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- 3.3** ■ Identify the major agents of socialization and describe their impact on an individual's understanding of culture.
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Agents of Socialization

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Socialization through the Life Course



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My seven-year-old son and I developed a bedtime ritual that he lovingly called “thoughts.” After our reading time, we reflected on all of the good things that happened that day and talked about why they were special and what we learned from the experiences.

“I have a thought,” he would say. “We got to go on a picnic. It was fun because there was a playground and we got to play Frisbee!”

Then it was my turn. “I have a thought,” I added. “You got to have cake for dessert!”

“That’s a good thought,” he said with a smile.

As my daughter approached her third birthday, we began to develop our own bedtime ritual. First, we would read her favorite story. Then each of her stuffed animal friends would give her a kiss and tell her goodnight in its own unique voice. She would giggle, then choose one stuffed animal to cuddle as she drifted into sleep.

One night, however, my daughter refused to choose an animal to cuddle. “I want to do thoughts,” she said.

“It’s time for bed,” I told her. After all, “thoughts” were something that my son and I shared. My daughter and I had our own ritual, which she no doubt would have resisted sharing.

“No, Daddy. I want to do thoughts. My thought is that I have a very nice brother.”

“That’s a good thought,” I said, relenting.

“I have another good thought,” my daughter said, raising her hand.

And so the nightly ritual of thoughts spread. Now, I am expected to do thoughts with both my son and my daughter. To save time, we now do them together, with my daughter dutifully raising her hand to give her thoughts. Although at first she did not quite understand every aspect of the practice, she quickly learned the expectations. Now she participates fully and enjoys the last bit of family time before bed.

Reflecting on the development of our nighttime rituals, I guess that I should not have been so surprised that my daughter adopted the practice that my son began. After all, she was exposed to the ritual every night. She was, as sociologists would say, socialized into that particular bedtime observance. Within the boundary of her limited social experience, my daughter had observed and learned a ritual and sought to be a part of it. It also illustrated Merton’s concept of anticipatory socialization. My daughter keenly observed her older brother and often tried to imitate his actions. She wanted to be like him, and this nighttime ritual was another way that she could fulfill that desire. It was sociology in action.

Socialization is the way in which people learn the beliefs, values, and behaviors of their social groups. It is a lifelong process of learning. Sociologists see the process of socialization as vitally important to understanding the development of the sociological imagination. Although we are rarely conscious of this process, it operates all around us all of the time. My daughter provided me with a window into this interesting process. Now, as my daughter gets older and learns new skills and behavior, I think about how I can use my understanding of socialization to guide her development appropriately.

3.1 Socialization through Societal Experience

Socialization is the process by which a person learns the beliefs, values, and behavior of his or her society.

- Discuss how societal experience impacts an individual’s socialization.

Socialization The process by which an individual learns the beliefs, values, and behaviors that are appropriate for his or her society.

What makes us who we are? Are we simply a product of our genetic heritage, or is who we are largely the result of the social structure that surrounds us? Sociologists are not the first to ask these questions, but while researching them, they have gained critical and unique insights into the development of the individual and what it is that makes us who we are. The process by which a person learns the beliefs, values, and behaviors that are appropriate for his or her society is called **socialization**. Throughout this lifelong process, a person develops his or her personality and sense of self. Socialization is also the way a person learns about his or her culture. Although most sociologists recognize

that biological factors play a role in the development of the individual, sociologists believe that society plays a much larger role in who a person becomes.

Sociologist C. Wright Mills **FIGURE 3-1** saw socialization as a process that allows us to see beyond the immediate causes of our beliefs and behaviors. Mills called this process the sociological imagination. According to Mills, the sociological imagination develops along two paths. First, the history and structure of the society that we live in shape our general values and the way we look at the world. These broad values are refined through personal experience as we interact in our social world. Thus, our socialization is achieved as the influence of society and the influence of our interactions work together to shape who we become. Mills suggested that when we understand how our beliefs, values, and behaviors are shaped, we are able to look at the world in new ways. Mills was not the first to attempt to understand how the world around us shapes who we become, however. Many others have paved the way in trying to understand how we become who we are.

Human Development: Nature and Nurture

Since Charles Darwin (1874) demonstrated that much of human behavior is rooted in our evolutionary history, human development has often approached behavior in terms of whether biology (nature) or society (nurture) is more important to who we become. However, recent research suggests that this approach is too simplistic. Charles Darwin's view of human behavior has often been misinterpreted as suggesting that humans are solely a product of instinctual drives. Yet, while Darwin did acknowledge that human behavior had its roots in biological processes, he also recognized that human beings possessed a unique trait—culture. Indeed, for Darwin, culture was an important part of understanding how human beings develop and grow. Early misinterpretations of Darwin's theory were instrumental in justifying prejudices and discrimination against certain groups of people whose behaviors were viewed as both primitive and instinctual. Differences in cultures were misattributed to differences in intelligence and understanding rather than to differences in the ways in which cultures can be constructed.

In contrast to the extreme biological view of human behavior, psychologist John B. Watson **FIGURE 3-2** argued that all behavior is learned. Watson denied that human beings have any instincts at all but rather believed we exist as empty vessels to be filled by social learning. Watson believed that people vary only in their cultural patterns and learning. Following in the footsteps of Watson, a number of influential anthropologists noted that while cultures may differ in fundamental ways, all cultures are equally complex.

Neither of these extreme views is entirely correct. It is clear that nature does place limits on the ways in which humans can construct culture, as the existence of cultural universals reveals. **Cultural universals** are cultural patterns that are part of every known culture. Because these traits are a part of every known culture, it is difficult to make the argument that the traits are the result simply of social learning. Rather, as Darwin suggested, these universals are probably rooted in our evolutionary history. At the same time, the considerable diversity of cultures throughout the world attests to the strength and pervasiveness of human choice in the construction of culture. Other evidence for the influence of culture on the development of the individual can be seen in studies of social isolation.

Social Isolation in Monkeys

Psychologists Harry and Margaret Harlow conducted early studies of social isolation using rhesus monkeys. In 1962, the Harlows placed infant monkeys in conditions of varying isolation. What they found was startling. The greater the degree of social isolation, the greater was the degree of developmental disturbance. Monkeys placed in total isolation for six months showed disturbing and irreversible developmental



FIGURE 3-1 C. Wright Mills developed the idea of the sociological imagination to describe how the process of socialization operates to make each person a unique product of society.

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FIGURE 3-2 Psychologist John B. Watson believed that all behavior is learned.

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Cultural universals

Cultural patterns that are part of every known society.



FIGURE 3-3 Psychologist Harry Harlow did experiments to test the effects of social isolation on monkeys.

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Feral children Children raised by wild animals or without appropriate socialization.

deficiencies, even when adequate nutrition was provided. When these monkeys were brought into a room with other rhesus monkeys, they exhibited extreme passivity in interaction, anxiousness, and fear of other monkeys.

The Harlows (1964) conducted another experiment in which infant rhesus monkeys were provided with an artificial mother. This artificial mother had a wire body, wooden head, and a feeding tube. Monkeys raised by this mother suffered similar developmental deprivations as monkeys raised in isolation **FIGURE 3-3**. Another group of infant monkeys was given an artificial mother made from soft terrycloth. Although these infants did suffer some developmental setbacks, they were able to interact to some degree when placed in a group. Furthermore, monkeys raised in social isolation who later become mothers themselves exhibited consistent inability to care for their infants. Most commonly, the new mothers were indifferent to their young, neglecting them to the point of death.

Based on these experiments, the Harlows concluded that social interaction is a key component to proper development. While short-term isolation appears to be reversible to some degree, isolation for longer than about three months appears to lead to permanent developmental damage **FIGURE 3-4**.

Social Isolation in Children

Of course, the kinds of experiments that the Harlows conducted on monkeys cannot be done on human infants for ethical reasons. However, documented cases of children growing up in isolation suggest that the results of the Harlows' experiments would apply to humans as well. Despite the tragic nature of these cases, they shed light on the importance of social interaction on the development of the human mind.

The notion of **feral children**—that is, children raised in the wild or by animals—is nearly as old as recorded history. For example, Romulus and Remus, legendary founders of the city of Rome, were allegedly raised by wolves. Indeed, through the years, many stories have been told about feral children. Often surrounded by fantastic tales and insufficient recordkeeping, it is difficult to disentangle the myth from the reality. Many cases, such as the case of Kaspar Hauser,

FIGURE 3-4 Monkeys were forced to choose from a soft monkey with no food, or a wire monkey with food. Harlow's experiments showed that monkeys prefer attachment to the soft monkeys to food.

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a German youth who claimed to have been raised in an isolated dungeon, have since been legitimately dismissed by historians. However, credible modern cases of feral children do exist, and they shed light on the effects of isolation on the human mind.

