . . .

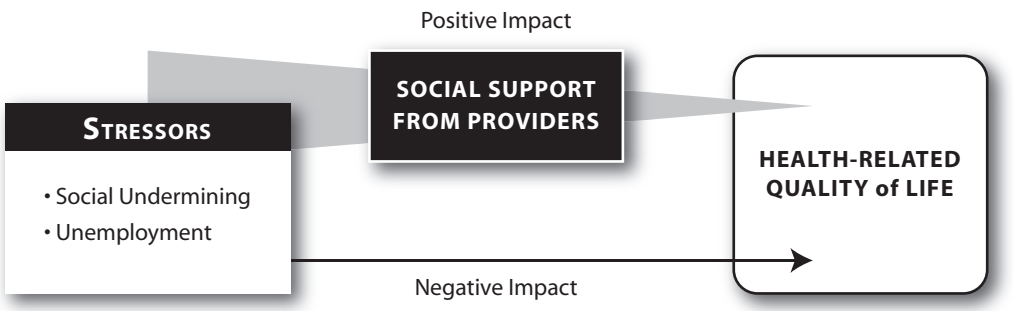
I started studying social support by examining advice because I knew that sometimes advice helped me figure out how to cope but other times I resented unsolicited advice, felt criticized instead of supported, or felt obligated to take uninformed suggestions. Since then, I've examined everyday support for ordinary stresses as well as memorable conversations related to health crises. I've learned that what we say, how we say it, and when we say it matters!

Daena Goldsmith

John Oetzel and colleagues tested the direct and buffering effects of social support on health-related quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS.[30] Health-related quality of life is a construct that includes perceptions about general, physical, and mental health. The authors also introduced the concept of *social undermining* as a variable related to social support and relevant for those living with HIV/AIDS. Social undermining is a negative form of communication that includes active devaluing or dislike of someone. People living with HIV/AIDs often face negative evaluations from people in their social networks, an added stressor to living with HIV/AIDs.

The researchers found evidence to support the buffering effect of social support models. Social undermining and being unemployed were stressors that had direct effects on the health-related quality of life. However, social support from providers buffered the impact of these two stressors and provided a positive impact on health-related quality of life. Figure 10.4 displays a model of the buffering effects of social support from this study.[31] The next theory further explores the importance of positive communication with health-care providers.

Figure 10.4 Buffering Effect of Social Support



Patient-Centered Communication

Providers and patients reflect on and shape their relationships through communication. Providers use blood tests, X-rays, and physical exams to assess the health of their patients, but interactions between patient and provider are necessary to make sense of the physical and biochemical evidence that the assessments provide. For example, a test may show that a person is low in iron, and yet without understanding the patient's dietary intake and the symptoms he is experiencing, the doctor may not be able to suggest an adequate course of action to address the iron deficiency. Further, the quality of the interaction between patient and provider is critical to health outcomes of patients.[32] For example, better communication between patient and provider leads to better emotional and physiological health, pain management, compliance with treatment recommendations, and symptom resolution. In contrast, ineffective communication is associated with medical errors and malpractice claims.

Despite the importance of effective communication for patient outcomes, biomedical approaches have grown in popularity at the expense of approaches that focus on communication.[33] The Institute of Medicine and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (among others) have called for renewed attention to patient-centered communication in patient-provider interactions of all kinds.[34] *Patient-centered communication* (also called patient-centered care) refers to the central focus on the patient's perspective and preferences for care during the interaction with providers. This approach contrasts with a focus on what the physician wants to gain from the interaction.

Debra Roter and Judith Hall outline a model of patient-centered communication that includes four key elements and is undergirded by a focus on high-context communication.[35] High-context communication emphasizes a focus on implicit, unspoken, and nonverbal messages rather than explicit and verbal messages. The first element, *data gathering,* involves the ability of the provider to help the patient fully tell his story about his health and illness. Data gathering helps the patient disclose what he sees as relevant through the use of open and directed questions and good listening. For example, if the patient thinks it is important to tell a story about how his headaches may be related to his foot pain, the provider should explore this possibility. Second, *patient education and counseling* helps the patient understand and make sense of his condition and assists with decision making. For example, the provider may listen to the narrative and offer a medical explanation about why the headaches and foot pain are likely unrelated and see how this resonates with the patient.

Third, *partnership-building communication* helps the patient become more active in his medical decisions and actions by asking for opinions, gently offering treatment suggestions without making a decision for the patient, or asking if it is okay to recommend a treatment. For example, the provider may say: "There are three options we can explore. Which do you think is best?" or "Would you like my thoughts on the best course of action?" Finally, *emotional responsiveness* refers to the degree to which the physician understands and reflects the patient's expressed emotions without judging those emotions. For example, the provider may recognize the patient's confusion in hearing that the headache and foot pain are probably unrelated. He might say, "I sense you are confused; would you like to talk more about this?" While patient-centered communication is co-constructed and influenced by both parties, much of the focus in this model is on how providers can communicate in ways that facilitate patient-centeredness rather than on what patients can do to assert it.

Christopher Koenig and his colleagues developed a grounded practical theory of patient-centered communication that is consistent with Roter and Hall's model.[36] Specifically, Koenig and colleagues explore communication in routine visits for Type 2 diabetes—visits that are important because they can include changes to the treatment of chronic care conditions. For example, some patients are fine with oral medications, but then their condition worsens, and they need insulin shots. The authors describe this as an interaction dilemma because the recommended treatment may run counter to patient preferences and values. To address these dilemmas, interactional sensitivity is needed. *Interactional sensitivity* is actively involving a conversational partner to respond to the partner's needs in a smooth manner. While interactional sensitivity is a conversational construct, the authors argue that providers have more of a burden for sensitivity because they are involved in multiple interactions every day.

Providers can enhance sensitivity in three ways. First, providers need to tailor their communication to the needs of specific patients rather than relying on a single communication style. Second, providers need to learn to balance patient preferences and medical indications by exploring these tensions during conversations rather than just focusing on one or the other (i.e., just on what the doctor wants or what the patient wants). Third, interactional sensitivity can be facilitated by having conversations at earlier stages in the clinical pathway so that

the suggested change does not seem so sudden or big. In this manner, providers can offer patient-centered care that reflects both patients' medical needs and their personal needs and preferences. The next theory moves to a different type of relationship—the communication that occurs among providers.

Structurational Divergence Theory

Communication among health providers is fraught with challenges and tensions as providers often work under high stress and uncertain conditions. For example, an emergency department includes numerous patients with serious conditions. Health providers also may work in situations where they feel the organization does not support them or encourage their participation. Just as communication between patients and providers impacts health outcomes, the communication among providers also impacts health outcomes, although these impacts are not as direct or apparent. As a patient, the challenging and conflicting interactions that occur among providers are usually not evident. Anne Maydan Nicotera and colleagues developed structurational divergence theory to explain negative communication cycles among providers and particularly among nurses.[37]

Structurational divergence theory has a foundation in structurational theory (discussed in chapter 9). *Structurational divergence* refers to an institutional positioning in which there are incompatible meaning structures that create unresolved conflict among individuals within an organization. In other words, there are different sets of organizational rules that suggest different courses of action, and individual workers find it impossible to reconcile these rules. For example, you might work in the emergency department and be encouraged by your organization to provide patient-centered care at the same time you are encouraged to be efficient in order to save money and provide care to other patients.

As a result of structurational divergence, a person feels *immobilized*—unable to select actions that satisfy all of the rules operating in the interaction. Further, most people in such a situation are not even aware that there are multiple rule structures constraining the effectiveness of their actions. For example, a nurse related a story of an ongoing conflict with a physician, whom she claimed treated her poorly, disrespected her knowledge, and undermined her ability to apply safety standards. The doctor, in turn, was continually exasperated with the nurse for wasting time and undermining his medical authority, thus compromising patient safety. Here is an example of a typical interaction between them.[38] The physician writes a medication order. The nurse looks at the prescription and questions, "50 mg?" The doctor snaps at her to simply follow his orders and strides off. The nurse rolls her eyes and complains loudly to her peers about what a jerk he is.

What is happening here is a simple instance of structurational divergence. The doctor is following rules of medical authority; the nurse, on the other hand, has been sent to multiple safety seminars that require her to verify medication orders by questioning them. Further, the physician presumes a traditional authority structure where doctors order and nurses follow orders, so he finds her question a challenge to his authority. The nurse's safety training, in contrast, follows an egalitarian structure that sees all caregivers as responsible for safety. Because these two individuals are reproducing conflicting structures, they cannot work productively together. Because their interaction does not re/produce a

coherent structure, both are frustrated, blame each other, and patient care suffers. For example, when the nurse decides not to ask for verification because she wants to avoid a conflict, she sometimes makes mistakes that affect the patient. This upsets her coworkers and compromises patient safety. Because of her mistakes, she receives a negative performance evaluation. This negative evaluation is one type of *erosion of organizational and human development,* negative outcomes related to the growth of the organization and/or individual.

These negative outcomes result in continued unresolved conflict. The employee is upset at the system, her bosses, the physicians, and other nurses for putting her in an impossible situation, not recognizing this impossibility, and then negatively evaluating her for not reacting correctly. Other employees may be upset at this person because she did not do her job correctly. The result is a negative cycle of unresolved conflict that is perpetuated by multiple parties—the parties blame each other and perhaps the system in an ongoing cycle.

Structurational divergence theory also illustrates impacts on conflict communication patterns and individual agency. Not surprisingly, structurational divergence is associated with destructive communication patterns such as verbal aggression, dominating patterns of and approaches to conflict, and taking conflict personally. In the above example, recurrence of the situation is likely to lead to frustration for the doctor, who does not trust that his orders will be carried out correctly, and he may start chastising nurses to avoid potential errors or may request a meeting to talk about how "we might do it differently." However, because the conflicts engendered by structurational divergence are not ordinary conflicts, discussions that would ordinarily solve conflicts by clarifying positions do not help unless underlying structural differences are recognized and acknowledged.

Part of the reason for this pattern is that individuals feel like they do not have any agency for determining what happens; they become frustrated when what they think they are supposed to do is continually thwarted. It is a position of "damned if you do and damned if you don't." Another reason for this pattern is that individuals thrust into conflict with each other are unaware that they are applying divergent rules. They treat each other as opponents and blame one another. However, if the discussion is a dialogue that digs deeper into underlying meanings, then an adjustment may be all that is needed. The physician may simply add a step to his verbal orders to ask the nurses to repeat it back to him, thus preserving his authority structure and the nurses' safety directive at the same time.

From the Source . . .

Structural divergence theory's heritage is my own organizational struggles between rocks and hard places in my organizational communication consulting. Over and over, I heard the same stories from different people of different cultures in different organizations—from a federal agency rooted in multiple contradictory constraints after a reorganization to literature on African-American organizations showing the same patterns. SDT arose from later field work in hospitals, where, with sudden clarity, I saw the contradictory structures of health-care organizations.

Anne Maydan Nicotera

Nicotera and Marcia Clinkscales completed a case study of nurses in a geriatric care (GC) unit of a hospital to illustrate the causes and consequences of structurational divergence.[39] The nurses in this unit had a recurring conflict with the emergency department (ED) staff. The ED staff often would send patients to the GC unit rather than directly to the intensive care unit to make an efficient transition (i.e., the ED staff had other patients to see, and the GC was the safest and most efficient place to send them until the patients could be admitted). Many of the patients required care while they were waiting, and the GC nurses addressed those needs, while feeling conflicted by rules about patient-centered care and about the use of GC resources—medicine, supplies, and nurses' time. The patients would then get admitted to the intensive care unit, but because of limitations in the admission system, records would only show that the patients went from the ED to intensive care without recording the care received from the GC.

Management evaluations later concluded that costs in the GC were too high relative to care provided and sanctioned the GC, unaware that GC resources were serving emergency-room patients. Management was following a bureaucratic set of rules in the evaluations (what do the records show about costs and care provided). These evaluations led to frustration of the GC with the ED, while the ED felt the GC complained a lot, were uncooperative, and just needed to do their part to care for patients. This conflict exemplifies the structurational divergence between rules for patient-centered care and bureaucratic management. The most effective way to solve this problem is to eliminate contradictions by addressing it at an organizational level. However, it can also be dealt with through specialized training that raises consciousness about conflicting meaning structures and teaches dialogue skills so that those involved can reframe their coworkers not as opponents in a struggle but as partners with a shared problem that can be productively managed together.[40]

This section explored various types of communicative relationships in health contexts, from social networks and personal relationships to relationships with providers and relationships among providers. Communication in each of these relationships reflects and constructs these relationships and also impacts health outcomes. All four theories in this section note the importance of communication for positive and negative health and social outcomes. The next section explores both individual and relational aspects of managing information and risk in the health context.

Managing Information and Risk

Many health conditions and situations have uncertainties about them. For example, there is no guarantee that a terrorist attack will not happen to us. We may or may not get cancer. Or, if we do get cancer, we may not die from cancer. All of these elements have some level of *risk*, which involves the combination of the severity of a harm and the chance that it adversely will affect us. Health communication and public health scholars often talk about risk factors or characteristics that may impact the possibility of getting a particular disease. For example, smoking, not using sunscreen, and diet are risk factors for cancer (although different levels of risk).

Understanding risk involves getting and managing information, communication about the factors posing risk, and taking action to mitigate risk factors. Management can occur at an individual (What information do I seek or avoid?), organizational (How can our organization promote vaccines?), or larger societal level (How do we make sure emergency response services are ready for a major crisis?). This section explores three theories that examine the ways that we seek and manage information about uncertainty, risk, and health and why we take, or do not take, action in response to risk.

Risk Perception Attitude Framework

Rajiv Rimal and Kevin Real developed the risk perception attitude framework (RPA) to explain how the perceptions of risk and efficacy influence the motivation to engage in a health behavior, including seeking information about health.[41] Risk perception is the belief about vulnerability to various diseases and risk factors and is similar to the notion of perceived threat in the extended parallel process model. Interestingly, people tend to believe that they are at less risk than the "average person."[42] Across many health domains, when people are asked to estimate their vulnerability to a risk factor relative to others, they underestimate the risk to themselves.[43] For example, most of us will estimate that we are less likely to get diabetes than others. As noted with several theories in this chapter, perceived efficacy is the perception that we are capable of performing a certain action. For example, can we change our eating and exercise habits to reduce the risk of diabetes?

The central prediction of the risk perception attitude framework is that people are more willing to act when they believe that they are at risk and if they also believe that they have the ability to affect the outcome. RPA considers four combinations of risk and efficacy perceptions that create attitudinal groups influencing the degree to which people are willing to act. Those with high-risk perceptions and strong efficacy beliefs are classified into the *responsive* group. This group is thought to be both highly motivated and able to translate motivations into actions like information seeking and changing health behavior. For example, a person in the responsive group will be interested in finding out more about diabetes and how to change his diet to help prevent it.

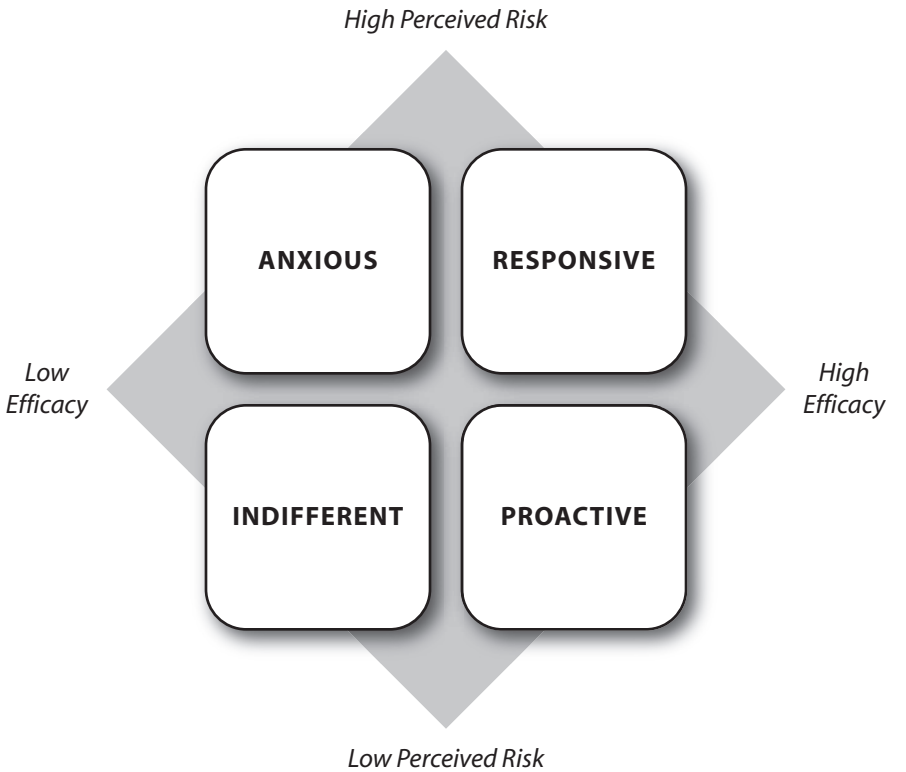
Individuals with high risk perceptions and weak efficacy beliefs are described as the *anxious* group (originally called *avoidant*). Members of the anxious group believe that they are vulnerable to a disease or risk factor and simultaneously feel incapable of addressing the threat. The anxious group has heightened defensive behaviors, including the active avoidance of information. For example, a person in the anxious group is worried about getting diabetes and yet does not feel he can do anything about it and so avoids information and behavior change.

The *indifferent* group includes low-risk perceptions and weak efficacy beliefs. Individuals in this group are least motivated to act as they have low perceived risk and low capabilities. For example, a person in this group perceives low risk of diabetes, and even if he were at risk he does not feel he can do much about it. Therefore, he avoids information and behavior change.

Finally, members of the *proactive* group include people with low-risk perceptions and strong efficacy beliefs. These individuals perceive they are able to take

the requisite action to protect themselves against disease. Thus, they are likely to experience little, if any, anxiety about their health status given that they believe they can change behavior to prevent future problems. A person in this group may seek out information on how to prevent diabetes although he is not really motivated to do so until there is a perceived risk. However, even though he may not feel at risk he does have the belief that he could take action and may believe it is "better to be safe than sorry." Figure 10.5 displays a model of these groups.

Figure 10.5 Risk Perception Attitudinal Groups



From the Source . . .

Kim Witte's extended parallel process model (EPPM) was the inspiration for the risk perception attitude (RPA) framework. Although the central idea behind the EPPM made sense, I had a hard time linking EPPM with health behaviors. A step was missing: how people understand threatening messages. Not all such messages increase risk perceptions, and the EPPM equated threat (a property of messages) with risk perception (property of individuals). The RPA framework was conceptualized to make this important distinction.

Rajiv Rimal

Katherine Grasso and Robert Bell conducted a test of the risk perception attitude framework for health information seeking related to four health conditions—hypertension, high cholesterol, alcohol dependence, and diabetes.[44] The authors used the four attitudinal groups of RPA and predicted that the responsive group would have higher information seeking than the anxious group, while there would be no difference between the indifferent and proactive groups since both of these groups perceive low risk. They surveyed a large number of adults from the United States, using an online data collection tool. The results illustrated that the responsive group had higher information seeking than the anxious group for all conditions except alcohol dependence. Further, there was no difference in information seeking between the indifferent and proactive groups for all four conditions. These findings are consistent with the RPA, although the authors note that there are also other reasons why people seek information, such as curiosity, social expectations, situational norms, and prior knowledge. The next theory further elaborates on the reasons people seek health information, particularly from people in their social networks.

Theory of Motivated Information Management

Information is a key element for managing risk and helping to determine a correct course of action. We often seek out information about particular health issues and ailments that we are currently facing. Probably all of us have recently searched for information online about various symptoms and particular treatments. For example, John received a minor burn while writing this chapter and searched on-line for the best treatments for the skin. However, we also seek information from other people when making health decisions. The theory of motivated information management helps to explain why people seek or avoid information from other people rather than pursuing online sources. Other theories relevant to this topic include problematic integration theory and uncertainty management theory (see chapter 3).

Walid Afifi, Judith Weiner, and colleagues developed the theory of motivated information management, and it has been applied to a variety of health topics, including organ donation, sexual health, and end-of-life care.[45] The authors explain that there are three stages of active information seeking and avoidance (interpretation, uncertainty discrepancy, and evaluation) before the decision phase. During the *interpretation phase*, a person looks at how much uncertainty they currently have about a particular health issue and how much (un)certainty they desire. If the *uncertainty discrepancy* between current and desired levels is high, the discrepancy leads to anxiety. For example, assume that James is thinking about having sex for the first time with his new partner, someone he does not know very well. He wants to decide whether to use a condom and is worried about sexually transmitted infections (STIs)—is the other person STI free and will that person be monogamous with him? He has uncertainty discrepancy and thus is anxious about talking with his partner.

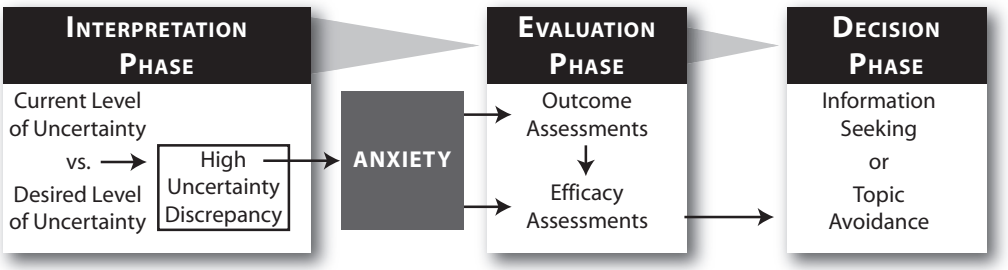
The next phase is the evaluation phase. The *evaluation phase* involves two elements influenced by social cognitive theory presented early in this chapter—outcome and efficacy assessments. These assessments mediate a person's anxiety and his decision to seek or avoid information. *Outcome assessment* is the evaluation of the pros and cons, or benefits and costs, of a specific information-seeking

strategy. For example, James may wonder whether asking his partner directly about previous sexual history will yield a truthful answer. He may also wonder what the impact of asking that question will be—will it create trust and intimacy or distrust? *Efficacy assessments* include whether a person believes they can perform the specific strategy effectively. Efficacy assessments mediate the influence of outcome expectations on information seeking. For example, if James believes the direct question strategy will be effective, he also has to believe he can effectively ask the question—otherwise he will not use that strategy.

There are three specific types of efficacy assessments. *Coping efficacy* assesses whether people have the resources to deal with the information they receive. For example, will James be comfortable finding out that his partner does not know his STI status and has been with other people sexually? *Communication efficacy* identifies whether people have the communication skills to perform the strategy. For example, will James be able to ask the question, or will he get nervous and avoid it? *Target efficacy* addresses whether you believe the other person has the willingness and capability to share the requested information. For example, will James's partner know his STI status, and will he share it with him?

The final phase is the decision phase. In the *decision phase*, the person makes a determination about whether to seek the desired information or to avoid the topic. The decision also involves the specific strategy for seeking the information—will it be a direct or indirect approach? For example, James may decide he doesn't want to be too direct about asking about STIs for fear of being seen as too threatening, so he may try an indirect approach such as asking about the last time his partner had sex with someone else. Figure 10.6 below illustrates a model of the theory.[46]

Figure 10.6 Theory of Motivation Information Management



Katherine Rafferty and her colleagues used the theory of motivated information management to explore conversations that people have with their spouses about end-of-life care.[47] As people get older, some are faced with decisions about the type of care they would like to receive if they are diagnosed with a terminal illness. Their preferences are influenced by what their spouses prefer; these are difficult conversations. How many of us want to talk with our partners about what they want us to do if we are dying? Rafferty and colleagues used

the theory of motivated information management as well as the quality of the relationship to examine information seeking or avoidance in such situations. Rafferty and her coauthors found that the theory is a useful framework for explaining whether partners avoid end-of-life conversations but not whether they seek information about what their partners want. Further, the relational quality impacts efficacy assessments, which impacts whether people avoid the conversation. So, if partners have a positive relationship, they have greater efficacy and are less likely to avoid the conversation. This study helps to illustrate the limitations of motivated information management; application of the theory to multiple contexts is necessary to understand how it works. The next theory explores the ways people manage problems of integrating probabilities and values through communication with others.

Risk and Crisis Communication Management Theory

Communities, states, and nations often consider the risks that are associated with various health outcomes. In some cases, there are public health efforts to address and minimize risks. For example, as we write this chapter, there is a measles outbreak in John's community in New Zealand. Public health offices are sharing information about the symptoms and what to do if you experience those symptoms. There are also efforts to encourage people whose vaccinations are not up-to-date to get vaccinated. In other parts of the world, there is concern about the Zika virus and how it may impact people. Agencies are trying to coordinate the distribution of information and services to address the various cases and prevent further spreading of the virus. Sometimes, risk factors turn into large-scale crises. The local measles outbreak is a crisis for the local community, while the Zika virus is a global outbreak. In chapter 9, we explored the situational crisis communication theory for specific organizations. This section explores larger scale approaches to crisis communication management.

Matthew Seeger constructed a grounded theory of best practices for large publicly managed crises (e.g., Centers for Disease Control or Departments of Public Health).[48] A grounded theory is one that is developed from empirical evidence rather than generated by the theorist. In order words, a scholar collects data and then uses the data to formulate a theory. *Best practices* are approaches, systems, and processes that are considered the most effective ways for dealing with a problem. To create his theory, Seeger reviewed the research literature on risk and crisis communication management, models of crisis management, anecdotal evidence, and observations from people in the field. He then used a panel of experts from the National Center for Food Safety and Defense to review and critique the best practices model.

Before describing these best practices, we introduce a model of the phases of crisis management to understand how best practices fit into the larger context. There is general consensus that risk and crisis management occur in four stages.[49] First, *prevention* involves actions that help to avoid the crisis in the first place by reducing risks. For example, the transportation warning system in the U.S. and the screening of air travelers helps to prevent people from taking explosives and other dangerous items onto airplanes. Second, *preparation* involves creating a plan for crisis management, such as having coordinated emergency response plans. For this reason, emergency agencies conduct role

plays and rehearsals for how to deal with a terrorist attack or a natural disaster. Third, *response* refers to the actions that various agencies take in relation to a specific crisis. For instance, agencies release information about what people should do and where they should go for help in an emergency. Fourth, *learning* is what happens post response to avoid a recurrence of the crisis. The transportation warning system and increased screening at airports, for example, is the result of what was learned from the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Seeger's best-practices strategies fit at various points of the crisis response model. The first best practice is that communicators need to have a role in policy development in terms of crisis response. Decision makers, in other words, should not be taken for granted; they need to have an understanding of how communication plays a role at all stages of the process. The second best practice is pre-event planning using risk assessment to inform crisis-communication and emergency-management plans. The third best practice is to create a partnership with the public using a dialogic approach rather than simply talking to the public. The fourth best practice is to listen to the public's concerns in order to understand the public's position, interests, and needs. This fourth practice builds on the previous one as a way to begin the dialogue process between policy makers and the public.

The fifth best practice is to communicate messages related to the risk or crisis with honesty, candor, and openness. Part of this principle comes from the fact that a lack of information or honesty will be apparent to people seeking out the information on their own by using other sources such as social media. The sixth best practice is to coordinate and collaborate with credible sources. Some agencies try to go it alone rather than using strategic partnerships to share resources. The seventh best practice is to meet the needs of the media and provide good access to them as well. Media want to tell a story and need a continual stream of information. The spokespeople for the agency(ies) need to have media training to know how to communicate effectively with various media sources.

The eighth best practice is to communicate with empathy, concern, and compassion. People's lives will be affected negatively in a crisis, so the agency providing the information has to show it cares. The ninth best practice is to accept uncertainty and ambiguity. As a crisis unfolds, there is uncertainty and ambiguity about what is happening, how to proceed, how to share information. Communicators must avoid being too reassuring or too certain because the situation can change quickly. The tenth best practice is to provide messages to the public that enhance self-efficacy. People have a need to do something during a

From the Source . . .

Crises are confusing and uncertain events that place a great deal of stress on communicators and systems. Most of us have limited experience with a crisis. We realized that practice-based principles could help managers prepare for and respond to a crisis. The best practices were synthesized from research and other theories and can help improve the effectiveness of communication about events as diverse as the Zika outbreak, the Fukushima Daiichi accident, and the Sandy Hook school shootings.

Matthew Seeger

crisis, so agencies should provide the public with clear instructions of what to do for their families and the larger community.

These best practices have been reinforced by recent reviews suggesting that crisis management should be a dialogic approach focusing on a discourse of renewal rather than simply image restoration.[50] Renewal emphasizes learning and growing from a crisis; image restoration is about making the organization look better during and after the crisis. Communication scholars recognize the vital role that communication plays in crisis and risk management and see value in creating partnerships with the public and constructing response plans rather than simply informing the public when something goes wrong. Similarly, the theory of motivated information management illustrates how interaction with others is managed in order to reduce uncertainty and anxiety in a crisis situation. The risk perception attitude framework theory adds to this area by illustrating the role of perceptions of risk and efficacy for individual behavior. The next section turns to the topic of health disparities, which involves risk factors as well but responds to them in different ways.

Health Disparities

Health disparities are inequities in health status/outcomes for different groups.[51] A health disparity exists when one group has a health outcome that is worse than that of another group. It does not mean that everybody in the group experiences the problem, or that everyone in one group has a better health outcome than everyone else in a different group. For example, the U.S. tends to have a higher life expectancy than most developing nations, although it has a lower life expectancy than other developed nations. Within the U.S., disparities exist along socioeconomic, gender, and ethnic lines, although in varied ways. Life expectancy is lowest for African Americans followed by American Indians, non-Hispanic whites, and then Asian Americans and Latino/a Americans. However, low levels of self-reported health are highest among Latino/a Americans, American Indians, and African Americans compared to white Americans and Asian Americans.[52] In addition, and not surprisingly, lower socioeconomic status is associated with lower health outcomes. Many government agencies, health-care providers, researchers, community advocates, and others seek ways to reduce inequalities in health outcomes.

Community-Based Participatory Research Conceptual Model

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a growing approach for health promotion in general and for addressing health disparities specifically.[53] CBPR involves the partnership of academic researchers and community members in all phases of research, including definition of the problem and research question, research design, research implementation, data analysis, and dissemination of research findings. In addition to a philosophy of partnership, CBPR seeks to do research that works toward social justice and social change. Common changes sought by means of CBPR research include changing health policies, improving community health, reducing health disparities, and increasing the capacity of community members to address and meet community needs. It

has been used in numerous communities with a variety of health issues, including cancer prevention, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, and HIV prevention. CBPR as a research model is often advocated in communities in which past research practices created mistrust—of government, universities, and/or health systems. In contrast, this approach actively involves the community in creating research that matters to and benefits the community. Thus, the approach is empowering and helps to build trust and rapport between researchers and community.

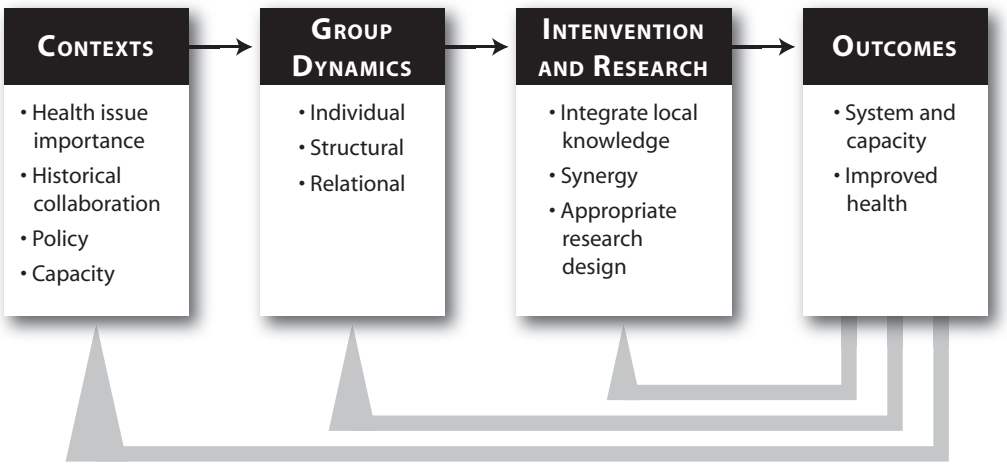
Community-based participatory research has been utilized for many decades; only relatively recently has theory been introduced to explain how and why it works. Public health scholars Nina Wallerstein and Bonnie Duran, along with communication scholar John Oetzel and some of their colleagues, developed a conceptual model of CBPR that includes four domains: context, group dynamics, intervention/research, and outcomes.[54] The authors created the model in consultation with a national advisory board of CBPR community and academic experts along with the results of a survey of people engaged in CBPR practices. *Context* refers to the larger sociocultural milieu and includes socioeconomic factors, existing health and social policies about the issue of concern, community readiness, historical levels of collaboration/trust, and community/university capacity to engage in the research and to work together. *Group dynamics* includes structural features of the partnership (e.g., agreements), individual characteristics (e.g., cultural identities), and the relational dynamics among members. These relational dynamics also include a variety of communication elements such as conflict management, dialogue, task communication, mutual influence, and leadership. The *intervention/research* is the actual work of the partnership. It should reflect local and culturally centered knowledge, have research and practical rigor (that is, it should include high quality research or intervention with practical applications), and be the result of synergy or co-learning among the partners. *Outcomes* are the product of the partnership and include both system/capacity and health outcomes. System and capacity outcomes include (1) building the capabilities of individual members and the agencies they represent to carry out further research, advocate for policy change, or other outcomes relevant to the project; (2) changing power relationships among community members and academics; and (3) sustainability of the work. Health outcomes include changing health policies, improving community health, and reducing health disparities.

The conceptual model suggests that each of these four domains is influenced by the others. First, context shapes the nature of the group dynamics. For example, the authors proposed that in communities where there is a history of mistrust with the university, partnerships will have relational dynamic difficulties. In addition, they suggest that formal governance structures, such as agreements, will promote greater equality in decision making among the partners. Second, context and group dynamics shape the nature of the research and intervention. The work of the partnership should reflect the mutual influence of both community and academic partners. The authors suggest that the better the group dynamics in the partnership, the better the quality of research/intervention will be. Third, the intervention/research (along with the context and group dynamics that shape it) results in system/capacity and health outcomes. The

impact in the community is a result of the quality of the work the partnership does. Importantly, this work needs to incorporate the local and cultural beliefs of the community in order to have sustainable and positive impacts. Finally, group dynamics and the outcomes of the research all have feedback loops back to the "previous" features.

The model is meant to illustrate a dynamic rather than a linear process. For example, in a history of mistrust, high quality group dynamics can change the context to one of trust and respect. Positive outcomes of a project can also change the context and nature of the ongoing dynamics. Many CBPR partnerships last for many years, so the model reflects changes in the nature of these relationships over time. Figure 10.7 displays this conceptual model.[55]

Figure 10.7 Community-Based Participatory Research Conceptual Model



Wallerstein, Duran, Oetzel, and their colleagues completed a systematic evaluation of community-based participatory research projects to test this conceptual model.[56] Their project involved identifying 300 CBPR projects that received funding in 2009 from the US federal government. They were able to get 200 of the principal investigators of these projects to complete an Internet survey about the project and to describe features related to the four domains of the model. Further, the principal investigators nominated up to four partners each to complete another survey that asked the partners to describe their perceptions about the project, the dynamics among members, and the outcomes of the project. Finally, Wallerstein, Duran, Oetzel and their colleagues also completed seven in-depth case studies of these partnerships.

The findings of their research demonstrate support for the conceptual model. Specifically, relational dynamics mediate the influence of context on system, capacity, and health outcomes. Further, the authors isolated the following key features: (1) a formal written agreement; (2) shared academic and community control of resources; (3) a partnership with strong capacity at the begin-

From the Source . . .

We have been thrilled to see the growth of community based participatory research (CBPR) in the U.S. and internationally but felt we needed to know more about what constitutes *effective* partnering and what really is the added *value* of partnering across a wide range of outcomes. We were concerned it would just be a latest fad, rather than adopted as a serious research strategy. Our CBPR conceptual model and research inquiry therefore has been built from the literature and from community perspectives in order to provide empirical recognition of CBPR and community engaged partnerships as critical for achieving knowledge democracy, health equity, and social justice.

Nina Wallerstein and Bonnie Duran

ning; (4) adherence to CBPR partnering principles; (5) community involvement in the research; (6) partner influence on the project; (7) effective leadership; and (8) effective resource management. The fact that many of the key factors are communication variables or have communication integrated within them suggests the importance of communication to the design and implementation of CBPR practices. The next theory further elaborates on several notions found in the CBPR conceptual model including integration of local knowledge, involvement/engagement with communities, and creating change in power relations.

Culture-Centered Approach

Another approach to addressing health disparities is Mohan Dutta's culture-centeredness approach.[57] Many scholars have examined the importance of culture for addressing health and health disparities and have done so using terms like cultural competence and cultural sensitivity. Dutta explains that these approaches (which he labels *cultural sensitivity*) focus on taking interventions and other health practices that have been developed elsewhere and adapting them to fit the cultural characteristics, values, and beliefs of the new community. Interventions could include a smoking-cessation program, a substance-abuse prevention program aimed at preteens, or a particular type of health service. Typically, these interventions and services have worked in a different population; researchers then tailor the messages of the intervention or its implementation to fit local norms and values. For example, Project ALERT is a two-year substance abuse program for middle school students (Grades 7 and 8) designed to prevent or reduce and delay onset of use of various substances including alcohol, marijuana, and inhalants.[58] The program has been adapted to work in a variety of culturally diverse communities, typically making use of advisory boards to fit local needs. There is significant evidence that the approach reduces drug use among these populations.

Dutta acknowledges that there are benefits to a cultural sensitivity approach. It clearly is better than using an intervention without tailoring or adapting it. However, he argues that cultural sensitivity is insufficient for long-term change in health disparities. Instead, Dutta advocates a culture-centered approach that builds on knowledge and interventions from within the culture. *Culture centeredness* occurs when researchers and practitioners place local

knowledge and culture at the center of understanding health problems and identifying solutions to them. Further, this approach focuses on changing social structures that surround health to create space for the marginalized or subaltern populations to share their voices. *Subaltern* refers to people whose voices have been erased or are "under the radar" in terms of the discourse about any particular issue.

For example, in discussions about poverty held in most government circles, the voice of the poor is often absent. The discourse is undertaken by people who are not poor but are talking for the poor. Dutta argues that such an approach reinforces the existing structures that have created poverty or negative health in the first place. In contrast, centering discourse with those for whom the problem is directly relevant allows them to exercise their own voice and agency. Community members, then, not officials and politicians, make sense of and create localized health solutions framed in everyday experiences that have a better chance of changing the economic, social, and political conditions of the community.

Three concepts underlie cultural centeredness: community voice for problems and solutions, reflexivity, and structural transformation and resources. *Community voice* for problems and solutions means that affected community members are involved in defining the nature of the problems and also in identifying relevant solutions. Ironically, the metaphor of voice takes for granted that speaking is transformative, and yet for Deaf communities, it is a reminder of power/oppression. Thus, "voice" should be literal and metaphoric, and include various communicative acts such as sign language, written communication, and oral communication.

Key elements of community "voice" are participation and listening. Participation is at the center of "voicing" perspectives about solutions and problems and emphasizes the diversity of community perspectives and the importance of creating spaces for multiple interpretations. For example, many health practitioners come into a community and offer their thoughts about a particular health problem, emphasizing Western medicine. Participating with the community may help researchers and practitioners identify other causes and solutions to the problem that the local community knows and outsiders do not. Participation and lived experiences serve as guideposts for defining problems, collecting the data that are needed to explain problems, and the role that researchers need to play in data gathering, data analysis methods, and developing the range of solutions. Listening to perspectives creates possibilities for new ideas and visions. For example, if we listen to others, we can create new solutions to problems by building off each other's ideas. A key part of listening is the shifting of the stance of the researcher from all-knowing outsider to a co-constructing participant in locally derived understandings of health that respect local cultural logics.

Reflexivity refers to a continual questioning of researchers' unstated positions of privilege and power when interacting within the community. These elements of privilege include the right to contact communities to initiate a research project; assumptions about the "appropriate" methodological choices and best ways to design participatory processes; and collaboration on problem identification, solution choice, and evaluation. Reflexivity encourages researchers to understand their privileges, ensure that the research process is co-constructed with community members, and makes the subaltern perspective salient and cel-

ebrated. There should be continual questioning about the ways knowledge is produced and the politics involved in this production. Reflexivity might also involve reflecting on processes involved in note-taking, dialogue among partners, and journaling. Who takes the notes and sets up dialogue groups can be an issue of privilege that may not be immediately apparent to a researcher.