One such case is the story of Anna. Discovered in 1938 by social workers on the second story of a farmhouse in rural Pennsylvania, Anna lived a life of virtually total isolation from her mentally challenged mother and elderly grandfather. The two fed Anna only milk and kept her locked in a storage room until her discovery at age six. The emaciated Anna could not speak or walk, and she rejected human contact. After extensive socialization over the course of 10 days, Anna was able to interact with others. She began to walk. She found joy in the ability to feed herself and play with toys. However, it also became clear that her years of social isolation had caused permanent developmental damage. By age eight, Anna's development was below that of an average two-year-old. By age 10, Anna was using simple words. Unfortunately, Anna died at age 10 of a blood disease that may have been related to the years of neglect that she had suffered (Davis 1947).

In 1970, another feral child was found in California. Genie was 13 and had spent her life strapped to a potty chair in a dark room. She was rarely spoken to by her blind mother and mentally unstable father. Her only source of stimulation was a raincoat hung on a hook in front of the chair, which Genie could reach out and play with as she sat alone. When Genie was found, she had the mental capacity of an average one-year-old child. Scans of her brain revealed no obvious abnormality or retardation, so the deficiency is presumed to be the result of her years of isolation.

Although Genie's physical health improved dramatically, her cognitive improvements were not as spectacular. After nearly five years of intensive work, her language skills were still equivalent to a small child's. While Genie has learned to do many things for herself, 13 years of social isolation have meant that she must live in a group home for developmentally disabled adults (Rymer 1993) **FIGURE 3-5**.

The cases of Anna and Genie illustrate both the power and limitations of socialization. Individuals who lack appropriate early socialization tend to display developmental delays. Children who are not socialized properly do not develop properly. On the other hand, the failure of attempts at socialization to overcome years of isolation means that there are limits to the plasticity of the human brain.

These findings have led sociologists to develop two key hypotheses about socialization. The first hypothesis is that socialization occurs on three levels. The first of these levels is called **primary socialization** and refers to the basic and fundamental aspects of interacting that help an individual develop self-awareness. This level of socialization occurs most often through infancy and childhood and is influenced most strongly by the family. **Secondary socialization** occurs in later childhood through adolescence. As the social sphere widens, social influence moves beyond the family and extends to peer groups and other nonfamily forces. Finally, **adult socialization** occurs as the individual takes on adult roles such as spouse, employee, or parent, adapting to the complexity of changing roles that occurs throughout the adult years. The cases of Genie and Anna reveal the importance of primary socialization in opening the gates for the subsequent levels of socialization. Individuals who do not undergo adequate primary socialization within a given period of time will likely not proceed through secondary or adult socialization. Instead, as their biological potential is not met, the individuals will remain trapped at the level of a child. Thus, the second key hypothesis about socialization, the **critical period hypothesis**, suggests that there is a window of time for primary socialization to operate. Once this period has passed, primary socialization becomes increasingly difficult and less effective. This suggests that the effects of socialization are strongest and most important at the earlier stages in life.



FIGURE 3-5 Found after nearly 13 years of social isolation, Genie now lives in a group home.

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Primary socialization The basic and fundamental aspects of interaction that help an individual develop self-awareness.

Secondary socialization Social influences that extend beyond the family.

Adult socialization Socialization that occurs as the individual takes on adult roles.

Critical period hypothesis Hypothesis that suggests there is a window of time for primary socialization to operate.

CONCEPT LEARNING CHECK 3.1

Socialization through Societal Experience

Choose the correct answer for the following questions.

1. The Harlows' research with rhesus monkeys showed that:
 - A. Monkeys will choose food over comfort.
 - B. Monkeys do not suffer ill effects from social isolation.
 - C. Monkeys suffer developmental effects as a result of prolonged social isolation.
 - D. Monkeys prefer a real mother over a surrogate mother.
2. Which of the following is untrue based on studies of feral children?
 - A. Socialization has unlimited power to mold the human brain.
 - B. There is a critical window in which certain skills are learned more easily.
 - C. Socialization is essential for early attachment and learning.
 - D. Lack of socialization has negative developmental and social consequences.

Match the life event with the appropriate level of socialization.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ 3. Primary socialization | A. Learning to share |
| _____ 4. Secondary socialization | B. Dating |
| _____ 5. Adult socialization | C. Learning to talk |
| | D. Transitioning into a new career |
| | E. Having children |
| | F. Getting a driver's license |

3.2 Understanding Socialization through Theorists and Their Research

Socialization is a lifelong process that may be understood in a variety of ways.

- Compare and contrast the key theories of the process of socialization.

Even though the effects of socialization are strongest during infancy and childhood, most people consider socialization to be a lifelong process. Often, the exact mechanisms and processes of socialization remain difficult to discover. Yet various theorists in both psychology and sociology have made lasting contributions to our understanding of the process of socialization.

Freud and the Psychoanalytic Perspective

Sigmund Freud was an Austrian physician whose interests led him to theorize about how the human mind develops and maintains personality **FIGURE 3-6**. Eventually Freud developed the theory of psychoanalysis, which has maintained an influential role in psychology, psychiatry, and medicine. At the time of its development, the idea that human behavior was biologically determined was dominant. Freud's theory reflects the core of this belief, but with important caveats. Freud believed that humans have two basic general instincts that guide behavior toward the satisfaction of those instincts. The first instinct, which Freud called *eros*, is the instinct for life. According to Freud, this is often represented in the form of a sexual drive. In contrast, *thanatos* is the death instinct. This instinct is often represented by the need to destroy or act aggressively.

These two drives operate in a constant state of tension, vying for the primacy of satisfaction. Freud believed that the tension caused by these opposing instinctual forces formed the basis for the human personality (Slee 2002).

Freud's Model of the Human Mind

Freud represented the tension between *thanatos* and *eros* with a single concept—the id. The **id** represents the most basic part of the human personality, containing all of the basic impulses and drives that are necessary for human survival. The id is present at birth and is geared solely toward the satisfaction of the basic instincts. Freud noted that infants are constantly needy, demanding attention, contact, and food. However, as children grow, they realize that in many cases, their desires may not be satisfied or their needs may go unmet. This creates a level of frustration that is acted upon by the id in the form of crying or tantrums.

As the child learns to deal with the frustration that accompanies unmet needs, the second aspect of Freud's personality emerges. The **ego** represents the conscious part of the personality. As the conscious individual realizes that he or she cannot always satisfy his or her basic desires, the ego helps balance these desires with the demands of society.

As the demands of society are learned and reinforced through interaction, the norms and values of the society become part of the individual psyche. The **superego** is the expression of these internalized societal values, reinforcing the ego's conscious realizations and lessons learned from early childhood **FIGURE 3-7**.

Freud believed that personality development—and thus socialization—ended by the end of adolescence. His views reflected a radical departure from the prevailing views of his time. Freud's theory has subsequently become one of the most novel and influential approaches to understanding the human mind. The legacy of Freud was the challenge to rethink our views of children and the importance of socialization in the early years. At the same time, Freud's views have been widely criticized and challenged from many different professions. Indeed, Freud did no actual experiments, and the only corroboration we have of his theories come from his own reports of treatments he gave to his own patients. Subsequent investigations of these cases have shown his reports of successful treatments to likely be exaggerated (Kramer 2010). Empirical investigations into other aspects of his theory have revealed general but pervasive problems with the validity of the theory (Fisher and Greenberg 1996).



FIGURE 3-6 Sigmund Freud was an Austrian physician who developed a theory about how a person develops his or her personality. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, [reproduction number LC-USZ62-1234]

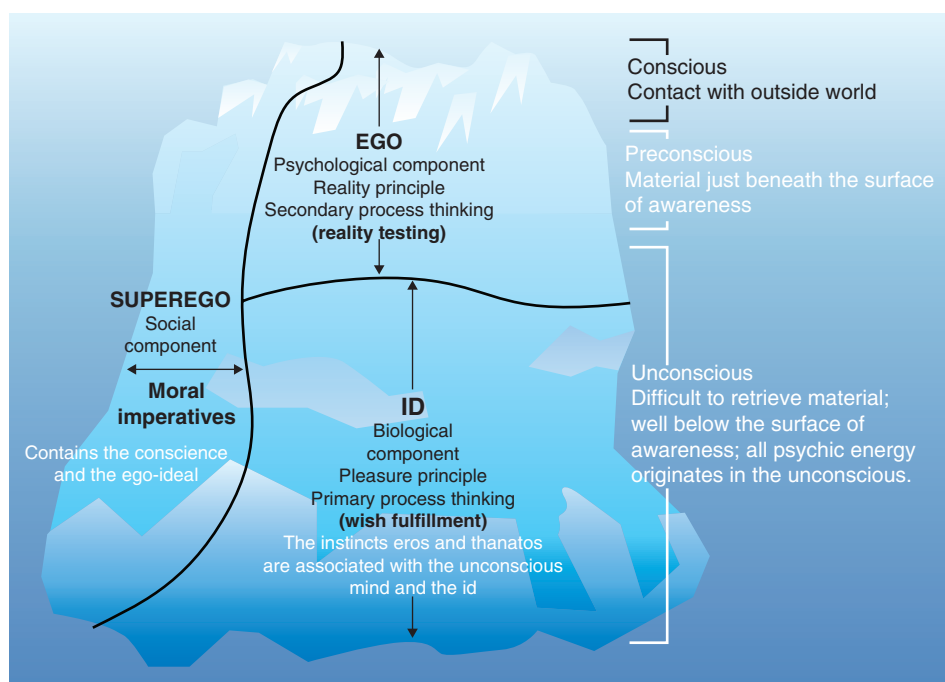


FIGURE 3-7 Freud hypothesized that there were three elements to the human mind.

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Id Freud's terms for the most basic part of the human personality, geared toward satisfaction of the basic instincts.

Ego Freud's term for the conscious part of the personality that seeks to balance instinctual desires with the demands of society.

Superego Freud's term for the expression of internalized cultural values that reinforces the conscious understanding of the ego.

Normative crisis The struggle people go through between what society expects them to do and what they actually accomplish.



FIGURE 3-8 Erik Erikson believed that personality spanned the life course.

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Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

A student of Freud's, Erik Erikson, broke from traditional Freudian ideas as Erikson came to doubt that personality development stopped at adolescence. Instead, Erikson believed that every individual passes through eight stages of psychosocial growth that span the entire life course **FIGURE 3-8**. At each stage, the individual must navigate successfully through a normative crisis resulting from the tension between biological desires and societal expectations. A **normative crisis** is defined as the struggle that people go through between what society expects them to do and what they actually accomplish. How an individual accepts and resolves these crises depends upon the success of transitions through earlier stages. In contrast to Freud, who placed most of his emphasis on what is wrong with people, Erikson focused on how the biological, social, and individual dimensions of a person's personality converge to give a person a strong personal identity and make him or her psychologically healthy.

Most important for our understanding is that Erikson believed that socialization occurred throughout the life course **TABLE 3-1**. Adding three stages beyond adolescence, Erikson argued that people continue to be influenced by their social world in adulthood as well as in childhood.

Like Freud, Erikson has been very influential in developing our understanding of how personality is shaped through interaction. Also like Freud, Erikson's theory has been both widely defended and widely criticized. Erikson's theory is not easy to study empirically, and this makes it hard to make an accurate assessment of it (Cole 1970; Cole & Cole 1989). Some critics claim that Erikson's theory is more applicable to males than to females. Others suggest that Erikson's ideas about identity formation are too rigid and ignore cases of people who rediscover themselves or develop new understandings of their lives. Still others say that despite claims of being a theory of the lifespan, Erikson's theory puts more emphasis on the childhood years than on the adult years.

Piaget and Cognitive Development

Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget developed a theory of how children come to know about the world **FIGURE 3-9**. By observing his own children, Piaget hypothesized that children pass through a series of stages as they develop cognitively **TABLE 3-2**. It is important to note that Piaget was concerned only with the ability to understand the world through the



During Freud's oral stage, children explore the world by sticking objects in their mouths.

© Ilka-Erika Szasz-Fabian/Thinkstock

TABLE 3-1 Erikson's Stage Theory in its Final Version

Age	Conflict	Resolution or "virtue"	Culmination in old age
Infancy (0–1 year)	Basic trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Appreciation of interdependence and relatedness
Early childhood (1–3 years)	Autonomy vs. shame	Will	Acceptance of the cycle of life, from integration to disintegration
Play age (3–6 years)	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Humor; empathy; resilience
School age (6–12 years)	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence	Humility; acceptance of the course of one's life and unfulfilled hopes
Adolescence (12–19 years)	Identity vs. confusion	Fidelity	Sense of complexity of life; merging of sensory, logical, and aesthetic perception
Early adulthood (20–25 years)	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love	Sense of the complexity of relationships; value of tenderness and loving freely
Adulthood (26–64 years)	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Caritas, caring for others, and agape, empathy and concern
Old age (65–death)	Integrity vs. despair	Wisdom	Existential identity; a sense of integrity strong enough to withstand physical disintegration

Source: Adapted from Slee, P. T. 2002. *Child, Adolescent and Family Development*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge.



FIGURE 3-9 Jean Piaget studied cognitive development by observing his own children.

© Bill Anderson/Getty Images

TABLE 3-2 Piaget's Stages of Development

Stage (age range)	Description
Sensorimotor (0–2 years)	Explores the world through sensory and motor contact
Preoperational (2–6 years)	Uses symbols (words and images) but not yet logic
Concrete operational (7–12 years)	Thinks logically about concrete objects
Formal operational (12 and on)	Reasons abstractly and thinks hypothetically

process of thinking rather than any emotional components of personality. This emphasis on cognition led Piaget to divide his theory into two parts. In the stage-independent component, Piaget addressed the issue of how cognitive development emerges. He identified four factors that are essential for the development of proper cognitive functioning. The first of these factors, maturation, emphasizes the role that biology plays in the development of the mind. At birth, the brain is not fully developed and thus acts as a limiting factor to cognition. As brain growth and development proceed, they provide both the upper and lower limit for cognitive development.

The second factor is experience. Piaget believed that within the limits set by maturation, the child experiences the world in two general ways. The first is through direct physical experience, such as playing with objects and exploring the world. As the child interacts with the world, he or she also gains experience with the way that various aspects of the world relate to one another.

Maturation and experience are child-centered processes. That is, the child is the center of the developmental process. However, in Piaget's third stage-independent component, the child moves from the center of the process to being a part of the process itself. Social transmission refers to the ways in which social interaction acts as a motivator of development. This occurs both through the transmission of social values as well as through conflict. Through the process of interaction, the child is forced to challenge the view of the child as the center of the process of development and gradually develops a multitude of conflicting ideas, which the child must learn to effectively choose from.

The final factor is equilibration. As the child struggles with the conflicts that arise in social transmission, he or she must find a balance between things that are understood and things that are not yet understood. The child attempts to relate the unknown to the known, to make the unfamiliar familiar. In other words, the child tries to make everything he or she encounters fit into his or her picture of the world. Equilibration is thus achieved through a process of accommodation, in which a child fits a novel object or idea into an existing cognitive category, or assimilation, in which the child creates a new category for the novel object or idea.

Piaget's contribution to understanding the development of cognition is properly recognized, but it is not without its critics. Maccoby (1980) and others have accused Piaget's theory of neglecting the role of emotions in cognitive development. Additionally, the stage theory may be too rigid. For example, some research suggests that there are various decision points in children's lives involving different aspects of the world that may lead different children to follow different paths of development (Slee 2002). For example, a child in adolescence may have to choose between pleasing friends or pleasing parents. The choice that the child makes can shape the availability of future choices, such as when the child chooses a delinquent behavior to impress friends at the expense of obeying parents. Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky coined the term **scaffolding** to refer to a kind of socialization whereby a parent or other person helps a child bridge a gap between the child's current skill level or knowledge and a more advanced state of knowledge or skill. In the absence of scaffolding, children may make choices that are inappropriate for their developmental level. In other words, Piaget's theory is less a theory of socialization and more a theory of cognitive structuring. That is, Piaget explains the ways in which a person learns to respond to agents of socialization.

Scaffolding Socialization whereby a parent or other person helps a child bridge a gap between the child's current skill level or knowledge and a more advanced state of knowledge or skill.

Kohlberg's Six Stages of Moral Development

Support for Piaget's theory of moral development has been mixed (Slee 2002). A much more widely accepted theory of moral development comes from psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg **FIGURE 3-10**.

Building on Piaget's idea of a sequence of developmental stages, Kohlberg interviewed boys between the ages of 10 and 16, asking them to judge the morality of certain actions in a variety of stories. Unconcerned with whether the children thought the action right or wrong, Kohlberg focused his attention on the reasons why the child thought that the action was right or wrong. From this data, Kohlberg developed a three-level, six-stage theory of moral development **TABLE 3-3**.

Numerous criticisms of Kohlberg's theory of moral development have been offered. Despite Kohlberg's claim that the stages are universal, Simpson (1974) and others (e.g., Harkees, Edwards, and Super 1981) have credibly challenged this claim (Slee 2002). Similar to criticisms of Piaget, some researchers claim that Kohlberg's stages create artificial separations that assume that the process of moral development is unnaturally rigid, ignoring the considerable variation that occurs in how people develop their moral ideas. Also similar to criticisms of Piaget, Meadows (1986) has argued that Kohlberg neglects the role of emotions in the development of morality.