Structural transformation and resources refers to efforts to change the ways mainstream research and health systems organize, constrain, and enable access to resources. For example, mainstream health systems work for many people, and yet some people feel excluded from them or receive substandard care. A key aspect in structural transformation is the capacity of subaltern communities to interpret the structures for themselves and to participate in processes of change on the basis of cocreated meanings. Agency and ownership are critical dimensions of the dialogues if transformation is to be achieved; community members need to have agency to create lasting and sustainable change. Further, finding and developing resources for the desired changes occurs through participatory processes and through identifying tools and strategies for leveraging relationships with external stakeholders. Communication resources of advocacy might include using short videos and photos displayed through social and traditional media to communicate the needs and proposed solutions.

Dutta, Agaptus Anaele, and Christina Jones conducted two case studies of food insecurity in two communities (West Bengal, India, and Tippecanoe County, Indiana) to illustrate the culture-centered perspective and how it addresses health disparities.[59] Food insecurity is the lack of access to enough safe and nutritious food to maintain good health. They used various approaches to engage community "voices" from people facing food insecurity, including interviews, focus groups, community-wide discussions and meetings, and photo exhibits. They identify key themes including causes of inequities, access to quantity and quality of food, the negative impact of neoliberal politics (e.g., assuming the positive economic growth will trickle down to poor communities), and the stigma associated with food insecurity and poverty.

From these conversations, community members were able to share their stories with policy makers and help create policy briefs and reports, design community meetings, and participate in coalitions with government and nongovernment organizations to develop solutions for addressing these issues. Because of these processes, policy makers reported having new insights about the problems and a willingness to work with community members to identify solutions. Further, as a result of the community discussions, local food pantries had more healthy food for their clients. Finally, the project helped to reduce the stigma associated with insecurity. Thus, creating space for "voice" enabled community members to share their perspectives, create avenues for transforming the structures that create food insecurity, and provide more resources to address the problem.

Community-based participatory research and the culture-centered approach seek to address health disparities by engaging in participatory processes in which researchers and community members work together to develop and implement solutions. The goal of these approaches is to change the nature of the relationship between academics and communities, to shift the focus of research to local knowledge and perspectives for defining problems, and to create practical outcomes that directly benefit the community.

Conclusion

This chapter explored a number of key theories about health communication. These theories reflect the key topics of messages and behavior change, the importance of relationships in health care, managing information and risk, and health disparities. Health communication theories also demonstrate interest at multiple levels even though the majority of theories do focus on individuals and their communication and behavioral choices. Health communication has seen considerable theoretical development in the past decades, and the importance of health and the burgeoning health-care industry makes it likely there will be proliferation of new research in health communication in the coming decades.

Chapter Map **THEORIES OF HEALTH CONTEXTS**

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Messages and Behavior Change	Narrative Theory	Walter Fisher; Barbara Sharf & Lynn Harter	Stories about health and illness help us make sense of events and determine courses of action.
	Entertainment-Education & Entertainment Overcoming Resistance Model	Arvind Singhal, Michael Cody, Everett Rogers, & Miguel Sabido; Emily Moyer-Guse	Stories embedded in entertainment provide implicit and explicit messages that lower resistance and enhance self-efficacy to perform desired actions.
	Extended Parallel Process Model	Kim Witte	Fear messages motivate healthy responses when they increase perceived threat and perceived efficacy to perform behaviors.
	Inoculation Theory	William McGuire; Joshua Compton & Michael Pfau	Mild doses of attacks to one's beliefs produces resistance to future persuasion efforts, much like a vaccination.
Relationships	Theory of Normative Social Behavior	Rajiv Rimal, Kevin Real, & Maria Lapinski	Our perceptions of what others are doing influence our behavior, especially when we identify with the group, believe the behavior will lead to positive outcomes, and believe the behavior will be sanctioned.
	Social Support Theory	Daena Goldsmith & Terrance Albrecht	Social support tends to buffer the psychological impacts of stressors by providing resources and coping mechanisms to address the stressors.

(continued)

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Relationships *(continued)*	Patient-Centered Communication	Debra Roter & Judith Hall	Communication that places a central focus on the patient's perspectives and preferences leads to positive health outcomes.
	Structurational Divergence Theory	Anne Maydan Nicotera	Competing organizational rules and structures create ongoing negative cycles of communication among health-care providers.
Managing Information and Risk	Risk Perception Attitude Framework	Rajiv Rimal & Kevin Real	People are motivated to act when they perceive they are at risk for a health problem and are capable of doing something to mitigate the risk.
	Theory of Motivated Information Management	Walid Afifi & Judith Weiner	People are motivated to seek out (or avoid) information from others based on level of uncertainty, anxiety, efficacy, and outcome expectations.
	Risk and Crisis Communication Management	Matthew Seeger	Crisis communication management should be governed by 10 best practices that emphasize the central role of honest and dialogic communication.
Health Disparities	Community-Based Participatory Research Conceptual Model	Nina Wallerstein, Bonnie Duran, & John Oetzel	Academics and community members working on research problems in a participatory way can lead to a variety of positive health and social outcomes, including reduction in health disparities.
	Culture-Centered Approach	Mohan Dutta	Culture centeredness occurs when social structures are transformed to ensure that local knowledge and culture are at the center of understanding health problems and identifying solutions to the problems.

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11

Culture

Every act of communication—whether personal or mediated—is affected by and contributes to large cultural forms and patterns. Because the cultural context of communication is so huge, we often do not see it. We forget, for example, that what we perceive, how we understand, and how we act are very much shaped by the language, customs, and values of our culture. Patterns of interaction among friends, in communities, and throughout society determine lines of influence that, in turn, shape our values, opinions, and behavior. In fact, we often do not notice culture until we are taken out of it. Travel overseas generally creates awareness in us that we are somehow different—a different language, different media, different customs, and different meanings. In many parts of the world today, you have to travel only to the closest street corner to experience diversity in culture because most of us do not live in homogenous communities.

Culture has been defined in hundreds of ways that illustrate different perspectives. We chose the following definition because it includes the key components of underlying values, shared communicative elements, and sense making within and struggle among groups:

> The way of life of a group of people, including symbols, values, behaviors, artifacts, and other shared aspects, that continually evolves as people share messages and is often the result of a struggle between groups who share different perspectives, interests, and power relationships.[1]

Culture is any group of social significance in which members share elements of identity and communication patterns to varying degrees; people have different subjective experiences of these elements. Cultures can include people from different nations, racial groups, ethnicities, social groups, communities, genders, etc.

Scholars who study culture and communication explore different ways that communication reflects and creates culture (*cultural communication*) and also how people from different cultures communicate (*intercultural communication*). One of the most common topics in the study of cultural and intercultural communication is that of identity creation and negotiation (see discussion in chapter 3). This chapter explores four additional topics: (1) communicating culture; (2) intercultural communication competence; (3) cultural adaptation and

change; and (4) negotiating difference. These topics and their related theories are summarized in the chapter map (pp. 423–424).

Communicating Culture

There are various ways to understand and make sense of culture. As we grow up, our family, friends, and community members teach us about the "right way" to do things in our culture. They socialize us through communication, and we adopt similar communication patterns and perform rituals that reinforce culture. These communication patterns and performances create and express culture. The research traditions of hermeneutics and ethnography of communication offer key approaches to the study of these aspects of cultural communication. You may recall from chapter 4 that the process of interpretation is *hermeneutics*. Cultural interpretation is commonly referred to as *ethnography*.[2] We look at these types of interpretation and construction of cultural communication through three theories in this section: (1) cultural hermeneutics; (2) ethnography of communication; and (3) performance ethnography.

Cultural Hermeneutics

Cultural interpretation involves trying to understand the actions of a group or culture such as the Zulu, residents of the Castro district in San Francisco, or New York City high-school students. This kind of hermeneutics requires observing and describing the actions of a group, just as one might examine a written text, and trying to figure out what they mean. Clifford Geertz was a highly renowned cultural interpreter/ethnographer.[3] Geertz described cultural interpretation as *thick description*, in which interpreters describe cultural practices from the insider's viewpoint. This level of interpretation is contrasted with *thin description*, in which people merely describe the behavioral pattern with little sense of what it means to the participants themselves.

Cultural interpretation uses a hermeneutic circle, which is the process of moving back and forth between specific observations and general interpretations. The circle is a deliberate shifting of perspectives from something that feels familiar to something that may stretch our understanding. In cultural interpretation, this hermeneutic circle involves a movement from one type of concept to another. *Experience-near concepts* are those that have meaning to the members of the culture, and *experience-distant concepts* have meaning to outsiders. The cultural interpreter essentially translates between the two, so that outside observers can have an understanding of the insider's feelings and meanings in a situation. The interpretive process, then, circles between what appears to be happening from outside to what insiders define as happening. Slowly, a suitable vocabulary can be developed to explain the insiders' point of view to outsiders without forsaking participants' own experience-near concepts.[4]

For example, an ethnographer might wonder about the meaning of numerous tattoos and body piercings among a group of young people. From an experience-distant perspective, it might appear to be a form of group conformity. If you ask several young people what it means, they would answer in a more experience-near way with something like, "Oh, it's just cool." The ethnographer

would need to investigate what it means for something to be "cool" and perhaps relate this response to statements made by others. Eventually, a vocabulary acceptable to informants and understandable to those who are not members of this group would be created.

Ethnographic interpreters, of course, do not begin their investigation empty-handed. Previous experience always provides some kind of schema for understanding an event, but ethnography is a process in which one's understandings become increasingly more refined and accurate. As a hermeneutic activity, then, ethnography is a very personal process, a process in which researchers experience a culture and interpret its various forms. Although ethnographers take different approaches to this process, many believe that the best approach is to live the culture firsthand. On this point, Lyall Crawford writes:

> As an ethnographer, I am an expert about what only I verify—a state of affairs subject to emotional vulnerabilities, intellectual instabilities, and academic suspicion. Thought of in these terms, taking the ethnographic turn, living and writing the ethnographic life, is essentially a self-report of personal experiences.[5]

Donal Carbaugh and Sally Hastings describe ethnographic theorizing as a four-part process.[6] The first part is to develop a basic orientation to the subject, including assessing personal assumptions about culture and its manifestations. Communication ethnographers, for instance, define communication as central to culture and worthy of ethnographic study and decide to focus on various aspects of communication. They may decide to focus in particular on clothing as an important expression of meaning and a form of communication.

The second phase of ethnographic theorizing defines the classes or kinds of activity that will be observed. Communication ethnographers, for example, might decide to look at the ways clothing is worn. Next, the ethnographers theorize about the specific culture under investigation. Certain activities will be interpreted within the context of the culture itself—young men wearing baggy pants are taken as a sign of group conformity and acceptance. Finally, in the fourth phase, the ethnographers move back out to look again at the general theory of culture with which they are operating and test it against the specific case. The ethnographers in this case might conclude that baggy pants are yet another instance of how clothing is used by members of a culture to establish communal bonds. The next theory explores in more depth the ethnography of communication, a particular approach and theorizing about cultural communication.

Ethnography of Communication

The ethnography of communication is the application of ethnographic methods to the communication patterns of a group.[7] The interpreter attempts to make sense of the forms of communication employed by the members of a community or culture. Ethnographers of communication look at (1) the forms of communication used by a group; (2) the meanings these communication practices have for the group; (3) when and where the group members use these practices; (4) how communication practices create a sense of community; and (5) the variety of codes used by a group.[8] The ethnography of communication includes the foundational work of Dell Hymes and Gerry Philipsen and colleagues on speech codes theory; other recent applications include the work of Donal Carbaugh and Tamar Katriel.

Hymes was an anthropologist, credited with initiating the ethnographic research tradition.[9] Hymes suggested that formal linguistics is not sufficient by itself to uncover a complete understanding of language because it ignores the highly variable ways in which language is used in everyday communication. According to Hymes, cultures communicate in different ways, but all forms of communication require a shared code, communicators who know and use the code, a channel, a setting, a message form, a topic, and an event created by transmission of the message. Anything may qualify as communication as long as it is construed as such by those who use that code. Is snake handling communication? How about baggy pants? Perhaps these are shared codes for expressing something among the members of the group. We cannot know without further ethnographic study.

Hymes referred to a group that uses a common code as a *speech community*, a concept that has become a centerpiece in the ongoing work of the ethnography of communication.[10] Speech communities are richly different from one another, and this makes generalization difficult. Hymes suggested a heuristic model for analyzing and making sense of speech events called SPEAKING:

1. Setting and Scene—space, place, and time
2. Participants—speaker and audience
3. Ends—purposes, outcomes and goals
4. Act Sequence—form of specific behaviors and order in which they are presented
5. Key—indicators of the tone or spirit of the speech act
6. Instrumentalities—channel or media of interaction
7. Norms—social rules for interpreting and producing behavior
8. Genres—types or classes of speech acts or events

This model is useful for comparing different cultures. Two native groups—the Apache in the United States and the Ilongot in the Philippines, for example—would have many different events that count as communication, varying behaviors that would be considered appropriate within those speaking events, and perhaps some distinct rules for how to communicate. On the other hand, they might have some similar types and functions of communication as well.

Participants in a local cultural community create shared meaning by using codes that have some degree of common understanding. Gerry Philipsen, a leader in the ethnography of communication and developer of speech codes theory (along with colleagues), defines a *speech code* as a distinctive set of understandings within a culture about what counts as communication, the significance of communication forms within the culture, how those forms are to be understood, and how they are to be performed.[11] The speech code is a culture's unwritten and often subconscious "guidebook" for how to communicate within the culture. How does a teenager in the United States know how to communicate at school—what to say, how to understand what others say, and how to talk? The group's speech code enables the teenager to do this.

Speech codes theory makes several claims about speech codes. First, such codes are distinctive; they vary from one culture to another. The manner and meaning of "griping" in Israel, for example, is entirely distinctive. Second, a

speech community will have multiple speech codes. Although a single code may predominate at particular times and in particular places, several codes may be deployed within the community. These multiple codes may relate to others in the community as a way of distinguishing one context from another. For example, you may talk in a certain way on social media and talk in quite a different way to your parents.

Third, speech codes constitute a speech community's own sense of how to be a person, how to connect with other people, and how to act or communicate within the social group. The code is more than a list of semantic meanings; it establishes the actual forms of communication that competent members of the culture must know. For example, to be a true member of a social group you might need the right slang and vocabulary.

Fourth, the codes guide what communicators actually experience when they interact with one another; it defines the meaning of speech acts and directs the interpretation of specific actions. Thus, the code tells social media users how to interpret actions in social media such as emoticons. Fifth, speech codes are not separate entities but are embedded in daily speech. You can "see" the code in the patterns of communication commonly used; the terms communicators use to describe what they are doing when they speak; and how they explain and justify the communication being used. You can detect speech codes also in how members of the culture change their behavior and vocabulary in different forms of communication.

Sixth, speech codes are powerful. They form the basis on which the culture will evaluate and conduct its communication. The skill or quality of performance in communication is noticed and evaluated based on the requirements of the speech code. Moral judgments are made about whether individuals and groups communicate properly and make appropriate use of cultural communication forms.

Dini Homsey and Todd Sandel explored speech codes in a Lebanese American community in the central U.S.[12] They completed a three-month participant observation and interviews with community members to identify speech codes around food, tradition, and identity. One key speech code was how food functioned to identify a person as Lebanese or not Lebanese. Participants explained that suppertime was a means of bringing family together through rituals of cooking, eating, and hospitality. The code for talking about food and inviting guests in to eat emphasizes the sharing and enacting of culture. The participants identify these codes as distinct from non-Lebanese who simply eat together. Another way food distinguishes the Lebanese is in the connection to tradition. For example, in preparing for a food festival, younger members of the community suggested quicker and more efficient ways of preparing food that were quickly rejected by the older members as being antitraditional and thus not being Lebanese. The authors conclude that the premise of speech code theory receives support from the way the code of food and tradition is reflected in the practices of members of the Lebanese community and the ways that member of the community talk about those practices.

Carbaugh is another significant theorist in the ethnography of communication tradition and suggests that ethnography functions to uncover at least three aspects of culture.[13] The first is to discover the type of *shared identity* created by communication in a cultural community—whether by African Americans, La Habra High

School cheerleaders, Japanese businessmen, or Jim's Auto Body bowlers. This identity is the members' sense of who they are as a group. It is a common set of qualities with which most members of the community would identify.

The second problem is to uncover the *shared meanings of public performances* seen in the group. What performances constitute communication within the culture, and what meanings do the various displays evoke? What does "playing the dozens" mean in black youth culture? What do cheerleaders at a high school basketball game communicate? What meaning is assigned to the "fines" at a Rotary meeting?

Finally, ethnography helps explore *contradictions*, or paradoxes, of the group. How are these handled through communication? How, for example, might a culture treat its members as individuals while also providing a sense of community? How might autonomy be granted while maintaining authority? How might roles be taught while instilling ideals of freedom?

In addressing these ethnographic dimensions, three types of questions are pursued. *Questions of norms* look for the ways communication is used to establish a set of standards and the ways notions of right and wrong affect communication patterns. *Questions of forms* look at the types of communication used within the society. What behaviors count as communication, and how are they organized? *Questions of cultural codes* draw attention to the meanings of the symbols and behaviors used as communication in the cultural community.

From the Source . . .

When I was living among Blackfeet people in Montana, I realized some moments when people were not verbally communicating but were deeply involved in listening to the natural world around them; when I was living among Finnish people, I discovered long periods of comfortable silence where my impulse was to get people talking! In both cases, and many others, the ethnography of communication provided not only a way of investigating these practices—of communicating with nature, and in silence—but also a way of living with others and respecting their communal ways. In this sense, the theory has offered to me not just an academic perspective but also a way of living constructively with others.

Donal Carbaugh

Although ethnography highlights aspects of group life, it also can reveal how individuals see themselves as persons. Group identities are not separate from but give rise to individual identities. Who you are, your identity as a person, is determined in large measure by how you communicate, with whom, and in what settings. The ethnographic study of communication, then, offers insights into various individual and group experiences. It is the study of the cultures that surround us and in which we participate. Carbaugh's own studies—of a college basketball audience, workers in a television station, married persons' names, a television talk show, and a community land-use controversy, to name a few—show the diversity of communities that can be explored ethnographically.

Tamar Katriel is another significant theorist in ethnography of communication. Her classic research focuses on Israeli "griping."[14] Based on her own experience as a "native griper" and interviews with middle-class Israelis, Katriel explains the common communication form *kiturim.* This form of communication takes place throughout adult Israeli society, but it is most often seen among the middle class and commonly takes place at Friday-night social gatherings called *mesibot kiturim,* or griping parties.

This communication form is so common that it is widely recognized by Israelis as part of their national character. Griping does not deal with personal problems but with national (and sometimes local) and public ones. It seems to affirm the Israeli identity as having important common national concerns. The griping centers on concerns that society at large theoretically could address and that the individual has little power to change. Thus, griping is a kind of shared venting. It is more than this, however, since it provides a sense of solidarity and is fun. In fact, griping and joke telling are often viewed together as the primary means of establishing cohesiveness in a social group in Israel.

Griping follows a predictable pattern. It usually begins with an initial gripe, followed by an acknowledgment and a gripe by another person. The pattern of a griping session can go from general societal problems to local ones, or the other way around. Katriel found two interesting variants on the griping theme. *Meta-griping* is griping about griping, or complaining that Israelis gripe too much. The other form is the *antigripe:* "Stop griping, and start doing something." Griping is ritualistic, and the content of the communication does not seem to be important. One must not mistake griping for serious problem solving on topics of concern. In fact, there is a strict prohibition against griping in the presence of non-Israelis—e.g., tourists—because outsiders do not understand the nature of griping and may take it literally, which would be embarrassing to the Israelis.

More recently, Katriel has theorized about speech codes and the ethnography of communication as it relates to new and social media.[15] She argues that the instrumentalities of the SPEAKING model are still critical as technology has changed the way that we communicate in cultural communities. For example, today it is common for people to be sitting together and use their cell phones to text each other (and others) rather than talk directly to one another. Katriel suggests two key areas for future inquiry. The first line is exploring new speech codes in virtual communities, including the ways that public and private become mixed. The second line looks at the materiality of the actual technologies and how communication technologies enable or constrain performance. For example, the nature of phones and apps have changed, which enables us to communicate in different ways that create new meanings and codes (e.g., using avatars, voice-over Internet, video conferencing). This new perspective emphasizes temporality and performativity in the creation of speech codes.

In this section, we have explored one line of work within the broader tradition of ethnography. In the following section, we look at another one, frequently termed *performance ethnography*.

Performance Ethnography

If you were to do fieldwork in a foreign culture, you would be observing what the people of the culture actually do—how they perform culture. Victor Turner, a

British cultural anthropologist, was best known for pointing out that culture is performed.[16] Similar to the framework presented by Goffman's presentation of self (chapter 3), Turner saw much in common between theatre and everyday cultural life. Like actors, we say our lines as we perform with our bodies.

The public performances in a culture are like *social dramas,* in which group members work out their relationships and ideas. Such dramas are *liminal,* meaning that they mark a transition from one state to another or a border between one thing and another. A *limin* is like a threshold between two places. Rites of passage (e.g., a quinceñera or Bar/Bat Mitzvah) are good examples, as they depict movement from one stage of life to another. Often rituals are liminal in the sense that they connect the sacred with the secular or symbolize the change of seasons.

Turner notes that social dramas follow a specific process. The first stage is a *breach,* or some kind of violation or threat to community order. This is followed by a *crisis,* as members of the community become agitated and take various sides on the issues raised by the breach. In the third phase, consisting of *redressive* or *remedial procedures,* members of the culture engage in performances that mend the breach or in some way return to a state of acceptance. This stage of the social drama often involves the most self-examination and is the place where new meanings are created or old ones reproduced. Finally, there is a fourth stage—*reintegration*—or restoration of peace.

The way a community responds to a threat such as an attack or a natural disaster is one form of social drama. The United States responded to or performed in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11 with a war designed to track down terrorists. Great Britain responded quite differently when terrorists planted bombs on the underground, proceeding with business as usual to show a refusal to let fear—which the terrorists wanted to provoke—alter regular routines. In some African communities, members respond as a group when a member's behavior threatens the usual order. The entire community forms a circle around the individual who violated accepted norms. All remain there until everyone has had a chance to say everything good they can think of about the individual. The outcome of this performance is that the individual is welcomed back into the community.[17]

Not all members of a group or culture participate in these social dramas and performances. Often certain members take the lead, and others may be asked or selected to participate. Cultural performances, like presidential elections, are ways that central figures show an audience its own culture. By seeing how the performers work things out through breach, crisis, redressive action, and reintegration, the culture is both formed and learned.

Sporting events are a good example of social dramas. The teams come together in competition, which creates a breach, or threat to order. As the teams play and make gains against one another, a spirit of crisis arises, and fans take sides, cheering with elation or booing with disappointment. Rules, officials, time-outs, halftime huddles, and coaching offer moments of redressive action, as the teams and fans deal with the crisis in a variety of ways. Usually, a game ends with the two teams shaking hands and fans joining their friends to rehash the game over a beer or perhaps to tune in to another game. These performances, then, are more than just games. They teach us about competition, collaboration, loyalty, and a host of other values important to a culture.

Dwight Conquergood was probably the most well-known performance ethnographer in the communication field. His work and legacy highlight the ways we are always engaged in performance. Life is an ongoing process of production, always emerging through action and doing and by listening and seeing. Performance ethnography is significant because it broadens the field beyond its traditional fixation on language and text to include *embodied practice*. This move—from text to performance—raises a number of interesting questions.[18]

1. Is culture better understood as a verb rather than a noun?
2. Is ethnographic fieldwork a joint performance between the researcher and the subject?
3. How does performance impact interpretation, and can performance be considered a kind of hermeneutics?
4. How should the results of performance ethnography be published, and how should scholarly representation itself make use of performance?
5. What is the relationship between performance and power?

In working with these questions, Conquergood replaced the traditional ethnographic approach of *observation* (seeing) with listening. When we see, we look at the other as a spectator; when we listen, we take in the experience of the other and become engaged co-performers. For Conquergood, doing ethnography is always a dialogue between researcher and participant.

Ethnographic theories clearly prioritize cultural conditions and tendencies over individual ones. Within this tradition, communication is never a simple tool for transmitting information and influence from one person to another; rather, it is a way in which culture itself is produced and reproduced. As a tradition, then, these theories place cultural forms at the center, showing how culture both influences and is influenced by our forms of communication. Notice, however, that question 5 above takes this field directly into concerns about power. Indeed, Conquergood's work is classified as critical performance ethnography because cultural productions can have serious personal and societal consequences that highlight fairness and justice.

Conquergood's critical performance ethnography framework emphasized a series of triads.[19] The first triad is of performance, ethnography, and praxis. *Praxis* is the doing or practical application of insights about performance ethnography. The second triad consists of imitation, construction, and intervention. Cultural members use acts to imitate others, construct meaning, and intervene in practices and structures that are unjust and unfair. The final triad involves three separate triads: (1) the Cs—citizenship, creativity, and critique; (2) the As—analysis, artistry, and activism; and (3) the Is—inquiry, imagination, and intervention. These three triads illustrate the constant performance of culture and how it is used to teach, challenge, and create change. Thus, there is a moral component that fosters hope for a community within performance ethnography as well.

This section explored three different approaches to the study of cultural communication. It examined the ways that culture is interpreted, created, and performed to create shared identity, common ways of speaking, and sites of struggle in relation to other speech communities. The next section introduces

theories that focus on effective and appropriate communication with people from different cultures.

Intercultural Communication Competence

Many scholars who study intercultural communication have the goal of improving the quality of interaction between people of different cultures. Increased globalization and diversity in societies can create challenges ranging from misunderstandings to prejudice to violence. These scholars seek to identify cultural elements that lead to better understanding, fewer intercultural conflicts, and better outcomes for all involved. This area of research can be classified as intercultural communication competence—the ability to communicate with people from different cultures in an effective and appropriate manner to support goal achievement and to build relationships.[20] Intercultural communication competence is sometimes referenced as cultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, cultural humility, cultural safety, and intercultural effectiveness. Each of these terms has slightly different meanings and emphases, although all have, to a certain degree, an interest in enhancing the quality of interaction and outcomes when people from different cultural backgrounds interact with each other. This section includes three theories with this goal in mind: (1) anxiety-uncertainty management theory; (2) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity; and (3) communication accommodation theory.

Anxiety-Uncertainty Management Theory

William Gudykunst and his colleagues extend the work of Charles Berger on uncertainty reduction theory (see chapter 3) by examining uncertainty and anxiety in intercultural situations. Gudykunst viewed the relationship with people from different cultures as similar to communicating with a stranger. When we meet someone who is a stranger (or different and unknown to us), we have some uncertainty and anxiety about interacting with that person. Gudykunst's theory differs from that of uncertainty reduction theory by emphasizing the importance of managing uncertainty and anxiety for effective communication with strangers rather than just reducing uncertainty. Hence, the theory is called anxiety and uncertainty management theory (AUM).[21]

Uncertainty relates to the need and desire for predictability, while *anxiety* is a feeling of worry. Gudykunst argues that some uncertainty and anxiety is important because it keeps us focused, which is important when interacting with someone from a different culture. The focus does not invoke feelings of danger; rather it acknowledges difference and the unknown. Gudykunst suggests that there is a maximum and minimum amount of uncertainty and anxiety that makes for a productive intercultural interaction, and we need to be within those thresholds to communicate effectively. There is no clear line that marks the point at which difficult or problematic communication will result. Instead, individuals have different thresholds for uncertainty and anxiety. If your level of uncertainty exceeds your upper threshold, you will not feel very confident and may decide to avoid communication. Similarly, if you are too anxious, you will be nervous and less likely to communicate. There are also low-end thresholds,

below which your motivation to communicate will disappear. If you do not feel any uncertainty, you will not be motivated to communicate because you feel you already know enough. Similarly, if you are not anxious enough, you will not care enough to try. The ideal in intergroup situations, then, is for uncertainty and anxiety to be between your upper and lower thresholds, which would lead to motivation to communicate and the adoption of uncertainty-reduction strategies.

Two additional key concepts to the theory are effective communication and mindfulness. *Effective communication* refers to the exchange of messages that results in maximum understanding. Communicating with strangers can be difficult because we use our own values, frames of reference, and communication styles to interpret the behavior of the other person. *Mindfulness* occurs when we are aware of our communication styles and strategies. Many times when we interact with others, we do so on automatic pilot or in a mindless manner. If you have ever driven somewhere and do not remember how you got there or drove home when you meant to go to the grocery store, you understand being on automatic pilot. Mindfulness is very important for effective communication with strangers in order to avoid simply relying on our own values, frames, and communication styles. It allows us to be aware of difference and to adapt to the values, rules, and identities of others. It also helps us to manage uncertainty and anxiety.

The process of uncertainty and anxiety management is also influenced by a number of factors that Gudykunst labels as superficial causes including *group identities*, *connections with strangers*, and *cultural variability*.[22] When you strongly identify with your own cultural group, and you think the other person is typical of a different group, you will probably feel a certain amount of anxiety, and your uncertainty will be great. On the other hand, your confidence in getting to know the other person will be higher and your anxiety about doing so will be lower if you expect the results to be positive. Experience and friendships with other people from different cultures also may increase your confidence when meeting a stranger from another cultural group. In addition, knowing the other person's language will help, as will a certain amount of tolerance for ambiguity. When you are more confident and less anxious about meeting someone from a different cultural group, you will probably do a better job of getting information about them and reducing uncertainty.

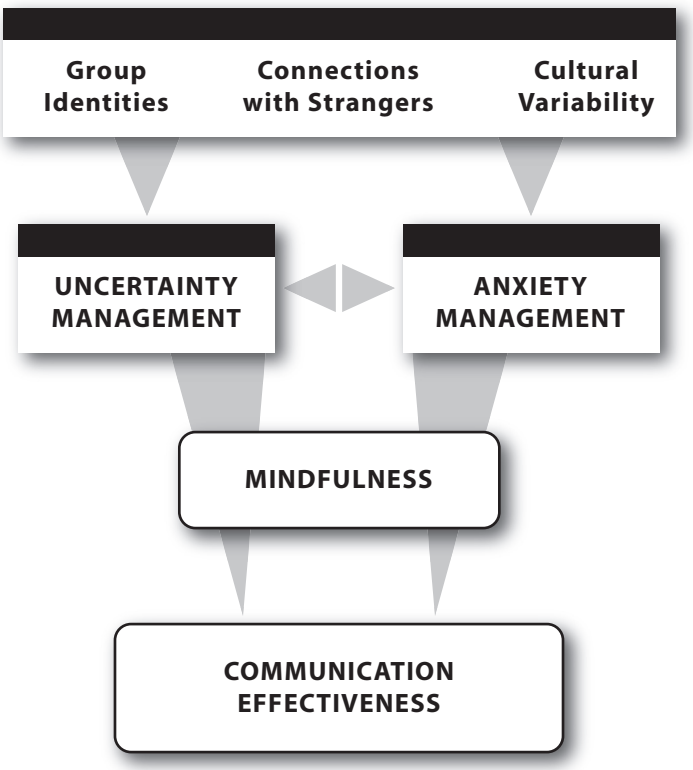
Cultural variability, or the notion that cultures vary on particular factors, is a part of a number of theories of intercultural communication and largely is derived from the pioneering work of Geert Hofstede.[23] Hofstede identified four dimensions of cultural variability from a large study of IBM employees from over 50 nations. *Individualism-collectivism* refers to whether a culture emphasizes individual identity and individual rights or group identity and group obligations ("I" or "we" identities). *Power distance* is the extent to which individuals accept and expect there to be inequalities in the distribution of power. For example, if you expect people in positions of power to diminish their power by using first names, you probably live in a low power distance culture. The formal use of titles to emphasize positions of power is more reflective of high power distance cultures. *Uncertainty avoidance* is the degree to which members of a culture are threatened by unknown or uncertain situations. *Masculinity-femininity* is the degree to which cultures stress achievement or nurturing respectively—the extent to which traditionally masculine traits or traditionally feminine ones are favored.

Gudykunst proposes that each of these dimensions influences factors related to uncertainty or anxiety management during initial interactions with strangers. For example, he posits that collectivism, large power distance, and masculinity result in stronger distinctions between strangers, which results in greater uncertainty and anxiety. In addition, high uncertainty avoidance leads to an increase in fear of interacting with strangers.

Gudykunst elaborated this theory in detail, to the point that it now includes 47 axioms related to how various elements impact anxiety and uncertainty, how uncertainty and anxiety affect effective communication, and how mindfulness moderates the relationship of anxiety/uncertainty and effective communication. Clearly, anxiety and uncertainty correlate with a whole host of communication traits, behaviors, and patterns; these combinations affect what we do in conversation with those whom we do not know. Figure 11.1 displays a model of the theory.[24]

AUM theory continues to be used and has been expanded in recent years. James Neuliep conducted a study to determine if communication apprehension and ethnocentrism were related to uncertainty reduction and communication satisfaction. *Ethnocentrism* is the inherent belief in the superiority of one's culture.[25] *Communication apprehension* is the tendency to have fear about communicating with others. Neuliep had participants rate their levels of these variables prior to interacting with strangers. He then had participants interact either with

Figure 11.1 Model of the AUM Theory



a person from a different culture (intercultural) or with a person from the same culture (intracultural). He then had the participants again rate their levels on each of these variables. Neuliep found that communication apprehension and ethnocentrism are negatively related to uncertainty reduction and communication satisfaction only in the intercultural interactions. These findings are consistent with Gudykunst's theory in that they show additional superficial causes that create uncertainty and anxiety that can negatively impact effective communication (in this case measured as satisfaction). The next theory explores the concept of ethnocentrism in more detail.

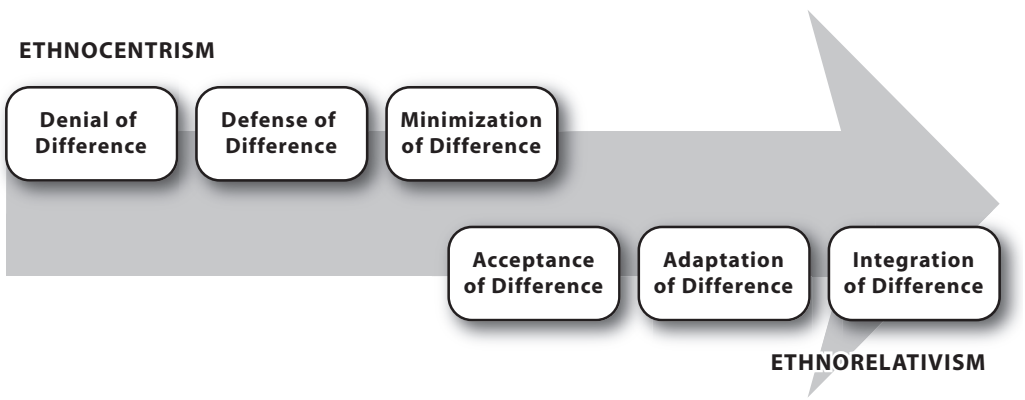
Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Another approach to understanding intercultural communication competence is Milton Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity.[26] Bennett sought to create a model that would help intercultural trainers assess trainees' subjective experiences and their attitudinal and behavioral states when interacting with people from different cultures. By assessing current attitudes, trainers can help trainees develop intercultural sensitivity. *Intercultural sensitivity* is developing the capacity to accommodate and accept cultural differences in communication behavior, values, and beliefs.

Bennet's model consists of six stages (see figure 11.2). The first three stages reflect varying states of ethnocentrism. We are all somewhat ethnocentric; it is a human tendency to view our behaviors, values, and beliefs as important and "normal." These attitudes allow us to have pride in our culture and a sense of accomplishment and security. However, rigid and extreme amounts of ethnocentrism foster ineffective and hurtful relationships with people of other cultures. To move beyond ethnocentrism, we have to work to change our attitudes and to develop effective intercultural communication skills.

Denial of difference refers to the belief that all people are the same, and there are no cultural differences. Often this attitude occurs because there is limited contact with culturally different people. If there is contact, people in this stage conclude that people who act differently are primitive. For example, a per-

Figure 11.2 Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity[27]



son in this stage might say something such as, "We are all just humans. However, those people have not been raised right" (the implication is that they are not human). *Defense of difference* recognizes that people are different but those differences are denigrated rather than appreciated. This stage is somewhat advanced from the first because there is a recognition of cultural differences. However, people in this stage believe that their culture is better, and they negatively stereotype other cultures. For example, "all of those people should be banned from this country" is an example of a negative stereotype that is used to defend cultural superiority. *Minimization of difference* includes the recognition of cultural differences but only at a surface level. People see basic differences such as music, food, and clothes and yet do not relate these differences to values and norms.

The next three stages move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. *Ethnorelativism* is believing that all cultures are normal and appropriate. There is an attempt to interpret and evaluate behavior from the relevant cultural background. *Acceptance of difference* refers to the appreciation of and respect for cultural value differences. People in this stage perceive that there are different worldviews and accept those worldviews as appropriate and interesting. There is increased curiosity about different cultures, resulting in exploration of them. For example, a person might read about different cultures, take an intercultural communication class, or ask others about their cultures. *Adaptation of difference* results in changed communication styles to better interact with members of other cultures. This stage also includes the development of intercultural communication skills. *Integration of difference* is the willing adoption of different cultural beliefs and behaviors into one's own life. At this stage, people see strengths in other cultures and seek ways to enhance their own identities and perspectives. For example, moving overseas and adopting some of the cultural practices of the new region would be an indicator of being in this stage.

These six stages are not fixed, and people can move in and out of the stages. Sometimes we might find that people are in an ethnorelative stage with one culture, but an ethnocentric stage with another. For example, perhaps you grew up in a Latino/a community and thus have integrated Latino/a values and communication styles. However, other ethnic groups feel strange to you, and you minimize their differences. Bennett advocates using this model as a diagnostic tool;

From the Source . . .

Back in the day, intercultural training was guided more by good intentions and borrowed experiential pedagogy than by any particular intercultural theory. In trying to generate a theory for training, I discovered that we needed a clearer definition of the outcome of training and a better pedagogical model for cross-cultural education. To that end, the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity defines "perceptual sensitivity to cultural difference" as the goal and incorporates constructivist developmental theory as the pedagogy. It has been a good combination, fueling a lot of research and educational design over the last 30 years.

Milton Bennett

trainers can use different strategies at each stage to encourage growth and development. For example, for someone in the denial of difference stage, avoiding deep discussions about difference and the cultural implications of difference might be most productive. Instead, facilitating, for example, a Mexican fiesta could help the person in this stage move forward in recognizing cultural differences and beginning to appreciate them.

Bennett's model continues to inspire research and practice within and outside of the discipline. Ksenia Kirillova and her colleagues used the model to examine the impact of volunteer tourism for developing intercultural sensitivity.[28] Volunteer tourism is the combination of travelling as a tourist and also volunteering time for the local community (e.g., building a house, participating in a conservation project, etc.). The authors asked a large number of adults who had completed a volunteer tourism stay of less than 12 months to fill out a questionnaire about their experiences. They found that volunteer tourism has both positive and negative effects on intercultural sensitivity. That is, this type of experience can both facilitate and inhibit intercultural understanding and growth. The key factor for increasing intercultural sensitivity was the quality of interaction with the host community. If the participants had positive and effective communication with hosts, they were likely to have an increase in intercultural sensitivity. In contrast, negative and ineffective communication led to lower intercultural sensitivity. This study demonstrates the importance of communication competence for effective intercultural relations. The next theory explores an additional theory that looks at the importance of accommodation for intercultural communication competence.

Communication Accommodation Theory

Formulated by Howard Giles and his colleagues, communication accommodation theory (CAT) explains how and why we adjust our communication behaviors to the actions of others.[29] Giles and his colleagues have confirmed the common observation that communicators often seem to mimic one another's behavior—two people in conversation might both have their arms crossed or both could have one hand in a pocket. This is *convergence*—some form of accommodation and mutual adjustment to the other. The opposite—*divergence* (moving apart or nonaccommodation)—happens when speakers begin to exaggerate their differences. Accommodation occurs in almost all imaginable communication behaviors, including accent, rate, loudness, vocabulary, grammar, voice, gestures, and other features.

Convergence or divergence can be *mutual,* in which case both communicators come together or go apart, or it can be *nonmutual,* in which one person converges and the other diverges. A couple on the verge of divorce might demonstrate such nonmutuality; the party that does not want the divorce may display convergence behaviors, while the other's behavior clearly displays divergence. Convergence can also be *partial* or *complete.* For example, you might speak somewhat faster so that you are a little closer to another person's speech rate, or you might go all the way and speak just as fast as the person to whom you are talking. Although accommodation is sometimes done consciously, the speaker is usually unaware of doing so. The use of accommodation is similar to any number of other functional but subconscious processes that are scripted

or enacted without having to attend to all the details of each behavior. You are probably more aware of divergence than convergence because differences are more noticeable.

Communication accommodation theory makes three assumptions. First, all communicative interactions are embedded in a sociohistorical context. That is, any given interaction is shaped by previous social and historical factors among members of different groups as well as our own interpersonal history. For example, if you have had a negative relationship with a coworker, you probably use divergence when you communicate with her. In addition, you may be meeting someone from a different culture for the first time. If your community has had negative interactions with her community, the two of you may be negatively inclined toward each other, and you may use divergent communication strategies. In contrast, if you (or your communities) have had neutral or positive relations, there is a greater tendency to accommodate the other person's behaviors.

The second assumption is that communication includes the exchange of messages for information purposes and also for negotiating personal and cultural identities. In some interactions, you are focused on informational purposes. Usually accommodation enhances mutual understanding, although in some situations, divergence is helpful. For example, Hiroshi speaks English as a second language and speaks with little accent. However, he is still learning about US American customs. He may speak English with a greater accent than normal so that you do not assume he understands everything you are saying, particularly slang, which as an outsider is more difficult to grasp. His divergence encourages you to check the accuracy of perceptions and information exchanged, which may help increase understanding. In other interactions, you may focus on negotiating your personal and social identities. You may try to create a closer personal relationship with the other person, which leads to accommodation. For example, you meet someone you are attracted to and desire a closer relationship with that person. You will likely accommodate her behavior in this situation.

The third assumption is that you use various forms of communication to converge and diverge in order to achieve information and identity needs. Accommodation can lead to identification and bonding or disapproval and distancing. For instance, convergence often happens in situations in which you seek the approval of others. This can occur in groups that are already alike in certain ways because such groups consist of similar individuals who can coordinate their actions. When communicators converge effectively, they may find one another more attractive, predictable, and easier to understand. They may also feel more involved with one another. Typically, some convergence is appreciated. You respond favorably to someone who makes an attempt to speak in your style, but you will probably dislike too much convergence, especially if you think it is inappropriate. For example, people sometimes converge not with the other person's actual speech but with a stereotype, such as when a nurse speaks to an elderly patient using baby talk or when someone speaks loudly and slowly to a blind person. People generally appreciate convergence from others that is accurate, well intended, and appropriate in the situation and are irritated by the convergence effort if it is not.

Of course, you do not always match the behavior of others in order to seek their approval. Often higher-status speakers will slow their speech or use sim-

pler vocabulary to increase understanding when talking with a person who has lower status. In contrast, lower-status communicators will sometimes upgrade their speech—eliminating the colloquialisms of their class such as "ain't," for example—to match the higher-status person's speech because they want that person's approval.

Sometimes, instead of converging, you choose to maintain your own style or actually move in the opposite direction of your conversational partner's style. You may work to maintain your own style when you want to reinforce your identity. This would be the case, for example, among members of an ethnic group with a strong accent who work to preserve the accent in the face of the homogenizing influences of a dominant culture. Stephen and Karen have a friend who was born and grew up in Germany. Although she hasn't lived there for 50 years, she works hard to maintain a strong German accent. She admits that she is doing this on purpose to keep her German identity, while her brother doesn't have even a hint of a German accent.

In addition to affecting how we communicate, communication accommodation theory also specifies that we use our personal and cultural identities and social norms to perceive and evaluate the behavior of others. How you evaluate convergence depends in part on motivation—why you think others are copying you. Studies have shown that when listeners perceive that the speaker is intentionally speaking in a style close to the listener's own, they usually like it. But listeners will evaluate negatively any convergence move that is seen as inappropriate in the situation or done out of ill will. This includes, for example, mocking, teasing, insensitivity to social norms, or inflexibility. These evaluations will influence the anticipation of future interactions. For example, a positive evaluation leads to a desire for and expectation of future interactions with the other person; a negative evaluation decreases interest in future interaction.

From the Source . . .

I noticed that I was a "linguistic chameleon"; my accent changed when going to soccer games, at college, and coming back home. When in North Wales, an entire pub switched from speaking English to Welsh when they saw us walk in! The theory was an attempt to explain these compelling events (which many others reported experiencing). While communication accommodation theory was recognized in its formative years, it is only recently that people are meowing loudly about it!

Howard Giles

CAT continues to be a very popular theory that is applied to a variety of contexts. A recent special issue of the journal *Language & Culture* was devoted to the development and advancement of the theory. Jenny Nilsson, who authored one of the articles in the special issue, explored change in and stability of dialects in West Sweden generally and within specific conversations among participants.[30] In Gothenburg (the second largest city in Sweden), most speakers speak a Gothenburg dialect rather than standard Swedish. In some coastal areas near

the city, many speakers use a Gothenburg dialect, while inland (and equidistant from the city as the coastal areas), all the speakers use a standard dialect. This sociohistorical context illustrates that certain speakers see their dialect as prestigious and important for cultural identity.

In her study, Nilsson examined conversations among naturally occurring triads of people who displayed variations of dialects and accommodation and nonaccommodation in their speech. Accommodation was used to facilitate goal completion and also movement toward others. Nonaccommodation reflected support for one's own cultural identity. Nilsson concludes that there is a dynamic tension between convergence and divergence that reflects changes in preferences for dialects and identities.

This section explored three different theories that examine aspects of intercultural communication competence. Anxiety and uncertainty management theory positions competence as the mindful management of anxiety and uncertainty during initial interactions. The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity positions competence as the attitudinal and behavioral growth of a person moving from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Communication accommodation theory positions competence as the ability to converge and diverge to enhance understanding and also support personal and cultural identities. The next section includes theories that look at how people adapt and change as they are exposed to different cultural elements.

Cultural Adaptation and Change

Globalization has led to increased mobility and migration around the world. While some of this mobility relates to tourism, many communication scholars are interested in longer-term changes that people face when they move to a new country or community, whether as a migrant, refugee, or sojourner. *Sojourners* are people who spend a period of time away from their home (e.g., for work or school) and intend to return home. Migrants and refugees are people who permanently leave home, whether by choice (migrants) or due to political or social upheaval (refugees). All of these individuals adapt to new cultures. In addition, people within a culture change as a result of the influence of new people, new ideas, and new technologies. Three theories of adaptation and change are presented in this section: (1) integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation; (2) differential adaptation theory; and (3) diffusion of innovations theory.

Integrative Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Young Yun Kim offers a theory to explain how people who move from one culture to another—whether as sojourners, immigrants, or refugees—adapt to the larger host culture in which they live.[31] The integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation focuses on the adaptation of the individual to her new or host environment. Cross-cultural adaptation is the attempt to establish and maintain a functional and reciprocal relationship with the environment. Thus, the person who moves to a new culture wants to be able to do her work, get the resources she needs, raise her children, and so on, and yet also maintain a positive personal and cultural identity.

Adaptation includes deculturation and acculturation. *Deculturation* is unlearning old cultural behaviors, beliefs, and values. *Acculturation* is learning some of the host cultural behaviors, beliefs, and values. For example, John moved to New Zealand five years ago. He had to unlearn some factors of US culture such as driving on the right hand side of the road and that pies are filled with fruit—in New Zealand, pies are typically filled with meat instead of fruit. He also had to learn some new features of New Zealand culture including the importance to the culture of tea/coffee breaks every morning at 10:30 (he is still working on that one) and rugby (which he fully gets into—"go All Blacks!," the national rugby team). These are just minor examples of adaptation; deeper changes are always involved, including learning a new language, community styles, and ways of thinking.

The integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation takes a systems perspective whereby the individual must adapt to larger environments. Inputs from the larger system (environment) are transformed into actions that lead to change. This process involves a series of movements involving stress and adaptation. Change happens incrementally through a back-and-forth movement within a stress-adaptation dialectic. *Stress* occurs from a tension between the familiar and the new. Immigrants want the comfort of "home," but they know that they must learn new things. This stress leads to *adaptation*, or the development of new behaviors and ideas. Immigrants "grow" over time as they manage this stress-adaptation dialectic.

Change for the immigrant, then, is a result of the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic over a long period of time. Successful adaptation can be seen in higher levels of *functional fitness*, which is evidenced by apparent ease and comfort; *psychological health*, which can be seen in the person's sense of well-being and satisfaction; and *intercultural identity*, or movement toward a more complex sense of self that may include cultural elements of both home and host countries.

Adaptation and change are largely the result of communication, both intrapersonal and social. The immigrant constantly is thinking (having an internal conversation) about what to do, and this personal process is extended into the social realm as individuals participate in face-to-face encounters with members of their own group and members of the host group. There is also the use of media for obtaining information about the host culture.

Over time, as adaptation occurs, the immigrant relies on a certain amount of *host communication competence*—cognitive, affective, and operational knowledge shared with the host culture (or how well an immigrant can communicate with members of the host culture). *Cognitive competence* includes knowledge of the language, history, institutions, and other important parts of the host system. *Affective competence* is the motivation to change and learn the host culture, and *operational competence* simply refers to learning necessary behaviors to get along. The more the immigrant participates in the host culture, the more host competence grows. This interaction can happen through interpersonal communication as well as through mediated sources, both within the immigrant's own community and with the larger host community. Indeed, *ethnic communication*, or interaction within one's own group, can help the immigrant learn more about the host, particularly in the early period of immigration. For example, John's

first department meeting included an agenda item of apologies. He asked one of his US American colleagues why people would be apologizing. She explained to him that apologies meant people who said they could not attend the meeting.

Three key environmental factors affect how well strangers will adapt. These include *host receptivity*, or how welcoming the host community is; *host conformity pressure*, or the expectations of the host community for adaptation; and *ethnic group strength*, or the encouragement the individual receives from his or her own ethnic group. Some groups, for example, discourage their members from adapting to the new culture.

From the Source . . .

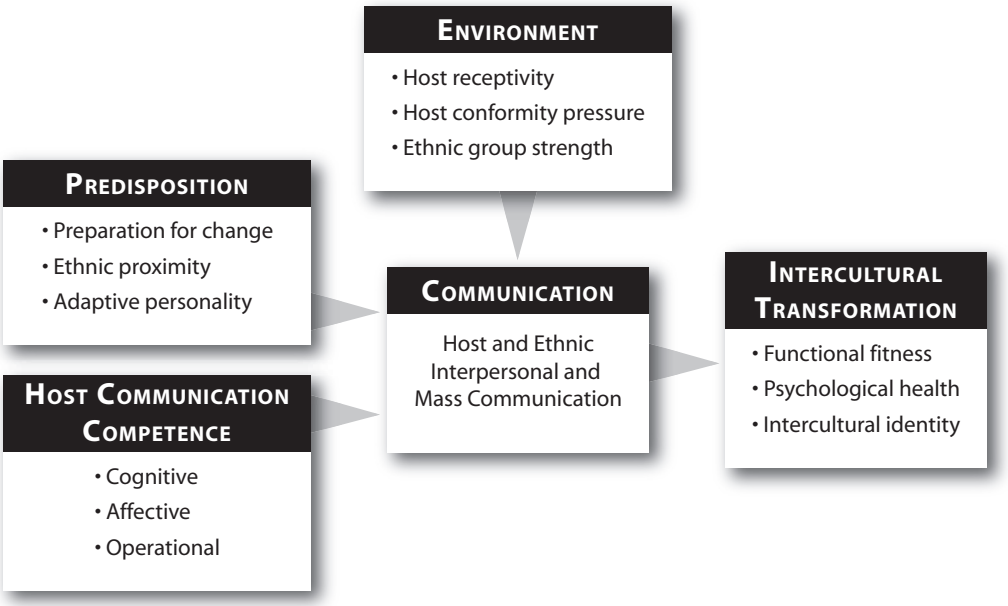
As a graduate student from Korea studying communication in the United States in the 1970s, I began my inquiry into what it meant to leave a home culture and adapt to a new one. The integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation is the outcome of this long-term endeavor. Consolidating many pertinent social scientific concepts, I sought to capture in this theory the richness and complexity of the dynamic process in which cultural strangers, over time, are able to achieve greater functional fitness and efficacy. My own cross-cultural journey has given this work a special sense of assurance and gratitude.

Young Yun Kim

There are, of course, many personal factors involved in the effectiveness and speed of adaptation. These can be classified as the level of *preparedness*, or readiness of the immigrant to learn the new culture; *ethnic proximity* or distance, which is the similarity or difference between the cultures; and *personality*, including openness, strength, and positivity, among other traits. This theory employs 21 theorems that predict the outcome of the variables described above. For example, one theorem states that the greater the communication competence of the host, the more the individual will participate in host social communication. Figure 11.3 displays a model of the theory.[32]

Kelly McKay-Semmler and Kim conducted a test of the theory, specifically exploring communication patterns, functional fitness, and psychological health.[33] They examined the adaptation of Hispanic youth in public schools in the upper Midwestern United States by asking them to complete a questionnaire about their host communication competence, host interpersonal communication, functional fitness, and psychological health. They found support for the theory in that host competence and interpersonal communication were positively associated with intercultural transformation outcomes of functional fitness and psychological health. The authors conclude that the quality of communication (individually and interpersonally) is a key factor in facilitating adaptation of an immigrant to the host culture. However, some question whether it should only be immigrants who need to adapt, and the next theory explores some of the tensions between adaptation of immigrants and hosts.

Figure 11.3 Model of the Theory of Integrative Cross-Cultural Adaptation



Differential Adaptation Theory

Antonio De La Garza and Kent Ono challenge the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation theory and other similar approaches, arguing that immigrants do not necessarily choose to assimilate into the host culture.[34] *Assimilation* occurs when people adopt the host culture's values and norms rather than maintaining the values of their home culture. Further, De La Garza and Ono argue that immigrants change the existing host culture as well. These scholars suggest that a critical orientation toward adaptation that includes power and agency is important for understanding immigrant adaptation, and they call their theory differential adaptation theory.

Differential adaptation theory begins with two dialectics (opposing tensions, as introduced in chapter 7). The first dialectic is universal versus specific. De La Garza and Ono explain that the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation assumes a universal perspective in which all immigrants adapt in a similar manner. There might be some individual differences, but overall these experiences have commonalities that can be explained by a single model. Further, this theory assumes that all people want (or at least should want) to adapt to their host culture. De La Garza and Ono contrast this with specificity, suggesting that immigrants want and have different types of adaptation experiences that are specific to their individual experiences. Some immigrants want to adapt and have an experience similar to the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, while others resist adaptation or have a blended adaptation experience. For example, one immigrant might try to adapt and yet he feels resistance by the

host culture, so he chooses to live in an ethnic enclave and still finds functional fitness and psychological health. Another immigrant might choose to live in an ethnic enclave and yet also choose to identify with aspects of the host culture, thus living effectively in both cultures.

The second dialectic is individual versus society. De La Garza and Ono argue that the integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation assumes a one-way adaptation in which the society changes the individual. In contrast, they also note that individuals change society and/or resist efforts to change which in turn can force society to change. For example, a community of immigrants that does not learn to speak English results in communities developing multi-lingual services to meet the needs of the immigrant community. Differential adaptation theory includes the possibilities of change of both individuals and society and the resistance of both individuals and society to change.

Differential adaptation theory also distinguishes between adaptation and assimilation relating to agency. De La Garza and Ono explain that adaptation is something that an individual, or individuals can choose to do. For example, individuals can adapt to the host culture or create ethnic enclaves and programs (language schools or identity groups at universities) that provide a safe haven for protecting home cultural identities. Assimilation, on the other hand, is something that society imposes on individuals. The agency for assimilation does not rest with individuals but rather with the pressure created by the state and larger culture. The theory also explains why some immigrants adapt in ways that conform to host culture and others choose to differentiate themselves from the host culture.

From the Source . . .

> We came across immigrants (documented and undocumented) who saw themselves as belonging in the United States but who exhibited nostalgic feelings about their and their families' home countries (Japan and Mexico). Kent's grandmother and grandfather, for example, regularly got mail from Japan, and it was written in Japanese. The idea that immigrants like them would happily give up all that they were before just did not square with what we saw happening in immigrant communities.
>
> Antonio De La Garza and Kent Ono

Differential adaptation theory recognizes the need to account for atypical and unique experiences in the adaptation process. Further, the theory specifies the changes that occur for society as well as for individuals. It also emphasizes that the host culture needs to change rather than simply expecting immigrants to change. Finally, the theory seeks to account for the complexity of enculturation and deculturation is subtle ways; that is, it is possible to learn new aspects of the host culture and yet reinforce home culture as well. The next theory explores a different aspect of change that relates to new ideas, technologies, and processes rather than immigration specifically.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory

Although the theory of the diffusion of innovations goes back at least to the middle of the twentieth century in sociology, the best-known and most influential work is that of communication scholar Everett Rogers and his colleagues.[35] Rogers relates dissemination to the process of social change, which consists of invention, diffusion (or communication), and consequences. Such change can occur internally from within a group or externally through contact with outside change agents. Contact may occur spontaneously or accidentally, or it may result from planning on the part of outside agencies. Change agents normally expect their impact to be functional and direct, although this positive result does not always occur. Indeed, diffusion of innovations theory has a strong practical purpose in "translating" the research findings into practices that agencies can use to disseminate innovations more effectively.

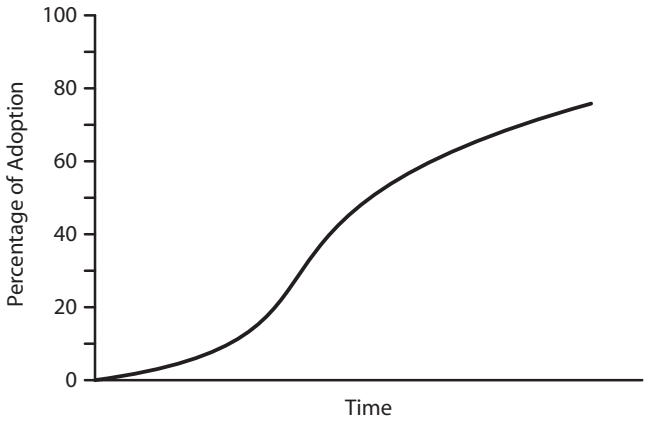
When innovations such as touch technology (e.g., iPhone, Droid), electric cars, a new therapy, or e-books are introduced, it takes a while for them to catch on. Rogers states, in fact, that one purpose of diffusion research is to discover the means to shorten this lag. Some innovations never catch on, but others spread rapidly. One innovation that has yet to catch on is a keyboard arranged so that the keys most often used are under the strongest fingers, an innovation that could increase keyboarding speed. The traditional "qwerty" keyboard, named for the first keys of the top row, was deliberately designed to slow typists down. When the typewriter was first introduced, keys would jam if the typist went too fast, so positioning often-used keys under weak fingers was the approach devised to limit typing speed.

People vary in their levels of resistance to change and the social support needed to adopt the new idea, practice, or object. There are always individuals who will adopt an innovation early, before most others consider doing so. These *early adopters* will set the stage, and they usually have an influence on others. As more and more people adopt, a critical mass of adoption occurs that gives rise to a rapid increase in general adoption.[36] A few people may be very slow to adopt and must see the innovation all around them before they will consider it. These are the *late adopters* (Rogers called these *late majority* and *laggards*). Of course, some may never adopt the new practice. In general, Rogers and his colleagues found that adoption approximates an S curve. The rise of adoption is slow at first, then it hits a critical mass, after which a sudden rise in adoption occurs. After that, adoption levels flatten out. Figure 11.4 on p. 410 displays the S curve of adoption.

There are four key elements to the theory of diffusion of innovations that help explain how to increase the rate and effectiveness of dissemination and adoption of the innovation: (1) time; (2) innovation itself; (3) communication channels; and (4) social system. Time is a key element of diffusion. Roger recognizes that all innovations take time to diffuse, and the goal is to speed up the rate of adoption, if possible.

Second, the rate of adoption is determined by perceptions of the characteristics of the innovation, including its relative advantage(s) over existing options, compatibility with existing values and experiences, complexity of the innovation (less complex is easier to adopt), trialability (potential adopters will more read-

Figure 11.4 S Curve of Adoption



ily accept an innovation with which they can experiment), and observability (many potential adopters want to observe others' adoption before taking the plunge themselves). The more that change agents can demonstrate these features of a potential innovation, the more likely it is that people will adopt the innovation. For example, early iPhones were displayed in Apple stores, allowing customers to try them and learn how much better they were than previous cell phones. They were easy to use and compatible with people's lives, values, and experiences.

The third dimension of Rogers's model is communication channels. The types of channels available and used can affect the diffusion of a new innovation. Channels include interpersonal communication, mass media, and social media. For example, early adopters become change agents by talking to others in their social networks. Further, messages about innovations need to come to people in a way that is consistent with their communication channel usage. Earlier versions of the theory emphasized interpersonal communication in social networks, but recently the importance of social media is recognized as important for diffusion as well. Rogers also made a distinction between homophily and heterophily in communication sources. Homophily is a communication source who is similar to you, while heterophily is a communication source who is different from you. Both are important for diffusion; homophily results in information that someone trusts, while heterophily is responsible for exposure to innovations. For example, when buying a new phone, you probably will trust your friend's opinion. However, someone in your personal network (maybe even you) had to find out about the innovation from someone else, so connections to outsiders are necessary as well.

Fourth, the social system has a role in the diffusion of innovations. The social system includes various elements, including opinion leaders and organizations. Opinion leaders are key people in networks who influence the opinions of others. Sometimes these people are formal leaders such as a chief of a village in Fiji; at other times, they are informal leaders. For example, some villages adopt water systems to improve sanitation, and others do not. Often it is the opinion of the chief that determines whether these systems are implemented. Organizations have an important role in the adoption of innovations because of the considerable time we spend in them. Organizations that have a culture of creativity and openness to innovation have a positive influence in terms of encouraging individual members to adopt innovations.

The diffusion of innovations is well illustrated by the family-planning program instituted in South Korea in 1968. Mothers' clubs were established in

about 12,000 villages throughout Korea for the purpose of disseminating information about family planning. Overall, the program was successful, and Korea saw a major decline in birthrate during this period. This program was built on the idea that interpersonal channels of communication would be crucial to the adoption of birth-control methods. Rogers and his colleagues interviewed women in 24 villages to gather information about the networks the women used for family planning.[37] They found that the village leaders initially received their information about family planning from the mass media and family-planning worker visits. However, interpersonal networks turned out to be the most important elements in the dissemination-adoption process. As birth control spread within the region, each village, with its distinctive social network, tended to use the same form of contraception (pill, IUD, condoms). Further, birth-control adoption was greatest in the villages in which the leader talked to many people personally, and the village women talked about it among themselves. This shows the importance of *opinion leaders* and the network of relations among adopters and potential adopters that is necessary for successful diffusion to occur.

A recent application of diffusion of innovations is a study by Beth Sundstrom that focused on the role of communication channels in the diffusion process.[38] She interviewed mothers with newborns to explore how they perceive and use mass media and social media. She found that these mothers tended to resist mass media portrayals of women's health. Rather, they tended to rely on Internet sources via Google for information about health and particularly about pregnancy and the postpartum period. For these women, these sources provided both impersonal and personal information that they could use to answer their health-related questions. Sundstrom argues that these sources provide an ideal balance of homophily and heterophily that can be used by communication campaign planners to target women during pregnancy and postpartum in order to provide innovative health messages.

This section examined three different theories of cultural adaptation and change. The first two theories explored adaptation of immigrants and the factors that influence the nature of adaptation. The integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation explores factors related to intercultural transformation, while the theory of differential adaptation argued for a differential model of adaptation in which immigrants and host culture change each other. Diffusion of innovations theory explored how new ideas, technologies, and information are disseminated and change society. The next section explores the negotiation of difference among people of different cultures.

Negotiating Difference

One of the key challenges for intercultural communication is that of difference. When we interact with people of different cultures, we are faced with different perspectives, beliefs, values, and communication styles. Cultural adaptation, discussed above, explores these differences indirectly as people learn to adapt to other cultures. The theories in this section directly address how individuals negotiate these differences to create positive and healthy personal identities, cultural identities, and intercultural relationships. We present four

theories in this section: (1) face-negotiation theory; (2) co-cultural theory; (3) cultural contracts theory; and (4) critical race theory.

Face-Negotiation Theory

Developed by Stella Ting-Toomey and her colleagues, face-negotiation theory (FNT) provides a basis for predicting how people will accomplish facework in different cultures, particularly when managing conflict.[39] *Face* refers to one's self-image in the presence of others. It involves feelings of respect, honor, status, connection, loyalty, and other similar values. In other words, face means your desired image or the identity others ascribe to you in a given social situation. Culture strongly dictates what identities are desired within a situation. *Facework* is the communication behaviors people use to build and protect their own face and to protect, build, or threaten the face of another person.[40]

When you observe facework in action, you can see various things going on. For example, you might notice the *locus* of facework, or whether it is directed at self or others. You might notice people bragging about an accomplishment or praising another person for a job well done—in the first case, the locus is directed at self; in the second, it is directed at another person. As you observe people communicating, you might also notice face *valence*, or whether a person's actions are positive (as in the case of defending, maintaining, or honoring one's face) or negative (as in attacking someone else's face). Next, you might notice *temporality*, or whether the communication is designed to prevent loss of face in the future or restore a loss of face that already has happened.

Face is a universal concern, but how face is defined and the ways in which facework is accomplished vary significantly from person to person and culture to culture. All cultures have ways to accomplish both preventive and restorative facework. *Preventive facework* involves communication designed to protect a person from feelings that threaten personal or group face. If you need to discuss a problem with your boss, for example, you might begin by saying, "I know you are very busy, and I'm sorry to intrude, but . . ." *Restorative facework* is designed to rebuild one's face after loss has already occurred. If you made an insulting comment to a friend in a moment of anger, you might later apologize and say, "You are a great friend, and I'm sorry I said that—I didn't really mean it."

Face is usually an issue in conflict situations. When you are having a conflict with another person, respect and honor are often compromised. Face threats can happen in situations marked by: (1) competition or a desire to win; (2) feeling angry or disconfirmed in some way; (3) conflicting values, opinions, or attitudes. Facework is a regular part of conflict communication. Often the facework is negative and takes the form of an attack on the other person. Other times, we try hard to work through the conflict, using positive facework to accomplish our own goals and helping others feel good about themselves in the process.

Face-negotiation theory tends to focus on locus of face and how it mediates the influence of cultural and individual variables on particular conflict styles. *Conflict styles* refers to a general approach for managing conflict. Ting-Toomey incorporated the dual-concern (the goals of self and others) model to define five different conflict styles: (1) competing—low concern for other goals and high concern for own goals; (2) avoiding—low concern for both types of goals; (3)

accommodating—high concern for other goals and low concern for own goals; (4) compromising—moderate concern for both kinds of goals; and (5) collaborating—high concern for both self and other goals.[41] Ting-Toomey argues that the notion of avoiding as low concern for both goals is a Western conceptualization and that avoiding actually reflects a moderate concern for other goals. As a result, FNT states that self-face concern is positively associated with competing and collaborating conflict styles, while other-face concern is positively associated with avoiding, accommodating, compromising, and collaborating styles.

There are three levels of factors that influence the strength of self- and other-face concerns. At the cultural level, *individualism-collectivism* is the key factor—is the focus on individual identity or group identity? Members of individualist cultures usually do more facework that acknowledges people as autonomous individuals and as having high self-face orientation. They see themselves as important apart from others and work to build their own esteem as well as that of others. In contrast, in collectivist cultures, facework is group oriented, and other-face is emphasized.

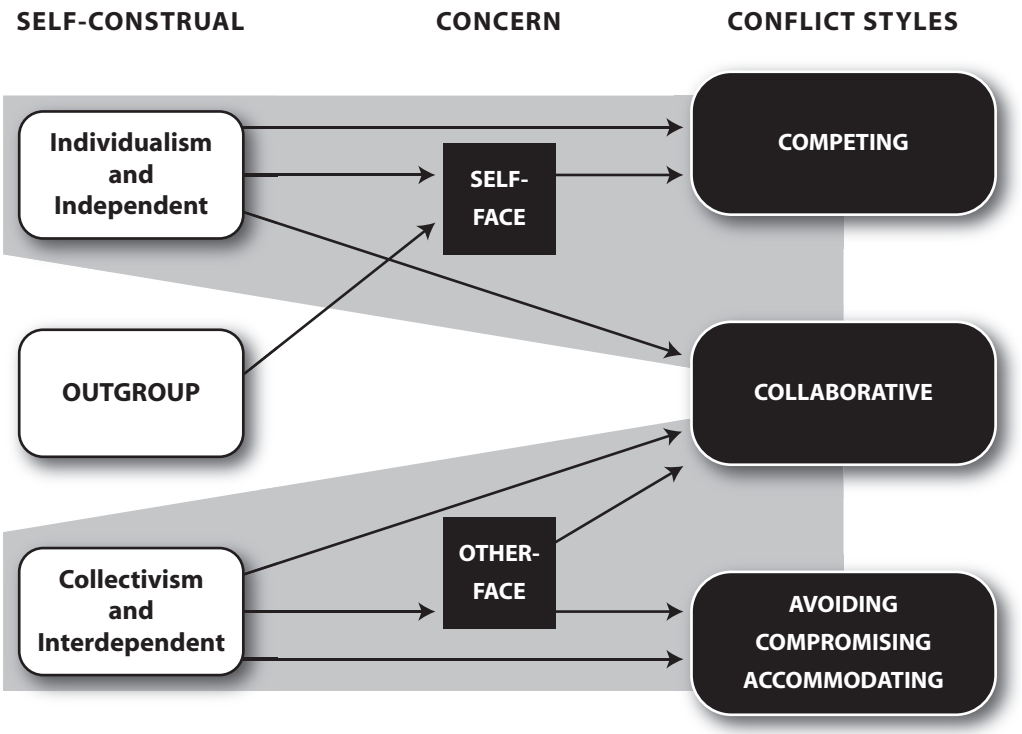
In terms of conflict styles, both individualists and collectivists prefer collaborating styles. However, their secondary styles differ. Individuals also use competing styles, while collectivists favor avoiding, accommodating, and compromising. Individualists will use more direct personal attacks and may try to protect or rebuild face—theirs and that of others—by showing personal respect. Collectivists, on the other hand, will use fewer personal attacks and will be more indirect in conflicts. They may avoid the issue at hand, talk around it, discuss side issues, take more time to get to the point, and generally talk in ways that build the sense of the group over themselves. Individualists in a conflict want to get through it by solving the problem or settling the dispute. Collectivists, in contrast, are more interested in affirming the relationship. Collaboration and compromise mean different things in these different cultures. For individualists, collaboration and compromise are ways of solving the problem, but for collectivists, they are a means for building a relationship.

At the individual level, *self-construal*, or one's concept of self as independent or interdependent, is a factor in how face is conceptualized and managed. Independent self-construals refer to the view of self as autonomous and unique from others. Interdependent self-construals consist of the view of self as connected and linked with others. These are similar to individualism and collectivism at the cultural level, but they are personal factors that intersect with cultural factors. Someone from a collectivistic culture may still have an independent view of self, for example. Independent self-construal is positively associated with self-face concern and competing conflict styles, while interdependent self-construal is positively associated with other-face concern and avoiding, accommodating, collaborating, and compromising conflict styles. Further, people who see themselves as both independent and interdependent have a large repertoire of strategies for managing facework and conflict. People who are ambivalent (low on both construals) use more third-party (mediator) interventions.

At the relational/situational level, FNT considers whether the parties come from the same ingroup or culture or from different cultures or outgroups. When we see the other person as a part of our group, we call her an ingroup member,

while an "us" versus "them" distinction often gets made about those in the outgroup. Ting-Toomey notes that collectivists behave differently with ingroup and outgroup members while individualists do not. Specifically, collectivists interacting with outgroup members have high self-face concerns, much like individualists. Figure 11.5 displays a model of face-negotiation theory.

Figure 11.5 Model of Face-Negotiation Theory



From the Source . . .

I'm still constantly amazed at how my faculty do facework during faculty meetings in the United States. They can be debating and arguing about certain issues until red in the face; however, once they exit the meeting, they can turn around and be on collegial terms. The separation of instrumental and relational issues is much more pronounced in individualistic settings than collectivistic settings. Collectivistic members will tend to view both task-based and relational-rapport spheres as tightly intertwined.

Stella Ting-Toomey

Face-negotiation theory is a popular theoretical frame for the study of intercultural and cross-cultural (comparative) conflict. Qin Zhang and her colleagues used FNT to compare the conflict patterns of Chinese and US American students.[42] Further, the authors expanded FNT by considering the role of emotions (anger, compassion, and guilt) in relation to face and conflict styles. Zhang and her colleagues asked students about a recent conflict they had with someone close to them (an ingroup member). They measured self-construals, face concerns, and conflict styles. They found that anger mediated the influence of independent self-construal and self-face concern on competing conflict styles. That is, independent people with high self-face concern use competing conflict styles in part because of their anger in the situation. In contrast, compassion and guilt mediated the influence of interdependent self-construal and other-face concern on collaborating, compromising, accommodating, and avoiding conflict styles. These styles are used, in part because their interdependent and other-face lead them to feel compassion and/or guilt. These findings support FNT and also illustrate the importance of emotions for face and conflict behavior. The next theory moves us from examining conflict directly to looking at relationships among people of underrepresented and dominant cultural groups.

Co-cultural Theory

Co-cultural theory, developed by Mark Orbe, is a theory about conversations between individuals from underrepresented or marginalized groups and representatives of the dominant society.[43] Orbe refers to underrepresented groups as *co-cultural groups*, which could be any group with lower-power status, including, for example, homeless individuals, first-generation college students, African Americans, or members of the Deaf community. Dominant group members are from the mainstream of society and are often, but not always, the majority group in a culture. They are usually the people who have higher status and power in society; men, whites, or people of high socioeconomic status are members of the dominant group in US society. This theory is distinctive in that co-cultural communication is defined from the perspective of the members of the underrepresented group. In other words, the theory seeks to understand when members of a co-cultural group perceive cultural differences as salient. The theory is designed to facilitate understanding of how co-cultural group members negotiate their cultural differences with others.

Co-cultural theory is grounded in five assumptions: (1) a hierarchy exists in any society that privileges certain groups; (2) dominant members, on the basis of varying levels of privilege, occupy positions of power that enable them to create and maintain systems that reinforce their perspectives and experiences and mute those of others; (3) dominant communication systems function to keep co-cultural group members outside the centers of power; (4) while there is considerable variation across co-cultures, they share a marginalized social position within the dominant system; and (5) co-cultural group members strategically communicate to negotiate the dominant system in which they find themselves.

Orbe's theory emerged from a series of studies of how underrepresented group members communicate with members of a dominant culture. The first three studies focused on different groups—African American graduate students,

African American men, and gay men. In the fourth study, Orbe included a broad range of participants from diverse co-cultural groups, including people of color, women, gay men/lesbians/bisexuals, and those from lower socioeconomic classes. As a result of these and subsequent studies, Orbe and his colleagues have identified 26 co-cultural practices that members of co-cultural groups use, including emphasizing commonalities, averting controversy, overcompensating, bargaining, dissociating, mirroring, ridiculing self, educating others, avoiding, and attacking.

Co-cultural theory explains that these practices are categorized into nine different communicative orientations based on two dimensions: communication approach and preferred outcomes. *Communication approach* is the use of aggression, assertion, or nonassertion. Aggression includes attacking and ridiculing others; assertion includes bargaining and emphasizing commonalities, and nonassertion includes avoiding and dissociating. *Preferred outcome* is how the person wants to relate to the dominant culture and consists of three choices: assimilation, accommodation, and separation. Assimilation is fitting in with the dominant culture. Accommodation seeks to retain some cultural distinctiveness and also to transform dominant structures to lessen hierarchy. Separation is a process that rejects dominant culture and seeks to stay largely with one's own co-cultural group members, forming organizations and other social structures that maintain the co-culture's unique cultural values. In combination, one's communication approach and preferred outcome mean that you can be aggressive, assertive, or nonassertive as you seek assimilation, accommodation, or separation. For example, if you have an aggression-separation orientation, you likely ridicule members of your own co-cultural group who try to assimilate into the dominant culture.

The creation of this categorization scheme raises another issue: when do individuals use which strategies? Four factors are found to influence the choice of strategy: (1) field of experience—the repertoire of possible responses for co-cultural members; (2) abilities; (3) situational context—the particulars of the interaction; and (4) perceived costs and rewards. These factors are interdependent and create a matrix of understanding and action that frames a co-cultural response in any given interaction. For example, if your field of experience is that you have received rewards when you tried to assimilate, you likely will choose nonassertive assimilation. Or, if you seem to be unable to avoid conflict situations or difficult issues, you will likely select an assertive or aggressive orientation.

From the Source . . .

As a biracial person raised in low-income housing projects, I first became aware of co-cultural communication in public settings where divisions of race and class were evident. Strategically adopting different forms of communication became the norm for me over the years. While learning about muted-group theory, I immediately recognized parallels based on race and class. This prompted my interest in exploring how different underrepresented groups communicate in societies where they are marked as Other.

Mark Orbe

Since Orbe's original work, various communication scholars have applied co-cultural theorizing to different co-cultural groups across many situations, focusing on such diverse groups as people of color in organizational settings, people with disabilities, people without homes, and first-generation college students.[44] This work has affirmed the value of the co-cultural approach and also demonstrates that dominant group members can be co-cultural members within particular settings. For example, Marsha Cohen and Susan Avanzino explored the organizational assimilation experiences of people with physical disabilities.[45] The authors interviewed people with physical disabilities to explore how they negotiate and manage organizational assimilation (the process whereby the organization socializes you to be one of its members). They found that participants used both accommodation and assimilation but did not use separation. Accommodation was easier in larger organizations because those organizations have the means to provide resources to facilitate accommodation. Further, about half the participants reported experiencing negative perceptions and stereotypes from work colleagues. To counter these responses, participants tried to demonstrate their work competence, to show that they could negotiate and manage barriers, and used an accommodation orientation in dealing with their colleagues in the organization. For example, some participants tried to educate colleagues about their disabilities and show why it did not limit their productivity. The authors conclude that co-cultural theory is useful for illustrating the numerous ways that people with physical disabilities negotiate their identities in the pursuit of organizational assimilation. The next theory continues to examine the negotiation of underrepresented and dominant group members while looking specifically at the negotiation of identity.

Cultural Contracts Theory

Ronald Jackson developed cultural contracts theory to explore the shifting and negotiation of identities during intercultural interaction.[46] More specifically, the theory examines the identities of members of underrepresented or marginalized groups when they interact with dominant cultural group members or within a cultural setting framed by dominant group relations. He argues that cultural contracts serve as a metaphor that represents the social and attitudinal dispositions that people have in these situations and that these contracts often are operating without our awareness. Cultural contracts are agreements that we make with others in how we will shift our identities in order to coordinate with them. The contract is created because it is deemed to have value for all interacting parties.

Jackson sees identities as relevant for a person in every intercultural and cultural encounter (much like other approaches to identity that we discussed in chapter 3). These identities include both cultural and personal elements. For Jackson, the negotiation of identities is in essence a bargaining between individuals about values, beliefs, and ideas in which all participants consider the gains or losses in maintaining their own view of reality compared to accommodating to other views. In other words, we shift our worldviews when we interact with others, a process that impacts how we interpret the world in which we live. For example, if Regina begins to assimilate to mainstream US American culture, it may inhibit her ability to interact effectively with members of the African American community in which she grew up.

The theory makes basic assumptions about culture, identities and identity negotiation, and contracts. Jackson sees *culture* as a fundamental and core element for humans; cultural *contracts*, the result of cultural differences with others, are necessary for defining and protecting the self. Contracts can be both temporary and enduring, reflecting the dynamic and multifaceted nature of identities. That is, we have many identities that we are simultaneously negotiating during interactions with others. Finally, *identity negotiation* is influenced by prior interactions and has future consequences for our relationships.

Cultural contracts theory also includes explanations about the role of power in relation to the contracts we establish with others. Unequal power, often found between marginalized and dominant group members, results in strategic communication about cultural contracts. Marginalized group members have to decide whether they want to come to an agreement with dominant group members about how to interact. According to this theory, then, even those without power can decide not to coordinate with the dominant group. If there is no need to coordinate, that individual will not "sign" a contract or adjust her behavior in any way. For example, if we do not want to interact with the other person, we may simply expect them to adjust to our ways of communicating or simply remove ourselves from the interaction.

Jackson notes there are three types of contracts people can sign: (1) ready-to-sign; (2) co-created; and (3) quasi-completed. *Ready-to-sign* contracts are pre-negotiated and designed to reinforce the status quo. They are rigid agreements that maintain unequal power relationships. For example, a dominant group member may essentially say "I am not going to change, so you'll need to adapt to me if you want this relationship to work." Cultural loyalty and power generally result in ready-to-sign contracts. *Co-created* contracts are mutually negotiated and demonstrate respect for cultural differences. For example, two culturally different members might say, "We like who we each are, and we do not want to change each other." *Quasi-completed* contracts are partially pre-negotiated and partially open to negotiation. They are designed as a balance between preserving existing identities and trying to meet the other person where they are. These are the most common types of contracts.

The last part of cultural contracts theory deals with breaches of contracts. We initially negotiate a contract with another—yet that contract can be violated. Three actions result from such violations. First, the relationship can be termi-

From the Source . . .