Carol Gilligan and Gender in Moral Development

Perhaps the most relevant criticism of Kohlberg's theory comes from Carol Gilligan, who noted that Kohlberg drew his data only from males **FIGURE 3-11**. In testing Kohlberg's theory on females, Gilligan (1977) noticed that females rarely moved beyond stage two, level three of Kohlberg's theory. In other words, females appear to judge moral rightness in terms of living up to what others expect of them (Slee 2002). Whereas Kohlberg saw this as a deficiency on the part of females, Gilligan argues that this reflects societal standards to see male patterns as the norm, as well as an inability or unwillingness to acknowledge different developmental trajectories for women and men. While Gilligan agrees with Kohlberg that women and men develop their moral sense through interaction, Gilligan believes that the interactions of women are fundamentally different from the interactions of men, which lead them to different developmental outcomes in terms of their moral sense.

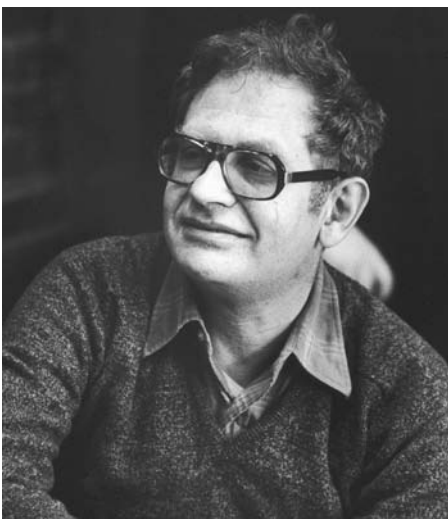


FIGURE 3-10 Lawrence Kohlberg studied the development of moral sentiment in children.

© Lee Lockwood/Getty Images

TABLE 3-3 Kohlberg's Three-Level Theory of Moral Development

Premoral level	Stage 1: Punishment avoidance and obedience	Make moral decisions strictly on the basis of self-interests; disobey rules if can do so without getting caught.
	Stage 2: Exchange of favors	Recognize that others have needs, but make satisfaction of own needs a higher priority.
Conventional level	Stage 3: Good boy/girl	Make decisions on the basis of what will please others; concerned about maintaining interpersonal relations.
	Stage 4: Law and order	Look to society as a whole for guidelines about behavior; think of rules as inflexible, unchangeable.
Principled level	Stage 5: Social contract	Recognize that rules are social agreements that can be changed when necessary.
	Stage 6: Universal ethical principle	Adhere to a small number of abstract principles that transcend specific, concrete rules; answer to an inner conscience.

Source: Adapted from Slee, P. T. 2002. *Child, Adolescent and Family Development*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge.

Charles Horton Cooley and the Looking-Glass Self

Charles Horton Cooley was an American sociologist who was interested in how people developed their sense of self. Cooley believed that individuals developed their sense of who they are through social interaction, and he set out to describe the process by which the self emerges. Like Erikson, Cooley saw the process of socialization as lifelong **FIGURE 3-12**.

Cooley argued that the most basic forms of interaction occur in **primary groups**. These are small groups, such as family, characterized by intimacy, face-to-face interaction, and strong commitments to one another. Socialization through primary groups is highly personal. Thus, in primary groups, the self is defined in relation to the group. According to Cooley, primary groups exert a lasting influence on us and serve as the foundation for the development of our social selves. In contrast to primary groups, with which we interact because it fulfills a basic need, **secondary groups** are larger, more impersonal groups that fulfill strictly instrumental needs. That is, we join secondary groups to achieve a specific goal or to accomplish a particular task. Examples of secondary groups include schools, clubs, governmental organizations, or work.

As we interact through primary and secondary groups, we notice that the people in these groups react to our behaviors. If these reactions are negative, we will change our behaviors to meet the expectations of the group. If the reactions are positive, those behaviors are reinforced. Thus, we judge our actions and ourselves by how they appear to others. Cooley (1902) termed this the **looking-glass self** because this process resembles looking in a mirror.

We see . . . our face, figure, and dress in the glass, and are interested in them because they are ours, and pleased or otherwise with them according as they do or do not answer to what we should like them to be; so in imagination we perceive in another's mind some thought of our appearance, manners, aim . . . and so on, and are variously affected by it. (Cooley 1902 182)

The concept of the looking-glass self implies that the self emerges through the process of interaction. The self is continuously constructed through judgments we make



FIGURE 3-11 Carol Gilligan criticized Kohlberg's theory as applicable only to males. Gilligan expanded Kohlberg's theory to females.

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Primary groups Cooley's term for small groups characterized by intimacy or strong commitments to one another.

Secondary groups Cooley's term for larger, impersonal groups that fulfill instrumental needs.

Looking-glass self Cooley's process of the development of the self, in which individuals interpret how they think others see them and adjust their behavior accordingly.

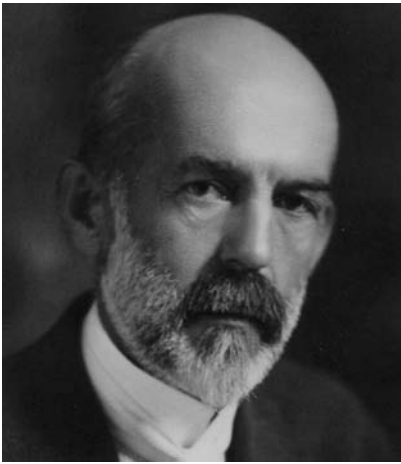


FIGURE 3-12 Charles Horton Cooley hypothesized that the self emerges through the process of social interaction.

Source: Courtesy of The American Sociological Association.

about how others see us. Thus, the self is a product of socialization. According to Cooley, without socialization a sense of self will not emerge.

George Herbert Mead and the Social Self

Building on the work of Cooley, George Herbert Mead argued that children begin to develop a social self as they imitate the world around them. Unlike Cooley, who failed to clearly identify a mechanism by which the self emerges, Mead outlined the actual process of the emergence of the self through social interaction. Play behavior, according to Mead, is essential to the process of developing a sense of self. Play behavior, and the sense of self that emerges from it, occurs in three stages **FIGURE 3-13**.

At first, infant play is limited to **imitation**. Children may see their parents talking on a phone. While the child may have no understanding of the significance of the action, she or he will nonetheless imitate the motions by placing an object to her or his ear. Children watching a parent cook will often imitate stirring motions even without understanding the significance of cooking.

As children move beyond the imitation stage, they progress into the **play stage**. At this stage of play, the child adopts a specific role and acts out that role as a form of play. For example, a child may wrap a towel around his shoulders and pretend to be a superhero. At this stage of play, however, the adoption of the role is limited to the individual. In other words, the role is not dependent upon other roles for its structure. The role is independent of any other person; it is egocentric.

By about age six, the child progresses into the **game stage**. At this stage, the child adopts roles that are dependent upon other roles for their structure. Mead used the game of baseball as an example of this interdependence. At any position, it is not sufficient for a player to understand only his role on the field. He or she also must understand the roles of others in the game and their relationships to every other position. It is during this stage of play, when the child learns to take the role of the other, that Mead says the self emerges. Children learn to see themselves as individual selves by seeing themselves as others see them.



Cooley described the process of personality development as looking through a mirror and reacting to the image that we see.

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Imitation Mead's first stage in the development of the self, in which the child imitates the behaviors of adults without understanding the actions.

Play stage Mead's second stage in the development of the self, in which the child adopts and acts out a specific role.

FIGURE 3-13 George Herbert Mead believed that personality development was reflected in play behavior.

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Mead argued that progressing through the stages of play, individuals learn to distinguish the *me* from the *I*. The *I* is the unsocialized, biologically driven child. Much like Freud's id, the *I* is a collection of spontaneous desires and wants. In contrast, the *me* is the socialized aspect of the individual. The *me* understands the role of the individual as it relates to others in society because the *me* is the social self, that part of the self that is able to take the role of the other.

Mead agreed with Cooley that socialization begins with the family and other groups with close emotional ties to the individual. Mead called these agents of socialization the **significant other**. Like Cooley, Mead also recognized the importance of the wider society in the process of socialization. Mead referred to these broader social groups and the values that they instill as the **generalized other**. For Mead, both significant others and the generalized others are important for the development of the distinction of the *I* and *me*. It is important to note, however, through the process of socialization, the *I* remains even as the *me* is discovered. Mead considered both the *I* and the *me* to be essential components of the individual self. Thus, the self is composed of a biological component as well as a socialized component.

It is important to note that although Mead saw the self as emerging in childhood, he still considered socialization a lifelong process. Mead argued that just as the sense of self emerges through socialization, so do our cognitive structure and moral sentiment. In other words, Mead was the first person to put all of the psychological pieces together to form a coherent theory of how socialization makes us who we are.

Game stage Mead's third stage in the development of the self, in which the child adopts roles that are dependent upon other roles for their structure and meaning.