In a world where we are taught culture is not okay just the way it is, and therefore we must do something with it, I've always noticed throughout my life that it was never okay to just be black. Marginalized groups around the world have to negotiate their identities. They do this by lightening their skin, changing how they talk in different contexts, getting body transforming surgery, etc. Cultural contracts theory is all about who gets the privilege to be themselves and, on the other hand, what others must give up in order to be accepted and valued.

Ronald Jackson

nated. Second, we can renegotiate the contract. Third, we can decide to do nothing because the relationship is either very important (and we want to maintain it, no matter what) or the damage was minimal.

A recent study used cultural contracts theory to explore the communication experiences of biracial women in the United States. Mark Orbe and colleagues interviewed young adult women (19–30 years old) with both a black and a white parent.[47] They found that ready-to-sign contracts were pervasive due to several factors. First, the women were relegated to a black identity by outsiders using a "one-drop rule" (i.e., one-drop of black blood means she's black), and second, blackness was dichotomized and compared to whiteness. However, most of the women also negotiated quasi-contracts by shifting identities in different settings, expressing both black and white identities, depending on whom they were with and what was going on. Finally, a few women negotiated co-created identities by focusing on personal identities as much as racial ones and by accepting both black and white identities in all situations. These contracts were difficult to maintain because they constantly have to be negotiated and depend on the willingness of other parties to negotiate. The authors conclude that their study supports the validity and usefulness of cultural contracts theory for understanding contemporary racial identities in the United States. The next theory explores different aspects of racial identities and particularly issues of racism and bias in multiracial societies.

Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) originated in the 1970s, when a group of lawyers and legal scholars realized that the progress made by the civil rights movement had not continued and, in fact, that much racism had gone underground.[48] Foundational to the movement was the idea of legal indeterminacy—the idea that not every legal decision has a single correct outcome. The movement had activist origins as well; CRT took the notion of social justice—that historic wrongs need to be addressed—from the civil rights movement. From radical feminism, it incorporated the idea that largely unrecognized patterns of social behavior constitute patriarchy and other forms of domination. Thus, this theory examines differences related to bias, prejudice, and discrimination.

Proponents of critical race theory share several beliefs. First, CRT scholars see racism as ordinary, common, or normal—it is "the usual way society does business." Thus, it is difficult to address because it appears ordinary. If discriminatory practices are unmarked in everyday discourse, this means they usually go unaddressed in the law as well. Second, CRT scholars agree that white domination in the United States serves the psychological and material advantage of dominant groups, which means there are relatively few people genuinely interested in eradicating racism. Critical race theorists want to demonstrate, then, that what is seen as "normal" in fact contains a deep bias toward white culture. Indeed, in a process of *interest convergence,* dominant racial groups will only support anti-racist policies when these are perceived to benefit them.

This idea is further explored in *whiteness theory.*[49] In general, whiteness scholars examine what it means to be white, how whiteness became established legally, how certain groups moved into whiteness (Irish and Italians, for exam-

ple, were originally seen as nonwhite, on par with blacks), and the privileges that come with being white. Communication scholars have recognized the difficulty of studying whiteness because whiteness is at once invisible and yet extremely important.

Thomas Nakayama and Robert Krizek attempt to make the cultural construction of whiteness visible by describing six strategies inherent to the discourse of whiteness.[50] They arrived at these strategies after interviewing people about what it means to be white. They found six different constructions of whiteness embedded in the answers they received: (1) white is equated with power—white means status, majority, and dominance; (2) white is a default position—if you are not another color, you are white; (3) white is a scientific classification—fairly meaningless and without social status; (4) white means national origin—I'm an American; (5) white means the refusal to label self as any racialized category, whether white, black, or any other ethnic group; and (6) white means European ancestry. These varied and at times contradictory mappings of white discursive space suggest how expansive, central, and powerful the concept of whiteness is, even when it is being downplayed.

From the Source . . .

Our exploration stemmed from our own experiences of whiteness—one from the margins, one from the center. When we began to theorize whiteness, however, we found very little work in this area. In developing our approach, we believed it was important to think about whiteness to better understand how race functions rhetorically. Since our article in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, interest in whiteness has exploded, and we now know much more about how whiteness (and race more generally) has infused itself in communication about a wide range of topics, including the environment, health, and security.

Thomas Nakayama and Robert Krizek

As whiteness theory shows, race is a social construction—race and racism are products of social interaction that society constructs, manipulates, and abandons as convenient. For example, a commonly constructed notion of race is the *black-white binary.* When race is understood primarily within the constructed categories of black and white, the interests, histories, and cultures of other groups such as Latinos, Asians, and American Indians are ignored. Increasingly visible scholarship now addresses multicultural topics to reach beyond narrow constructions.

Critical race theorists understand that race is not only a structural category but a fluid and shifting one. In fact, scholars in this tradition point out that identity never can be understood strictly in terms of race but is always determined as an *intersection* among many categories such as gender, class, sexuality, and nationality.[51] Thus CRT relies on *particularism*, the idea that identity is always relative to the context of one's life.

CRT scholars are particularly interested in the stories that get told in a culture in regard to race. It depends, of course, on who is doing the telling. Did O. J.

Simpson kill Nicole Simpson? The story told by a white person might concentrate on issues of guilt or innocence. For many African Americans, however, the story looks different: it is a triumph of a person of color over a system that routinely discriminates against blacks. This is an example of a *counternarrative*—a story based on the actual experiences of people of color.

CRT scholars are also interested in the differences in stories told about racial groups at different times—depending on the interests of the dominant culture. A society may have, for example, little use for Chinese laborers at one time while it welcomes Japanese workers. During another period, Japanese fall into disfavor—as was the case during World War II—while African Americans are "cultivated" for jobs in the Army and in factories.

CRT advocates share a belief in the importance of nonwhites telling their stories about race and racism to provide alternative perspectives to widely accepted stories of what is normal and right. The accepted stories become master narratives that control how social processes, including legal statutes, are constructed. Stories from nondominant groups reveal that the law is not the neutral, just, and unbiased arbiter it is often assumed to be from the viewpoint of white privilege. Personal stories can serve as counter-histories to many stock US narratives about immigrants, for example. Introducing these narratives into legal discourse is a matter of communication. CRT scholars want to make the discourses of racism transparent—to allow many voices to enter the dialogue and to allow the telling of a wider range of stories.

Another issue that also involves communication is the tension between color-blind and color-conscious perspectives. The first of these positions says that legal decisions should no longer take note of race—that decisions should be color-blind—a stance many CRT scholars dispute. They argue that if racism is indeed embedded in our thought processes, social structures, and discourse, then aggressive measures to address race are necessary in order to bring about change. So a paradox is constructed about race: in order to ameliorate race relations, we need to talk about race—but that conversation itself may reproduce existing patterns of racism. The insistence on attention to legal and civil rights—often the foundation on which societal changes are predicated—is questioned by critical race theorists because such rights often are procedural rather than substantive. "Rights" favor the interests of the powerful; they can be and often are changed to fit the interests of the dominant and elite. How rights are defined is a matter of interpretation both legally and socially, and language and communication are important factors in such definitions.[52]

Much theorizing about communication and race has occurred in recent years. Most of this work highlights the positive contributions of traditionally marginalized groups. The theory of *Afrocentricity* is a good example. Primarily attributed to the work of Molefi Kete Asante, this line of scholarship offers a philosophical approach focusing on the history and culture of people of African descent.[53] It counters the dominant European view that marginalizes the African experience. It highlights the importance of knowledge rooted in African history and culture—including language, art, argument, economics, and social life—that were removed from white consciousness by both slavery and colonization.

From the Source . . .

Nothing seemed so disjointed to me and others as trying to examine African American communication without valuing Africans as subjects of their own historical experiences, so placing African people in the center of their own narratives of action and behavior meant referencing philosophies, histories, customs, and proverbs; this is what caused some of us to move away from the periphery of Europe's explanations and to the agency of Africans in all questions of communication.

Molefi Kete Asante

Similarly, Yoshitaka Miike offers a theoretical perspective of Asiacentricity, which also seeks to counter the dominant Eurocentric bias in communication theory.[54] He identifies several Eurocentric biases that do not resonate with an Asiacentric perspective, including individualism, ego-centeredness and self-enhancement, reason and rationality, pragmatism and materialism, and rights and freedom. In contrast, an Asiacentric perspective emphasizes interdependence, reduction of selfishness, emotion, obligation and debts to others, and harmony and morality. He does not suggest that the Asiacentric perspective is better than the Eurocentric perspective nor that Asia should be the center of research. He simply argues that when examining multicultural discourse, and particularly when referencing Asian cultures, we need to explore different values and perspectives to ensure we are inclusive.

From the Source . . .

If Asian cumulative wisdom remains hidden and invisible, there would be no breakthroughs and leaps in thinking and theorizing about local communication in the Asian context. If Asian cultures served only as peripheral targets of data analysis and rhetorical criticism, there would be no original and creative Asian contributions to the art and science of communication on the global scene. I have advanced the Asiacentric idea with these realizations. Asiacentricity, not ethnocentric Asiacentrism, seeks to embrace the best of Asian traditions in both theory and practice and strives to ensure that Asian cultures emerge as central resources of humanistic insight and ethical inspiration in the changing world.

Yoshitaka Miike

A recent example of the use of critical race theory is Elizabeth Dickinson's study of environmental racism.[55] *Environmental racism* is the framing of environmental issues as racially driven, especially when underrepresented groups are disproportionally affected by environmental practices. These practices include increased exposure to toxic pollutants, struggles with land issues, and removal from decision making about the environment. She studied a case in New Mexico about a road being built through Petroglyph National Monument, which contained protected American Indian rock carvings. She noted that nar-

ratives of pro-road advocates included color-blind racist arguments focused on development. In contrast, environmental justice advocates told stories about how the road violated the integrity of the environment and the wishes of American Indians. She advocates for a CRT perspective to understand the conflict; CRT unmasks the racism and environmental inequities in this dispute through the use of narratives told by Indian groups themselves.

In sum, critical race theory is a compilation of the work of numerous theorists with various perspectives about communication and racism. These perspectives share the view that racism is prevalent and hidden and needs to be illuminated and illustrated to overcome injustices and inequities in society. The theories in this section generally reflect much of the scholarship about negotiating differences between dominant cultural members and underrepresented cultural members. Co-cultural theory privileges nondominant perspectives in interaction, cultural contracts theory helps explain the negotiations that occur between marginalized and dominant groups, and face-negotiation theory examines how culture and face influence communication during conflict.

Conclusion

This chapter explored aspects of cultural communication and intercultural communication. Cultural communication examines how communication creates, reflects, and performs cultural values, practices, and speech codes. Intercultural communication investigates the communication between interactants who come from different cultural backgrounds. Scholars explore issues of culturally competent communication, adaptation and change, and negotiation of differences from various theoretical perspectives. Theorizing about intercultural communication tends to reflect either critical traditions, examining power and domination, or social scientific/normative perspectives about the role of cultural values in shaping communication styles. These perspectives all seek ways to improve the quality of communication in an increasingly global world.

Chapter Map — **THEORIES OF CULTURE**

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Communicating Culture	Cultural Hermeneutics	Clifford Geertz	Cultural interpretation is thick description of cultural practices from the point of view of the native community.
	Ethnography of Communication-Speech Codes Theory	Dell Hymes; Gerry Philipsen; Donal Carbaugh & Sally Hastings; Tamar Katriel	Cultural communication is the speech codes (distinctive forms of communication) of a particular speech community.
	Performance Ethnography	Victor Turner; Dwight Conquergood	Culture is embodied practices that illustrate the relationship among performance, ethnography, and praxis.

(continued)

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Intercultural Communication Competence	Anxiety-Uncertainty Management Theory	William Gudykunst	Effective communication with culturally different people occurs when we are mindful in managing anxiety and uncertainty.
	Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity	Milton Bennett	Intercultural sensitivity is a growth process moving from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism.
	Communication Accommodation Theory	Howard Giles	Competent communication involves the appropriate use of accommodation and nonaccommodation.
Cultural Adaptation and Change	Integrative Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory	Young Yun Kim	Effective cross-cultural adaptation involves managing the stress-adaptation-growth dynamics through communication.
	Differential Adaptation	Antonio De La Garza & Kent Ono	Immigrants and host cultures both change when there is intercultural contact.
	Diffusion of Innovations	Everett Rogers	The speed and adoption of innovations are influenced by the innovation itself, communication channels, the social system, and time.
Negotiating Difference	Face-Negotiation Theory	Stella Ting-Toomey	Face concerns mediate the influence of culture, the individual, and the relationship on conflict styles.
	Co-cultural Theory	Mark Orbe	Co-cultural communication involves a combination of the communication approach (assertive, aggressive, nonassertive) and the preferred outcome.
	Cultural Contracts Theory	Ronald Jackson	People negotiate their identities with people of other cultures by "signing" three different types of contracts.
	Critical Race Theory	Thomas Nakayama & Richard Krizek; Molefi Kete Asante; Yoshitaka Miike	Social justice can only be achieved by unmasking hidden forms of bias, racism, and prejudice in communication patterns.

NOTES

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[6] Donal Carbaugh and Sally O. Hastings, "A Role for Communication Theory in Ethnography and Cultural Analysis," *Communication Theory* 2 (1992): 156–65.
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[13] Donal Carbaugh, "Culture Talking About Itself," in *Cultural Communication and Intercultural Contact*, ed. Donal Carbaugh (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1990), 1–9; Baillet, "Speech Codes Theory," 920–24;
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[17] Alice Walker, *We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For: Inner Light in a Time of Darkness* (New York: New Press, 2006), 203.
[18] Dwight Conquergood, "Rethinking Ethnography: Toward a Critical Cultural Politics," *Communication Monographs* 58 (1991): 179–94; Dwight Conquergood, "Ethnography, Rhetoric, and Performance," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 78 (1992): 80–97.
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[32] Adapted from Kim, "Adapting to a New Culture," 393.
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[49] For a brief overview, see Dreama G. Moon, "Whiteness Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 1007–10. For more extensive applications, see the special issue of *Feminist Theory* 8 (2007): 141–237. See also Robert Jensen, *The Heart of Whiteness: Confronting Race, Racism, and White Privilege* (San Francisco: City Lights, 2005).

[50] Thomas K. Nakayama and Robert L. Krizek, "Whiteness: A Strategic Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 (August 1995): 291–309. For other treatments of whiteness, see Thomas K. Nakayama and Judith N. Martin, eds., *Whiteness: The Communication of Social Identity* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999); Roberto Avant-Mier and Marouf Hasian, Jr., "In Search of the Power of Whiteness: A Genealogical Exploration of Negotiated Racial Identities in America's Ethnic Past," *Communication Quarterly* 50 (2002): 391–409; and Alberto González and JoBeth González, "The Color Problem in Sillyville: Negotiating White Identity in One Popular 'Kid-Vid,'" *Communication Quarterly* 50 (2002): 410–21.

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[52] For a discussion of the color-blind/color-conscious dilemma and the "rights" dilemma, see Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory,* 20–24.

[53] See, for example, Molefi Kete Asante, *An Afrocentric Manifesto* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2008). For a brief summary, see Molefi Kete Asante, "Afrocentricity," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 24–27.

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12 Society

We started our survey of communication theories in this book by looking quite narrowly at the individual communicator and moving from there to expand our scope of concern to increasingly larger contexts in which communication occurs. In this chapter, we take the broadest perspective yet to look at communication within the context of society. Each of us is a member of society, a community bound together by shared laws, traditions, and values. That does not mean we are all in agreement about what makes a society and how it should operate, but there must be enough agreement about the essence of those elements for shared patterns of thought and behavior to develop and persist. Important to remember, too, is that although we have separated out the societal level here, the communication that occurs at this level cannot be divorced from the other communication formats and contexts we described earlier. Every act of communication is affected by and contributes to larger social forms and patterns.

To show the range of communication theories dealing with society, we begin with a discussion of modernism and postmodernism as two different and broad ways to think about theories of society.[1] All of the theories in this chapter—indeed in this book—more or less fit within the modernist or postmodernist tradition, although these should not be seen as discrete perspectives. Indeed, there is considerable overlap, with many theories having both a modern and postmodern variation. We have chosen to discuss modernism and postmodernism in some depth in this chapter (we mentioned them briefly as part of Robert Craig's typology in chapter 2) because these two traditions directly speak to larger social concerns. After that discussion, we move to two major topics that function at the level of society: (1) power and ideology; and (2) preservation and change. These topics and theories are summarized in the chapter map (pp. 468–469).

Modernism and Postmodernism

Modernism and postmodernism include literary, artistic, aesthetic, economic, and philosophical elements, so they touch virtually all areas of society.

For purposes of communication, what is important is that they deal with knowledge claims (what a society believes to be true); the source and grounds of authority; and the nature of social structures—issues intricately connected to issues of communication. We will see these themes carried out in different ways in modernism and postmodernism.

Modernism

Modernism generally is considered to be the period between World War I and the 1970s; it is characterized by a rejection of the old and progression toward the new and nontraditional, whether in art, literature, or thought. Descartes's assertion, in the seventeenth century, of *thinking* as the means by which to discover the truth about the self and the world often is cited as an early precursor of modernism; he sought to establish a foundation for knowing the world in the operation of the mind or reason. At the core of modernism is a rejection of religion and tradition—of sanctioned systems of belief—in favor of rationality. Whereas knowledge had been the province of ecclesiastical and governmental institutions, modernism offered a foundation that religion and tradition could not, privileging a rational foundation that can be known by the mind of each individual. In this sense, modernism is structural, operating on the belief that there are real forms and concepts in the world, including the norms and rules that govern rationality, which can be known through observation and investigation. Truth is out there awaiting discovery, and the human mind is the vehicle for doing so.

Rapid changes in society compelled modernism to embrace change as a constant. Scientific discoveries (such as Einstein's theory of relativity) and technological innovations (from the internal combustion engine to telephones to electricity) fueled modernism's interest in human progress. Artists turned away from representation to forms of abstraction to signal the push toward whatever was new and progressive. There was thus a constant state of anticipation within the modernist impulse, a progressive sense of urgency, so there was a reluctance to commit to any particular worldview or system. Postmodernism solidified this reluctance, privileging the fluidity and fragmentation of society.

Postmodernism

Postmodernism is based on the idea that social realities are constantly produced, reproduced, and changed through the use of language and other symbolic forms. In contrast to modernity, postmodernism resists a unified, coherent, rational foundation. Instead, reality is seen as fragmented, local, situated, and fluctuating, with polysemy as its defining characteristic—any system, object, symbol, or sign has multiple meanings. Rather than trying to understand how humans know the world, the postmodernist understands that the world cannot be known except in fragments and partial perspectives, depending on those who are experiencing it at the moment. Reality, then, is not something external but emerges in the linguistic interaction among individuals and groups; temporary responses rather than permanent answers or universal truths prevail.

Postmodernism often is dated from the societal turmoil of the 1960s, characterized by social movements of all kinds, as well as similar movements in art and literature that questioned established social systems and conventions. Combined with an increasingly global society, the advent of the information age, and

a burst of new technologies, postmodernism made clear that coherent symbols and meanings no longer are possible. The search for a priori structures and meanings was replaced by deconstruction of texts and meanings designed to expose their internal contradictions, tensions, and inequities. There is a struggle in society, according to the postcolonial view, but it is not a struggle between monolithic ideologies, as was the case with modernism. It is a struggle between fluid interests and ideas created in communication practices, and no single, enduring arrangement is responsible for power inequities, social structures, or any other part of society.

Modernism and postmodernism function as broad backdrops for theories about society. In the next section, we discuss theories about power and ideology that have been developed by communication scholars interested in the various competing forces that create the broad parameters of a society.

Power and Ideology

Concerns with power and ideology have been important to scholars across the social sciences interested in how society functions, develops, evolves, and changes. Theories about power and ideology comprise an important part of the contemporary communication landscape at the level of society, and such theories have assumed both modern and postmodern forms. We will discuss (1) Marxism; (2) critical theory; (3) the Frankfurt School; (4) cultural studies; (5) post-structuralism; (6) postcolonialism; (7) feminist theories; and (8) critical rhetoric. Marxist-based social theory is a starting point of these concerns, all of which are interested in the ways certain ideologies become dominant and prescribe specific power arrangements for society.

Marxism

Originating with the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who wrote in the nineteenth century, Marxism consists of a number of loosely related theories that challenge the dominant order of society.[2] Marx believed that a society's means of production determine the structure of that society, and he was especially concerned with the consequences of capitalism as an economic system. As a result, classical Marxism often is called *the critique of political economy.*[3]

According to Marx, under capitalism, production is turned into a commodity that benefits the bourgeoisie at the expense of the workers or proletariat, creating an exploitive class structure and relationship. Marxism was concerned with the degree to which workers are able to see, challenge, and resist the capitalist ideology, or false consciousness, that perpetuates the pursuit of profit as the foundation of democracy. Ideologies are hegemonic; they manipulate or coerce citizens into "reading" or interpreting the structures and events of society in a way that benefits the dominant group or class.[4] Marxist theories generally see society as the site of struggle among competing interests, with a *dominant* or *hegemonic* ideology subverting and controlling others. Marx's ultimate goal was revolution, in which workers would rise up against the hegemonic interests of capitalism to change the nature of society, ultimately furthering the natural progress of history.

Communication is central to Marxism because words and meanings as well as media systems are controlled by the capitalist enterprise. Communication scholars have been interested, then, not only in the ways communication is used to produce and promote ideologies that favor consumption and commodification but also in the ways individuals can resist such systems.[5] Marxism fits generally within the modernist frame because the structures and competing interests are considered real and enduring. Today, few Marxist theorists are Marxist in the classical sense of this term, but Marxism does continue to serve as a catalyst for identifying social structures of domination and oppression. For this reason, much of this work is now labeled *neo-Marxist* or *post-Marxist*.

Dana Cloud's work on the materiality of discourse is an example of contemporary neo-Marxist thought within the discipline of communication.[6] In contrast to much traditional communication theory, which has assumed the immateriality or intangibility of thoughts, conceptions, strategies, and logics of communication, theories about the materiality of discourse, such as Cloud's, argue for a material or economic base for communication. According to this view, economics—a logic of social, material, and cultural factors concerned with the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities—brings forth discourse. In this sense, economics is prior and foundational to communication.

Discourse is situated in and influenced and constrained by materiality—by the spatial, technological, and corporeal contexts in which it is constructed. Cloud contrasts discourse with real and often difficult and horrendous acts in the world: "If the discourse is the reality, would a critic of the 'freedom' inherent in the discourse around the war be forced to grant the nationalistic 1991 Super Bowl half-time an ontological status equal to the suffering of thousands of Iraqis as they were buried in the sand?"[7] While this example is extreme, Cloud uses it to illustrate that discourse has real effects in the world, and liberation is more than just a matter of emancipation from words. She is particularly interested in the ways material conditions and relations are obscured by communication and the effects and impact of those arrangements on human lives.

From the Source . . .

Historical materialism, the theory pioneered by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, understands all rhetorical and cultural expressions as located in and conditioned (not entirely determined) by material (economic) conditions. Examination of the historical context and political-economic motives (like oil) helps explain rhetorical acts (like war propaganda). The division of society between a minority ruling class and the rest of us results in struggle (for cultural, political, and economic hegemony) between "ruling ideas" (including sexism, racism, and homophobia) and the rhetoric of ordinary people in social movements.

Dana Cloud

Cloud's neo-Marxist approach to materiality is one approach to the relationship between materiality and communication. Other scholars formulate the connection in slightly different ways, further advancing the material foundations of

neo-Marxist thought. For some, discourse is conceived as material because it occurs within actual physiological, technological, or mechanical formats, such as within the brain, within sound, or within digital processing. The ways discourse moves through and across human-machine networks is a similar view of discourse as material. Other scholars concentrate on how physical reality communicates; the structures of the physical environment invite certain responses from those who interact with those structures, whether parks, memorials, stadiums, and the like. Discourse can be material in yet another sense—the actual documents or statements that are the artifacts of communication are material discourses. That one statement is made and another is not, that a certain document is preserved and another is not, or that certain statements are now possible because of media that did not exist previously are issues of interest to those concerned about the discursive formations made possible by actual material discourses.[8]

Marxism as a theory continues to be important to the communication discipline. Whether scholars concentrate on the materialist conditions or discursive formations that contribute to or create oppression, the concern is with understanding the hegemonic ideologies that impede emancipation. These concerns carry over into critical theory that similarly focuses on issues of oppression and emancipation, although not always from an economic foundation.

Critical Theory

Marxism was the impetus for the development of critical theory, which is not a theory per se as much as an orientation toward structures of domination in society. At the heart of critical theory is the idea that social and cultural arrangements enforce the power of certain stakeholders in ways that dominate and oppress others.[9] Critical theorists, then, are interested in the ways unequal and competing power relations create societal injustices. Usually attributed to Max Horkheimer's 1937 essay, "Traditional and Critical Theory," critical theory diverged from traditional objective scientific methods. It argues instead for a mode of critique that examines exploitation, ideology, and alienation (in the Marxist sense) to produce social change. Critical theory, then, is not separate from practice in the world but is designed to examine lived instances of marginalizing and alienating dynamics in order to determine ways society might be emancipated.

In the examination of the ways that structures of domination—institutions, systems, language—contribute to marginalization, critical theorists posit that such social processes and conditions are *overdetermined*—caused by multiple sources. As a result, critical theorists recognize how difficult it is to achieve the ideal society in which all voices are heard, all people are treated equitably, and openness and shared values prevail. In many ways, the critical tradition is a consciousness-raising endeavor, a mission driven by a desire to expose oppressive forces in society and to help marginalized individuals and groups recognize those oppressions and work to overcome them.

Communication is important to critical theory for several reasons. First, language itself is an oppressive social structure, serving the needs and interests of dominant groups at the expense of marginalized ones. Language, then, is not just an objective and neutral description of the world but a tool for constructing that world. Second, it is in social interaction that hegemony and domination are constructed and maintained, so not only is language per se of concern to critical

theorists but also how it works in the world. Finally, communication is important because despite its oppressive features, language also carries possibilities of emancipation. Through communication, more liberating possibilities can be imagined and realized. One of the tasks of the critical theorist is to create new forms of language that will enable the predominant ideology to be exposed and competing ideologies to be heard. There are both modernist and postmodernist versions of critical theory, depending on whether the theorist orients more toward material structures, institutions, and objects that are oppressive in society or how those structures are constituted in language.

Critical theory has had several trajectories that address the concerns of a particular oppressed group or oppressive phenomenon or that elaborate some aspect of critical theory. We will describe six of the more prominent theories that fall under this rubric: (1) the Frankfurt School and the theory of communicative action; (2) cultural studies; (3) post-structuralism; (4) postcolonialism; (5) feminist theory; and (6) critical rhetoric. The members of the Frankfurt School rely heavily on the Marxist tradition. Cultural studies also shares an interest in ideologies that dominate a culture, but its focus is on social change from the vantage point of culture itself: "to make intelligible the real movement of culture as it is registered in social life, in group and class relations, in politics and institutions, in values and ideas."[10] Post-structural theory, and especially the tool of deconstruction, is concerned with the ways language works to maintain systems of domination. Postcolonialism looks at unequal relations created between nations, whether through actual invasion and colonization (such as occurred with the British rule of India) or through the dominance and spread of Western influences (media, language, commodities, and values). Feminist perspectives often are placed within critical theory because of a focus on a particular system of oppression—patriarchy. Similarly, critical rhetoric is concerned with issues of who can speak and in what contexts.

The Frankfurt School and the Theory of Communicative Action

One of the best-known Marxist traditions is the *Frankfurt School*, which was a formal institute—the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research—connected with the University of Frankfurt in Germany. The Institute was founded in 1923 to study the labor movement and anti-Semitism in Germany from a Marxist perspective. This focus broadened, under the directorship of Max Horkheimer in 1930, to encompass a range of economic, social, and political topics studied from a Marxist standpoint. Early members of the school, in addition to Horkheimer, included Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse.[11] The early Frankfurt School scholars, in line with original Marxism, viewed capitalism as an evolutionary stage preceding socialism and then communism.

When Frankfurt scholars were forced to emigrate (first to Geneva in 1933 and then to New York and Columbia University in 1935) following the rise of Nazism in Germany, they became intensely interested in mass communication and the media as structures of oppression in capitalistic societies. During this stage, these scholars identified media as a *culture industry* in which a few large corporations, driven by the profit motive, control the consumption habits of the public. The Institute returned to Frankfurt in 1949, and a third generation began in 1955 when Jürgen Habermas assumed leadership. A fourth generation, led by

Rainer Forst, one of Habermas's students, began just prior to Habermas's retirement in 1994. One of the concerns of the fourth generation is the American political system and a desire to construct a third alternative between liberalism and communitarianism.

Habermas remains the best-known contemporary Frankfurt scholar and spokesperson for the Frankfurt school; his theory of communicative action and the transformation of society has had considerable influence in Europe and in the United States across disciplines, including that of communication.[12] His theory draws from a wide range of disciplinary areas to present a coherent critical view of communication and society. Habermas maintains that society must be understood as a mix of three major interests—work, interaction, and power—all of which are necessary in a society.

Work, the first interest, consists of efforts to create material resources. Because of its highly instrumental nature—achieving tangible tasks and accomplishing concrete objectives—work is basically a "technical interest." It involves an instrumental rationality and is represented by the empirical-analytical sciences. Technology, as an instrument to accomplish practical results, relies on empirical scientific research. This technical interest designs computers, builds bridges, puts satellites in orbit, administers organizations, and enables the development of new medical treatments, to name but a few accomplishments of the technical interest.

The second major interest is *interaction*—the use of language and other symbol systems of communication. Because social cooperation is necessary for survival, Habermas names this second item the "practical interest." It involves practical reasoning and is represented in historical scholarship and hermeneutics. The interaction interest can be seen in speeches, conferences, psychotherapy, family relations, and a host of other cooperative endeavors that rely on communication.

The third major interest is *power.* Social orders naturally involve issues of power and its distribution, so this interest also deals with how emancipation from domination—from unequal power relations—can be achieved. Power leads to distorted communication, but by becoming aware of the ideologies that dominate society, groups can be empowered to resist and transform power. Consequently, power is an "emancipatory interest." Figure 12.1 summarizes these three interests.

Steven Ealy's study of a Georgia state job-classification survey demonstrates how Habermas's three interests work in combination.[13] At the time of the

Figure 12.1 Three Interests of Society

TYPE	NATURE OF INTEREST	RATIONALITY	ASSOCIATED SCHOLARSHIP
Work	Technical	Instrumental	Empirical Sciences
Interaction	Practical	Practical	History / Hermeneutics
Power	Emancipatory	Self-reflection	Critical Theory

survey, Georgia was tasked with the responsibility of reclassifying 45,000 state job positions, a monumental task. The state employed a consulting firm to conduct a survey, and a plan was drafted to collect information about each position, develop job specifications, classify the positions, and determine pay. A strong technical interest guided the reclassification study. There was a job to be done, and the consultants developed a method to achieve this goal. They proceeded as if the task could be solved by the use of "objective" or scientific procedures—gathering data, classifying jobs, and the like.

The employees and the departments, however, did not think of the study this way. They saw the study as a practical problem, one that affected their daily work and pay. For the departments, collecting data and implementing the results should have involved a good deal of interaction and consensus building, but it did not. Because the organizational decision makers held the power, their technical interests prevailed, the consultants' methods were imposed, and all practical interests were eliminated. In other words, the employees were expected to comply without much discussion of their needs, issues of morale, and the other practical problems that reclassification might create. The result was a serious communication breakdown. The existing inequalities in power and knowledge were not acknowledged or addressed by management nor was open communication privileged. Consequently, the interests of workers were not taken into account. As a result, the new classification system was not accepted by employees and was only partially implemented after many delays, additional studies, lawsuits, and appeals.

As this case illustrates, virtually every human activity involves all three interests—work, interaction, and power. For example, the development of a new drug is a clear reflection of a technical interest, but it cannot be done without cooperation and communication, requiring an interaction interest as well. In a market economy, the drug is developed by a corporation to gain a competitive advantage, which is clearly a power interest. No aspect of life, then, not even science, is interest free. An emancipated society is free from unnecessary domination of any one interest, and everyone has equal opportunity to participate in decision making about those interests and how they play out in society. Habermas is especially concerned with the domination of the technical interest in contemporary capitalistic societies. Ideally, the public and private should be balanced, and the public sector should be strong enough to provide a climate for free expression of ideas and debate. Under capitalism, however, the public and private are intertwined to the point that the public sector cannot guard against the oppression of private, technical interests.

Communication is central to emancipation in Habermas's scheme because language is the means by which the emancipatory interest is fulfilled. Thus knowing how to use speech appropriately to accomplish goals is another one of Habermas's concerns.[14] Habermas's theory, sometimes called *the theory of communicative action*, establishes principles for the use of language.[15] As an example, let's say that you give a speech to a labor group, claiming that labor unions today do not fight hard enough for their members' rights. Clearly, you want the audience to take some action on this problem. In this speech, you are making a claim, asserting your feelings about it, and trying to influence the audience to adopt your perspective. Three validity criteria must be met in order for your

audience to take your speech seriously: you must be (1) truthful; (2) appropriate; and (3) sincere. These validity claims are not always easy to secure, since people do not always believe that certain statements are valid.

Habermas uses the term *discourse* to describe the special kind of communication required when a speaker's statements are challenged. Unlike normal communication, "discourse" is a systematic argument that makes special appeals to demonstrate the validity of a claim. There are different kinds of discourse, depending on the type of speech act being defended. Truth claims are argued with *theoretic discourse,* which emphasizes evidence. If the union denied your allegations about its role, you would be pressed to make a case by offering evidence showing that the union failed to support activities designed to benefit workers.

When appropriateness is being argued, *practical discourse* is used. This form of discourse emphasizes norms. If the union resisted your attempts to urge them to bargain for the rights of workers, you would have to create practical discourse to demonstrate that your proposed negotiations meet accepted standards. Challenges to sincerity, the third kind of validity criterion Habermas discusses, also require actions out of the realm of the ordinary to demonstrate genuine concern. Typically, these efforts are accomplished by engaging in an actual behavior rather than discourse because it is the sincerity of the discourse that is under question. In other words, acting in a manner consistent with expressed intentions is really the only way of demonstrating sincerity.

Of course, there is no guarantee that the audience will agree with the evidence offered in support of validity claims. When communicators do not share the same standards or concepts for evaluating the strength of an argument, they must move to a higher level of discourse, which Habermas calls *metatheoretical discourse.* Here, communicators argue about what constitutes good evidence for a claim or what norms are indeed appropriate in the given situation. This is the kind of discourse in which the Supreme Court engages. An even higher level of discourse is sometimes necessary—*metaethical discourse.* Here, the very nature of knowledge itself is under scrutiny. Metaethical discourse is concerned with such issues as what counts as proper knowledge, the criteria used to make that judgment, and the ways knowledge is produced in social life.

Habermas believes that free speech is necessary for productive communication in both everyday speech and higher levels of discourse. Although impossible to achieve, Habermas describes an *ideal speech situation* that serves as a model for society; he also suggests three conditions necessary for its realization. First, the ideal speech situation requires freedom of speech; there must be no constraints on what can be expressed. Second, all individuals must have equal access to speech—all participants are allowed to speak, and all speakers and positions are recognized as legitimate. Finally, the norms and obligations of society must treat all participants equally—there can be no one-sided obligations that essentially give some individuals power over others. Only when these requirements are met can emancipatory communication occur.

Emancipatory communication in the form of higher levels of discourse is essential to transform society so that the needs of the individual can be met. Habermas believes that people normally live in an unquestioned *life-world*—preoccupied with the ordinary, daily activities of life. This life-world, however, is con-

strained by certain aspects of the social system such as money, bureaucracy, and corporate power. Habermas frames this problem as *colonization*, or the power of the system over individuals. When the life-world is colonized by the system, there is less opportunity to use language to achieve positive goals for individuals.

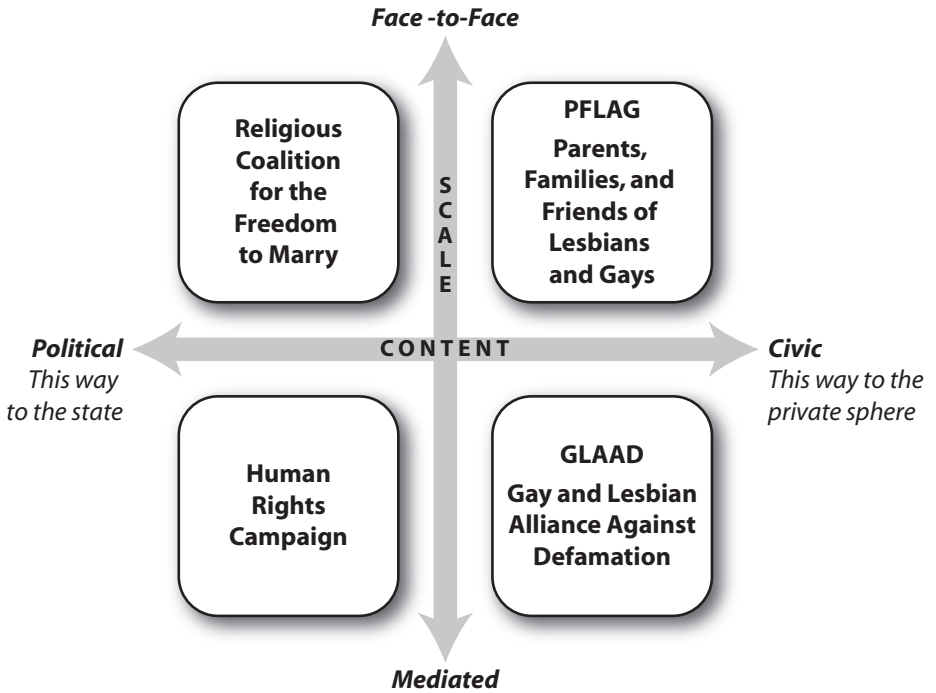
For Habermas, critical theory raises questions and calls attention to problems about the life-world that make critical reflection and resolution necessary. Only when we are aware of the problems of the life-world and the ways the system influences our view of life can we become emancipated from the entanglements of the system. There is greater opportunity to accomplish emancipation in modern society than in traditional society because of the relatively greater amount of conflict in modernity. In modern society we have the opportunity to hear a variety of viewpoints, but only if the system allows free expression. Modern capitalistic societies have not yet achieved emancipation, and critical theorists have a responsibility to work toward making such emancipation possible. Habermas believes that a strong public sphere, apart from private interests, is necessary to facilitate achieving emancipation.[16]

Elizabeth Butler Breese's study of variety across public spheres offers an example of Habermas's ideas in action.[17] According to Habermas, the public sphere is separate from the state, the formal economy, and the family—other spheres Habermas identifies. What distinguishes the public sphere is that private individuals come together as citizens in it to deliberate and debate. Breese notes that since Habermas's initial description of the public sphere, scholars agree that there is not one but multiple and overlapping public spheres. She argues, however, that there has not been an effort to organize various spheres into a coherent scheme.

To this end, Breese furthers the discussion of public spheres by offering a framework for the variations that exist. She charts this variation along two dimensions—*scale* and *content* (see figure 12.2).[18] The horizontal axis is the *content* dimension, referring to publics that exist on a continuum between civic public spheres and political ones. The vertical axis or *scale* dimension moves from face-to-face publics to mediated or symbolic ones. Breese maintains that by plotting individual activists, groups, associations, and organizations in the appropriate sphere on the grid, different orientations toward public life become evident. Such a mapping allows activists, scholars, and citizens to see their projects in relation to others and also makes clear how groups can and do move along the axes—from a civic group to a political one, for example—or from primarily face-to-face interactions to mediated ones.

Breese uses as an example "the gay community," which consists of many different orientations in terms of the public sphere. In the upper left quadrant, she places the coalition of over 700 clergy, congregations, and organizations that came together under the name, *Religious Coalition for the Freedom to Marry*; these organizations are face-to-face groups interested in political action to change laws around same-sex marriage. By contrast, in the upper right quadrant, Breese puts *PFLAG*—Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. Members of this group want to create a more compassionate society for their lesbian and gay friends and family members. They operate largely as a support group interested in enlightening others about and strategizing how to advance the social status of GLBTQ individuals.

Figure 12.2 Variations of the Public Sphere



GLAAD, or the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, is situated in the lower right quadrant of Breese's grid. GLAAD works to scrutinize media and promote positive images of GLBTQ individuals in the media. Because personal networks are those primarily used by this group, GLAAD exists at the civic and mediated end of the continuum. Finally, an example of a group in the lower left quadrant is an organization called the *Human Rights Campaign*. The largest gay rights organization in the United States, it focuses on changing policies at the state and national levels by educating publics about existing policies and encouraging legislation, lobbying, and voting on behalf of gays and lesbians. Because it makes extensive use of the media to achieve its ends, it falls in the political and mediated quadrant.

This kind of mapping of social movement groups, alliances, coalitions, and individual activists visibly shows the existence of different public spheres, distinguished by different missions, goals, and structures. Furthermore, such a mapping makes clear that there is no singular and correct conception of the public sphere. Not only is there considerable variation across a social movement, but there is the potential for groups to move along both axes, thus providing a framework for understanding the changes that occur within a social movement as well.

Habermas's work exemplifies the essence of the critical tradition. Concerned with how various interests play out in society and constrain or enable an ideal speech situation, Habermas seeks society's ultimate emancipation. We

describe cultural studies next because it also was influenced by Marxist thought and investigates how culture is produced through a struggle among ideologies.

Cultural Studies

The general concern of cultural theorists is how the actions of society's institutions (such as the media) are linked with, produce, and reproduce culture.[19] For example, people watch television every day, making them part of a television culture. The entire television industry is a cultural production as well because it is a means for creating, disputing, reproducing, and changing culture. The concrete or material practices involved in producing and consuming television are a crucial mechanism in the establishment of ideology. Cultural studies scholars are interested, then, in the relations among different components of culture and how they intersect and interact with various historical and social processes. A cultural critic might examine how a particular artifact or cultural practice—a television program, song, sports event—is positioned against an intersecting set of historical discourses in order to better understand a set of cultural practices. Thus, cultural studies generally fits more within the postmodern tradition because of the concern with the ways culture is produced, reproduced, and changed through language and symbolic forms.

The most notable group of cultural scholars, British Cultural Studies, is associated with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham. The origins of this tradition usually are traced to the writings of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams in the 1950s; working class intellectuals, they chose to focus on "popular culture" in contrast to the traditionally elitist intellectual positions they encountered in the academy.[20] The name most associated with contemporary cultural studies is Stuart Hall, who assumed directorship of the CCCS in 1969.[21] Hall is credited with a turn from a study of popular culture generally to a focus on the media, particularly the functions and effects of media.

Drawing on Marx, the starting point of media studies from a cultural studies perspective was the structure of media ownership, influence, and control; on the basis of this information, the nature of most media content could be determined as well as media's probable effects on their audiences. This focus now has been expanded considerably—there is more to the media than questions of economics.[22] Issues of representation in media, the promises and costs of mediated technology, and the different roles audiences play in relation to media are among the many recent concerns of cultural studies scholars. The study of mass communication remains central to cultural studies, with media perceived as powerful tools of dominant ideologies because they present, quite directly, a way of viewing reality.

The irony of media is that they present the illusion of diversity and objectivity—when, in fact, they are clear instruments of the dominant order. At the same time, media have the potential of raising the consciousness of the population about issues of class, power, and domination because audiences use their own categories to decode messages, and they often reinterpret media messages in ways never intended by the source. For example, an advertisement during a political campaign, designed to show a candidate's intercultural expertise, might show him speaking Spanish. Opponents, however, use the ad to see the

candidate as someone in favor of uncontrolled immigration from all countries south of the US border.

In cultural studies, *articulation* refers to lived realities reinforced by many sources.[23] The term plays on two British connotations of articulation: *to speak* and *to be connected*, such as the way a truck and a camper are hooked together. It is a joining of parts to form a unity—whether in sounds to form a sentence or a truck and camper to form a single vehicle. To study articulation is at once to study the ways disparate elements are combined, connected, or linked across both similarities and differences. The notion of articulation as used in cultural studies contrasts with Marxism's single economic explanation for society's ills. Rather than reducing everything to economics, articulation examines how different elements—economics, media, race, class, property—are complicit in determining the nature of culture. All linkages are part of larger structures, however, so another form of articulation of interest to cultural studies scholars is the way ideologies coerce individuals and groups into envisioning themselves as members of a particular group, sharing the values and goals of that group.

For example, earning a college degree may seem absolutely essential to you. You believe that a college education is good and will lead to success in life—you will have a better and more satisfying career, make more money, and be able to participate more critically and fully in society. Your acceptance of the superiority of higher education is a product of a very strong articulation. This shared understanding about the value of a higher education is an ideology determined by many subtle factors—family values, media, messages from educational institutions themselves—that work together to make a university education seem necessary to you.

Because some ideologies are more articulated than others, ideologies exist on an unequal footing in society. The hegemony dominance of some ideologies is not static; it is always a fluid process—what Hall calls a temporary state characterized by a "theatre of struggle." In other words, the struggle between contradictory ideologies is constantly present and constantly shifting. Rap is a good example of this struggle. Does it reflect the genuine values and interests of black youth culture? Is it a sign of the degeneration of society? Or is it something else entirely? The answer depends on which cultural community is asked. Cultural studies scholars particularly are interested in the dominant or hegemonic ideologies that characterize capitalism because they want to see changes in Western society, and they view their scholarship as an instrument of socialist cultural struggle.

According to cultural studies scholars, social reform will occur in two ways: (1) by identifying contradictions in society, the resolution of which will lead to positive, as opposed to oppressive, change; and (2) by providing interpretations that will help people understand domination and the kinds of change that would be desirable. The chief aim of cultural studies, then, is to expose the ways ideologies of powerful groups are unwittingly perpetuated and to develop ways to resist and disrupt these ideologies.

Video game culture is a relatively recent topic of study within cultural studies. Adrienne Shaw unpacks the definitions of and discourses around video game culture to suggest that games should be looked at from the perspective of cultural studies.[24] Rather than assuming a common sense definition of the term

video game culture, she critically examines the term, looking specifically at how video-game play as a culture is framed in the popular press and in the academy. Shaw sampled articles about video game and gamer culture in *USA Today, The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times,* and the *Washington Post*, seeking to understand, from a cultural studies perspective, *who* plays, *what* games they play, and *how* they play. She found that the stereotype of gamers is that they are adolescent males; this means that those who study other gaming populations, such as women, are forced to talk about their subject in relation to the perceived center. Shaw suggests that what is needed is a critical reexamination of the place of women and girls, and all groups seen as "outsider" in gaming culture, looking specifically at whether these group members in fact position themselves as "other" or "outside" the culture.

Shaw argues for a similar examination of the games that receive the most attention. Violent games are mentioned most frequently in news articles, for instance. She asserts that what needs to be studied is why certain games and genres of games are canonized and others are not—and within what larger cultural discourses are games positioned? Similarly, Shaw suggests cultural studies scholars need to ask about how gamers play. Most news accounts focus on, and academics try to disprove, the negatives of gaming—the immersion of players in games, the correlation between games and childhood obesity—without examining positive impacts and trying to disprove the positives associated with gaming. Video games, for example, are highly interactive and audience-dependent texts, and this sociality deserves more research. But so does its opposite—what are the drawbacks of this kind of sociality? Shaw argues, then, that video games should be looked at in culture rather than as culture, and scholars seeking to understand how they function should examine questions such as how video games are linked to other media practices, how video games are socially organized in culture, and what they mean to those who play them.

The interests of critical scholars in working for society's emancipation are extended through cultural studies. Post-structuralism is in many ways a more specific form of critical theory and cultural studies with a focus on language.

Post-Structuralism

Post-structuralism originated in France in reaction to traditional structural ideas about language.[25] Structuralism, or the view that meaning resides in the structure of language and other symbol systems, is associated with Ferdinand de Saussure, Claude Lévi Strauss, Roland Barthes, Louis Althusser, and Jacques Lacan, who were interested in a scientific theory of meaning in language (Lacan and Barthes are associated with post-structuralism as well). Structuralists, then, are associated with modernism because of their belief in specific meanings that reside in symbol systems.

Post-structuralists, including Lacan and Barthes as well as Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, came to believe that language use could not be considered apart from historicity—that historical context is needed to understand how language functions. To simply map structural features, the focus of the structuralists, was insufficient. The goal of post-structuralism was to "deconstruct" language in order to show that language can be understood, used, and constructed in virtually limitless ways. Furthermore, post-structuralists considered

language use as a social production and process, informed by conventions, traditions, and situations as well as by the nature of the language or symbol system itself. Post-structuralists also were interested in issues of power in language. When meanings and grammars are normalized, one form of discourse is privileged over another—a process that is ultimately and always oppressive. Post-structuralism, then, is postmodern because it resists ideas that posit a universal, normal structure or meaning in symbols.

Post-structuralism has been a particular challenge to the discipline of communication because it calls into question the basic communication transaction that has been central to the discipline—a communicator constructs a message and delivers it to an audience, whose members generally receive the message as intended. Post-structuralists point out that at every point in this process, there are tensions, contradictions, and ambiguities that intervene in the successful transmission of a message. The audience, for example, regardless of how clear or ambiguous a message is, brings their own meanings and needs to it, synthesizing it into something that is likely quite different from its original form and intended meaning. Post-structuralists, then, have exerted a profound influence on the field of communication by suitably complicating the communication process.

Within the communication field today, the most influential post-structuralist is Michel Foucault. Foucault is sometimes considered a structuralist and at others a post-structuralist; he is impossible to classify neatly because his writings bridge both traditions.[26] According to Foucault, each period has a distinct worldview (conceptual structure) that determines the nature of knowledge in that period. Foucault calls the character of knowledge in a given epoch the *episteme* or *discursive formation*. The vision of each age is exclusive and incompatible with visions from other ages, making it impossible for people in one period to think as do those in another period. The episteme, or way of thinking, is determined not by people but by the predominant discursive structures of the day. These discursive structures are deeply embedded ways of expressing ideas, and what people know cannot be separated from the structures of discourse used to express that knowledge. For Foucault, discourse includes written texts, but it also includes spoken language and nonverbal forms such as architecture, institutional practices, and cultural productions of all kinds.

The structure of discourse is a set of inherent rules that determines the form and substance of discursive practice. For Foucault, rules apply across a culture in a variety of types of discourse; they function on a deep and powerful level. The rules determine not only how to talk but also the very nature of the knowledge, power, and ethics in place in that discursive formation. These rules control what can be talked or written about, who may talk or write, and whose talk is to be taken seriously. Such rules also prescribe the form that discourse must take. In our day, for example, "scientific authorities" are given great credibility, and in matters of "fact," most people prefer the form of "objective studies" over the form of conjecture or myth.

According to Foucault—and contrary to much popular belief—people are not responsible for establishing the conditions of discourse. Inversely, it is discourse that determines the place of the person in the scheme of the world. The present discursive structure defines humans as the foundation and origin of knowledge, but Foucault believes that the episteme will shift and humans will

once again disappear from their central place in the world: "It is comforting . . . and a source of profound relief to think that man is only a recent invention, a figure not yet two centuries old, a new wrinkle in our knowledge, and that he will disappear again as soon as that knowledge has discovered a new form."[27] This radical idea does not mean that humans do not produce discourse. Indeed, they do. But any number of individuals could have produced a given statement, and any speaker or writer is merely fulfilling a role in making that statement.

Martha Cooper applied Foucault's ideas to Richard Nixon's famous Checkers speech to show how the discourse made use of—indeed created—standards for responding to an accusation.[28] In the presidential campaign of 1952, vice-presidential candidate Richard Nixon was accused of harboring a secret campaign fund. He responded to this accusation by denying the charge, opening his private finances to public scrutiny, and claiming that the only possible illegitimate contribution he had received was a dog named Checkers. While Nixon took the role of agent in this case, that Nixon was the source of the Checkers speech is not especially important. What is important is that a Nixon-type person was created by the Checkers speech; furthermore, a context was created that established the rules for politicians to follow to handle successfully an accusation of the type Nixon faced. First, an accusation requires a response; politicians who do not publicly answer charges do not survive politically. Second, in that response, the speaker provides details of his private life not previously known by the public, which casts an aura of honesty on the disclosure. The final characteristic established by the speech was that the politician's fate is placed in the public's hands. Nixon's speech, then, constructed a context as much as it arose in a context and constructed a persona for politicians as much it was delivered by the person of Richard Nixon.

Foucault's research on the penal system is a good example of the relationship among language and discourse.[29] He described a dramatic shift in conceptions of prisons—away from torture and public punishment in the eighteenth century to incarceration and protection of the criminal from bodily harm in the nineteenth century. In the 1700s, convicts were tortured or executed in a public spectacle because the discursive formation of the day viewed the body as the central object of political relations. It was very natural that power should be exerted against the body and that punishment should involve bodily pain. In the discursive formation of the nineteenth century, however, the body lost this status, as power became more a matter of the individual human psyche or soul. Thus, locking people up came to be viewed as a more appropriate punishment than flogging or executing them in public.

Foucault's work centers on analyzing discourse in a way that reveals its rules and structures. This method, which he first called *archaeology* and later renamed *genealogy*,[30] seeks to uncover, through careful description, the regularities and contradictions of discourse and the succession of discourses across time. For this reason, Foucault emphasizes comparative descriptions across pieces of discourse. Interpretation, or establishing the meaning of a single text, cannot be avoided in textual analysis, but it should be minimized because interpretation does not reveal discursive structures and, in fact, may obscure them.

Another important theme in Foucault's work is the subject of power. He believes that power is an inherent part of all discursive formations and all rela-

tionships. As such, power is a set of relations rather than a thing; it is a function of discourse or knowledge and not a human or institutional property. In Foucault's many areas of investigation—the prison system, sexuality, madness[31]—he sought to understand how power functions as a creative force that is always producing new types of knowledge. Power relations are never fixed; instead, they are mobile and fluid.

Rebecca Walker discusses the history of flash mobs—spontaneous scripted public performances—in two different textual formats.[32] First, she uses written accounts to understand and capture the historical movements that predate and contribute to flash mobs, including Dadist performances in Munich at the turn of the twentieth century; situationists in Italy who altered preexisting artwork and renamed streets; counter-cultural happenings in the 1950s and 1960s in the United States; and streaking, which involves some of the same lack of inhibition evident in flash mobs. Following this historical account, Walker engages in a second telling of flash-mob history, this one a much more personal one. Walker narrates her own involvement with some of Bill Wasik's eight flash mobs in New York City in 2003, making use of Foucault's notions of genealogy. Through genealogy, she is able to demonstrate a network of practices and behaviors that characterize her involvement in flash mobs and thus reveal a different kind of discursive formation than a more objective historical account can offer. By using two approaches—a linear approach and a composite of practices in line with genealogy—she shows how history can appear very different in different discursive formations.

Foucault's approach to systems of discourse foreshadows the next area of inquiry. Postcolonialism addresses one particular discursive formation—colonialism—that continues to manifest, although in quite different forms, the imperialism that characterized much of history.

Postcolonialism

Postcolonial theory involves a critique of colonialism, which has been an important cultural structure of the modern period. Scholars working in the postcolonial movement are devoted to examining Eurocentrism, imperialism, and the processes of colonization and decolonization—how the colonial experience can be understood as an ideology of domination.[33] Postcolonial scholars examine and ultimately seek to undo the historical structures that originally created, maintained, and continue to reproduce the oppression of the colonial experience.

While many postcolonial scholars are themselves from nations that were subject to European and British colonization, their focus is not restricted to the literal colonization practices of these countries as empires. They also focus on what is called *neocolonialism* as it occurs in contemporary discourse about "others." Neocolonialism is present, for example, in the use of the terms *First World* and *Third World* for "developed" and "developing" nations, in the massive transference and "invasion" of US culture into all parts of the world, and in treatments of nonwhite races as "other" in US media.

Edward Said's work on "otherness" is often considered the origin of postcolonial theory. In his book *Orientalism*, Said discusses the systems of discourse by which the "'world' is divided, administered, plundered, by which humanity is thrust into pigeonholes, by which 'we' are 'human' and 'they' are not."[34] These

systems of discourses extend beyond the political realm to the academic world as well. Said points out how members of non-Western cultures are positioned as "subjects" of study—"others" turned into objects, something to learn about rather than engage with. The postcolonial project, then, is concerned with how the discourses of the Western world legitimize and reinforce certain power structures and practices in the ongoing production and reproduction of colonization. Raka Shome is largely responsible for bringing the postcolonial into the communication discipline; she shows how colonial and neocolonial themes persist but also how such understandings can enlarge and enhance understandings of rhetoric and its functions.[35]

From the Source . . .

My interest in postcolonial theory emerged partly from my experiences in, and with, the US academy. As a graduate student, I experienced the academy and the communication discipline as only focusing on Euro/US-centered theories and not recognizing how those were connected to global apartheid in knowledge production and distribution. This was true even of the so-called *critical* theories in our field. Added to this was my experience of how students (and faculty) from the Global South were not adequately understood in US academia. Our (that is, postcolonial subjects) communication structures and styles are often at odds with the highly individualistic style of US academia. These kinds of experiences led me to postcolonial theory because of its focus on global inequalities in knowledge production and how those trickle down to everyday material practices.

Raka Shome

The stance of postcolonialism is inherently political, seeking emancipation from oppressive structures as they continue to play out in Western discourses around the world. Postcolonial critics recognize, however, that the answer to Western domination is not simply retreating into a pre-Western past or an indigenous tradition in order to preserve some kind of "native" identity. This is not only impractical but simply reproduces the "us" versus "them" ideology at work in the larger world. Rather, the postcolonial critic seeks to understand the world from a place between two cultures, to resist any singular form of cultural understanding, and to see cultural identities in more complicated ways.

An important theme in postcolonial work, then, is *hybridity*—the spaces between cultures.[36] Living between two cultures and not being truly part of either creates what Gloria Anzaldúa calls the borderlands, a displaced position that carries with it a special consciousness and way of seeing that is valuable to understanding both cultures.[37] Postcolonial theorists ask the discipline of communication to examine ways of communicating that take into account how all of us live, to some degree, in the borderlands.

Postcolonial theory is thus very much concerned with power—another basic component of the critical tradition. While offering a critical understanding of the power dynamics of imperialism in all of its forms, it also understands the

difficulty of moving out of those structures of domination. Postcolonial scholars suggest several ways to begin grappling with the forms of domination that pervade society. A first task is to unlearn privilege—to recognize and acknowledge the ways in which daily practices connect to larger political, national, and international interests in the world. Even simple things like being able to buy Band-Aids that match one's skin tone are signs of "privilege" that members of the dominant culture often do not think about.

A second suggestion is to avoid essentializing others in the ways that Western discourses have done. The postcolonial critic who attempts to discuss the situation of a woman in Senegal, for instance, essentially colonizes that woman by speaking with authority about and defining the nature of her experience. Gayatri Spivak offers the idea of "strategic essentializing" as a way out of this bind. Avoiding essentializing altogether is impossible; what is important is to constantly examine that stance, considering essentialism not as "the way things are" but as "something one must adopt to produce a critique of anything."[38] The postcolonial critic, then, values self-reflexivity and remains watchful of the ways the processes of scholarship may be inscribing the very power relations and hegemonic structures under investigation.

Trinh T. Minh-ha's work demonstrates several aspects of the intersection of the postcolonial with communication theory. A Vietnamese filmmaker, musician, composer, poet, and author, Trinh examines and seeks to disrupt "rooted ideologies" or established orders in any form. What is troublesome for Trinh about hegemonic systems is that they usually are unmarked, unnoticed, and thus considered normal: it becomes "the only way people can think about something."[39] Even those who might be expected to resist the system—those who have been colonized—participate in and are co-opted by the dominant worldview, maintained by prevailing social codes and techniques of categorization and standardization. As a result, the colonizer and colonized speak the same language. Trinh's aim is to disrupt any singular ideology, replacing it instead with a world of many possible meanings.

Trinh distinguishes between *otherness* and *difference* to explore how individuals are positioned in systems of domination. Individuals in privileged positions tend to respond to those who are different from themselves through a lens of otherness, assigning a fixed, stable, essential identity to the other. Marginalized or colonized individuals, on the other hand, typically respond to others through a lens of difference. They move between outsider and insider positions, exploring differences between the self and the image one has of the other and vice versa. Identity through difference becomes an open, fluctuating, ongoing process of construction, "a multiplicity of I's, none of which truly dominates."[40]

Trinh adopts two primary communication tools—violation of expectations and honoring multiplicity—to disrupt ideologies of domination. Violation of expectations means simply breaking the rules with regard to a particular situation, experience, or text. Trinh's documentaries are an excellent example of this strategy in operation. In her film *Surname Viet Given Name Nam*, for instance, she had Vietnamese women in the United States act out transcripts of interviews others had conducted with women in Vietnam. The reenactment is deliberately ambiguous, until the women in the film interviews discuss why they agreed to play the roles on screen. In another example, a film titled *Reassemblage*, Trinh

uses silence over the titles, introducing music much later in the film than is typical and expected: music tells an audience what to expect, and Trinh wants audiences to suspend their expectations.

The disruption of expectations is tied closely to Trinh's second communication strategy—the honoring of multiplicity, or the construction of messages that are deliberately ambiguous. She prefers and creates messages that do not have a single answer. Instead, audience members are invited to participate in the making of meaning. Trinh not only challenges systems of domination but also uses communication techniques to challenge and destabilize ideologies.

A study by Mahuya Pal and Patrice Buzzanell about Indian call centers provides an example of a postcolonial analysis.[41] Indian call centers are a $16.9 billion industry, thriving with the offshoring of service work by companies in the West. In employing a postcolonial framework, Pal and Buzzanell seek to understand the ways unequal power relationships continue to serve the interests of capitalism as well as the ways those relationships rupture taken-for-granted Western assumptions about transnational corporations. From focus groups and telephone interviews with call-center employees in Kolkata, India, three themes emerged in a larger pattern of acquiescence and resistance. First, there is the tension between having to ape the West but struggling against the need to do so. Call-center workers thus can provide the rationale for why it is necessary to take on an American identity and name when they answer calls—it is more acceptable to Western clients and helps sell a product—but they simultaneously resent the need for these practices. Second, call-center employees reverse the dominant neoliberal discourse that outsourcing is good for developing nations, instead framing outsourcing as an opportunity for the West. In this sense, they center their Indian sensibilities and pride rather than adopting a colonialist logic. Finally, these employees adopt a completely new way of life to work at call centers, from learning Americanness to working at night, but they treat it as a temporary situation—a stepping stone to better careers—rather than a permanent career opportunity as is touted by the corporations for which they work.

Call-center workers, then, reveal micro-level forms of resistance that complicate global capitalism. They manage to educate their Western clients about India, sometimes unknowingly and sometimes quite decisively; they demystify the dichotomy between the West and non-West by challenging stereotypes; and they adhere to their own Indian identities while also appropriating and rearticulating Western discourses. The dialectical tensions that characterize the call center show complex oppositions—fascination and repulsion, questioning and acceptance—that support but also challenge the politics of decolonization.

The postcolonial project brings the concerns of the critical tradition—domination, ideology, and power—to the global scene. It offers ways to listen to those who have been colonized by Western discourses, and it suggests ways to bring everyone into conversations about identities, politics, globalization, and power. The next theory continues the examination of critical theory from feminist perspectives.

Feminist Theories

Feminist scholarship has both modernist and postmodern variations but often is positioned within critical theory (see chapter 9 for a discussion of feminist theories in organizational communication).[42] There are many misunderstandings

about feminism. Rebecca West, a British writer and journalist is reported to have said, "I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that distinguish me from a doormat."[43] Most definitions of feminism deal with some combination of gender, oppression, and self-determination. We define feminism here as a movement aimed at making available opportunities for self-expression and self-fulfillment regardless of gender or any other identity characteristics.

Feminist scholarship within the modernist tradition centers around two lines of inquiry: (1) scholarship seeking social, political, and economic equality for women within existing power structures; and (2) scholarship seeking to dismantle and restructure the social system to make it more emancipatory for women and men. In the most general terms, these can be viewed as *liberal* and *radical* feminism, respectively, and they correlate loosely with modern and postmodern approaches. *Liberal feminism,* the foundation of the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s, is based in liberal democracy—the idea that justice involves the assurance of equal rights for all individuals. Liberal feminists say that women have been oppressed as a group and therefore have not had equal rights with men, as evidenced by women's lower average income, women's exclusion from decision making and centers of power, and women's lack of opportunity to advance in careers of their choice. The focus of this branch of the movement is to change laws and policies so that they include women. The push for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the US Constitution in the 1970s and 1980s is an example of the efforts of this branch of feminism.[44]

In contrast to the liberal school of thought that sees the issue of feminism as one of political rights, *radical feminists* believe that patriarchy is the central source of oppression. Women are oppressed because the very fabric of society is based on a constructed reality that devalues and marginalizes women's experiences. If gender is a social construction, then in the present order of things, it is a man-made construction. The term *radical* is appropriate for this movement because it goes to the root of social structure and demands a rethinking and restructuring of all facets of society. Instead of merely thinking that there should be more women physicians, society itself must redefine the whole nature of medicine. Instead of seeking to overcome the glass ceiling, women must strive to change the very definition of commerce and economy in society at large so that it better accommodates the interests and needs of women, children, and men. Radical feminism seeks to transform society rather than simply to incorporate women's voices within it.[45]

The early work in feminist scholarship in the academy tended to fit within the liberal feminist paradigm—understanding sex and gender differences in order to move toward a valuing of the feminine on equal terms with the masculine. These scholars sought to describe women's perspectives and worldviews; the different expectations of and patterns for women's communication; and the ways women accommodate, challenge, and subvert such expectations.[46] Feminist scholars sought, by means of these studies, to add women's communication practices to those of the discipline and to value the often private and vernacular discourses that characterize much of women's experience.[47] They also argued that the inclusion of women and women's discourse into the study of communication could benefit everyone.

In the field of communication, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's essay, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation," suggested that feminist discourse is distinctive and constitutes a unique genre, thus challenging traditional notions of persuasion, the rhetorical situation, and social movements. She later contributed a two-volume analysis and examples of women's discourse in *Man Cannot Speak For Her,* providing access to women speakers who largely had been ignored in rhetorical studies. Campbell also developed a theory of feminine style, later elaborated and extended by Bonnie Dow and Mari Boor Tonn, which is a result of experiences in the home and craft learning. A feminine style, while not limited only to women, is characterized by features that align with much of women's socialization—a personal tone, an inductive organizational pattern, and an invitational approach to the audience, treating them as peers and soliciting their views and insights. Campbell, then, established significant areas of inquiry for feminist scholarship—from the distinctiveness of women's discourse, to critical analyses of women speakers, to features of a particular communication style often associated with women.[48]

Another major direction of feminist theories in communication was reconceptualization. If different assumptions characterized feminist scholarship, the discipline should take into account those conceptualizations. Carole Spitzack and Kathryn Carter argued that feminist scholars need to do more than fill in the gaps in communication research if women's perspectives and communication practices are to be integrated into the discipline; they need to engage in reconceptualization—producing novel theories and strategies that ultimately will accomplish that transformation.[49] This call was followed by a plethora of feminist reconceptualizations of aspects of the discipline, from social movements to public speaking and public address to the work of Kenneth Burke.[50]

The work of early feminist theorists to bring women's perspectives and practices into the communication discipline and to begin to reconceptualize the discipline on the basis of gender was important for making visible gendered patterns in society and creating greater awareness of how gender functions. In many of these early treatments, however, *women* ended up constructed in an essential way that treated all women the same. In this way, liberal feminist scholarship fits within the modernist paradigm, seeing groups, categories, and structures as preexisting and static. These essentializing tendencies have been forcefully and productively challenged by scholarship that seeks to emphasize individual standpoints (see chapter 3 for a discussion of standpoint theory) and the intersection of gender with other social classifications and identities. With these developments, feminist scholarship moved from modernist to postmodern concerns.

Thus, more recent forms of feminist scholarship, in communication and other academic disciplines, has been critical, seeking to understand how oppression and unequal power relations are constructed in social interactions of various types. Specifically, feminist communication scholars examine the ways the male language bias affects the relations between the sexes, the ways male domination has constrained communication for females, and the ways women have both accommodated and resisted male patterns of speech and language. Contemporary feminist scholars also examine and articulate interrelated forms of oppression—gender, sexuality, race, class, ability, age, religion—realizing that working to end one kind of oppression is useless and in fact impossible—if other

oppressions remain entrenched and unaddressed.[51] Finally, feminist scholars imagine new emancipatory possibilities for humans when current gender binaries are dissolved and unequal power relations no longer dominate. The work of Sonia Johnson and Sally Gearhart illustrate two approaches in which feminist theorists develop strategies for envisioning new worlds beyond patriarchy.[52]

Feminist scholars do not just examine discourses and practices out in the world; they also have become self-reflexive in treating scholarship and the scholarly enterprise itself as a cultural text. Feminist scholars have pointed out how research and theory building are dominated not only by gender biases but by biases of Western science—including the privileging of objectivity, Eurocentricism, and imperialism. Accordingly, feminist scholars devise methods of scholarship that take into account the shifting female subject and its related discourses while also situating it in lived experience. They explore how the so-called gender-neutral discourses of the academy have denied women voice; they also develop strategies by which women can interrupt the academic conversation, and they examine what the academy stands to lose and gain from such exclusions. Essays by Carole Spitzack and Kathryn Carter are among the earliest critiques of the gendered nature of the discipline; Carole Blair, Julie Brown, and Leslie Baxter critiqued the ways the process of publishing in the discipline perpetuates a masculine bias in the discipline despite the inclusion of feminist scholarship.[53]

As an example of feminist scholarship that takes a critical perspective on communication, Karla Scott studied black women who grew up in the era following the civil rights and women's movements.[54] Taking advantage of opportunities to move into expanded educational and professional realms, these women live in both black and white worlds. Using focus groups to explore the communication strategies used by young black women in predominantly white environments, Scott asked these women about the challenges they face, the stereotypes they encounter, how they deal with those stereotypes, and how these encounters affect their identities as black women. Their strategies include dispelling stereotypes (showing that they are intelligent and that they are not all and always angry black women) and overcompensating (playing the game and performing competence in order to succeed). They see themselves as expanding the vision of black womanhood rather than rejecting black identity and describe their ability to live in both a black world and a white one as "twice blessed" rather than doubly oppressed.

In the next section, we address critical rhetoric, the last theory we include here that specifically centers issues of power. Critical rhetoric raises issues of power and ideology in the mainstream rhetorical tradition, calling into question many assumptions about speakers, texts, and audiences.

Critical Rhetoric

What has come to be called *critical rhetoric* is the result of the work of many communication scholars—most notably Michael McGee and Raymie McKerrow—that led to the publication of McKerrow's essay, "Critical Rhetoric: Theory and Praxis," in 1989.[55] We begin by first discussing Michael McGee's theory of ideographs because it set the stage for critical rhetoric.

Michael McGee's theory of ideographs, published in 1980,[56] identifies ideographs as at the heart of ideologies. Ideographs are concepts that have particu-

lar force and meaning because of how they constitute and trigger a particular ideology. Words like *patriotism*, *democracy*, *rule of law*, *freedom*, *equality*, and *liberty* are ideographs in the United States. They are short, abstract summaries of orientations—god and devil terms[57]—that are shared by and taken for granted by a particular group, culture, or society. Another way to think about ideographs is that they function as *synecdoche*, standing in for the beliefs and commitments that constitute ideologies. They foster an almost blind commitment to and acceptance of a position or cause.

Without being aware of it, we are dictated to by the slogan-like ideographs that populate our culture, whether we recognize, adhere to, or resist the ideologies of which they are part. McGee explains that because ideographs are taken for granted, they direct belief and action into acceptable forms without much challenge. Most public arguments and campaigns consist of brandishing about often competing and contradictory ideographs. For example, *right to life* and *choice* are opposing ideographs in the abortion debate; *gun control* and *the right to bear arms* are contradictory ideographs in the debate over guns in the United States. Both come with agreed-upon meanings that are part of the fabric of US ideology. Both are accepted ideographs despite the possibility of being used in contradictory ways. Only rarely are the clusters within an ideograph examined, unmasked, or deconstructed to make the implicit norms and values of the ideograph explicit. McGee urges us to read ideographs more critically to understand the richer understandings available within the clusters that form the ideographs and ideologies of society.

Mark Moore explores how competing ideographs of *life* and *liberty* are involved in the public debate about environmental tobacco smoke (ETS).[58] In exploring campaigns on both sides of the issue, Moore argues that the cigarette is able to stand as synecdoche for each side, despite appealing to different ideographs. For the pro-smoking side, the cigarette is constructed as a materialization of liberty—the right to do what you want, including the right to die from smoking or from exposure to cigarette smoke. Liberty, then, is what is threatened by anti-smoking campaigns, according to the narrative of the pro-cigarette side. What is actually threatened, however, according to Moore, is liberty for the tobacco industry—the freedom to make money from cigarette sales. On the other side of the debate, the cigarette stands for *life*; life is what is threatened by the cigarette, either from smoking it directly or from second-hand smoke. The debate about ETS, then, is about a threat to life or to liberty, but the social construction of the pro-cigarette side fails to hold up ideologically, given that its true intent is economic.

McGee's theory functions as foundation for Raymie McKerrow's critical rhetoric. Critical rhetoric is clearly situated within the postmodern tradition; it deals with many of the themes of critical theory and its extensions, but does so in rhetorical terms. The starting point for critical rhetoric is the traditional hegemony of rhetorical practice, in which those in charge control who can speak and when. In contrast, a critical rhetorical stance challenges the power of the establishment and offers a critique of domination and freedom as they play out in a given rhetorical situation. The critical rhetorician seeks to understand the assumptions that underlie various forms of discourse and how they function to promote domination or freedom. A critique of domination refers to emancipa-

tion from repressive power, while a critique of freedom signals productive power—what can be created in positive terms "to become other than we are at this moment."[59] McKerrow draws on Foucault for his delineation of power as capable of both inhibiting and inviting change. Critical rhetoric privileges a sense of continual and ongoing critique, so that even if change in the preferred direction has occurred, that state of affairs is again subject to another round of reflection and critique. Critical rhetoric is not a theory or method as much as it is an orientation or stance toward critical practice.

Critical rhetoric of necessity, then, transforms the place and role of the rhetor (speaker) in "public address." Traditionally, the term *address* conjures up a rhetor who constructs a discourse with a beginning, middle, and end—a discourse designed to fit a situation and audience. The rhetor is in charge of the process, tasked with selecting proper and appropriate strategies for appealing to the audience. With critical rhetoric, the emphasis is essentially reversed, and the task for the rhetor is to "construct addresses out of the fabric" of the social world in its fragmented, unconnected, and contradictory nature—a "'pulling together' of disparate scraps of discourse which, when constructed as an argument, illuminate otherwise hidden or taken for granted social practices."[60] The emphasis, in other words, is on the relational properties that contain and constrain the rhetor in the act of creating discourse. In a sense, agency is an effect rather than a cause in critical rhetoric.

McKerrow elaborates critical rhetoric by offering eight principles that collectively reshape and redirect the process of rhetoric and rhetorical criticism from a critical perspective. First, critical rhetoric privileges an orientation, rather than a strict set of methodological requirements, based on the question, "What does this context determine to be necessary in best understanding and analyzing its features?"[61] Second, discourse is considered material—what is considered real is so constituted through discursive practices. Every object is constituted as an object of discourse; in other words, nothing can be discussed except in discursive terms. Third, rhetoric's focus on the contingent—what knowledge means at any given moment—shifts the focus from what symbols "are" to what symbols "do" in society. Issues of truth and falsity are replaced with concerns of how power works to create constructions that are called right or wrong.

The fourth principle asserts the importance of naming. The power to name always has been recognized in rhetoric; a critical perspective enhances this understanding even more by elaborating on who has the power to name, the way naming "fixes" something, and the need to see naming as an interpretive act that only expresses what is perceived to be true for the moment. The focus on naming as interpretation enhances the understanding of rhetoric as relativistic rather than absolute and evolving rather than fixed. The fifth principle reinforces the fluidity of rhetoric in asserting the claim that the creation of discourse is not a linear, causal process. It is important to acknowledge the range of forces and choices that may impact a given discourse.

Similarly, the sixth principle is a reminder that what is observable may not be the most important element of a scene—what is absent may be more important as a source of information than what is present. The seventh principle highlights the importance of multiple perspectives for an assessment from a critical-

rhetoric perspective. Depending on the questions asked, different understandings will emerge, each of which can add to the critique being offered. Finally, the eighth principle concerns the performance of the critical act itself. The critical rhetor does not merely explain but commits to a position in the world. This performance of advocacy is accompanied by ongoing discussions and critiques of the possibilities and pitfalls of the advocated position. Ultimately, the rhetor's assessment of a rhetorical situation or set of discourses is offered in order to achieve change, always with the understanding that the "new universe, with different possibilities for discursive interactions, lays itself open to renewed critique."[62]

From the Source . . .

The ideas that eventually became an essay in 1989 began to form earlier in that decade. Conversations with my friend Michael Calvin McGee also factored into the work being done. Short convention papers in the early 1980s, along with a review essay on ideology and Marxism, served as background for the development of what became critiques of domination and freedom. A separate convention paper outlined key "principles of practice." At some point, I realized that I could link the critiques and the principles together to form a new essay. As I've said on other occasions, the ideas were not "invented"—they were drawn from conversations among rhetoricians at the time. That the essay became influential was a surprise!

Raymie McKerrow

In an example of critical rhetoric, Victor Alumona studied the Ahiara Declaration, Biafra's Declaration of Independence delivered by General Odumegwu Ojukwu in 1969. Alumona suggests that despite its revolutionary pretensions, the speech actually had the opposite effect.[63] In critically assessing the rhetorical choices Ojukwu used, Alumona argues that the speech created in the Biafran people a persecution complex that then allowed them to see themselves as victims of a global conspiracy rather than take responsibility for their own misadventures. He discusses, for instance, Ojukwu's reversal of traditional phrases "peace and progress" and "glory and honor." If he had said "peace and progress" first, his audience might start wondering about when that peace would be realized after two years of a brutal and ongoing war. But by mentioning "glory and honor" first, the people can reflect on how they have kept their glory and honor throughout the war.

As a second of many examples, Ojukwu also chooses to call the situation a *predicament* rather than a war; a predicament conveys the idea of being forced into the situation by circumstances outside of one's control. In fact, the Biafrans made a deliberate decision to secede from Nigeria and declare independence. But by using the word *predicament,* Ojukwu sells the idea that the war was thrust upon them. He adds to this a racial discrimination argument—that the white world places no value on black lives, considers blacks inferior, and this explains the reactions of many governments in response to Biafra's struggle. The end result is that Biafra is suffering because it has taken on a war with the

white world, an argument that essentially absolves the leader and his people from responsibility or blame for this unavoidable predicament.

A critical examination of the language and arguments used in Biafra's Declaration of Independence, then, shows that instead of offering an opportunity to engage the important issues around war and independence, the document deflected attention away from Ojukwu and the war. Instead, the document set up a scenario in which the people could feel victimized by dominant white society and thus not attend to how Biafra found itself in this predicament and their leader's involvement in it.

Theories of power and ideology illustrate the ways a society is structured, the ideologies and power dynamics in place that both further and resist that structure, and how these play out in processes of communication. The theories in the next section deal with maintenance and change, processes in which every society is continually involved.

Preservation and Change

We next discuss two sets of theories—(1) theories about development; and (2) theories about memorializing—that represent how societies deal with change and preservation. Development communication has been of particular interest to communication scholars concerned about material and power inequities in the world; theories of development demonstrate concerns with the application of theory to make the world a better place. We conclude this section with theories of memory, or the ways societies seek not only to preserve but also to commemorate some significant event or experience. Taken together, theories of development and memory show societies dealing with theories that impact past and future social concerns.

Development Communication

Development communication, as a specific type of social change, traditionally has involved solving social problems, especially in "underdeveloped" countries.[64] Rural sociology, journalism and mass communication, and education were the disciplines that collectively gave rise to development efforts; Lyndon Johnson's war on poverty and the availability of global aid it generated served as catalysts for efforts to address literacy, health, political participation, agriculture, and economic entrepreneurship of all kinds. In the field of communication, the notion of diffusion of innovations (see chapter 11), a theory developed and applied widely by Everett Rogers and his colleagues, can be considered a major factor in development efforts and research. Rogers originally studied innovations in agriculture in the United States but then applied those strategies to development issues around the world.[65]

Four approaches—distinguished by direction, goals, and focus—capture the important themes of development communication. These paradigms are described in various ways, with scholars emphasizing different issues and focal points for each. What they share is a conception of development and communication as a form of social change that can make a real difference in the world. Several scholars contribute to each paradigm, so we will articulate the basics of the approach and then suggest some representative scholarship within that paradigm.

Top-Down Development. A conception of development as linear and top-down—with information, aid, and technology flowing from the developed First World to the undeveloped Third World—characterized the first approach to development in communication. In this paradigm, governments, researchers, and aid societies figured out what needed to be done and imposed it on the village, region, or country in need of help, with little or no input from the people themselves. In this version of development, economic growth was featured as the critical difference between the First and Third worlds; thus, reducing the income gap, bolstering gross national product, and raising the standard of living were the basic concerns. Because industrialization had spurred economic growth in the West, introducing industry and technology to the Third World was seen as the answer to economic development in non-Western societies as well. Modernization and the accumulation of wealth were the desired outcome; these were the visible signs that development was effective.