Significant other Mead's term for family and other intimate or close agents of socialization.

Generalized other Mead's term for broader social groups and the values they instill in the individual.

CONCEPT LEARNING CHECK 3.2

Understanding Social Theorists

Fill in the blank with the name of the appropriate theorist.

- _____ 1. Socialization leading to an understanding of the self proceeds through three stages: the imitation stage, play state, and game stage.
- _____ 2. Human personality develops throughout the life course as each person tries to resolve a central crisis associated with each of eight stages.
- _____ 3. The child develops a sense of self through play, progressing through three stages to the eventual emergence of the *me*.
- _____ 4. Boys and girls are socialized toward morality differently, with girls being socialized toward an other-oriented moral system and boys being socialized toward an individualist moral system.
- _____ 5. We watch the reaction that other people have to our behaviors and adjust our behavior accordingly so that we gain the approval first of primary groups and later of secondary groups.

3.3 Agents of Socialization

There are numerous agents of socialization that teach a person the beliefs, values, and behaviors that are appropriate in his or her society.

- Identify the major agents of socialization and describe their impact on an individual's understanding of culture.

As previously noted, sociologists see socialization as taking place in three general stages that span the life course: primary, secondary, and adult. At each stage, various agents of socialization affect the individual's cultural learning. **Agents of socialization** are groups, individuals, or circumstances in society that socialize an individual. Socialization is strongest in infancy and childhood, probably because there is simply so much cultural learning that needs to take place. Additionally, the brain is most susceptible to

Agents of socialization Groups, individuals, or circumstances that socialize the individual.



Agents of socialization impact who we become in a variety of ways.

© Jones & Bartlett Learning; Photographed by Sarah Cebulski

learning at younger ages. At this stage, the family is by far the strongest agent of socialization. By adolescence, the agents of socialization change and the overall impact of socialization begins to weaken. Peer groups, school, and the media replace family as strong agents of socialization. By adulthood, although socialization continues to occur, the brain has matured and the individual core personality has stabilized. As a result, socialization is weakest at this stage.

The major theoretical perspectives in sociology offer significant insight into both the products and process of socialization. Using the various theoretical perspectives, we can better understand how socialization operates to make us who we are and develop our sociological imagination and how we think about the world. These perspectives also give us a backdrop to help us understand how socialization works in our lives.

Functionalist Perspectives on Socialization

The functionalist perspective analyzes the social world in terms of the functions that institutions have within the whole social system. What function does socialization have in society? Most obviously, socialization is the way in which each individual learns about his or her social world. Socialization functions as a process by which individuals learn the roles they will play in society, as well as the norms that are appropriate for those roles. Socialization functions as a means by which our status in society is constructed and maintained. Socialization also functions as a means of cultural transmission. That is, socialization is the process by which we teach others what are appropriate beliefs, values, and behaviors in our society. It is how we pass our culture on to our children.

Socialization through the Conflict Perspective

The conflict perspective tries to understand the world in terms of competition between groups and individuals for scarce resources. Although we will discuss this more in depth in a later chapter, the conflict perspective sees socialization as the process by which individuals and groups are taught to compete for resources in society. Prejudice and discrimination are taught to individuals as ways for them to justify their position as well as to legitimize differential access to resources. In other words, the conflict perspective seeks to understand socialization in terms of how individuals and groups are socialized to compete in society. Largely, the conflict perspective sees this competition as socially undesirable and uses this knowledge to develop ways to reduce social conflict and increase social justice.

Socialization and Symbolic Interactionism

As we have already learned, symbolic interactionism is a perspective that is interested in how social reality is constructed through the use of symbols. Since socialization is often transmitted and received through symbols such as language, symbolic interactionism seeks to understand how the process of socialization is transmitted. For example, many people see a doctor's white lab coat as a symbol of education, experience, and authority. Yet how is this message transmitted? Clearly, the white coat is a symbol of a doctor, but how do we learn this? Symbolic interactionism seeks to understand how individuals become socialized to understand the workings of our society and how they use this knowledge to be successful in society.

The Family

Ways of structuring a family and raising children vary from culture to culture. In some cultures, the family is broadly defined to include extended kin or even the entire community. In others, the family is more narrowly defined to include only parents and children. Nevertheless, wherever children are born, the family remains the most important agent of socialization in infancy and childhood. In modern societies, nuclear

family units are most common, and most socialization of young children takes place in this context. However, even in modern society, there is variation in the structure of the family that may have an impact on the socialization of the child.

Infancy and Early Childhood

Some children grow up in single-parent homes; others grow up in blended families or in extended family units. In some families, the mother stays home to raise children; in others, the mother enters the paid labor force and places the child in daycare. Regardless of the circumstances, the family socializes us to our basic sense of self as well as to the values, beliefs, and behaviors that we hold throughout childhood. The structure of the family has a strong impact on how the child is socialized.

Socialization in infants and young children has been widely studied. According to McCartney and Galanopoulos (1988), these studies were conducted in two major waves. The first wave, conducted in the 1960s, focused on whether daycare was harmful to the development of children. Generally, the research led to the conclusion that daycare did not negatively impact attachment to parents. However, the body of research also concluded that children who spend even moderate amounts of time in daycare tend to be more aggressive than children who are cared for at home. Despite this negative finding, the studies also concluded that spending time in daycare may help accelerate the level of intellectual development of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Two decades later, more sophisticated studies focused on the effects of various qualities of daycare (Belsky 1990). In large measure, these later studies confirmed the conclusions of the earlier studies, but only for high-quality daycare centers. These studies also noted that child–staff ratios, staff supervision, staff resources, and quality of staff training were important factors in how daycare affected the development of children over time. These studies have led some researchers, such as Richard Fiene, to call for national standards of high-quality daycare.

Socialization and Social Class

One of the key findings about the ways in which families socialize children is that the social class of the family affects the way in which the child is socialized. Working-class and middle-class parents tend to raise their children in different ways. For example, Kohn (1977) found that working-class parents focus on raising their children to stay out of trouble. To that end, they tend to use physical punishment as a means of achieving compliance. In contrast, middle-class parents tend to be more concerned with developing creativity, self-expression, and self-control in their children. Rather than use physical punishment, middle-class parents tend to try to reason with their children or to use nonviolent forms of punishment.

Despite wide confirmation of these findings, sociologists at first did not understand why the differences occur. Now it is believed that parents are reflecting their work experiences in their parenting. For example, many working-class jobs are highly regimented, with bosses telling workers exactly what to do. Since parents generally expect their children's lives to be similar to their own, they stress obedience in their child rearing just as this value is expressed in their work. On the other hand, middle-class parents, who often work at white-collar jobs, often have greater opportunities to take the initiative and be creative at work. These parents may pass those values on to their children and socialize them toward those characteristics.

Kohn also found that basic understanding of child development varied in a similar way. Kohn discovered that middle-class parents tend to believe that children need guidance to master skills necessary in life, while working-class parents are more likely to believe that children develop naturally and thus need less guidance. These beliefs shape the expectations that parents have of their children with regard to behavior, school performance, and elsewhere.



The family is the strongest agent of socialization.

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Studies show that children who spend significant time in daycare are more likely to solve problems aggressively.

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Race and Socialization

Just as parental socialization differs with social class, different races and ethnic groups tend to socialize their children differently. African Americans tend to be either very permissive parents or very strict parents. Asian-American parents tend to strictly adhere to traditional values of their country of origin and expect children to show deference to those values. White parents tend toward parenting styles that offer both structure and flexibility and that give children the ability to make some choices in their behaviors.

There are other racial differences that impact socialization. One of the most notable is the attitude toward education that people of different racial or ethnic backgrounds take. For example, many families of Asian descent place a very high premium on education relative to other racial groups. Given that the number-one predictor of how well students do in school is how well they enjoy going to school (Duncan 2007), racial differences in attitudes toward education will no doubt have an impact on how a child is socialized through school.

Gender and Socialization

Parents socialize boys and girls differently because society expects different things from males and females. The transmission of these expectations begins at birth. For example, certain colors are associated with certain genders—blue for boys and pink for girls. Parents also socialize children through the toys that they buy for their children. Parents often buy dolls for girls but action figures for boys. Dress-up toys for girls are frequently pink with frills and fairy wings, while dress-up toys for boys includes shields, swords, and helmets.

Generally speaking, society expects boys to be less emotional and more aggressive than girls. Society also expects parents to be more protective of girls than of boys. For this reason, boys are typically given more freedom than girls. In a classic study of gender socialization, Goldberg and Lewis (1969) found that mothers subconsciously rewarded their daughters for being dependent and passive. On the other hand, mothers rewarded sons for being independent and active. Other studies have found that parents will allow their male preschool children to wander farther from them than their female children of the same age. Subsequent research has confirmed these results.