The recipients of this kind of development were treated essentially as passive subjects in need of assistance—targets of Western intervention by those who have the answers and the aid. Traditional cultural values and practices were seen as backward, naïve, and limiting; the goal was to replace them with the modern values of the West to foster social and economic advancement, development, and growth. Blame for the state of underdevelopment was placed on the people themselves, on social/governmental structures in place, and on a lack of resources—lack of capital, technology, natural resources, or motivation.

Rogers's original definition of development captures this linear, top-down approach: "Development is a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita income and levels of living through more modern production methods and improved social organization."[66] Sarah De Los Santos Upton describes this traditional approach as one that reinforces and reifies binaries such as traditional/modern, Northern/Southern, First World/Third World, independent/dependent, and agency goals/community goals. She uses the binary *nos*/*otros* (*we*/*them* in Spanish), to summarize this traditional approach to development.[67]

In the beginning of the 1970s, substantial critiques of development emerged. Assumptions that had been implicit in development work—ethnocentrism, blaming the individual for underdevelopment, the belief in the superiority of economic growth and modernist values—began to be articulated, questioned, and addressed. Development came to be seen as another version of colonialism and imperialism; for some, capitalism itself was named as the source of the world's underdevelopment rather than its salvation. That development efforts had not been very successful was also a factor in the shift to a new approach to development; millions of dollars in aid had failed to erase income gaps, increase employment, and improve basic living conditions.

Participatory Development. As a result of the critiques of development efforts, a second paradigm of development emerged, which is often referred to as *participatory.* Development came to be seen less as a function of what national governments did to villagers and more about grassroots, participatory efforts in which the individuals themselves participated in considering, planning, and implementing their own development plans. As noted by Julius Nyer-

ere, leader of Tanzania, people cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves.[68] The individuals on the ground not only began to be consulted but also were the primary instigators of change efforts; they assumed responsibility for the type of development needed in the neighborhood or village, determined what resources would be most effective, and planned how to access resources and achieve their own development goals. Furthermore, both aid agencies and those seeking aid learned from each other; the one-way flow of information was replaced by a mutual process of learning, communication, and engagement.[69]

An emphasis on culture also began to emerge as part of this second phase in development communication, with local, cultural resources prioritized over economic ones as a primary source of development activity.[70] Culture became an asset, not something backward in need of modernization. Rogers's revised definition suggests the expanded view of development, with its participatory and local characteristics: "A widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment."[71] De Los Santos Upton sees participatory approaches to development as characterized by *nosotros*, with the division between us and them replaced by a collaborative working together to identify and meet needs—just as the two words are no longer divided.

Transcendent Development. We use the term *transcendent* for a third paradigm of development communication in which diverse and multiple pathways, suited to a specific community in distinctive ways, transcend a single approach to development. Jan Servaes describes this as "multiplicity in one world;" standardized goals, outcomes, methods, and forms of evaluation are replaced with individualized plans and measures that highlight the unique qualities and assets of the communities, as defined by community members themselves.[72] Universal theorizing is rejected in the understanding that even within fairly homogeneous cultures and communities, competing interests will be apparent. Silvio Waisbord uses the term *empowerment* to characterize the desired outcome of approaches that privilege both the personal and cultural. His definition of development fits this paradigm because the source of agency, the kinds of improvements, and the means by which to achieve change are not specified: "mobilized citizens use communication to improve people's lives and promote social justice."[73]

Mohan Dutta's culture-centered approach offers one model of transcendent development; by creating solidarity with subaltern or marginalized communities and the specialized uses of listening, participation, and co-conversation, Dutta seeks to avoid the issues that have plagued traditional approaches to development.[74] Chapter 10 explores Dutta's approach in more detail as it relates to health and health disparities. In the Public Dialogue Consortium's transcendent communication project, different kinds of questions guide the conversations among participants in community conflict situations.[75] Arvind Singhal's "positive deviance" offers another example; it is an approach to community-based social change that emerged from the observation that in every community there are positive deviants—individuals or groups whose atypical behaviors and

strategies enable them to find solutions to problems that others with the same challenges and resources do not discover. These successful approaches are then used as the basis for widespread diffusion, innovation, and change.[76]

Power and Development. Stemming from the critical tradition, a fourth paradigm looks at development communication from the contexts of power within which communication occurs. Karin Wilkins is perhaps the best known communication scholar pursuing this line of thinking.[77] Her starting assumption is that social problems are not given but are constructed by communities. How these problems are characterized determine the kinds of solutions possible. Wilkins and her colleague Young-Gil Chae offer as an example different framings of world population. When framed as a bomb, the suggestion is that intervention must be immediate in order to diffuse the situation; when framed as a problem of overcrowding on a boat, redistribution could be a possible response. Any information, then, is not neutral; it cannot be considered apart from the context that constitutes it.

Wilkins concentrates on the power dynamics involved in the larger contexts in which development occurs. This process necessitates asking questions such as who has the right to create development campaigns, who benefits from the changes advocated by the interventions, and whether organizational gains outweigh community gains. In this focus on power, attention to participatory processes within communities is subsumed by attention to broader structural issues, such as whether communities have formal decision-making control over the direction of the project, their involvement in funding decisions, and/or engagement with the political activities linked to the project. This attention to the formal structure of the project takes into account donor agencies, government agencies, manufacturers and producers—any entities involved in and affected by the proposed development activity. Mapping the power dynamics that exist among these players offers a better picture of the ideal and actual potential for the project, the hegemonic forces at work that affect its realization, and any other possible constraints that might determine outcomes.

From the Source . . .

Still relevant to my experience as a professional woman, my own adolescent rebellion against those who meant to control my choices, through money or through rules, inspired me to think about power. My initial attraction to development work led to frustration with limited scopes of understanding. I believe that ethical and effective change will not happen unless we understand the contexts of intervention as constraints as well as possibilities.

Karin Wilkins

Wilkins and Florencia Enghel studied the Living Proof program, a collaborative development effort between the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and ONE, a development program cofounded by Bono of the band U2.[78] The Living Proof campaign was designed to create awareness about the successes and achievements of development programs in order to expand the appeal of both of

these organizations to European audiences. By means of videos and other website images, citizens are encouraged to become active in the campaign by becoming a member, signing petitions, purchasing merchandise, and attending events.

Wilkins and Enghel suggest, however, that the strategies used in the Living Proof campaign do not reach the intended change agents. First, there is a separate database of images available only to nonprofit agencies, which suggests that the campaign is in fact intended for a privileged group of similarly minded organizations. In addition, the claims of success made on the website do not offer specifics about those successes, and there is little evidence of program evaluation, so it is difficult to translate the success stories of a few individuals into trends of long-term effectiveness. Furthermore, the successes mentioned are not directly correlated with aid funding, making the campaign seem more like a PR campaign than evidence of aid quality and effectiveness. Overall, then, the claim of "development success" touted by the Living Proof campaign glosses over the range of issues that need to be considered to determine whether a program is successful. The ability to access an organization's website and to feel one is contributing to a good cause by hearing success stories is simplistic and superficial. Furthermore, because such approaches focus on individual agency as the route to empowerment, governments and corporations are let off the hook. The failure of such agencies to provide adequate health care or to pay fair wages, for example, is unstated and thus not addressed.

Theories of development communication exemplify how the discipline has thought about and attempted to achieve social change. As with most areas of theory, there have been considerable shifts over time in terms of the nature and goals of such theories. We turn next to memorializing, or how cultures maintain and preserve rather than seeking and encouraging change.

Collective Memorializing

In this section, we deal not with change but with public memorializing—the ways societies "never forget" by commemorating people and events of significance. Memorializing highlights how a society preserves and asserts certain values and ideals; memorializing is thus a selective process. Theorizing about memory—what is enshrined and what is redacted—as a means of preserving the past offers insights into the discursive constructions that frame memory personally, socially, and collectively.

In the discipline of communication, the rhetorical tradition has featured both memory and commemoration. Memory is one of the five canons of rhetoric (along with invention, organization, style, and delivery), and epideictic oratory, which deals with speeches of praise and blame, is one of the three major speech forms. Until the 1960s, however, memory was confined almost exclusively to techniques to help a speaker remember a speech, and studies of commemorative discourse focused almost exclusively on written and oral texts given for special occasions.

In the 1980s, however, the communication discipline began to admit the study of the nondiscursive tributes and, simultaneously, to broaden how the canons were conceptualized. No longer confined only to the act of speechmaking, memory was reconceptualized as a system of categorization, a process of per-

ceiving, storing, and recalling data.[79] This broadened conceptualization within rhetoric paved the way for memory to be considered a collective construction of a group or society that generates, selects, and even disputes the meanings of the past and their significance for the present and future.[80]

In addition, the emergence of the study of public memorializing was aided by the development of visual communication as an area of investigation in the discipline.[81] Communication scholars realized that their tools of analysis, previously applied primarily to speechmaking, could aid in understanding symbolic expressions of all kinds. Visual communication scholars, then, are interested in the ways visual images and artifacts function to convey meaning. In particular, the focus of the visual communication scholar is on an object or image that involves human symbolic action of some kind. A tree standing in a forest is not visual communication; that tree becomes so, however, when a family cuts down that tree and brings it into their home to symbolize Christmas, or the tree is photographed for use on an environmental brochure. Visual communication also implies an audience; visual elements are created not just for self-expression but also to communicate with an audience.[82] Advertisements, billboards, paintings, sculpture, furniture, architecture, and even dance, gestures, and performance art have been studied as examples of visual communication. This section explores three types of theories related to collective memorializing: (1) visual communication and memorials; (2) remembering and forgetting; and (3) media and the past.

Visual Communication and Memorials. Visual communication scholars have studied a wide variety of artifacts, but investigations of memorial architecture have been a major area of study. Sonja Foss's study of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM) was an example of one of the earliest efforts to theorize monuments rhetorically.[83] Foss identified five visual features of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial that enable it to appeal to all visitors, despite their personal views on the Vietnam War: (1) it violates the traditional form of war memorials; (2) it invites visitors into the space rather than putting space and distance between viewer and monument; (3) it does not offer information about the various views on the war; (4) it focuses on those who did not survive the war rather than on the war itself; and (5) its referents—the V shape, black color, and submersion into the earth[84]—can be read in many different ways. Foss concludes that the ambiguity of the monument functions as an anti-war symbol that transcends the particulars of the Vietnam War.

Foss's analysis concentrated on the properties of the VVM and how they function rhetorically to signify about war and protest more broadly. A next major addition to theorizing about public memory made use of the same memorial to discuss an emerging postmodern era of memorializing. Carole Blair, Martha Jeppeson, and Enrico Pucci single out the displaced symmetry of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the multiple references and meanings viewers bring to the wall as evidence of its postmodern essence.[85] In terms of symmetry, while the shape of the wall itself is symmetrical, the positioning of the 58,000 names of those killed or missing in Vietnam is not. The viewer starts reading names at the angle formed by the two walls, proceeds to the right down the wall, and then must walk the length of the wall to stay in chronological order and start

reading the names on the left-hand wall. In addition, the polished granite of the wall is reminiscent of gravestones and honor rolls of the dead; unlike those traditional forms of commemoration, however, it is built into the earth rather than rising above it. Visitors are not forced to gaze upward to see it, as is often the case with memorial statues; in fact, they can walk right up and touch it. Finally, the wall calls up different and often contradictory contexts, depending on focus, so it can be read as comforting and disturbing, as political and apolitical, as offering a unifying perspective and a divisive one.

Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci's essay, in its introduction of a postmodern monumentality, also can be seen as an early instance of a critical turn in communication in terms of the study of memory. Critical scholars have sought to understand the ways memory affirms or disrupts power relations, including issues of what is worth remembering, what constitutes authenticity in memory, what is remembered and what is forgotten in a particular memorial, whose voices are part of the conversation about what to remember, who is authorized to invite parties into such conversations, and what are the consequences for enshrining a particular point of view? Other scholars have taken up issues of production, circulation, and reception as part of the critical turn.[86]

While it is impossible to summarize all of the developments in collective memorializing that have emerged from the visual communication field,[87] a recent summary is offered by Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian Ott.[88] Exploring the connections among rhetoric, memory, and place, they articulate six assumptions of collective memory (which goes by a collection of names—*collective memory*, *social memory*, *popular memory*, *cultural memory*, and *public memory*) as a shared understanding of the past: (1) memory is activated by present concerns and/or anxieties; (2) memory constructs a sense of communal belonging; (3) memory is animated by some kind of emotional attachment; (4) memory is always partial and often contested; (5) memory relies on material and/or symbolic performances, rituals, objects, and places to secure communal attachment; and (6) what memory means shifts over time. Each of these assumptions represents substantial and complex areas of inquiry that further elaborate the forms, meanings, believability, and consequences of public memorializing and show the vitality of this area of scholarship.

From the Source . . .

Like so many scholarly pursuits, the idea for *Places of Public Memory* originated in a hotel bar. The three of us had all been working on matters of space, materiality, memorialization, and public memory in a wide variety of contexts for many years. After a few beers, we began lamenting the lack of work in the field that explicitly attempted to theorize the relation between collective memory and space. It was probably just the beer talking, but someone proposed the idea of editing a collection of essays on the subject. We met for breakfast the next morning where we worked out the six assumptions of collective memory on napkins . . . this time over coffee.

Greg Dickinson and Brian Ott

Remembering and Forgetting. One of the major issues that emerged for scholars of memorializing is the relationship between remembering and forgetting. Questions about what is involved in not choosing to publicly remember a particular event or content, what memories must be forgotten to activate others, what memories get written over to allow new memories to be preserved, and how contradictory memories are managed in public memorials are among the many questions posed by scholars exploring memorializing as a communication process.[89] We offer examples of two studies of collective memorializing that demonstrate the complexities of this area of memory studies—one demonstrates how forgetting can be incorporated into a memorial site, and the other shows how a memorial chooses to commemorate rather than forget a difficult story. While we focus primarily on the process of memorializing as represented in visual monuments, this is not the only interest of communication scholars.

Cynthia Smith and Teresa Bergman studied the Alcatraz Island tour as a memorial site.[90] Their essay explores what is left out of the Alcatraz tour experience and its consequences for how the island ultimately is remembered. Alcatraz Island, situated in the middle of San Francisco Bay, is a popular tourist destination. A notorious federal prison, it was also the site of an Indian takeover between November 1969 and June 1971.[91] Those protests prompted extensive, positive, and progressive policy changes between the US government and Native American groups. Smith and Bergman argue that the context and various elements of the tour negate the few artifacts and discussions available about the Native American takeover on the island, and this forgetting negates the importance of the occupation as a powerful and effective instance of civil disobedience, resistance, and justice.

The first issue important to forgetting is the sheer materiality of the Alcatraz tour. Tourists take a ferry from San Francisco; on a clear day, the views of the city are stunning. Visitors encounter seagulls, waves, fog, and strong winds on the short trip to the island in a very visceral encounter with the elements. When they arrive at the island, the former prison physically dominates the view, and visitors are encouraged to literally experience the place by entering the cells, touching the bars, and spending a minute in solitary confinement, all while very aware of the freedom that awaits them just across the bay. All of this is accompanied by the sounds of prison life, from the slamming of cell doors, to the shouts and commands of guards, to distant footsteps and conversations, and even the chipping away at plaster by famous Alcatraz escapees. The tour does not take visitors to occupation sites to show how the Native American occupiers lived or where significant events from the occupation took place, and there are no Native American voices discussing the occupation on the audio portion of the tour.

Just as the tour itself neglects Native American occupation history, an orientation film, twenty minutes in length, is similarly dismissive. The segment on the occupation is only three minutes in length, and it is framed as one of many protests during a general era of dissent that characterized the 1960s—rather than part of a much longer trajectory of Native American oppression and resistance. To be fair, the film does interview two of the participants involved in the occupation and ends by noting that the occupation resulted in an end to policies of termination and paternalism toward Native Americans in favor of policies of self-determination.

These few reminders of the impact of the Native American occupation cannot compete, however, with the sheer immediacy of the physical experience the tour provides—of being surrounded so completely by the trappings of prison life. The totality of the experience makes remembering Alcatraz as a site of Native American resistance highly unlikely, especially given that there is no tangible experience of the occupation offered as part of the tour. In the end, the Alcatraz tour is an example of a site of cultural memorializing that neglects the chance to tell about a nonviolent and powerful civil rights counter narrative in US history.

We move next to a study by Joshua Reeves that chooses to tell rather than forget an unfortunate history.[92] Reeves's starting place is with the look of most commemorative artifacts—equestrian statues, obelisks, and representational images of people. These almost-universal monument forms are so common that we generally cease to see them; for the most part, these monuments "allow us to continue on our way undisturbed."[93] Reeves contrasts traditional monuments with what he calls countermonuments that not only reject traditional monument forms but also call into question the commemorative activities that occur there. Rather than reassuring, calming, and comforting audiences, countermonuments provoke, disturb, and unsettle. Rather than telling us what to think, they ask that we think and question.

Reeves uses the Prague Memorial to the Victims of Communism (PMVC), located just off the main walking path on the way up Petřín Hill in Prague, to illustrate his view of countermonuments. The visitor who takes the path that leads to the monument first sees a set of steps, with a series of male nude bodies staggering up them. The body on the first step is complete, but the ones behind progressively lose body parts until the last image is merely a pair of legs. Unveiled in May 2002, the monument is the work of Czech sculptor Olbram Zoubek and depicts the torture and death of political prisoners under the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1969.

Reeves's theorizing of countermonuments, such as that of the PMVC, begins with the Greek notion of *atopos,* which means out of place, uncommon, or strange. In contrast to the topoi of rhetoric, or the common places a rhetor can turn to find arguments, *atopos* means something uncommon, something extraordinary. Reeves claims that with pieces like the PMVC, which literally does not fit our experience of commemorative monuments, we are uprooted, brought to a standstill, stopped in a state of curiosity. Reeves calls this a state of *suspended identification*, because those who remain and "answer the call" of the countermonument seek some source of identification with it, some way of making sense of it. Those who do engage with the statues, read the placards, and ultimately arrive at some meaning about the context for the work are rewarded with a form of identification—but it is an identification that is unsettling and different. Reeves calls it identification by displacement because the viewer has been resettled in a new place.

The process of engaging a nontraditional commemorative memorial is noteworthy, according to Reeves, because of the demands it places on the audience. The audience must creatively engage the text or artifact in search of common ground. In this sense, viewers are more like orators than audience members, generating connections in an act of engagement that incorporates their own meanings and creativity into the commemorative act. Countermonuments, then,

can transform their audiences from complacent spectators into active, inquiring participants, creating a potentially transformative space in which viewers think, question, and respond in new and different ways to the monument, the event it commemorates, and perhaps to the act of commemoration as well. The next theory explores how media plays a role in commemoration.

Media and the Past. We conclude theories of commemoration with three approaches to memory that take into account media as an important way by which societies come to understand the past.[94] We begin with Janice Hume, who summarizes journalism's traditional approach to memory studies; journalism has played and continues to play an important role in the process by which a society constructs cultural memories. Hume begins by recounting the history of memory studies and the ways formative periods in US history came to be represented by major symbols of public memory. Patrick Henry, Davy Crockett, and the pioneers who settled the West are just some of the icons that configure memory about US origins, for example.

Memory cannot be divorced from mass media as vehicle. Even when newspapers were the only journalistic medium available, they constructed and cemented memories in the national psyche. With the advent of film, viewers could be transported through time and space to collective representations of earlier times, which the film audience may or may not actually have experienced. Such mediated products (whether newspapers, film, radio, or television) are technologies of memory—able to convey a sense of the past to those who were not literally there and to transport those who were back to that time.

Collective memories of a society often exist because they were created in the process of journalistic coverage; those images become a kind of shared cultural currency that is the baseline for discussions of that event. The image of John Kennedy Jr. saluting his father's casket, the explosion of the *Challenger*, and the falling twin towers on September 11 are seared into public memory because of the repeated reproduction of those journalistic accounts. Journalism is also primarily responsible for reminding us of milestone anniversary events—for keeping track of, packaging the coverage of, and recreating the significance of historical events. Journalism, then, reminds us of what we should remember.

The advent of digital memory and the ability to record everything with an immediacy not possible a decade ago adds an entirely different dimension to the act of memorializing. Just as the lines between viewer and journalist become blurred, so do the lines between what is living memory and what is archival, between what should be preserved and what does not need to be. Hume reminds us that journalism and the mass media are important dimensions in the process of creating, preserving, and enhancing collective memory.

Hume offered a perspective on mediated retrospective memory—memory in which journalists help us remember what happened in the past. In contrast, prospective memory refers to remembering to do something in the future that still needs to happen—following through on promises, meeting commitments, and the like. Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt suggests that communication and media scholars have focused on retrospective memory, thereby missing an important dimension of memory in journalistic accounts.[95] Tenenboim-Weinblatt suggests that just as retrospective memories are not retrieved but rather constructed, recon-

figured, contested, and socially negotiated, the same is true of prospective memory. It is important to remember that the timeline, intentions, and commitments are constructed as well, and journalists make choices about how those additional elements get constructed in order to keep future obligations alive. The media, in other words, play a critical role in the processes and practices by which collective prospective memory tasks are shaped and negotiated.

Using front-page stories of seven instances of hostage taking and captivity as data, Tenenboim-Weinblatt argues that the concept of mediated prospective memory is a missing link between collective memory and agenda setting (see chapter 5). By breaking the notion of collective memory into retrospective and prospective dimensions, the agenda-setting function of the media is clarified. Journalists are expanding memory from the past into the future, and some of the agenda-setting tasks of the media involve issues of prospective memory. For these issues, like the accounts of captivity, the media can help set the agenda and remind audiences of unfinished prospective memory tasks by calling attention to such issues.

Tenenboim-Weinblatt illustrates her framework by examining the case of Gilad Shlait, an Israeli soldier taken captive by Hamas militants in 2006 (and released in October 2011).[96] In news coverage of Shlait's abduction and captivity, journalists made use of several strategies for the implementation of prospective memory to ensure that the commitments about what remained to be done were carried out. They reminded audiences of the story of a soldier who was detained in 1986 and disappeared without a trace; his daughter visited the protest tent and was the focus of major news stories in all Israeli newspapers. The change of government following an election offered another opportunity for journalists to remind the outgoing government of its promise to bring Shlait home. The date marking 1,000 days in captivity was another occasion to remind the nation of its obligations to Shlait. In fact, one TV channel had a perpetual ticking clock in the corner of the screen counting his days as a hostage. An especially difficult task for journalists is how to represent prospective memories when the main protagonist is absent—when visible developments and images about the captive are not available. In the case of Shlait, the Israeli media used pictures from Shlait's childhood to give bodily presence to Shlait. One newspaper even drafted an imagined letter from Shlait, composed by family members using his handwrit-

From the Source . . .

The theory of mediated prospective memory, which addresses the ways in which the media remind us not only what happened but also what still needs to be done, grew out of my doctoral research on the coverage of cases of kidnapping and captivity around the world. In trying to understand the roles assumed by the news media in these cases, I noticed that journalism's memory work could not be fully explained by the available theoretical frameworks in communication studies. I thus imported the concept of prospective memory from psychology and developed it as a bridge between the theories of agenda setting and collective memory.

Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt

ing, to give him presence as well. All of these strategies served an agenda-setting function that urged attention to prospective memory demands.

The final theory of media and the past concerns how digital media have changed the process of memorializing. Anna Reading compares conventional approaches to memorializing in the media with new mediated approaches made possible with digital technologies.[97] She labels these part of a *globital memory field,* a phrase that combines global with digital to capture a combination of social and political forces that play out in the interconnection between human and machine. Reading examines two events with different forms of witnessing and media coverage available: (1) the death of Neda Agha Soltan, an Iranian woman shot and killed on June 22, 2009, during protests following the Iranian elections; and (2) the Battle of Waterloo, which occurred on June 18 and found its way into newspapers around June 22, 1815. While memory studies traditionally have focused on the ways traditional media—newspapers, television, radio—articulate past events and people of significance as well as on how memorials and national museums contribute to the memorializing process, multidirectional and digital memories are characterized by mobility and the ability to travel across national borders, to be reconfigured in various ways. For instance, with Soltan's death, it is necessary to take into account the ways her image was recolored, reconfigured, and reassembled across multiple media forms, including memorial websites, Facebook groups, memorial art works, and songs commemorating her life and death.

Reading suggests a new paradigm is needed that takes globital memorializing into account. She theorizes six dynamics that provide the basis for such a theory; these dimensions emerge from and extend earlier forms of media witnessing: transmediality, velocity, extensity, modality, valency, and viscosity. *Transmediality* for the Battle of Waterloo involved only the written press, followed much later by memorials and reenactments at the site as well as paintings, stories, and songs that memorialized the battle. In contrast, the digital witnessing of Soltan's death became transmedial in minutes because of the Internet. *Velocity* refers to the speed by which information travels; the Battle of Waterloo occurred prior to the use of the electric telegraph to transmit news; thus, newspaper accounts of the battle were published four days after the battle took place. The death of Soltan, in contrast, was reported in minutes, collapsing the time between when the event was witnessed and its subsequent memorialization. *Extensity* is the degree of extension of an event—how far was it known? With Waterloo, witnessing was not at all extensive; it generally was limited to the site at which the event took place. With Soltan's death, the witnessing became extensive almost immediately, flowing rapidly via globital networks.

Modality, the fourth dynamic Reading identifies, was limited for the Battle of Waterloo to personal witnessing, followed by text-based news stories. Soltan's death, however, was recorded on a mobile camera phone, and those data were then transferred to various networked media around the world. *Valency* (a chemistry term that refers to the number of chemical bonds formed by an atom of a given element) refers to the number of memory assemblages and the bonds formed among them. With Waterloo, the assemblages were limited essentially to those who were at the event itself, while with Soltan's death, there were multiple bonds to other memory assemblages—other protests, other deaths. Finally, *vis-*

cosity, or the "thickness" or internal resistance to flow, describes the degree to which a memory assemblage resists the processes of territorialization and remains open to processes of fluidity and change. Accounts of the Battle of Waterloo took longer to reach the public sphere, but when they did, the story was viscous—accounts did not change much once they found their way into print. The story of Soltan, on the other hand, was faster to reach the public but was less viscous and quite open to change—e.g., there were two Wiki pages for several weeks with slightly different versions of the events surrounding her death.

From the Source . . .

My paternal grandmother claimed magical powers from her Romany heritage: her people travelled, trading horses, news, and recipes at historic vurdu or fairs. Globital memory emphasizes transvection: it makes us think how memories migrate, change through media, move at different speeds, shift meaning, assemble and bond, thicken and get stuck, travel on and arrive once more where memories began.

Anna Reading

These different dynamics form a matrix that captures differences between traditional and new forms of globital memorializing. The new forms of digital witnessing are memory assemblages that cross conventional communicative binaries—organic/inorganic, body/machine, analog/digital, public/private—and involve citizen journalists as well as media organizations and public memory institutions. They mobilize and intersect differently within the public sphere, to be reconfigured and transported transnationally, with much less control of the process of memory making. Theories of globital memorializing can begin from Reading's matrix to further elaborate memorializing in a digital and global environment.

Theories of preservation and development represent two basic forces at work in society—to change or to remain the same. The theories in this section demonstrate how these ever-present tensions are negotiated through processes of communication—processes that contribute to how a society moves forward.

Conclusion

For theorists of communication concerned about the nature of society and how to make it a better place, theory has a deliberately practical goal—to generate perspectives, approaches, and strategies for achieving a society characterized by greater participation, access, agency, and creativity. The theories in this chapter represent some of the many ways communication theorists tackle the concerns of human life in community. The framings available from theories about the larger social system in which the communication interaction occurs have considerable impact on all other aspects of the communication process—the nature of the communicator, communication contexts, messages, and relationships of all kinds.

Chapter Map	THEORIES OF SOCIETY		
Topic Addressed	**Theory**	**Author(s)**	**Brief Summary**
Modernism and Postmodernism	Modernism	Varied	Rational foundations replace religion and tradition as the basis of knowledge in an ever-changing society.
	Postmodernism	Varied	Reality is seen as fragmented, local, situated, and fluctuating—the only way the world can be known.
Power and Ideology	Marxism	Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels; Dana Cloud	Means of production determine the structure of society; production under capitalism creates an exploitive class structure.
	Critical Theory	Max Horkheimer	Critical theorists examine marginalizing and alienating social arrangements that inhibit or prevent emancipation.
	The Frankfurt School and the Theory of Communicative Action	Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas	The ideal speech situation provides a model for an emancipated society, characterized by freedom of speech, equal access to speech, and equal treatment of all participants.
	Cultural Studies	Richard Hoggart & Raymond Williams; Stuart Hall	Society's institutions produce and reproduce culture and thus are implicit in determining the dominant ideologies of a culture.
	Post-Structuralism	Jacques Derrida; Michel Foucault	Poststructuralism deconstructs language to show how power and privilege are embedded in language use.
	Postcolonialism	Edward Said; Raka Shome; Gloria Anzaldúa; Trinh Minh-ha	Postcolonialism undertakes an examination of Eurocentrism, imperialism, and colonialism as a process of oppression and domination.
	Feminist Theories	Karlyn Kohrs Campbell; Bonnie Dow & Mari Boor Tonn; Carole Spitzack & Kathryn Carter	Feminism seeks equality for women within existing power structures, a restructuring of the social system to benefit women and men, and a transformation of the communication discipline.
	Critical Rhetoric	Michael McGee; Raymie McKerrow	Critical rhetoric seeks to understand the assumptions and power relations behind discourse and how they promote domination or emancipation.

Topic Addressed	Theory	Author(s)	Brief Summary
Preservation and Change	Development Communication: Top-Down Development	Everett Rogers	Development creates social changes by introducing new ideas into a social system to produce higher standards of living.
	Development Communication: Participatory Development	Everett Rogers	Participatory processes create social change that allow people to gain control of their own environments.
	Development Communication: Transcendent Development	Silvio Waisbord; Mohan Dutta; Arvind Singhal	Transcendent development privileges personal and cultural knowledge and seeks to empower marginalized communities.
	Development Communication: Power and Development	Karin Wilkins	Development communication needs to recognize the contexts of power, beginning with how problems are characterized and framed by communities.
	Collective Memorializing: Visual Communication and Memorials	Sonja Foss; Carole Blair, Martha Jeppeson, & Enrico Pucci; Greg Dickinson & Brian Ott	Visual communication and artifacts preserve and promote values and commemorate people and events of significance through rhetoric and memory.
	Collective Memorializing: Remembering and Forgetting	Cynthia Smith & Teresa Bergman; Joshua Reeves	Memorializing involves issues of remembering and forgetting through how stories and are told and framed.
	Collective Memorializing: Media and the Past	Janice Hume; Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt; Anna Reading	Media (traditional and new) enable certain types of memorializing, including retrospective and prospective dimensions.

NOTES

[1] For a brief overview of postmodernism, see Christopher Joseph Westgate, "Postmodernism," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 771–76. For more detailed discussions of modernism and postmodernism, see Mats Alvesson and Stanley A. Deetz, "Critical Theory and Postmodernism Approaches to Organizational Studies," in *Handbook of Organizational Studies*, ed. Stewart Clegg, Cynthia Harding, and Walter R. Nord (London: Sage, 1996), 173–202; Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics Between the Modern and the Postmodern* (London: Routledge, 1995); For a good description and critique of postmodern media studies, see John B. Harms and David R. Dickens, "Postmodern Media Studies: Analysis or Symptom," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 13 (1996): 210–27.

[2] Marx and Engels' best-known works are *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Reeves, 1888) and *Capital* (Chicago: Kerr, 1909). For an overview of Marxism, see Ronald Walter Greene, "Marxist Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009),607–11.

[3] For a discussion of the role of political economy in communication studies, see Robert W. McChesney, *Communication Revolution: Critical Junctures and the Future of Media* (New York:

The New Press, 2007), 37–98. For a forum on the relationship between discourse theory and political economy, see the special forum, "Post-Marxist Discourse Theory and Critical Political Economy," *Critical Discourse Studies* 11 (2014): 255–321.

[4] For a discussion of capitalist oppression as the basis for critical theory, see Graham Murdock, "Across the Great Divide: Cultural Analysis and the Condition of Democracy," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 12 (1995): 89–95. For brief discussions of theories of ideology, see Joshua Gunn, "Ideology," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 497–501.

[5] For overviews of Marxism in the communication field, see Everett M. Rogers, *A History of Communication Study: A Biographical Approach* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 102–28; Tom Bottomore and Armand Mattelart, "Marxist Theories of Communication," in *International Encyclopedia of Communications,* vol. 2, ed. Erik Barnouw, George Gerbner, Wilbur Schramm, Tobia L. Worth, and Larry Gross (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 476–83.

[6] Dana L. Cloud, "The Materiality of Discourse as Oxymoron: A Challenge to Critical Rhetoric," *Western Journal of Communication* 58 (1994): 141–63; Dana L. Cloud, "The Matrix and Critical Theory's Desertion of the Real," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3 (2006): 329–54. For a summary, see Dana L. Cloud, "Materiality of Discourse," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 611–14; For a more general discussion of the "material," see Momim Rahman and Anne Witz, "What Really Matters? The Elusive Quality of the Material in Feminist Thought," *Feminist Theory* 4 (2003): 243–61.

[7] Cloud, "Materiality of Discourse," 155–56.

[8] These approaches to materiality are described and elaborated in *Communication Matters: Materialist Approaches to Media, Mobility and Networks*, ed. Jeremy Packer and Stephen B. Crofts Wiley (New York: Routledge, 2012). For additional treatments of materiality, see Barbara A. Biesecker and John Louis Lucaites, eds., *Rhetoric, Materiality, and Politics* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009). One of the most unusual approaches to materiality is offered by Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007). Drawing on quantum physics, she proposes a theory of agential realism that suggest that discourse and matter are mutually implicated: "discursive practices are not human-based activities but specific material (re)configurings of the world through which boundaries, properties, and meanings are differentially enacted. And matter is not a fixed essence; rather, matter is substance in its intra-active becoming—not a thing but a doing, a congealing of agency" (183–84).

[9] For an overview of critical theory in communication, see Sara L. McKinnon, "Critical Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 237–43. For further elaboration on the role of power in critical theory, see Ed McLuskie, "Power and Power Relations," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 783–86; For a colloquium on critical theory and theory building, see the special issue, "The Role of Theory in Critical Rhetoric," *Western Journal of Communication* 77 (2013): 507–58.

[10] Stuart Hall, "Introduction," *Working Papers in Cultural Studies* 1 (1971), cited in David Macey, *The Penguin Dictionary of Critical Theory* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 77.

[11] For historical perspectives on and overviews of the Frankfurt School, see Alessandra Padula, "Frankfurt School," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 409–12; Thomas B. Farrell and James A. Aune, "Critical Theory and Communication: A Selective Literature Review," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 65 (1979): 93–120; Michael Huspek, "Toward Normative Theories of Communication with Reference to the Frankfurt School: An Introduction," *Communication Theory* 7 (1997): 265–76.

[12] For critical commentary about Habermas, see the special issue of *Communication Theory* 7 (1997). Secondary summaries can be found in Thomas B. Farrell, *Norms of Rhetorical Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993); Sonja K. Foss, Karen A. Foss, and Robert Trapp, *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, 30th anniversary ed. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2014), 233–66.

[13] Steven D. Ealy, *Communication, Speech, and Politics: Habermas and Political Analysis* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1981).

[14] This emphasis on communication competence takes a major step away from the earlier Frankfurt scholars, who emphasized social and economic structure as the root of oppression. For a good dis-

cussion of the differences between Habermas and other members of the Frankfurt School in this regard, see William Fusfield, "Communication Without Constellation? Habermas's Argumentative Turn in (and Away from) Critical Theory," *Communication Theory* 7 (1997): 301–20.

[15] For a discussion of this concept, see Scott R. Stroud, "Communicative Action Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 141–43.

[16] There has been considerable discussion, criticism, and elaboration of Habermas's public sphere. For a sampling of these debates, see: Young Cheon Cho, "Public Sphere," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 813–16; Robert Asen, "Critical Engagement through Public Sphere Scholarship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 101 (2015): 132–44; Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992); and Michael Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002). See also a special section in *Argumentation and Advocacy* about Habermas and the public sphere: David E. Beard, "Forum: On the Anniversary of Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 49 (2012): 132–50. Follow-up responses to those essays can be found in another special section the following year. See Catherine Helen Palczewski and John Fitch, eds., "Introduction," *Argumentation and Advocacy* 49 (2013): 228–35.

[17] Elizabeth Butler Breese, "Mapping the Variety of Public Spheres," *Communication Theory* 21 (2011): 130–49.

[18] This chart is adapted from Breese, "Mapping the Variety," 133.

[19] For overviews of cultural studies, see Karma R. Chávez, "Cultural Studies," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 268–73; and the review essay by Thomas Rosteck, "Cultural Studies and Rhetorical Studies," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 (1995): 386–421. For a discussion of the distinctions between critical theory and cultural studies, see Ben Agger, *Cultural Studies as Critical Theory* (London: Falmer, 1992); and Kent A. Ono, "Critical/Cultural Approaches to Communication," in *21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook*, vol. 1, ed. William F. Eadie (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 74–81.

[20] Richard Hoggart, *Uses of Literacy* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957); and Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

[21] For a good survey of the work of Hall and others at the Centre, see Stuart Hall, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe, and Paul Willis, eds., *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972–79* (London: Hutchinson, 1981). See also Stuart Hall, "Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms," in *Media, Culture, and Society: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Collins (London: Sage, 1986), 57–72. These secondary treatments are also helpful: Anne Makus, "Stuart Hall's Theory of Ideology: A Frame for Rhetorical Criticism," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 54 (1990): 495–514; Samuel L. Becker, "Marxist Approaches to Media Studies: The British Experience," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 1 (1984): 66–80.

[22] David Morley, "Cultural Studies, Common Sense and Communications," *Cultural Studies* 29 (2015): 23–31. Morley offers a summary of the development of cultural studies as well as three potential problems with the current direction of cultural studies—too much focus on technology apart from the culture in which it emerges, too much focus on Europe and the United States, and too much emphasis on the virtual world without understanding the intertwining of virtual and material geographies.

[23] For an overview of articulation, see Jennifer Daryl Slack, "The Theory and Method of Articulation in Cultural Studies," in David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen, eds., *Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 112–30. See also Ian Angus, "The Politics of Common Sense: Articulation Theory and Critical Communication Studies," in *Communication Yearbook 15*, ed. Stanley A. Deetz (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992), 535–70.

[24] Adrienne Shaw, "What Is Video Game Culture? Cultural Studies and Game Studies," *Games and Culture* 5 (2010): 403–24.

[25] For a good background discussion of post-structuralism, see Jonathan Potter, *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction* (London: Sage, 1996), 68–96. For a brief overview, see Wimal Dissanayake, "Poststructuralism," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 777–81.

[26] Foucault's primary works, as they relate to the post-structuralist project, include *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* trans. A. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972); *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Pantheon, 1970); and *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1927–1977,* trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, and Kate Soper, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980). For a short summary, see Foss, Foss, and Robert Trapp, *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, 30th anniversary ed., 343–83.

[27] Foucault, *The Order of Things,* xxii.

[28] Martha Cooper, "Rhetorical Criticism and Foucault's Philosophy of Discursive Events," *Central States Speech Journal* 39 (1988): 1–17.

[29] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1979).

[30] John Carr, "Archeology and Genealogy," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 39–40.

[31] For a study that elaborates Foucault's views on madness, see Michaela D. E. Meyer, Amy M. Fallah, and Megan M. Wood, "Gender, Media, and Madness: Reading a Rhetoric of Women in Crisis through Foucauldian Theory," *Review of Communication* 11 (2013): 216–28; for a critique of Foucault's view of power, see Susana Martinez Guillem, "Rethinking Power Relations in Critical/Cultural Studies: A Dialectical (Re)Proposal," *Review of Communication* 13 (2013): 184–204.

[32] Rebecca A. Walker, "Fill/Flash/Memory: A History of Flash Mobs," *Text and Performance Quarterly* 2 (2013): 115–32.

[33] For overviews of postcolonialism, see Karma R. Chávez, "Postcolonial Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 768–71; and Sarah Amira De La Garza, "Neocolonialism," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 680–82.

[34] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978), 41.

[35] Raka Shome, "Postcolonial Interventions in the Rhetorical Canon: An 'Other' View," *Communication Theory* 6 (1996): 40–59; Raka Shome, "Caught in the Term 'Post-Colonial': Why the 'Post-Colonial' Still Matters," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 15 (1998): 203–12; Raka Shome and Radha S. Hegde "Postcolonial Approaches to Communication: Charting the Terrain, Engaging the Intersections," *Communication Theory* 12 (2002): 249–70; Raka Shome, "Post-colonial Reflections on the 'Internationalization' of Cultural Studies," *Cultural Studies* 23 (2009): 694–719.

[36] For a summary of this concept, see Fabienne Darling-Wolf, "Hybridity," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* vol. 1, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 483–85; and Marwan M. Kraidy, "Hybridity in Cultural Globalization," *Communication Theory* 12 (2002): 316–39.