Although we know that socialization plays an important role in the development of gender roles, there is some evidence that biology may play a role as well. Do parents create dependency behaviors in girls and independence in boys, or are parents responding to innate behaviors that the children exhibit? Do parents buy gendered toys because they want to socialize children in a certain way, or do they buy these toys because those are the types of toys that children ask for? There is some evidence that biology may play a role in toy preference and play behavior.

Researchers have long known that girls are more likely to play caretaking games, often using dolls. In contrast, boys are more likely to play aggressive games. This coincides with additional research that shows that boys are interested in things, while girls tend to be more interested in people. These results seem to be true even when possible socialization effects are eliminated. Researchers explain these results with the suggestion that these play behaviors reflect biologically expected roles that the children will adopt in adulthood—parenting for women and competitive work for men.

Several recent studies have suggested that these biologically predisposed play behaviors may influence the kinds of toys that boys and girls prefer. A study in 2002 by Alexander and Hines showed that gendered toy preferences exist not only in humans but in monkeys as well. In this study, the researchers gave two stereotypically masculine toys, two stereotypically feminine toys, and two gender-neutral toys to 44 female and 44 male vervet monkeys. The result was that male vervets preferred the masculine toys, while the female vervets preferred the feminine toys. The two sexes did not differ in their preference for the gender-neutral toys.

There is also considerable evidence of brain differences between male and female children at birth (Moir & Jessel 1989). These differences are seen before the effects

of socialization can affect the individual. These and other studies suggest that while socialization certainly plays a large role in the development of sex roles, biology also matters. A likely explanation is that while biology provides a foundation to our behavior, socialization reinforces and expands those predispositions.

Socialization and School

School is also an important agent of socialization. While parents provide basic values to children, the school imparts specific knowledge and skills that society has deemed important. School formalizes the process of acquiring these skills. Schools also teach broader social values, such as diversity and multiculturalism, both through curriculum as well as through the process of interacting with peers. As sociologists have begun to study school, they have identified these as separate trends. The first trend, the **hidden curriculum**, refers to values that are taught during the presentation of the standard curriculum but that are not an explicit part of that curriculum. For example, a question about history may impart a subtle message about patriotism or democracy, or reading a particular story in English class may teach a lesson about justice or fairness.

The second trend, called the **corridor curriculum**, refers to the lessons that children teach one another at school while not in class. Unlike the hidden curriculum, which may impart positive social values, the corridor curriculum often teaches schoolchildren undesirable social values, such as racism or sexism. Often, the corridor curriculum emphasizes popularity as a value to be strived for. The pursuit of popularity often creates peer pressure that may lead schoolchildren to engage in behaviors that are contrary to the positive social values taught by parents and schools.

School and Gender

Schools often reinforce gender socialization that occurs in the home. Studies show that at school, boys are more likely to engage in activities that are physical in nature, while girls are more likely to engage in behaviors that are social in nature. Boys are also more likely to engage in aggressive behaviors while at school and appear less able to sit still than girls.

In addition to behavioral differences, there are also learning differences between boys and girls. Studies have shown that boys tend toward hands-on learning and visual learning styles, while girls exhibit stronger verbal learning skills. For example, on tests in which words are read aloud and the child is asked to identify which words contained a particular letter, girls performed better than boys. However, when the test was administered as a visual task, boys outperformed girls (Moir & Jessel 1989). On average, girls learn to read more quickly than boys, too.

Schools often teach in a manner that favors the learning styles of girls, presenting the material in verbal form. Early research from Dianne McGuinness (1979) suggests that education is biased against the aptitudes of males, at least initially. McGuinness notes that in the early years, schools focus on reading and writing skills, which largely favors girls. She notes that young boys are more than four times more likely than girls to be identified as learning disabled; and more than 95% of children labeled as hyperactive are boys. Subsequent research on levels of ADD and ADHD largely confirm these early studies. However, boys often make up for this deficiency later in their school careers. As schools move into mathematical and science-oriented curriculums, boys begin to outpace girls. In fact, by the time they enter high school, the disadvantage has been reversed and now favors males.

Hidden curriculum Values that are taught through the presentation of standard curriculum that are not an explicit part of that curriculum.

Corridor curriculum Lessons that children teach one another at school while not in class.



Schools often have a hidden curriculum that socializes students to the values, beliefs, and behaviors of their society.

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Schools often have a corridor curriculum that socializes students toward being popular and well liked.

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Race and Class in School

Because schools are funded largely by taxes on property values, schools in inner cities are often underfunded relative to schools in suburban areas. This means that urban schools typically have fewer resources to work with as they strive to educate children. Students in urban schools are more likely to have learning disabilities, including ADHD. The additional resources needed to effectively educate children with learning disabilities are often lacking in inner city schools. Inner cities are also populated disproportionately by racial and ethnic minorities. This means that there exists a structural bias in the educational system against minority groups.

Drop out rates for minorities are substantially higher than for whites. Hispanics have the highest high school dropout rate, approaching 18%. The dropout rate for Native Americans is around 13%, and it is more than 9% for African Americans. Whites and Asian Americans have the lowest dropout rates, with whites at just over 5% and Asian Americans at around 3½%. Dropout rates for all races and ethnic groups are higher in inner cities than in suburban school districts. We also know that minorities underperform on standardized tests relative to whites. We should not infer from these results, however, that dropout rates are solely a problem of race. Social class also plays a role. On average, minority families earn less than whites, which means that they are less likely to live in suburban school districts and more likely to attend poorly funded inner schools.

Socialization and Peer Group

As a child ages, his or her social sphere gradually widens. The influence of the family gradually wanes, and the influence of peers increases. The process likely begins at school, as the child interacts more and more with peers. A **peer group** is defined as a group of people, usually of similar age, background, and social status.

Peer groups gradually come to exert a strong influence over the individual. Peer groups often separate themselves into discrete units (Adler & Adler 1998). In elementary school, peer groups separate themselves by sex. Males at this age tend to prefer the company of other males, and females prefer the company of other females. However, as the children transition into adolescence, peer groups gradually become mixed.

In addition to segregating by sex, peer groups also segregate in other ways. Each of these groups develops its own set of norms and socializes members of that group to accept those specific norms. These may be based on characteristics such as athletic ability or toughness in boys or physical appearance in girls. For males, academic success is tacitly discouraged because it diminishes their popularity. For females, however, academic success increases popularity.

According to researchers, by adolescence, peers replace the family as the most important agent of socialization. This effect tends to be short lived, however. As the adolescent transitions into adulthood, work and other obligations often take precedence over friendships and peer groups.

Socialization and the Workplace

By young adulthood, the influence of peer groups tends to diminish. Work becomes an increasingly important agent of socialization as an individual attempts to match his or her interests and skills to a job. Often, this means that a person tries many different jobs involving different skills. This in turn involves **anticipatory socialization**—that is, learning to play a role before entering it. This involves learning the expectations of the role prior to adopting it. Sociologists Robert Merton and Alice Kitt introduced the concept in 1950. Since then, it has become one of the most widely used sociological terms. Through the process of anticipatory socialization, a person gains a sense of identity and understanding with the role, which may help with the actual transition into that role. On the other hand, anticipatory socialization may help us avoid roles that we would find to be unrewarding.

Peer group A group of people, usually of similar age, background, and social status.



During early childhood, peer groups are usually segregated by gender.

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Anticipatory socialization Learning to play a role before entering it.

Anticipatory socialization works in many ways. Merton and Kitt (1950) categorized the processes generally as occurring through either push or pull forces. *Push forces* refers to forces that push you away from a particular role, or behaviors associated with that role; *pull forces* refers to forces that pull you toward a particular role or forces associated with that role. For example, the threat of jail may push a person away from committing a crime. Programs like DARE and Scared Straight are designed to push people away from undesirable behaviors by offering a glimpse into the negative consequences of those behaviors. These programs serve as a means to dissuade people from adopting socially undesirable identities.

Conversely, the promise of a high salary and good benefits may encourage a person to pursue a particular career. Employers often take great pride in the benefits they offer employees and even advertise those benefits in their job advertisements. Many jobs also have a measure of social prestige that attracts people to a particular profession. For example, most people see lawyers and doctors as important professions in society.

Anticipatory socialization is important for the development of social identity. As we will later learn, research suggests that people have a desire for a positive social identity. The push and pull forces in anticipatory socialization help us to develop a positive sense of social identity by pushing us away from negative beliefs, values, and behaviors and pulling us toward socially desirable ones. The roles that we play—and that we are socialized into—play an important part in the development of the sociological imagination. Anticipatory socialization helps us to narrow the focus of the constant bombardment of social stimulation. By focusing on a limited number of behaviors that we wish to mimic, we exclude aspects of socialization that we consider less important. We will learn more about these concepts in later chapters. Work as an agent of socialization is important for another reason. As a person stays at a job, the work becomes more and more important. Work becomes a part of the self-concept. Indeed, people often identify themselves by the work that they do. The roles and norms of the profession we are in can have either a negative or a positive impact on our self-image, depending on how the occupation is perceived in society. Generally, professions with high status rankings, such as lawyer or doctor, increase self-esteem, while professions with low status rankings, such as custodian or server, may reduce self-esteem.

Socialization and Religion

Religious institutions influence the core values and beliefs that people hold. For many people, religion defines the boundaries between right and wrong and offers a means of dealing with crisis and emotional trauma. More than 65% of Americans say that they belong to a religious congregation, and 40% say that they have attended services in a typical week. Religious beliefs, customs, and rituals have the effect of creating a sense of solidarity among a religion's members. Religion offers people a sense of social identity, a sense that they belong to something greater than themselves. In this way, religion has a stabilizing effect on society.

Growing up in a religious household has distinct advantages. On average, people who are religious live longer, tend to be happier, and have less stress. This is manifest in a variety of behavioral outcomes, including quicker recovery times from surgery. Studies have also revealed that regular attendance at religious services is linked to stable families, strong marriages, and lower delinquency rates among children. Men who regularly attend religious services are less likely to engage in acts of abuse against spouses and children. They are also much less likely to commit a crime or abuse drugs or alcohol. Interestingly, these findings hold regardless of the particular religious views that a person holds (Koenig 2008).



During adolescence, peer groups become mixed in terms of gender.

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Anticipatory socialization prepares people for roles they may adopt at a future time.

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More than 65% of Americans belong to a religious congregation.

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However, just as religion can have a stabilizing effect on society, religion can also be a source of social conflict. Religions frequently socialize members to believe that their particular religious beliefs are true to the exclusion of other systems of beliefs. This can lead to tensions between religious views that sometimes erupt into violence, such as between Christians and Muslims or Sikhs and Hindus. Even people who do not identify as religious are affected indirectly by religion. For example, researchers from the University of Minnesota (Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann 2006) found that people who identify as agnostic or atheist are among the least trusted members of society. In this way, religion serves to divide as well as to join.

Socialization, Mass Media, and Social Media

Every day, we are bombarded with advertisements and other messages from newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and the Internet. These messages have an effect on what we believe, what we buy, and what we value. **Mass media**, defined as a means of delivering impersonal communication to a large audience, thus act as agents of socialization. Usually, the socialization occurs in limited, short but intense bursts. However, the pervasiveness of these forms of socialization is due to the repetition of the message. More importantly, these messages are often radically different from or opposed to the messages of other agents of socialization. This makes them stand out and captures the attention of people in such a way as to make the message desirable.

Mass media Means of delivering impersonal communication to large audiences.

Television

Television was invented in 1926, but did not make its way into American homes until the 1930s. The machine quickly became a sensation, becoming the dominant medium for news and information by the 1950s. Today, more than 98% of American households have at least one television. Even the poorest Americans have access to television services, with 97% of American households below the poverty line owning a television. Of those, 62% have cable or satellite services. This gives America the highest rate of television ownership in the world.

Today, television watching remains a popular pastime. On average, adults spend about 4.5 hours a day watching television, which is about half of an individual's daily free time. However, minorities and the elderly generally watch more television than the national average. The youth of America spend an average of 6.5 hours per day in front of video screens or television. When they are young, screen time is usually limited to television. However, as the child gets older, video games, the Internet, and social networking comprise an increasing amount of time in front of a screen. Many American children spend more time in front of a screen than they do in school or playing outside with friends. Studies have documented that too much television can lead to developmental problems in youth (Robinson et al. 2000). Studies such as Crespo and colleagues (2001) have demonstrated that children who watch television tend to be less physically active and are at greater risk for obesity.

Television has also received criticism for not portraying minorities equitably. For much of the history of television, minorities have either been invisible on television or portrayed in a very stereotypical manner. In recent years, minority groups have become more widely represented on television, both in the numbers presented as well as in the roles that they play. Other criticisms that have been offered are that television portrays a liberal bias in its reporting of the news and political issues. However, the increasing popularity of conservative talk shows suggests that television offers the political viewpoints of both sides of the political spectrum.

A much more poignant criticism suggests that the increasing amount of programming showing violent scenes on television may be negatively influencing America's youth. Bushman and Huesman (2001) found that the amount of violence on television exceeds the amount of violence that occurs in real life. By the time the average American

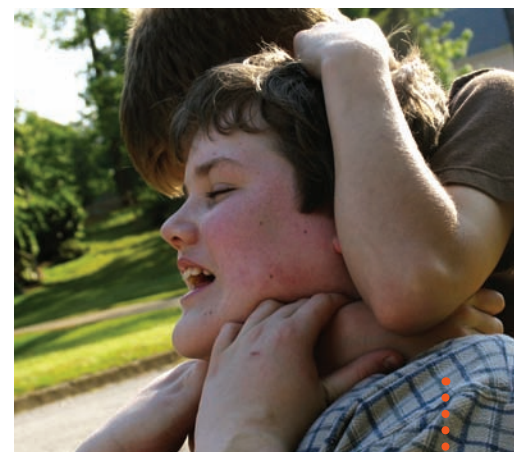


Americans have the highest rate of television ownership in the world.

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child enters the first day of junior high school, he or she will have viewed more than 8,000 murders and 100,000 total acts of violence on television (Kirsch 2006). Critics contend that exposure to so much violent content has a direct link to increasing violence among American youth. However, crime statistics show, contrary to the assertion of critics, that violent crime in America has been declining, even among youth.

Studies of the impact of television violence on children show mixed results. Some studies show few if any negative effects, while other studies show pronounced and clear effects. Much of the discrepancy in the research may be the result of the way in which violence is measured and the group being studied. Results do converge, however, on two key points. First, the effects of television violence on aggression tend to differ based on the way in which the violence is presented. For example, violence that is punished or violence that shows the victim in severe pain tends to decrease the likelihood of the viewer acting aggressively. On the other hand, aggressive behavior that is presented as unpunished or that is trivialized tends to have the opposite effect (Kirsch 2006). Thus, the way in which violence is portrayed on television seems to make a difference in how that programming affects the viewer. Research shows that much of the violence portrayed on television is glamorized. Nearly 70% of heroes committing acts of violence went unpunished, and almost one third of them were rewarded. Even more disturbingly, nearly 80% of villains faced no immediate punishment for their violent actions.



The effects of television violence have been widely studied.

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Video Games

Children's first exposure to mass media is usually through television. However, as children get older, the screens they spend their time in front of shift from those of television to video games, computers, and cell phones. Like television, many of the images in video games often contain scenes of vivid violence. Even more than television, many researchers contend that violence in video games is damaging to children and increases the risk of childhood aggression (Kirsch 2006). This fear has led to hearings before Congress and attempts by some states to ban certain video games that are labeled as too violent. In Germany, video games that show human deaths are heavily restricted because they violate the nation's decency standards. Australia has banned many violent video games outright (Kirsch 2006). Much of this fear has been fueled by a handful of cases such as the Columbine shooting, in which students who had experience playing violent video games suddenly killed people in a violent rampage. Nevertheless, violence in video games has increased substantially in the last 30 years.

While television is typically a passive activity, video games require the player to interact. That is, players are active participants in the fictionalized violence. This may make it more likely that children who play video games will have an increased risk of exhibiting violent behavior in other situations. However, research on the effects of violent video games is mixed. Some studies indicate that playing violent video games does indeed make children more violent, while other studies find only a small effect or no effect at all. The disparity in research results can have many causes. Some is doubtless due to the methods of study, as well as the particular video games that are used in the study. Studies also investigate different age groups, which may make a difference in the effect that particular media have on levels of aggression. Clearly, more research is necessary.



Some violent video games have been banned in Europe.

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Movies

Violence has also increased in movies over the last decade. Unlike television and video games, which are usually viewed on a small screen, movies are often watched on a large screen. Recent research has found a heightened physiological response and heightened memory of violence when viewed on a large screen (Heo 2004). Additionally, while violence on television is often broken up by commercials, movie violence is usually shown continuously. Thus, the exposure to violence is often continuous rather than

sporadic. Finally, movies are often watched in the presence of a larger group of people than is television. For all of these reasons, many researchers believe that the effects of movies may be greater than the effects of watching television (Kirsch 2006). However, very little research has actually been done to confirm these suspicions.

Social Media

Mass media are changing rapidly. Emerging technologies are changing the ways in which we communicate and connect with one another. The rate of technological change is increasing, especially in the area of communication. As emerging forms of mass media, social media such as Facebook or Twitter have not yet been widely studied. However, there is little question that these new ways of spreading information will have an effect in how individuals are socialized.