[37] Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1978), 9.

[38] Gayatri Spivak, *The Postcolonial Critic*, ed. Sarah Harasym (New York: Routledge, 1990), 51. For a summary of scholarship on the treatment of women in this tradition, see Karma R. Chávez, "Postcolonial Feminism," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, vol. 2, ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 766–68.

[39] See Trinh T. Minh-ha, "Critical Reflections," *Artforum* 28 (1990): 132; Linda Tyler, Sarah Williams, Toroa Pohatu, and Tessa Barringer, eds., "Strategies of Displacement for Women, Natives and Their Others: Intra-views with Trinh T. Minh-ha," *Women's Studies Journal* [New Zealand] 10 (1994): 11.

[40] Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Framer Framed* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 237.

[41] Mahuya Pal and Patrice M. Buzzanell, "Breaking the Myth of Indian Call Centers: A Postcolonial Analysis of Resistance," *Communication Monographs* 80 (2013): 199–219.

[42] For an overview of feminist communication theories, see Cindy L. Griffin, "Feminist Communication Theories," in *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory,* ed. Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 390–94; and Bonnie J. Dow, "Feminist Approaches to Communication," in *21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook,* vol. 1, ed. William F. Eadie (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 82–89.

[43] Rebecca West, *The Young Rebecca*, ed. Jane Marcus (London: Macmillan, 1982).

[44] The Equal Rights Amendment never became part of the US Constitution. For an assessment of the ERA debate, see Sonja K. Foss, "Equal Rights Amendment Controversy: Two Worlds in Conflict," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 65 (1979): 275–88.

[45] For discussions of the transformative potential of feminism, see Sonja K. Foss, Cindy L. Griffin, and Karen A. Foss, "Transforming Rhetoric through Feminist Reconstruction: A Response to the Gender-Diversity Perspective," *Women's Studies in Communication* 20 (1997): 117–36.

[46] For some articulations of women's systems, see Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982); and Anne Wilson Schaef, *Women's Reality: An Emerging Female System in the White Male Society* (Minneapolis, MN: Winston Press, 1981).

[47] Feminism long has been concerned with the exclusion of women's voices from virtually every aspect of society, both literally—as in the denial of the right to read, speak, vote, and the like—to more abstract denials implicit in a privileging of the masculine. For an early exploration of everyday discursive practices especially significant to women's lives, see Bettina Aptheker, *Tapestries of Life: Women's Work, Women's Consciousness, and the Meaning of Daily Experience* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1989). A more contemporary essay that addresses marginalized discourses is John M. Sloop and Kent A. Ono, "Out-Law Discourse: The Critical Politics of Material Judgment," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 30 (1997): 50–69.

[48] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59 (1973): 74–86; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, *Man Cannot Speak for Her: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric*, vol. 1 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1989); *Man Cannot Speak for Her: Key Texts of the Early Feminists*, vol. 2 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1989); and Bonnie J. Dow and Mari Boor Tonn, "'Feminine Style' and Political Judgment in the Rhetoric of Ann Richards," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 79 (1993): 286–302.

[49] Carole Spitzack and Kathryn Carter, "Research on Women's Communication: The Politics of Theory and Method," in *Doing Research on Women's Communication*, ed. Kathryn Carter and Carole Spitzack (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1989), 11–39.

[50] For discussions of different efforts to reconceptualize the discipline, see Dow, "Feminist Approaches to Communication," and Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin, *Feminist Rhetorical Theories* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 1999), 29–32.

[51] The definition of feminism that bell hooks created is one example of the call to take interlocking oppressions into account: "to be 'feminist' in any authentic sense of the term is to want for all people, female and male, liberation from sexist role patterns, domination, and oppression." Thus feminism "directs our attention to systems of domination and the interrelatedness of sex, race, and class oppression." See bell hooks, *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (Boston: South End Press, 1984), 31; and Marsha Houston and Olga Idriss Davis, eds., *Centering Ourselves: African American Feminist and Womanist Studies of Discourse* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2002).

[52] The theories of Johnson and Gearhart are described in Karen A. Foss, Sonja K. Foss, and Cindy L. Griffin, *Feminist Rhetorical Theories* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 1999).

[53] For representative critiques of the discipline, see Carole Spitzack and Kathryn Carter, "Women in Communication Studies: A Typology for Revision," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 73 (1987): 401–23; Carole Spitzack and Kathryn Carter, *Doing Research on Women's Communication: Perspectives on Theory and Method* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1989); and Carol Blair, Julie R. Brown, and Leslie A. Baxter, "Disciplining the Feminine," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 80 (1994): 383–409.

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[60] McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric," 101.

[61] McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric," 235.

[62] McKerrow, "Critical Rhetoric," 236.

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[65] Everett M. Rogers, "Communication and Development: The Passing of the Dominant Paradigm," in *Communication for Social Change Anthology: Historical and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Alfonso Gumucio-Dagron and Thomas Tufte (South Orange, NJ: Communication for Social Change Consortium, 2006), 120.

[66] Everett M. Rogers and Lynne Svenning, *Modernization Among Peasants: The Impact of Communications* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969), 18.

[67] Sarah De Los Santos Upton, "Moving from *Nos/otros* to *Nosotros*: A Transcendent Approach to Sustainable Development," *Development in Practice*, 26 (2016): 223–35.

[68] Julius Nyerere, *Freedom and Development: Uhuru na Maendeleo: A Selection from Writings and Speeches* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[69] Rogers, "Communication and Development," 114. Despite the shifts in development efforts to be more inclusive and to privilege grassroots participation, participatory approaches also have their critiques. The kinds of participation expected was often that assumed in democratic societies, so it was not always a comfortable fit for societies. Furthermore, not all individuals involved in such participatory efforts feel the need for or have time for such levels of participation. Nevertheless, involving those at whom development is directed was a major step in erasing the inequitable and hierarchical starting places and consequences of the traditional development paradigm. See Lucius Botes and Dingie van Rensburg, "Community Participation in Development: Nine Plagues and Twelve Commandments," *Community Development Journal* 35 (2000): 41–58; and Silvio Waisbord, "Three Challenges for Communication and Global Social Change," *Communication Theory* 25 (2015): 144–65.

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[72] Jan Servaes, "Development Theory and Communication Policy: Power to the People!," *European Journal of Communication* 1 (1986): 203–29; Jan Servaes, *Communication for Development: One World, Multiple Voices* (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 1999).

[73] Waisbord, "Three Challenges," 145. See also Silvio Waisbord, "Five Key Ideas: Coincidences and Challenges in Development Communication," in *Media & Glocal Change: Rethinking Communication for Development* (Buenos Aires, Arg.: CLACSO, 2005), 77–90.

[74] Mohan J. Dutta, "Communicating About Culture and Health: Theorizing Culture-Centered and Cultural Sensitive Approaches," *Communication Theory* 17 (2007): 304–28; Mohan J. Dutta, "A Culture-Centered Approach to Listening: Voices of Social Change," *International Journal of Listening* 28 (2014): 67–81.

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[78] Karin Gwinn Wilkins and Florencia Enghel, "The Privatization of Development through Global Communication Industries: Living Proof?" *Media, Culture & Society* 35 (2013): 165–81.

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[83] Sonja K. Foss, "Ambiguity as Persuasion: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial," *Communication Quarterly* 34 (1986): 326–40. For an overview of the development of memorializing in the field of communication, see Debra Hawhee and Jennifer L. Jones Barbour, "Review Essay: Stirring Up and Smoothing Out the Landscapes of Commemoration: Authenticity, Building, and Consumption in Public Memorials," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 96 (2010): 89–102.

[84] At the time Foss undertook her analysis, the representational statues of three soldiers had not yet been added to the memorial; they were added on Veterans Day, 1984.

[85] Carole Blair, Martha S. Jeppeson, and Enrico Pucci, Jr., "Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77 (1991): 263–88.

[86] For a discussion of the establishment of collective memory studies, see Barbie Zelizer, "Reading the Past Against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 12 (1999): 214–39. She enumerates six premises for collective remembering that are basic to

contemporary scholarship: collective memory is processual, unpredictable, partial, useable, particular and universal, and material.

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[88] Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott, eds., *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 2010), 6.

[89] For an elaboration of these ideas, see Bradford Vivian, *Public Forgetting: The Rhetoric and Politics of Beginning Again* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010).

[90] Cynthia Duquette Smith and Teresa Bergman, "You Were on Indian Land: Alcatraz Island as Recalcitrant Memory Space," in Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott, *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama, 2010),160–90.

[91] According to a treaty with the Sioux Indians in 1898, Indians had the right to take over surplus land—land that essentially was not wanted by anyone else. When Alcatraz was abandoned as a prison, it was declared surplus land, so this was the impetus for the Native American takeover. After two unsuccessful attempts to take over the island, the third attempt was successful and resulted in a 19-month occupation of Alcatraz. See Smith and Bergman, "You Were on Indian Land."

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[93] Reeves, "Suspended Identification," 308.

[94] Janice Hume, "Memory Matters: The Evolution of Scholarship in Collective Memory and Mass Communication," *Review of Communication* 10 (2010): 181–96.

[95] Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt, "Bridging Collective Memories and Public Agendas: Toward a Theory of Mediated Prospective Memory," *Communication Theory* 23 (2013): 91–111.

[96] Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt, "Journalism as an Agent of Prospective Memory," in *On Media Memory: Collective Memory in a New Media Age,* ed. Motti Neiger, Oren Meyers, and Eyal Zandberg (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 213–25.

[97] Anna Reading, "Memory and Digital Media: Six Dynamics of the Globital Memory Field," *On Media Memory: Collective Memory in a New Media Age*, ed. Motti Neiger, Oren Meyers, and Eyal Zandberg (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 241–52.

Index

Abra, G., 231
Acceptance
  of difference, 400
  latitude of, 58–59
Accommodation/adaptation
  accommodation theory, 401–404
  in co-cultural theory, 416–417
  in differential adaptation theory, 407–408
  in diffusion of innovations theory, 409–411
  in expectancy violations theory, 72–73
  in interaction adaptation theory, 71–72
  in theory of integrative cross-cultural adaptation, 404–407
Acculturation, 405
Active information-gathering strategies, 69–70
Activity coordination, 308
Actor network theory, 195–197
Adaptive structuration theory, 282–285
Adaptors, nonverbal, 107
Adorno, T., 434
Advisory rhetoric, 137
Advocacy, performance of, 454
Affect display, 107
Affection exchange theory, 228–229
Affective competence, 405
Afifi, W. A., 371
Afrocentricity, theory of, 421–422
Agamben, G., 239
Agency
  Bitzer's description of the rhetorical situation and, 85–86
  contradictory nature of, 88–89
  digital media as transformational catalyst of, 209
  individual, impact of structurational divergence on, 367
  as invention, 86
  networked, 195–197
  in power relations and structural conditions, 86
  prayer as an assertion of, 211–212
  protean nature of, 87–88
  situational specificity and, 86–87
  theory of constricted and constructed potentiality, 89–91
Agenda setting theory, 161–165
  agendamelding, 163–164
  gatekeeping in, 161
  medial framing and, 165
  network agenda setting, 163
  object agenda setting and attribute agenda setting in, 161
  prospective memory demands and, 465–466
  pseudo-environment and priming in, 161
  in social media vs. traditional media, 164
Agreeableness, trait factor of, 52
Ajzen, I., 61, 63
Albrecht, T. L., 362
Allen, B. J., 331–332
Alliance building, feminist theory of, 241–242
Allport, G., 244
Alter-adaptors, 107
Altheide, D. L., 152
Altman, I., 224
Alumona, V. S., 454
Andersen, P. A., 5
Anderson, J. A., 171–172
Animate rhetoric, 194–195
Anti-positivism vs. positivism, 26–27
Anxiety, social/communicative, 53
Anxiety-uncertainty management theory, 396–399
Anzaldúa, G., 82, 446
Appropriation, and distanciation, 113
Arbitrary acts, 106
Archaeology/genealogy of discourse, 444–445
Ardener, E., 115
Ardener, S., 115
Argument culture, 137
Argumentation processes, 286
Argumentativeness/aggressiveness, 52–53
Arrangement, as canon of rhetoric, 44
Arriaga, M., 156

Articulation, and the nature of culture, 441
Artifacts (objects)
commemorative. *See* Collective memorializing
nonverbal activity of, 107
Asante, M. K., 421–422
Ascription, describing others' identities through, 78–79
Ashcraft, K. L., 329–332
Asiacentricity, theory of, 422
Assimilation
adaptation vs., in differential adaptation theory, 408
assimilation effect, 58
in co-cultural theory, 416
Atkinson, J. W., 61
Atopos, 463
Attitudes
beliefs, role in attitude change, 61–62
consistency and attitude change, 64–71
information-integration approach to forming, 61–64
Attitudinal groups, risk perception in, 369–371
Attraction/affiliation, and uncertainty reduction, 69
Attribution theory, 57–58
Audience(s)
artistic/inartistic proofs demonstrated to persuade, 85
cognitive complexity level in adapting messages for, 10
consciousness raising effect of mass media on, 440–441
constrictive vs. constructive potentiality used in addressing, 90–91
coordinated management of meaning and, 125
countermonuments' impact on, 463
creation of personal texts from media content, 29
cultivation theory and, 159
cultural performances and, 394
digital transformation from users into producers, 209
as discriminating consumers of media, 174–176
the divine as, 211–212
dramatic presentation of self to, 77–78
effects of media on persuasion of, 157–167
elaboration (message evaluation) level of, 60
and entertainment messages, impact on, 353
enthymemes as a means of involving, 322–323
humans as audience to nature (performer metaphor), 193
important consequences of transportation theory for, 168
inoculation of, 357
as interpretive communities, 171–174
invitational rhetoric and, 136
meaning making expectancy violations, and honoring of multiplicity, 448
meaning of messages individually determined by, 59
media creation and interpretation of communities, 171–172
media dependency theory and, 203
media's reinforcement of, vs. causal relationship of behavior, 158
as a necessary component of rhetorical situation, 85
need for orientation, in agenda setting theory, 163
as peers, in theory of feminine style, 450
post-structuralist view of, 443
selective exposure hypothesis and, 158
transformation, countermonuments as a tool for, 463–464
uses and gratifications theory and, 174–175
validity criteria required for credibility in persuading, 436–437
visual communication with, 460
August, C., 150
Austin, J. L., 43, 121
Authority
in group communication, 273
organizational, 320
See also Power
Autonomy of fields, 154
Auwal, M. A., 323
Avanzino, S., 417
Avowal, description of self through, 78
Axiology, assumptions about, 11–12

Babrow, A. S., 67–68
Baesler, E. J., 213–215
Bakhtin, M., 243, 245
Bales, R. F., 264–265
Ball-Rokeach, S. J., 203–204
Bandura, A., 352
Barker, J. R., 277–279
Bartlett, J., 337
Baudrillard, J., 195, 198–199
Bauer, R., 157
Baxter, L. A., 245–248, 451
Beatty, M. J., 54–55
Beavin, J., 229
Behavioral attributes, impact on normative influence, 360
Belief, Attitude, Intention, and Behavior: An Introduction to Theory and Research (Fishbein & Ajzen), 61
Beliefs, and attitude change, 61–62
Bell, R. A., 371
Benevolent rhetoric, 137
Bennett, M. J., 399–400
Bentley, J. M., 36
Berger, C. R., 69–70, 396
Berger, P. L., 117
Bergman, T., 462
Bertalanffy, L. von, 269
Big data, 164
Biopsychological theories, 51–56

Bitzer, L. F., 85–86
Black, S. T., 91
Black-white binary, 420
Blair, C., 451, 460–461
Bona fide group perspective, 279–282
Bonito, J. A., 287–289
Boomerang effect, 59
Boor Tonn, M., 450
Bormann, E. G., 270, 272
Boundary linkage/ownership/permeability, and boundary rules, 226–227
Bounded rationality, critiquing the concept of, 34–35
Bourdieu, P., 154, 156
Brain, relationship between communication behaviors and, 55
Brandon, D. P., 289
Breese, E. B., 438
Broadcast media, social interaction approach to, 148–150
Brock, T. C., 167–168
Broome, B. J., 243–245
Brown, J. R., 451
Brown, P., 133, 135
Buber, M., 243–244
Buller, D. B., 255
Bureaucracy, theory of, 320–321
Burgoon, J. K., 71–73, 107–108, 255, 257
Burke, K., 127–130, 322
Burke, T. J., 177
Burrell, G., 26–30
Butler, J., 83
Butterworth, M. L., 40
Buzzanell, P. M., 448

Cacioppo, J. T., 59–60
Callon, M., 195
Camara, S. K., 126–127
Campbell, K. K., 86–87, 450
Campbell, P. O., 84–85
Canary, D. J., 252–253
Capital, types of, 154
Capitalism, Marxist critique of, 431
Carbaugh, D., 33, 190–191, 389, 391–392
Carcioppolo, N., 356
Carter, K., 450–451
Casanova, J. V., 353
Catalyst rules, 226
Categories, conceptual, 12–13
Catt, I. E., 55–56
Cattell, R., 270
Causal explanations of theory, 13–14
Cerulli, T., 191
Chae, Y-G., 458
Chandler, T. A., 53
Channel use theories
  ChaCha model/channel changing theory, 178
  channel complementarity theory, 176–178
  diffusion of innovation in communication channels, 410
  dynamic motivational activation theory, 177–178
Cheney, G., 278, 321, 323–324
Chesebro, J. W., 84
Chevrette, R., 235–237
Chomsky, N., 105
Chronemics, 107
Chronotopic similarity, 246
Chudoba, K. M., 284
Clair, R. P., 332
Classical phenomenology, 111
Classification, Dietz's reworking of Burrell & Morgan's system of, 30–35
Clevenger, T., Jr., 4
Clinkscales, M. J., 368
Cloud, D. L., 86, 432
Coalition and alliance building, theory of, 241–242
Co-cultural theory, 415–417
Coding, nonverbal, 106, 108
Cody, M. J., 351
Cognitive competence, 405
Cognitive complexity, 10, 119–120
Cognitive differentiation, 119
Cognitive elaboration, 353
Cognitive theories
  attribution and judgment, 56–61
  cognitive complexity theory, 10, 119–120
  cognitive dissonance theory, 64–67
  consistency theories, 64–71
  elaboration likelihood theory, 59–61
  information-integration approaches, 61–64
Cohen, M., 417
Cohesiveness, and group effectiveness, 292
Cole, K. L., 196–197, 239
Collaborative networks, 282
Collective memorializing
  media as a vehicle for understanding the past, 464–467
  remembering and forgetting, association between, 462–464
  visual communication and memorials, 460–461
Collective memory, 461
Collier, M. J., 43, 78–79
Collins, P. H., 81
Colonialism, postcolonial critique of, 445
Colonization, 438
Color-blind vs. color-conscious perspectives, 421
Commemoration, theories of, 459–467
Communibiology, theories of, 54–55
Communication
  contextual nature of, 10
  defining, 4–5
  efficacy, 372
  metaphors for, 19
  ontology in, 9–10
  problematic-integration process and, 68–69
  rhetorical tradition of, 44–45
  satisfaction/interaction enjoyment, 253–254
  semiotic tradition of, 41
  situation-centered, 39–40
  sociocultural tradition of, 43
  sociopsychological tradition of, 42–43
  See also Discourse
Communication competence
  intercultural, 396–406
  in theories of the communicator, 71–74
Communication privacy management theory, 224–228
  boundary rules for, 226–227
  privacy ownership/control/turbulence in, 225–227
  social penetration theory and, 225

Communication theory
academic study of, 5–7
biophysiological theories, 51–65
choosing the focus in, 19–20
as a collaborative building effort, 19
communicator, theories of, 51–93
Craig's seven traditions of, 40–45
critical tradition of, 43–44
cultural, 387–424
cybernetic tradition of, 42
evaluation criteria for, 15–16
foundations of, 3–20
framework for organizing, 25–45
group, 263–298
health-related, 347–382
human, with other animate and inanimate beings, 187–217
mediated, 145–180
message-oriented, 101–139
organizational, 303–342
phenomenological tradition of, 41–42
relational/interpersonal, 223–259
society-related, 429–469
Communicator, theories of, 51–93
agency theories, 85
agency as contradiction, 88–89
agency as protean, 87–88
constricted and constructed potentiality, 89–91
biophysiological theories, 52–56. *See also* Embodiment theories; Trait theories
cognitive and information processing theories
attribution and judgment theories, 56–61
consistency theories, 64–71
information-integration theories, 61–64
communication competence theories
expectancy violations theory, 72–73
interaction adaptation theory, 71–72
theory of communication competence, 74–75
communication identity theories, 75
cultural identity theory, 78–79
identity negotiation theory, 79–81
presentation of self, 77–78
queer theory, 83–85
standpoint theory, 81–82
symbolic interactionism, 76–77
competence theories
expectancy violations theory, 72–73
interaction adaptation theory, 71–72
theory of communication competence, 74–75
tier two in Powers's four-tier scheme, 37–38
Communicators
as initiators of messages, 101–139
presentation of the self, 77–78
Communicology, 55–56
Community
community-based participatory research conceptual model, 375–378
and foreignness, simultaneous construction of, 239–241
mediated through social integration, 150
voice, 379
Comparison processes, 286
Compensation and reciprocation, 71–72
Competence, defining, 74
Compliance gaining, 286, 131–133
Compton, J., 358
Computer-mediated communication
agenda setting in, 163–164
digital memory and, 464
emoticons in, 123–124
Internet/websites as simulacrum of reality, 200
male-dominated meaning in social media, 116
new media, Internet-based, 148
new medium theory and, 148–151
Objectùm sexuality international website, 196–197
online field of cultural production, 156–157
social interaction perspective, 149
race talk online, 150–151
Web 2.0 and, 145–146, 150, 157, 164–165
Concertive control
organizational enthymemes and, 322–323
organizational identification and, 321–322
in self-managed teams, 273
theory of, 277–279
Condit, C., 86
Conflict communication, impact of structurational divergence on, 367
Conflict styles, in face-negotiation theory, 412–413, 415
Conquergood, D., 395
Conquest rhetoric, 137
Conscientiousness, trait factor of, 52
Consensus-dissensus axis, 31
Consistency theories
cognitive dissonance theory, 64–67
problematic-integration theory, 67–69
uncertainty reduction theory, 69–70
Constructivism, 9, 119–120
Consubstantiality, identification through, 128
Consumption preceding production, 198
Content knowledge, 74
Contractor, N. S., 316

Contradiction, in third-wave feminism, 88–89
Contrast effect, 59
Control
concertive. *See* Concertive control
dialectic of
discourse of suspicion, 325–327
feminist theory in organizational communication, 329, 332–333
in organizational control/identity theory, 321–324
theory of bureaucracy, 320–321
problems of, in groups, 264
types of, 277–278
See also Domination; Power
Conventional logic, 130
Convergence
convergence theory of group participation, 288
divergence, in accommodation theory, 401
Conversational demand, 256
Conversion rhetoric, 137
Cooley, A. B., 336
Cooley, S. C., 336
Coombs, W. T., 334, 336
Cooper, M., 444
Coordinated management of meaning, 124–127
Cooren, F., 196, 313
Coping efficacy, 372
Core criteria rules, 226
Corporate citizenship perspective, 337
Corporate colonization theory, 327–329
Corporate social responsibility communication model, 336–338
Correspondence, validity as, 16
Counterarguing, resistance through, 352
Countermonuments, theorizing of, 463–464
Counternarrative, 421
Cox, J. R., 44
Cragan, J. F., 270
Craig, R. T., 4–6, 18, 40
Crawford, L., 389
Credibility of source, 60–61
Crisis communication, 336
risk and crisis communication management theory, 373–375
situational crisis communication theory, 333–336
Critical theory
critical ethnography, 30
critical race theory, 419–423
critical rhetoric, 451–455
critical tradition of communication theory, 43–44
cultural studies, 440–442
feminist, 448–451
Frankfurt School/theory of communicative action, 434–440
media and cultural production, 156
modernist/postmodernist, 433–434
postcolonialist, 445–448
post-structuralist, 442–445
Critical thinking, central and peripheral routes of, 60
Cronen, V., 124
Cross-cultural adaptation, integrative theory of, 404–407
Cross-functional teams, transactive memory theory work in, 291
Cultivation theory, 159–161
Cultural capital, 154
Cultural codes, questions of, 392
Cultural community, creating, 37
Cultural discourse analysis (CuDA), Carbaugh's, 191
Cultural feminism, 330
Cultural studies, 440–442
Cultural transformers, 80
Culture
defining, 387
naturalizing, 190–191
organizational, 316–319
transformation through digital media, 209
Culture, theories of, 387–424
cultural adaptation and change
differential adaptation theory, 407–408
diffusion of innovations theory, 409–411
integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, 404–407
cultural contracts theory, 159–161, 418
cultural hermeneutics, 388–389
cultural identities
identity negotiation theory and, 78–80
management by intercultural communicators, 249–252
cultural production theory, 154–157
cultural sensitivity, in health communication, 378
cultural studies on, 440–442
culture-centered approach to health disparities, 378–380
ethnography of communication, 389–393
performance ethnography, 393–396
transcendent development and, 457
Cupach, W. R., 74–75, 249–252
Cyberculture (Lévy), 149
Cybernetic tradition of communication theory, 42

Dance, F. E. X., 4
Danger control, as response to threatening messages, 354–356
Daugherty, T., 176
Deception
interpersonal theory of, 255–257
nonverbal communication and, 108
probability model for detecting, 257
Decision emergence theory, 266–268
Decision making, functional requisites for, 295–296
Decolonization, politics of, 446–448
Deculturation, 405
Deetz, S. A., 17–18, 30–35, 111, 328–329

Defense of difference, 400
DeFleur, M. L., 203
De Grove, F., 205–206
De La Garza, A. T., 407–408
De Lauretis, T., 83
Delia, J. G., 119
Delivery, as canon of rhetoric, 44
De Los Santos Upton, S., 456–457
Democracy and Education (Dewey), 313
Denial of difference, 399
DeSantis, G., 282
Descartes, R., 430
Descriptive norms, impact on human behavior, 359
DeShano, C., 174
Determinism, 10, 27
Development communication
  diffusion of innovations theory, 409–411
  participatory development, 456–457
  power dynamics of, 458–459
  and social change, 455–459
  top-down development, 456
  transcendent development, 457–458
Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, 399–401, 404
Dewey, J., 295, 313
Dialectics
  definition of, 246
  individual vs. society, in differential adaptation theory, 408
  of organizational control and resistance, 319–320
  othering vs. connection dialectic, 193–194
  relational theory of, 245–249
  of resistance. *See* Resistance, dialectic of
  universal versus specific, in differential adaptation theory, 407
Dialogic studies, discourse of, 34–35
Dialogical theory, 243–245
  chronotopic similarity and self-becoming in, 246–247
  dialogue as building a culture of peace, 243–245
  managing contradictions and discursive struggles through, 246
  types of discursive struggles in, 247–248
Dialogue, 243–246
Dickinson, E., 422
Dickinson, G., 461
Difference
  acceptance of/integration of, 400
  defense of, 400
  denial of, 399–400
  minimization of, 400
  negotiation of
    co-cultural theory, 415–417
    critical race theory, 419–423
    cultural contracts theory, 417–419
    face-negotiation theory, 412–415
  otherness vs., postcolonial view of, 447
Differential adaptation theory, 407–408
Diffusion of innovations theory, 409–411
Digital media
  digital memory, 464
  digital play and media transference, 205–208
  memorializing approaches in, 466
  as symbiosis of human and machine, 208
  See also Computer-mediated communication
Digman, J. M., 52
Dillard, J. P., 131–132
Direct divine communication, 213
Discourse/discursive orientations
  communicology as study of, 55–56
  critical studies, 33–34
  dialogic studies, 34–35
  discourse of communication, 31–25
  discourse of interpretive studies, 33
  discourse of knowledge, 443–444
  discourse of normative studies, 32
  discourse of whiteness, 420
  Foucault's analysis of discourse, 443–445
  genealogy/archaeology of discourse, 444–445
  Habermas on discourse, 437
  materiality of discourse, in contemporary neo-Marxist thought, 432–433
  structural linguistic studies of discourse, 105
Discrimination, study of stories about, 126–127. *See also* Racism
Disguised monologue, 244
Disinhibition searching, 70
Displacement, language referring to, 108
Dissonance. *See* Cognitive dissonance theory
Distanciation, 112–114, 311
Distinction (Bourdieu), 156
Divergence//nonaccommodation, 401
Divine, communication between humans and, 210–216
  prayer as rhetoric, 211–213
  relational prayer theory, 213–216
Domination, ideology of
  agenda-setting theory and, 162
  bounded rationality and, 34
  colonialist, 445
  corporate colonization theory, 327–329
  in critical theory, 33–34, 43, 433–434
  discourse of dialogic studies, 34
  discourse of suspicion, in organizational communication, 325–326
  dyadic power theory, 229–231
  Marxist theory and, 431–440
  media as instruments of the dominant order, 440
  oppression, and critical theory, 433–434

postcolonial discourse on, 446–447
See also Hegemony; Power
Dow, B., 450
Dramatistic pentad, Burke's, basic nature of prayer articulated through, 211
Dramatizations, determination of self through, 77–78
Dramatizing, 264–265
Dresner, E., 123
Droogsma, R. A., 102
Dunbar, N., 230–231
Duran, B., 376–378
Dutta, M. J., 378–379, 457
Dutta-Bergman, M. J., 177
Dyadic power theory, 229–231
Dynamic motivational activation theory, 177–178

Ealy, S. D., 435
Eccles, J. S., 61
Economic capital, 154
Effective intercultural workgroup communication theory, 273–277
Efficacy
assessments, in theory of motivated information management, 372
in response to fear messages, 354–356
risk perception and, 369
Ego involvement, 59
Egocentric communication, 289
Ekman, P., 106–107
Elaboration likelihood theory, 59–61
Electronic communication, mediated, 148. *See also* Computer-mediated communication
Elgin, S. J., 189
Elia, J. P., 84
Ellis, D. G., 147, 307
Emancipatory communication, 436–437
Embodiment theories
communibiology theories, 54–56
communicology, 55–56
Emoticons, speech act perspective of, 123–124
Emotional responsiveness, in patient-centered communication, 365
Emotions/emotion management, and nonverbal communication, 108
Empiricism, 9
Empowerment, and transcendent development, 457
Enculturation, 319
Engels, F., 431–432
Enghel, F., 458–459
Entertainment education, 351–353
entertainment overcoming resistance model, 351–353
impact of messages on identification and cognitive elaboration, 353
Enthymemes, organizational, concertive control through, 322–323
Environment, media as, 145
Environmental communication, 190–192
Environmental racism, 422–423
Episteme/discursive formation, knowledge as, 443–444
Epistemology, 8–9, 26–27. *See also* Knowledge
Equity theory, 253–254
Erosion of organizational and human development, 367
Ethnic group strength, 406
Ethnic proximity/distance, 406
Ethnocentrism
anxiety/uncertainty management theory and, 398–399
cultural identity and, 79
developmental model of intercultural sensitivity and, 399
Ethnography
of communication, 389–393
critical, 30
ethnographic theorizing, phases of, 389
exploring contradictions through, 392
as a hermeneutic activity, 388–389
individual vs. group identity in, 392
performance, 393–396
questions of forms in, 392
sociocultural tradition of, 43
thick description/thin description in, 388
Ethnorelativism, 400
Eurocentric bias in communication theory, 422
Evaluative orientation, 67–68
Exchange-theory approach to compliance gaining, 131
Expectancy Value of User-Generated Content, model of, 176
Expectancy-value theory, 61–63
uses and gratifications theory and, 175–176
Expectancy violation
disrupting ideologies of domination through, 447–448
theory of, 72–73
Experience, subjectivity of, 112
Experience-near vs. experience-distant concepts, 388
Explanation, empirical and analytical, 113
Explanatory uncertainty, 69
Expressive logic, 130
Extended parallel process model, 355–356, 370
Extended transportation-imagery model, 168
Extraversion, trait factor of, 52
Eye contact, and expectancy violation, 73

Facework
face concerns and personal image, 275
face needs/face-threatening acts, 133–135
face-negotiation theory, 412–415
identity management and, 250
locus of/temporality of, 412
preventive, 412
Family communication patterns theory, 75, 231–235
conversation orientation vs. conformity orientation in, 232

relational family schemas in, 232–234
Fantasy-theme analysis, 270–272
Fatal strategies, 199
Fear control, as response to threatening messages, 354
Felicity, speech acts evaluated in terms of, 123
Feminist alliance building, 242
Feminist Dictionary, A (Kramarae, Treichler, & Russo), 116–117
Feminist scholarship, 448–451
coalition and alliance building theory, 241–242
critical tradition of, 44
cultural feminism, 330
ethos of feminist zines, 89
feminine discourse, uniqueness of, 450
feminine style, theory of, 450
liberal feminism, 330, 449–450
modernist tradition of, 449
in organizational communication, 329–333
resistance theory, 330–331
silence-voice binary in, 332
theories of gender and race, 331–332
radicalist vs. liberal feminist paradigm, 449
reconceptualizations of, 450
standpoint theory (radical structuralist paradigm approach), 30
third-wave, contradiction in, 88
types of feminist theory, 330
Festinger, L., 64–65
Fields of production, 154–156
Fish, S., 172
Fishbein, M., 61, 63
Fisher, B. A., 265–268
Fisher, W., 348–349
FitzGerald, W., 211–212
Fitzpatrick, M. A., 231–232, 234
Five translations model of organizational communication, 310–312
Flores, L. A., 33–34
Floyd, K., 228–229
Fluke, S., 36–37
Foot, K. A., 199–200
Foreignness, performing, 239–241
normalized meanings and, 240
performance ambiguity and, 240–241
spectacle and, 240
Forgetting and remembering, relationship between, 462–464
Formal identification, 127
Forst, R., 435
Forsythe, K. E., 253–254
Foss, K. A., 89–91, 116, 137
Foss, S. K., 89–91, 116, 136–137, 460
Foucault, M., 12, 86, 187, 443–444
Four flows model, 308–309
Framing, media, 165–167
Frankfort School for Social Research, 434–436
Friends/friendship, mediatization of, 153
Friesen, W., 106–107
Fully functional society theory, 338–340
Functional biculturalism, 80
Functionalist paradigm of social science, 29
Fundamental attribution error, 57

Gaming culture, studies of, 441–442
Gaming methodology, and interdependence of bona fide groups, 281
Gaonkar, D. P., 85
Gardner, J., 202
Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, 439
Gayspeak: Gay Male and Lesbian Communication (Chesebro), 83
Gaze, nonverbal communication through, 110
Gearhart, S. M., 136, 170, 451
Geertz, C., 388
Gender
communication competence and, 75
identity, exploring through trans video blogs, 209–210
as a man-made social construction, 449
and race, theories of, in organizational communication, 331–332
as resource for concertive control processes, 279
See also LGBTQ theories/issues
Genealogy/archaeology of discourse, 444–445
Generality, principle of, in theory construction, 15
Generalizability, validity as, 16
Gerbner, G., 159–161
Giddens, A., 282, 307
Giles, H., 401, 403
Gitlin, T., 165
Glass slipper metaphor, in work identity relationship, 332
Globalization, cultural adaptation and change due to, 404
Globital memorializing, theories of, 466–467
Goals-plans-actions model, 131–133
Goffman, E., 76–78
Goldman, R., 60
Goldsmith, D. J., 362–363
Gordimer, N., 82
Grammar, generative, 105
Grasso, K. L., 371
Gray, J. B., 166
Green, M. C., 167–168
Griffin, C. L., 136
Griping as communication, 393
Group communication
ethnographic research methods applied to, 389–396
foundational approaches to, 263–272
input-process-output model, 268–270
interaction analysis and group development, 265–268
interaction-process analysis in small-group communication, 264–265

symbolic convergence theory, 270–272
group-centric communication, 289
group contexts
adaptive structuration theory, 282–285
bona fide group perspective, 279–282
concertive control and self-managed teams, 277–279
effective intercultural workgroup communication theory, 273–277
group process and effectiveness
groupthink theory, 292–295
simplified model of social influence process, 285–287
socio-egocentric and group-centric model, 287–289
transactive memory theory, 289–291
vigilant interaction theory, 295–296
groupthink theory, 292–295
intercultural workgroup communication, 273–277
speech codes theory, 389–391
Groups
attitudinal, risk perception in, 369–371
co-cultural, 415–417
group identity, 360, 392, 397
See also Teams
Gudykunst, W. B., 396, 398
Guggenheim, L., 158
Guilt
the negative as a source of, 128
principle of hierarchy and, 128–129
principle of perfection and, 129
processing through a pollution-purification-redemption cycle, 129–130
relieving through victimage and mortification, 129
Gunn, J., 86

Habermas, J., 329, 434–435, 437
Habitus, 154
Hall, J. A., 365
Hall, S., 440–441
Halperin, D. J., 83
Haptics, 107
Haraway, D. J., 81, 187–188
Harding, S., 81
Harrington, N. G., 166
Harris, S., 135
Harrison, R., 105
Harter, L., 349
Hastings, S. O., 389
Hawes, L., 265
Hawkins, B., 279
Health, definition of, 347
Health communication contexts
health disparities
community-based participatory research conceptual model, 375–378
culture-centered approach, 378–380
information management/risk management in
risk and crisis communication management theory, 373–375
risk perception attitude framework, 368–371
theory of motivated information management, 371–373
messages and behavior change in
entertainment education, 351–353
extended parallel process model, 353–356, 370
inoculation theory, 356–358
narrative theory and health, 348–351
personal, organizational, and public-health contexts, 347
relationship-related
patient-centered communication, 364–366
social support theory, 362–364
structurational divergence theory, 366
theory of normative social influence, 359–362
Heath, R. L., 338–340
Hegemony
Marxist, 431
in organizational communication, 325–327
of rhetorical practice, critical rhetoric and, 452
as theatre of struggle, 441
See also Domination; Power
Heidegger, M., 112
Heider, F., 57
Helmbrecht, B. M., 89
Hermeneutic circle, 111, 113
Hermeneutic theories
cultural hermeneutics, 388–389
distanciation, 112, 114
phenomenology, 110–112
Herring, S., 123
Hesmondhalgh, D., 155–156
Heteroglossia, 243
Heuristics
coordinated management of meaning and, 126
gain frames and loss frames in, 166
heuristic value, as theory evaluation tool, 15–16
Hewes, D. E., 287–288
Hierarchy, principle of, 128–129
High, A. C., 235
Hillin, S., 91
Hirokawa, R. Y., 295–296
Historical materialism, theory of, 432
Hjarvard, S., 152
Hoggart, R., 440
Hollingshead, A. B., 289
Holmes, D., 149
Homophily and heterophily, communication sources of, 410
Homsey, D. M., 391
Horan, S., 229
Horizontal media, 163

Horkheimer, M., 433–434
Host communication competence, 405–406
Host conformity pressure/host receptivity, 406
Houston, M., 81
Hovick, S., 351
How We Think (Dewey), 295
Huang, Y., 80
Human agency, ideology of, 85
Human communication
  determinist vs. pragmatic, 10
  with the divine, 210–216
  with nature, 187, 189–195
    animate rhetoric, 194–195
    environmental/internatural communication, 190
    humans as audience to nature (performer metaphor), 193
    materiality of nature, 192–193
    naturalizing culture, 190–191
    othering vs. connection dialectic, 193–194
    separation and exploitation vs. ecological interdependence and responsibility in, 194
  with objects, 195–200
    actor network theory, 195–197
    privileging of the object (Baudrillard), 198–200
  social norms' impact on, 359
  with technology, 200–210
  traits vs. states of, 10
  transformation by the media, 208–210
Human development, organizational, erosion of, 367
Human experience, individual vs. social, 10
Human identity, transformation by the use of technology, 208–210
Human nature, determinist vs. voluntarist perspectives on, 27
Humanism in decline, Foucault on, 187
Hume, J., 464
Husserl, E., 111–112
Hybridity, 446
Hyde, P., 329
Hymes, D., 389–390
Hypertelia, 199
Hypodermic-needle theory of communication effects, 157

Iconic signs, 106
Ideal speech situation, 328–329, 437
Identification
  effects of entertainment-education messages on, 353
  as hallmark of meaning-creation in narrative paradigm, 349
  idealistic, 127
  organizational, 322–324
  suspended, in answering call of countermonuments, 463
  theory of, 127–130
Identity
  cultural, 78–79
  freezing, 250
  group, in ethnography, 392
  identity-identification duality, 322
  identity knowledge, and intercultural competence, 80
  individual identity, in ethnography, 39
  intercultural, 405
  multiplicity of identities in an individual, 82, 447–448
  shared, 391–392
  transformation through digital media, 208–210
  transgender, 209–210
Identity management
  by intercultural communicators, 249–252
  and nonverbal communication, 108
  in organizations, 324
  theory, 249–252
Identity politics
  queer theory and, 83–85
  standpoint theory and, 81–82
Identity theory
  cultural identity theory, 78–80
  identity management theory, 249–252
  identity negotiation theory, 79–81, 418
  queer theory, 83–85
  standpoint theory, 81–82
  symbolic interactionism, 76–77
Ideographs, McGee's theory of, 451–452
Ideology, theories of
  critical rhetoric, 451–455
  critical theory, 433–434
  cultural studies, 440–442
  of domination. *See* Domination, ideology of
  feminist, 448–451
  Frankfurt School/theory of communicative action, 434–440
  Marxism, 431–433
  postcolonial, 445–448
  post-structuralist, 442–445
Igartua, J-J., 353
Ihlen, Ø., 337
Illocutionary acts
  Assertive, 122
  Commissive, 122
  Constitutive rules governing, 122–123, 125
  Declarative, 122
  Directive, 122
  Essential rule governing, 123
  Expressive, 122
  Preparatory rules governing, 123
  Propositional content rule governing, 123
  Regulative rules governing, 123
  Sincerity rule governing, 123
Illustrators, nonverbal, 107
Imahori, T. T., 249–251
Immediacy, and relational closeness, 256
Immigrants, cross-cultural adaption of, 404–408

Impression management, and nonverbal communication, 108
"In Defense of Queer Nation" (Slagle), 84
Individual versus society, dialectic of, 408
Individualism-collectivism continuum of, 273
dimension of cultural variability, 397
in face-negotiation theory, 413
Infante, D. A., 52–53
Information management
in health communication, 371–373
in organizations and groups, 282
Information Please (Poster), 208
Information processing/information-integration theories
elaboration likelihood theory, 59–61
expectancy-value theory, 61–63
theory of reasoned action, 63–64
uncertainty reduction theory, 69–71
Injunctive norms, impact on human behavior, 360
Innis, H. A., 146
Innovations, diffusion of, 409–411
Inoculation theory, 356–358
Input-process-output model, 268–270
Institutional analysis, in cultivation theory, 161
Institutional positioning, 308
Institutions, impact of media on, 152–153
Integration of difference, 400
Integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, 404–407
Interaction adaptation theory, 71–72
Interaction analysis and group development (interact system model), 265–268
Interaction, simulacrum of, 199–200
Interactional sensitivity, in patient-centered communication, 365
Interactional synchrony, 71
Interaction-process analysis (human systems model), 264–265
Interactive information-gathering strategies, 70
Interactive media, 148–149, 152, 168
Interactivity, 255–256
Interacts, content dimension and relationship dimension of, 266
Intercultural communication competence, 80
anxiety-uncertainty management theory, 396–399
communication accommodation theory, 401–404
developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, 399–401
identity management, 249–252, 405
intercultural sensitivity, developmental model of, 399, 404
intercultural workgroup communication theory, 273–277
negotiating difference in, 411
co-cultural theory, 415–417
critical race theory, 419–423
cultural contracts theory, 417–419
face-negotiation theory, 412–415
Intercultural training, 400
Interest convergence, 419
Intergroup dialogue, 244
Internatural communication, 190
Internet
audience agency and control heightened through, 209
diffusion of innovations on, 411
identity theft on, 208–209
new medium theory and, 148
as simulacrum of reality, 200
socially mediated communication on. *See* Social media
Web 2.0, 145–146, 150, 157, 164–165
See also Computer-mediated communication
Interpersonal Christian prayer model, 215
Interpersonal communication, communication competence in, 74–75
Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire, 75
Interpersonal deception theory, 255–257
Interpersonal relationships
constructing and transcending differences in, 237–245
negotiating boundaries and connections in, 224
tension and challenges in, 245–257
Interpersonal sphere of communication, 38–39
Interpretive community theory, 172–174
Interpretive media theory perspective, 174
Interpretive paradigm of social science, 29
Interpretive studies, discourse of, 33
Invention, as canon of rhetoric, 44
Invitational rhetoric, 45, 136–138
Inviting Transformation (Foss & Foss), 137
Invulnerability, illusion of, 293
I–Thou/I–It relationships, 243–244

Jackson, D., 229
Jackson, R. L., 417–418
Jamieson, P. E., 159–160
Janis, I., 292–293
Jensen, J. D., 166
Jeppeson, M. S., 460–461
Johnson, B. K., 65

Johnson, D., 202
Johnson, N. R., 87
Johnson, S., 451
Journalism's traditional approach to memory studies, 464
Journalists, interpretive community of, 174
Judas Rose, The (Elgin), 189
July's People (Gordimer), 82

Kahneman, D., 166
Kaplan, A., 17
Katriel, T., 389, 393
Katz, E., 174
Kellermann, K. A., 70
Kelly, G., 119
Kelly, H. H., 57
Keyton, J., 316–317
Kim, Y. Y., 404, 406
Kinesics, 107
Kirillova, K., 401
Klapper, J. T., 158
Knobloch-Westerwick, S., 65
Knowledge
  content and procedural, 74
  as episteme/discursive formation, 443–444
  explicit articulation of, 9
  holistic vs. component-based conception of, 9
  as a product of symbolic interaction within social groups, 9
  rationalistic perspective on, 9
  social construction of, 9, 117
  See also Epistemology
Koenig, C. J., 365
Koerner, A. F., 231–232, 234
Koesten, J., 75
Kong, D. T., 294
Kotlarsky, J., 291
Kramarae, C., 115–117
Krizek, R. L., 420
Kroløkke, C., 38
Krotz, F., 153
Kuhn, M., 76–77
Kuhn, T. S., 3, 12, 304

Ladd, K., 215
Langer, S., 102
Language
  arbitrariness as first principle of, 103
  critical discourse analysis of, 105
  emancipatory communication and, 437
  formal (langue) vs. speech (parole), 104
  gendered implications of, 115–117
  generative grammar, 105
  importance in critical theory, 433–434
  language games, 43
  medium as, 145
  the negative in, 128
  as organizational reality, empowerment and marginalization from, 339–340
  paralanguage/vocalics, 107
  post-structuralist view of, 442–444
  pragmatics and, 103
  principles, in theory of communicative action and, 436
  reflexivity of, 108
  semantics and, 102
  shaping meaning about natural space through, 190
  social construction of meaning in, 117
  as speech act, 43
  speech codes theory and, 390
  structural analysis of, 104, 442
  structural linguistics and, 103–105
  synchrony of, 104
  syntactics and, 102–103
  as a system of difference, 104
  in theory of communicative action, 436
  as a vehicle for action, 127
  See also Linguistics
Lapinski, M. K., 359, 361
Latour, B., 195
Law, J., 195
Leakage, 255
Ledbetter, A. M., 253–254
Lee, C. S., 205
Lee, P-W., 252
Legitimacy/legitimate power, organizational, 320, 322, 338
Levina, N., 156
Levine, T. R., 257
Levinson, S., 133, 135
Levitt, R., 242
Lévy, Pierre, 149
Lewin, K., 292
Lewis, N., 165–166
LGBTQ theory/issues
  Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, 439
  queer theory, 83–85
  queering family communication, 235–237
  trans video blogs (vlogs) for exploration of transgender identity, 209–210
Li, L., 175
Liberal feminism, 330, 449–450
Life-world, and colonization, 437–438
Limbaugh, R., 36–37
Liminal rituals, in performance ethnography, 394
Lindlof, T. R., 173
Linguistic relativity, theory of, 114–115
Linguistics
  generative, 105
  linguistic domination in social media, 116
  linguistic relativity (Sapir-Whorf hypothesis), 114–115
  structural, 103–105
Lippmann, W., 161
Listening, and performance ethnography, 395
Littlejohn, S. W., 7, 237–239
Liu, J. H., 150
Living Proof campaign, 458–459
Logic, conventional/expressive/rhetorical, 130
Logical force, and coordinated management of meaning, 125
Logical simplicity, as test of parsimony in theories, 16
Lovaas, K. E., 84
Love, M. A., 89
Lucaites, 87
Luckmann, T., 117

MacGeorge, E. L., 120
Maclaran, P., 110

Magic bullet theory of communication effects, 157
Maguire, K. C., 38
Mainstreaming, 160
Malkowski, J. A., 133
Man Cannot Speak For Her (Campbell), 450
Managerial capitalism, 328
Marcuse, H., 434
Marginalized groups
  cultural contracts theory and, 417–418
  identity through difference, 447
  standpoint theory and, 81–82
Married to the Eiffel Tower: Landmark Sex, 196
Marwell, G., 131
Marxism
  critique of political economy, 44, 431
  Frankfort School, 434–435
  neo-Marxist approach to materiality, 432–433
  as source of contemporary critical theory, 44
Masato, N., 175
Masculinity-femininity dimension of cultural variability, 397
Mass communication
  cultural studies of, 440
  development communication and, 455
  effects theories, 157–159
  limited-effects approach, 158
  media framing and, 165
  reinforcement and selective-exposure theories and, 158
  uses and gratifications approach to, 167, 174–176
Mass media
  broadcast, social interaction approach to, 148–150
  cultural production theory and, 155
  digital, transformation of human beings by, 208–210
  television, 151, 159–160, 440
  as a vehicle for memory, 464
Mass production, field of, 154–156
Material identification, 127
Materialist, transhuman dialogic theory of communication, 192–193
Materiality
  of nature, 192–193
  neo-Marxist approach to, 432–433
May, S. K., 336–337
Maznevski, M. L., 284
McCombs, M., 162–163
McCroskey, J. C., 53–55
McGee, M. C., 451–452
McGuire, W. J., 356–357
McIntyre, M., 86
McKay-Semmler, K., 406
McKerrow, R. E., 452–454
McLeod, P. L., 296
McLuhan, M., 145–148
McPhee, R. D., 308–309
McQuail, D., 175
Mead, G. H., 76
Meaning(s)
  active production by audiences, 171
  context affecting (pragmatics), 103
  coordinated management of, 124–127
  narrative paradigm, creation in, 349
  postmodern deconstruction of, 431
  semiotic theories on creation of, 101–110
  shared, genres of interpretation regarding, 173
  shared meanings of public performances, 392
  social construction of, 117–118
Mean-world syndrome, 159
Media
  broadcast, social interaction approach to, 148–150
  as a culture industry, 434
  dependency theory, 203–205
  differences among oral, written, and electronic, 147–148
  digital. *See* Digital media
  equation theory, 201–203
  first vs. second media age, 148–149
  as instruments of the dominant order, 162, 440
  interactive forms of, 148–149, 152
  mass media, 148–150, 155, 159–160, 208–210, 440, 464
  metaphors for identifying/relating to, 145–146
  ownership, influence, and control, cultural studies of, 440–441
  pillory function of, 170
  power, credibility linked with, 162
  ritualized, community created by social integration of, 150
  social action media theory, 29
  social interaction/social integration approach to, 149–150
  time-binding/space-binding, 146–147
  as vehicle for understanding the past, 464–467
Mediated prospective/mediated retrospective memory, 464–465
Mediatization, 151–154
Medium theory
  communication between humans and technology
    media dependency theory, 203–205
    media equation theory, 201–203
  contents and effects
    active audience theories, 158
    agenda setting theory, 161–165
    cultivation theory, 159–161
    effects tradition, 157–159
    framing theory, 165–167
    hypodermic-needle theory, 157
    key stages of, 158–159
    persuasion theories, 158

reinforcement approach/limited-effects approach, 157–158
social/societal context theories, 158
spiral models/selective exposure hypothesis, 158
two-step flow hypothesis, 157
cultural theory and, 440–442
motivations, uses, and consumption
channel use theories, 176–178
social action media studies, 171–174
spiral of silence theory, 169–171
transportation theory, 167–169
uses and gratifications theory, 174–176
power and ideology-oriented
communicative action theory, 436–440
critical theory, 433–434, 438
emancipatory communication, 436–437
Frankfurt school, 434–435
Marxist, 431–433
production
cultural production theory, 154–157
McLuhan's medium theory, 146–148
media ecology/mediatization, 151–154
media logic, 152
new medium theory, 148–151
small-scale/restricted vs. large-scale/mass production, 154
Member negotiation model of organizational communication, 310
Membership negotiation, 308
Memory(ies)
as canon of rhetoric, 45
collective memorializing, 459–467
digital media and globital memorialization, 466–467
globital memory field, 466
group. *See* Transactive memory theory
media as a vehicle for, 464–465
reconceptualization of, 459–460
Merleau-Ponty, M., 110, 112
Mescher, S., 327
Message(s)
cognitive complexity of, 119–120
deliberately ambiguous, 448
gain-framed vs. loss-framed, 166
in health communication, study of, 348–358
interpretation of
distanciation, 112–114
language and gendered orientations, 115–117
linguistic relativity (Sapir-Whorf hypothesis), 114–115
personal construct theory, 119–120
phenomenologist, 110–112
Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (theory of linguistic relativity), 114–115
socially constructed, 117–118
media framing and, 166
medium of, 145–180
in Powers's tiers of communication, 36–37
production and use of
compliance gaining, 131
coordinated management of meaning, 124–127
goals-plans-actions model, 131–133
invitational rhetoric, 136–138
message-design logic, 130–131, 133
politeness theory, 133–136
speech act theory, 121–124
theory of identification, 127–130
resistance to, through pre-exposure inoculation, 356–357
semiotics as foundation of, 101–110
nonverbal communication, 105–110
structural linguistics, 103–105
social construction of, 117–120
structures of, 37
threatening, managing fear generated from, 353–354
Message-design logic, 130–131, 133
Metaethical/metatheoretical discourse, 437
Meta-processes, 153
Meyrowitz, J., 145, 147
Miike, Y., 422
Milstein, T., 38, 193–194
Mindfulness, 80, 397–398
Minh-ha, T. T., 447
Minimization of difference, 400
Minowa, Y., 110
Mitra, R., 239–241
Modernism, 430–433
Monge, P., 207
Monologue, Buber on, 244
Montgomery, B. M., 247
Montreal School approach to communicative constitution of organizations, 310–313
Monuments/memorial architecture, theorizing rhetorically, 460–461
Moore, M. P., 452
Moral conflict theory, 237–239
incommensurate moral orders in, 238
intractable conflict in, 238
morally attenuated conflict in, 239
rhetorical ineloquence in, 239
Morgan, G., 26–30, 316

Morris, C. E., III, 84
Mortification, reliving guilt through, 129
Motivated information management, theory of, 371–373
Motivation, and communication competence skills, 74
Moyer-Guse, E., 351–352
Multiplicity, honoring of, 448
Mumby, D. K., 34, 325–327
Muted-group theory, 115–116
Myers, K., 310
Myers, S., 53–54
Mystification, identification through, 128

Nakayama, T. K., 420
Naming, power of, 453
Narrative, as key element in transportation, 167–169
Narrative paradigm
  identification as hallmark of meaning-creation in, 349
  multiple functions of narrative, 349–350
  narrative reality vs. traditional reality, 348–349
  narrative theory and health, 348–351
  the "narrative turn," 350
Nash, C., 201
Nature
  cultural discourse analysis of, 191
  materiality of, 192–193
  natureculture, Haraway on, 188
  "othering" of, 193–194
Negative face/negative politeness, 134–135
Negotiation skill, and intercultural competence, 80
Neocolonialism, 445
Neo-Marxist approach to materiality, 432–433
Network agenda setting, 163
Network theory, 313–316
Neuliep, J. W., 398
Neuman, W. R., 158, 164
Neurobiology, and brain research on communicator traits, 55
Neuroticism, trait factor of, 52
New media
  advantages and disadvantages of, 149
  diffusion of innovations in, 409–411
  new medium theory, 148–151
  speech codes and the ethnography of communication, 393
Nguyen, K. H., 118
Nicotera, A. M., 366–368
Niles Goins, M., 249
Nilsson, J., 403–404
Noelle-Neumann, E., 169–170
Nominalism, doctrine of, 26
Nomothetic inquiry, 27
Noncommitment, latitude of, 58–59
Nonlinguistic signs, 103
Nonverbal behavior
  analysis by usage, 106
  classification of body movements, 107
  coding, 106
  innate, species-constant, and variant, 106
  single vs. multiple channels of, 107
Nonverbal codes
  analogic nature of, 108
  definition of coding, 106
  iconicity of, 108
  immediacy of, 108
  multimodal nature of, 108
  simultaneous transmission of, 108
  spontaneous nature of, 108
Nonverbal communication
  defining, 105, 109
  Eckman and Friesen's typology of nonverbal behaviors, 106–107
  expectancy violations theory and, 72–73
  nonlinguistic signs in, 103
  nonverbal interaction theories, elements of, 109–110
  origin, coding, and usage of, 106
  research, Patterson's suggested areas for, 109
  semantics of, 110
  systems approach to research in, 109–110
  verbal communication vs., 108
Normative social influence, theory of, 359–362
Normative studies, discourse of, 32
Norms, questions of, in ethnography, 392
Nyerere, J., 456

Object-adaptors, 107
Objective-subjective continuum of social science inquiry, 27
Objects, abstraction from their social contexts, 198–199
Objects, privileging of, 198–200
Objectùm sexuality, 196–197
O'Donnell-Trujillo, N., 317–318
Oetzel, J. G., 273, 276, 284, 363, 376–377
O'Keefe, D. J., 166
Online field of production, 156
Ono, K. A., 407–408
Ontology, assumptions about, 9–10. *See also* Reality
Openness
  as necessary element in invitational rhetoric, 138
  of theories, 16
  trait factor of, 52
Operational competence, 405
Opinion leaders, 411
Oppression. *See* Domination; Hegemony
Oratory, and agency, 85
Oravec, C. L., 190
Orbe, M. P., 126–127, 415–417, 419
Organization(s)
  authoring the organization through textualization, 311–312
  clandestine, self-reflexive secrecy of, 313
  collective identity in, 324
  communication performances in, 318–319
  communicative constitution of, 313
  concertive control through identification., 324
  culture, scholarly research on, 316–319

identity management in, 324
mapping collective action through distanciation, 311
as networks of practices and conversations, 310
organizational enthymemes, 322–323
organizational health communication, defining, 347
organizational identification, 323–324
as the product of communication activities, 196
as representations and presentifications, 312
translating the one back into the many, 312
Organizational theory
dialectic of control and resistance, 319
corporate colonization theory, 327–329
critical theory lens (discourse of suspicion), 325–327
feminist theory in organizational communication, 329–333
organizational control theory/organizational identification, 321
suspicion, discourse of, 325
theory of bureaucracy, 320–321
external stakeholder communication in
corporate social responsibility communication model, 336–338
fully functional society theory, 338–340
organizational identification theory, 321
situational crisis communication theory, 333–336
organizing and structurizing the work of organizations
four flows model, 308–309
member negotiation model of organizational communication, 310
Montreal School approach to communicative constitution of organizations, 310–313
network theory, 313–316
organizational culture, research on, 316–319
structuration theory, 306–307
theory of organizing, 304–306
Orientalism (Said), 445
Orientational others, 76
Otherness
colonial, postcolonial critique of, 447
in communication, Peters on, 188–189
othering of nature, 193–194
Said's postcolonial view of discourse as, 445–446
Ott, B. L., 461
Outcome assessment, in theory of motivated information management, 371
Outcome expectations, 352, 360, 372

Pacanowsky, M. E., 317–318
Pal, M., 448
Palmgreen, P., 175
Pandelaere, M., 58
Papa, M. J., 323–324
Paralanguage/vocalics, 107
Parasocial interaction, 352
Parcell, E. S., 38
Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, 438
Park, H. S., 257
Parsimony in theories, 16
Participatory development, 456–457
Particularism, 420
Partnership-building communication, 365
Passive information-gathering strategies, 69–70
Patient-centered communication, 364–366
Patriarchy, feminist view as the central source of oppression, 449
Patterson, M. L., 53, 108–109
Pavitt, C., 285–287
Pearce, W. B., 5, 124, 126, 237–238
Peirce, C. S., 102
Perceived efficacy
in response to fear-generating messages, 354–355
risk perception and, 369
Perception, phenomenology of, 112
Perceptual sensitivity to cultural difference, 399–401, 404
Perfection, principle of, 129
Performance ambiguity, 240–241
Performance ethnography, 393–396
Performer metaphor, 193
Performing foreignness, 239–241
Perlocutionary acts, 121
Personal construct theory, 119–120
Personal health, definition of, 347
Personal identities, 79–80
Person-centered communication, 119–120
Perspective taking, 119
Peters, J. D., 188–189
Petronio, S., 225, 227
Petty, R. E., 59–60
Pfau, M., 358
Phenomenology, 41–42, 110–112
Philipsen, G., 389–390
Physical appearance, as nonverbal behavior, 107
Pillory function of media, 170
Places of Public Memory (Dickinson, Blair, & Ott), 461
Plan of action, 76–77
Plec, E., 190
Politeness theory, 133–136
Political economy, 44, 338, 431–432
Politics
mediatization of, 153
organizational, 318–319

political discourse and politeness theory, 135
postcolonial view of, 446–447
Pollock, D., 44
Poole, M. S., 268, 282
Positive deviance, and transcendent development, 457
Positive-negative face dialectic, 133, 135, 251
Positive politeness, 134
Positivism vs. anti-positivism, 26–27
Postcolonial theory, 431, 434, 445–448
Poster, M., 148, 208–209
Postman, N., 151
Post-Marxist approach to materiality, 432–433
Postmodernism
critical rhetoric and, 452
deconstruction of meaning in, 431
definition/origin of, 430–431
postmodern feminism, 330
postmodern monumentality, 460–461
reality, postmodernistic, 430
Post-structuralism, 442–445
Potentiality, constricted/constructed, theory of, 89–91
Potter, W. J., 160–161
Power
creating power relations in the online field, 156
critical rhetoric and, 451–455
critical theory and, 433–434
in cultural contracts theory, 418
development communication and, 458–459
dyadic power theory, 229–231
feminist critical theory and, 450–451
field of, in media production, 154
Foucault on, 444
Frankfort School, 434–436
legitimate, in organizations, 320, 322
Marxist theory, 431–433
of the media, credibility linked with, 162
and performance, in ethnographic theory, 395
postcolonial theory and, 446–448
post-structuralist view of, 443–445
power distance, and cultural variability, 397
relations between media and outside sources, 162–163
theory of communicative action, 435
Western legitimation of, in colonization, 446
See also Domination; Hegemony
Power Lines: On the Subject of Feminist Alliances (Rowe), 241
Powers, J. H., 35, 37–40
Powers's four-tier model of communication
contexts of communication, 39–40
levels of communication, 38–39
nature of communicator, 37–38
nature of messages, 36
Practical discourse, 437
Practical explanations of theory, 13–14
Pragmatics, 103
Pragmatics of Human Communication (Watzlawick, Beaving, & Jackson), 229
Pragmatism vs. determinism, 10
Predictive uncertainty, 69
Preferred outcome, in co-cultural theory, 416
Principles, construction in theory, 14
Privacy turbulence, 227
Probabilistic orientations, 67–68
Problem solving, in groups, 295–296
Problem-focused coping, 363
Problematic-integration theory, 67–69
Procedural knowledge, 74
"Procedural Queer, The" (Campbell), 84
Propositional acts, 121
Prospect theory and media framing, 166
Pseudo-environment, 161
Psychological reactance, 352
Public address, critical rhetoric's transformation of, 453
Public health communication, definition of, 347
Public memorializing. *See* Collective memorializing
Public opinion, spiral of silence theory on, 169–171
Public sphere, Breese's framework for variations in, 438–439
Pucci, E., Jr., 460–461
Putnam, L. L., 34, 279, 282

Quaschning, S., 58
Quasi-statistical sense, 169
Queer theory, 44, 83–85
Queer Theory and Communication: From Disciplining Queers to Queering the Discipline(s) (Yep, Lovaas, & Elia), 84
Queer Words, Queer Images: Communication and the Construction of Homosexuality (Ringer), 84
Queering family communication, 235–237
Queering Public Address (Morris), 84
Questions, information gathering via, 70–71

Race and gender, theories of, in organizational communication, 331–332
Race, theories of
Afrocentricity, theory of, 421–422
co-cultural theory, 415–417
critical race theory, 419–423
environmental racism, 422–423
whiteness theory, 419–420
Radical feminism, 330, 449
Radical humanist/radical structuralist paradigms, 29–30

Radically divine communication, 214
Rafferty, K. A., 372
Rancer, A. S., 52–53
Rapoport, A., 8
Rational paradigm, banal strategies within, 199
Rationalism, 9
Rational-legal authority, in organizations, 320
Raun, T., 209–210
Reactivity searching, 70
Reading, A., 466–467
Real, K., 359, 369
Realism, doctrine of, 26
Reality
as a construct of human symbol systems, 192
created by signs, 198
postmodernistic, 430
realist vs. nominalist perspective on, 26
scholars' theoretical conceptions of, 17–18
simulacrum of, 199–200
social construction of, 117–120. *See also* Social constructionism
See also Ontology
Reasoned action, theory of, 63–64
Reassemblage (Trinh), 447
Reciprocation and compensation, 71–72
Reeves, B., 201–202
Reeves, J., 463
Reflective self-structuring, 308
Reflexivity, 379–380
Refutational inoculation, 357
Regulation-radical change, principal of, 27
Regulative rules governing coordinated management of meaning, 125
Regulators, nonverbal, 107
Rejection, latitude of, 58–59
Relational dialectics theory, 245–249
Relational maintenance theories, 252–255
Relational management, and nonverbal communication, 108
Relational prayer theory, 213–216
Relationship theories
boundaries and connections in
affection exchange theory, 228–229
communication privacy management theory, 224–228
dyadic power theory, 229–231
family communication patterns theory, 231–235
queering family communication, 235–237
constructing and transcending differences in
coalition and alliance building, theory of, 241–242
dialogue as building a culture of peace, 243–245
moral conflict theory, 237–239
performing foreignness, 239–241
tension and challenges in
identity management theory, 249–252
interpersonal deception theory, 255–257
relational dialectics theory, 245–249
relational maintenance theories, 252–255
Remembering and forgetting, relationship between, 462–464
Renegar, V. R., 88–89
Resemblance/iconicity of nonverbal codes, 108
Resistance, dialectic of
discourse of suspicion, 325–327
entertainment overcoming resistance model, 351–353
feminist theory in organizational communication, 329, 332–333
inoculation theory, 356–358
organizational, 319–320
Response efficacy, in response to fear-generating messages, 354
Revenge of the Crystal, The (Baudrillard), 198
Reverence, performance of, through prayer, 212
Revised Family Communication Patterns scale, 75
Reward valence, 72
Rhetoric
advisory, 137
animate, 194–195
arrangement as a canon of, 44
benevolent, 137
communication vs., 45
conquest, 137
conversion, 137
critical, 451–455
as discursive enactment of political economy, 338
ethical and socially responsible, in public relations, 339
feminist, 448–451
five canons of, 44–45
invitational, 136–138
of memory and commemoration, 459–461
oratory in ancient Greece, 85
prayer as, 211–213
rhetorical agency, 85–91
rhetorical ineloquence, 239
rhetorical logic, 130, 133
rhetorical tradition of communications theory, 44–45
rhetorical vision and fantasy themes, 271–272
wilding of, 194–195
"Rhetoric of Women's Liberation, The" (Campbell), 450
Rhetorical criticism, McKerrow's critical perspective of, 453
Ricoeur, P., 112–113
Rimal, R. N., 359, 361, 369–370
Ringer, J., 84
Risk/risk management
attitude framework and risk perception, 369–371
construction of, 68
crisis communication and, 373–375
health communication and, 368, 373–375

Ritts, V., 53
Robinson, S., 174
Rocca, K., 53–54
Rogers, E. M., 351, 409–411, 455–457
Rogers, R. A., 192
Romer, D., 159–160
Roper. J., 336–337
Rosengren, K. E., 175
Roter, D., 365
Roth, A. M., 166
Rowe, A. C., 241–242
Rudd, J. E., 53
Rules of action, and coordinated management of meaning, 125
Rules of Art, The (Bourdieu), 156
Ruppel, E. K., 177
Russell, L. D., 68
Russo, A., 116

Sabido, M., 351
Sagas, fantasy themes as, 271
Said, E., 445
Salience, cultural/ethnic identities characterized by, 79
Sandel, T., 391
Sapir, E., 114
Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, 114–115
Saussure, F. de, 103–104
Scharp, K. M., 235
Schemas, relational, 232
Schmitt, D. R., 131
Schoening, G. T., 171
Scholars, as generators of knowledge vs. agents of change, 11
Scholarship, value-free vs. value-conscious, 11–12
Scientific inquiry, Deetz's four quadrants of, 30–35
Scott, C., 310
Scott, K. D., 451
Searle, J., 121–122
Second Media Age, The (Poster), 148
Security-vulnerability, identity dialectic of, 81
Seeger, M. W., 373–374
Seegert, N., 194–195
Selective exposure hypothesis, 158
Self
  presentation of, 77–78
  as a social object, 76–77
Self-adaptors, 107
Self-becoming, 246
Self-change, and constructed potentiality, 91
Self-construal
  in effective intercultural workgroup communication theory, 273–274
  in face-negotiation theory, 413
  in individualistic cultures, 275
Self-disclosure
  obtaining information through, 70
  social penetration theory and, 224–225
Self-efficacy, in response to fear-generating messages, 352–354
Self-expansion theory, 253–254
Self-face, 275
Self-managed teams, groupthink theory and, 294
Self-other face dialectic, 250
Self-reflexivity
  feminist, 451
  postcolonialist, 447
  self-reflexive secrecy of clandestine organizations, 313
Semantics, 102, 110
Semiotics
  as foundation of messages, 101–110
  of nonverbal communication, 105–110
  semantics, syntactics, and pragmatics, 102–103
  semiotic tradition of communication theory, 41
  signs and symbols, 101–102
  structural linguistics, 103–105
  triad/triangle of meaning in, 102
Sentence structure, standard model of, 104
Servaes, J., 457
Sexual harassment, and voice-silence tension, 332
Sexuality, objectùm, 196–197
Shared identity, 391–392
Shareholder value theory, 336–337
Sharf, B. F., 349–350
Shaw, A., 441
Shen, C., 207
Sherif, M., 58
Shields, D. C., 270
Shome, R., 446
Shultz, K., 129
Sigler, J. E., 212–213
Signorielli, N., 159
Signs
  arbitrary and iconic, 106
  dependence on a larger system of meanings, 103–104
  language as a system of, 103
  nonlinguistic, 103
  reality created by, 198
  separation from the objects they represent, 198
  symbols and, 101–102
  syntactics and, 102
Silence-voice binary, 332
Simulacrum of interaction/simulacrum of reality, 199–200
Singhal, A., 323, 351, 457
Situational crisis communication theory, 333–336
Situation-centered communication, sphere of, 39–40
Skill differentiation, in group communication, 273
Slagle, A. R., 84
Small-group communication, 264–265
Smith, C. D., 462
Snow, R. P., 152
Social action media theory, 29, 171–174
Social capital, 207–208, 339
Social cognitive theory, 352, 360, 371–372
Social construction
  of knowledge, 9
  of race, 420
  theory of, 117–118
Social dramas, in performance ethnography, 394
Social exchange theory, 230, 253
Social influence process, simplified model of, 285–287
Social interaction/social integration approach to media, 149

Social judgment theory, 58–59
Social media
  agenda setting and, 164–165
  channel complementarity theory and, 176
  communication privacy management theory and, 227
  diffusion of innovations via, 410–411
  digital game playing and gamer identity, 205–208
  digital memories transmitted through, 466
  interactive communication through, 149
  male-dominated communication in, 116
  media dependency theory and, 204–205
  speech codes and, 391, 393
  spiral of silence theory and, 170–171
  struggles around meaning and linguistic domination in, 116
  theory of cultural production and the online field, 156–157
  trans video blogs (vlogs) for exploration of transgender identity, 209–210
  uses and gratifications theory and, 175
  See also Internet; New medium theory
Social movements, mapping in different public spheres, 438–439
Social norms, factors that enhance or reduce the influence of, 359–360
Social object, the self as, 76–77
Social penetration theory, 224–225
Social perception, 58
Social science(s)
  four paradigms of, 28–30
    functionalist, 29
    interpretive, 29
    radical humanist, 30
    radical structuralist, 29–30
  interpretive paradigm of, and social action media theory, 29
  nature of, 26–27
  objective-subjective continuum of social science inquiry, 27
Social stratification, reproduction through the media, 149
Social support theory, 362–364
Social system, role in diffusion of innovations, 410–411
Socially mediated communication, 150–151
  community created by, 150
  dynamic motivational activation and, 177
  online field of production, 156
  transportation theory and, 168–169
Society, nature of, 27–28
Society, theories of, 429–469
  categorizing theories on the nature of, 27
  culture production theory, 154–157
  health-related
    social support theory, 362–364
    theory of normative social influence, 359–362
  modernist and postmodernist, 429–433
  power and ideology-based communicative action, theory of, 436–440
  critical rhetoric, 451–455
  critical theory, 433–434
  cultural studies, 440–442
  feminist theories, 448–451
  Frankfort School, 434–436
  Marxism, 431–433
  postcolonialist, 445–448
  post-structuralist, 442–445
  preservation and change-based, 455–467
Sociocultural tradition of communication theory, 43
Socio-egocentric and group-central model of group communication, 287–289
Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life (Burrell & Morgan), 26
Sociopsychological tradition of communication theory, 42–43
Sojourners, 404
Source credibility, 60–61
Sowards, S. K., 88–89
SPEAKING (heuristic model for analyzing speech events), 390
Speaking into the Air (Peters), 188
Spectactors, Milstein and Kroløkke's, 38
Speech
  diachrony of, 104
  group-centered, 289
  unimodal nature of, 108
Speech act theory, 43, 121–124
Speech codes theory, 389–391
Speech communities, 390
Spiral models of mass communication effects, 158
Spiral of silence theory, 169–171
Spiritual Modalities: Prayer as Rhetoric and Performance (FitzGerald), 211
Spitzack, C., 450–451
Spitzberg, B. H., 74–75
Spivak, G., 447
Stafford, L., 252–253
Stakeholder theory, 337
Standpoint theory, 30, 81–82, 330
Stevens, L., 110
Stohl, C., 279, 282, 313
Stohl, M., 313
Stromer-Galley, J., 199–200
Structural linguistics, 103–105
Structural transformation and resources, 380
Structuralism, definition/origin of, 442
Structuration theory, 282–285, 306–307, 310
Structurational divergence theory, 366

Style, as canon of rhetoric, 44
Subaltern communities, giving voice to, 379–380
Subjective norms, 63
Sundstrom, B., 411
Super traits, 52
Supportive inoculation, 357
Surname Viet Given Name Nam (Trinh), 447
Suspicion, discourse of, 325–327
Symbolic capital, 154
Symbolic convergence theory, 270–272
Symbolic interactionism, 76–77
Symbols
  reality as a construct of, 192
  signs and, 101–102
Synchrony, interactional, 71
Synecdoche, ideographs as, 452
Synergy, intrinsic/effective, 270
Syntactics, 102

Tannen, D., 137
Target efficacy, 372
Taxonomies, 13
Taylor, D. A., 224
Taylor, J. R., 196, 310–311, 313
Tchernev, J., 178
Teams
  cross-functional, transactive memory theory work in, 291
  self-managed, concertive control theory and, 277–279
Technical dialogue, 244
Technology
  diffusion of innovations in, 409–410
  and humans, communication between, 200
    digital play and media transference, 205–208
    media dependency theory, 203–205
    media equation theory, 201–203
    media transformation of human beings, 208–210
  impact on social capital, 207
  and information management in organizations and groups, 282
  Web 2.0, 145–146, 150, 157, 164–165
  See also Internet; Social media
Television
  cultivation theory and, 159–160
  industry, as a cultural production, 440
  media ecology mediatization and, 151
Temporal stability, in group communication, 273
Tench, R., 337
Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K., 464–465
Textual interpretation, Ricoeur on, 112–114
Theory(ies)
  appropriateness of, 16
  causal and practical explanations of, 13–14
  changeability of, 16–17
  concepts involved in building, 12–13
  as constructions, 14, 17–18
  defining, 7
  dimensions of, 7–14
  frameworks for organizing, 25–45. *See also* Typologies for organizing theories
  impossibility of value-free inquiry in, 11
  insightfulness of, 16
  omissions in, 17–18
  philosophical assumptions about
    axiology, 11–12
    epistemology, 8–9
    ontology, 9–10
  as scholars' conceptualizations about reality, 17
  as a snapshot in time, 18
  as statements of argument, 18
  staying power of, 17
  theoretic discourse, 437
  theoretical frameworks, differences in focus of, 17
  theoretical scope, 15
  usefulness of, 18
  value-laden, 17
Thick description/thin description, in ethnography, 388
Third-wave feminism, contradiction as hallmark of, 88–89
Threat in fear-generating messages, responses to, 354–355
Ting-Toomey, S., 43, 79–81, 412–414
Tompkins, P. K., 278, 321, 323
Top-down development, 456
Trait theories
  argumentativeness and, 52–53
  communibiology, 54–55
  communication apprehension (CA) and trait CA, 53–54
  communicology, 55–56
  Digman's five-factor model, 52
Trans vlog, gender identity explored through, 209–210
Transactive memory theory, 289–291
  directory updating in, 290
  information allocation in, 290–291
  retrieval coordination in, 290
  types of knowledge boundaries impacting, 291
Transcendent communication project, 238
Transcendent development, 457–458
Transgender identity, transformation through digital media, 209–210
Transmediality, 466
Transportation theory, 167–169
  extended transportation-imagery model, 168–169
  transportation in entertainment education, 352
Treichler, P. A., 116
Trethewey, A., 330–331
Trinh, T. M, 447
Truth, Sojourner, 87
Truth bias, 256
Tuckman, B., 268
Turner, V., 393–394
Tversky, A., 166
Twenty Statements Test, 77

Typologies for organizing theories
communication tiers
contexts of communication, 39–40
level of communication, 38–39
nature of messages, 36–37
nature of the communicator, 37–38
Powers's four-tier model, 35–40
Craig's approach, 40
critical tradition, 43
cybernetic tradition, 42
phenomenological tradition, 41–42
rhetorical tradition, 44–45
semiotic tradition, 41
sociocultural tradition, 43
sociopsychological tradition, 42–43
discourses of communication, 30–35
Deetz's reworking of Burrell and Morgan's classification system, 31–35
discursive orientations for the quadrants of social scientific inquiry 32
paradigms of inquiry, 26–30
Burrell and Morgan's four paradigms of social sciences, 28–30
categorizing theories in the social sciences, 26–27
traditions of communication theory, 40–45

Unanimity, illusion of, 293
Uncertainty avoidance, 397
Uncertainty management theory, 253–254
Uncertainty reduction theory, 69–70
anxiety-uncertainty management theory and, 396
Understanding, synthetic, 113
Unfinalizability, 243
Unwanted repetitive patterns, 126
Uses and gratifications theory, 174–176
Utterance, 243
Utterance acts, 121

Valence, 61, 72
Validity
as a criterion of theory/as value, 16
of speech, in theory of communicative action, 436–437
propositions evaluated in terms of, 123
Value
content, cultural/ethnic identities characterized by, 79
in invitational rhetoric, 138
validity as, 16
value-free vs. value-conscious scholarship, 12
Vanderford, M., 349
Van Every, E. J., 196
van Laer, T., 168
Verbal aggressiveness, 53–54
Verbal vs. nonverbal communication, 106, 108
Vermeir, I., 58
Verstehen (understanding), 111
Vertical media, 163
Vessel, medium as, 145
Victimage, relieving guilt through, 129
Video game culture, studies of, 441–442
Vietnam Veterans Memorial, visual communication features of, 460–461
Vigilant interaction theory, 295–296
Virtual teams, vigilant interaction theory and, 296
Visual communication, and collective memorializing, 460–461
Vlog, gender identity explored through, 209–210
Vocalics/paralanguage, 107
Voluntarism, 27

Waisbord, S., 457
Walker, K. L., 282
Walker, R. A., 445
Wallerstein, N., 376–378
Wang, Z., 177–178
Warnick, B., 114
Watzlawick, P., 229
Weaver, A. J., 165–166
Web 2.0, 145–146, 150, 157, 164–165
Weber, M., 320–321
Wegner, D. M., 289
Weick, K., 304–306
Weight, 61
Weiner, J. L., 371
West, R., 449
Western discourse, dialectics that promote human-nature separation within, 193–194
Westerwick, A., 65
Wheelan, S. A., 268
White, C. H., 133
Whiteness theory, 419–420
Whorf, B. L., 114
Wilding of rhetoric, 194–195
Wilkins, K. G., 458–459
Wilkum, K., 120
Williams, D., 207
Williams, R., 440
Witte, K., 353, 370
Wittgenstein, L., 43
Wood, J. T., 81–82
Work, as an interest of society, 435
Written communication, mediated, 147–148

Yamasaki, J., 351
Yea-Wen, C., 175
Yep, G. A., 84

Zanin, A. C., 272
Zaug, P., 308
Zhang, Q., 415
Zhang, W., 170
Zhou, L., 257

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