One such effect may be an increase in the ability to multitask. On average, 16- to 18-year-olds can effectively perform seven tasks simultaneously. People in their early 20s can perform only about six, and those in their 30s can perform fewer still (Koechlin et al. 1999; Wallis 2006). Another effect of the increase of technology is the change in the availability of personal information. Technologies like Twitter and Facebook have broken down many traditional boundaries of privacy and make users' intimate details and mundane activities public.

At the same time, many of these new technologies create an increasing sense of anonymity. For instance, how do you know that the people you are chatting online with are indeed who they claim to be? A man can pretend to be a woman; a woman can represent herself as a man. This allows criminals and predators new ways of finding and approaching targets.

Still another effect of this technology is the speed at which communication now occurs. What just a decade ago would take a few days can now be transmitted and received within moments. For example, prior to the advent of email, sending a letter across the country took several days. The same message sent as an email, however, reaches its destination in a matter of moments. This leads to increasing expectations of receipt of information as well as an increased expectation of response to information. The speed and availability of information is greater than ever before. While this availability is often a good thing, it also means a proliferation of misinformation.

As technology continues to accelerate and change, it will no doubt continue to affect how people learn the values, beliefs, and behaviors of their society. While much of this technology offers new opportunities for learning and growth, it also offers opportunities for emerging criminal activity and the proliferation of misinformation. What the future of social media holds is uncertain. However, it is clear that social media is changing the way in which people interact with one another.

Because social media are a relatively recent cultural construct, sociologists have only begun to study their effects. Sociologists are unsure what the long-term effects of such rapid social media will be on the socialization of individuals. Some hypotheses include a change in the language and literacy of the culture. As an example, many people argue that texting has led to a decline in a grammar and spelling skills of American youth.



Cell phones are the number one interface among adolescents.

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THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION

Social Media and Changing Communication

We said that C. Wright Mills defined the sociological imagination as the intersection between personal experience and history. A person's individual experiences within the framework of the broader culture go a long way toward shaping who we become. Changes in society will change how we experience the world.

The advent of social media such as Facebook and Twitter is fundamentally changing the way in which individuals communicate with one another. These changes will certainly have an impact on how individuals interact with the world around them. Twitter limits communication to 140 characters. For this and other reasons, text messaging has evolved

into phonetic bursts that are often not grammatical. This new way of communicating has even been given its own name—textspeak. Emoticons—pictures made with keyboard

characters—have also become popular as a way to express emotions in online interactions that often appear bereft of emotional content.

EVALUATE

1. How might the changing ways we communicate electronically affect the way in which we communicate in classrooms or workplaces?
2. Are there limitations to what can be communicated through text messaging and emoticons? Try experimenting with different messages to determine the limitations of communicating in textspeak.

CONCEPT LEARNING CHECK 3.3

Agents of Socialization

Answer the following questions.

1. Values that are taught through the presentation of standard school curriculum are called the:
 - A. latent curriculum.
 - B. corridor curriculum.
 - C. secret curriculum.
 - D. hidden curriculum.
2. Learning to play a role before entering that role is called:
 - A. socialization.
 - B. anticipatory socialization.
 - C. resocialization.
 - D. agency socialization.
3. Which of the following groups has the highest high school dropout rate?
 - A. African Americans
 - B. Native Americans
 - C. Hispanic Americans
 - D. Asian Americans
4. By adolescence, this replaces family as the strongest agent of socialization.
 - A. Mass media
 - B. Religion
 - C. School
 - D. Peers
5. This term refers to the lessons that children teach one another at school while not in class.
 - A. Hidden curriculum
 - B. Latent socialization
 - C. Corridor curriculum
 - D. Peer socialization

3.4 Socialization through the Life Course

Socialization is a lifelong process that has varying impact at different stages of life.

- Describe the five general stages of development and identify the major challenges and changes that occur in socialization at each stage.

We have learned that socialization is a lifelong process. However, the process of socialization and the effects it has on shaping beliefs, values, and behaviors differs at different stages of life. There are five general stages of development that are important for understanding socialization through the life course. These stages are infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.

Infancy

The brain is most malleable at birth. The infant comes into the world with biological predispositions and reflexes. One of those predispositions is the ability to bond. Research shows that from birth, infants respond positively to faces. This is believed to facilitate the bonding process, as infants gradually learn to identify familiar faces. Infants also respond to smell. Within days of birth, an infant recognizes the unique smell of its mother and identifies that smell with safety, warmth, security, and food.

As the infant develops and grows, certain skills, such as sitting, rolling over, and crawling, come naturally. However, the child learns the significance of these actions only through the reinforcement that is given at each developmental milestone. The child's world expands through the process of development, but its understanding of that world develops through socialization.

Childhood

In early childhood, the child begins to speak. The development of speech signifies a milestone because it allows the child to communicate in increasingly complex ways with the adults who care for him or her. Speech also allows the adult to teach the child in new ways. Thus, socialization takes on a new dimension as the child begins to enter the symbolic world of the adult. The child gradually learns to use language not just to express needs and wants but to express ideas as well. But speech is important in other ways. By about age two or three, the child is able to form friendships with other children. The growing sphere of social interaction is gradually widening.

For many children, however, childhood is also a time of stress. In many nations, childhood is seen as a time when the child can begin to contribute to the household. While in developed nations we may begin teaching children responsibility by giving them light chores, such as setting the table, in some countries, children are expected to work outside of the home. In fact, throughout the world, more than 160 million children work outside of the home. About half of these jobs are full-time positions. Often, the pay is low and the work environment poses significant physical or psychological danger to the child.

Of course, we do not allow children to work outside the home in the United States. In high-income nations, it is not necessary for children to earn an income. Instead, we see childhood as a time for children to explore, learn, and develop their skills and understanding of the world. We delay the responsibility of adulthood much longer than most cultures. Because childhood lasts so long in our culture, many children mature physically before they reach adolescence. In

fact, the developed world is in the midst of a secular trend. The **secular trend** refers to the increasingly early onset of puberty seen in children. The trend has been particularly pronounced in girls. One in every seven girls will develop breasts and pubic hair by the age of eight. Among African Americans, the number is one in two.

Although no one is certain what is causing the secular trend, many researchers hypothesize that the increasing abundance of calories—particularly fatty foods—may be driving this effect. Other researchers claim that the increasing bombardment of sexual images in the mass media may be responsible for the secular trend. Although the mechanism is unknown at this time, many hypothesize that these messages somehow affect the brain and cause it to stimulate early onset of puberty.

Whatever the cause, the secular trend is changing not only the way in which children experience childhood but also the way society views childhood. For example, while boys who experience early sexual maturation typically experience an increase in self-esteem and popularity, girls who experience early sexual maturation typically see a reduction in their popularity among other girls and often experience an increase in sexual advances by males. The secular trend also leads to earlier sexual onset for both males and females. This is particularly problematic because while their bodies may have matured physically, their emotional and psychological development may not have



In many countries, children work in unsafe conditions for substandard wages.

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Secular trend The increasingly early onset of puberty seen in children.

kept pace. Reduction in parental supervision has also led many children to turn increasingly to peers and mass media to get information about adulthood. What they see is often inaccurate, however, as Hollywood portrays a world of violence, drugs, and sex. For these reasons, many youth are unprepared for the realities of adulthood in modern society.

Adolescence

Many cultures do not have a life stage known as adolescence. These cultures transition from childhood to adulthood through a rite of passage. The new adult is then entitled to all of the benefits that adulthood has to offer in that society. In the developed world, however, adolescence is a transition time between childhood and adulthood. When one is no longer a child but not yet an adult, adolescence can be a time of significant stress.

Research shows that most adolescents transition through this stage quite well. Still, a significant proportion faces an unusual mix of physiological and cultural change that makes this period of life challenging. Unlike other societies, in the developed world, there is no single ritual that marks the transition into adulthood. Adolescents are allowed to drive at 16. They can vote and join the military at 18. However, these same individuals are prevented from legally drinking alcohol until they are 21. While parents tell adolescents to delay sex, mass media seems to encourage sexual behaviors.

This cultural confusion can lead some adolescents to engage in rebellious behavior. They may dress in socially inappropriate ways or deliberately defy other cultural norms in an effort to express their independence. This rebellion is often an attempt at negotiating the cultural contradictions that manifest themselves most clearly during adolescence. During this time, the adolescent seeks to find his or her place in the world, deciding which values he or she wishes to adopt and which values to reject.

Adulthood

By the time an individual enters adulthood, his or her sense of self is largely stabilized. The formation of a family and the pursuit of a career generally mean the end of adolescent rebellion. Individuals in adulthood tend to adopt the dominant cultural values and integrate fully into society.

However, the period of adulthood is also a time of challenge. Individuals struggle to balance the many roles they have now adopted—spouse, parent, worker. The expectations of society require increasing demands for time for all roles, which can cause stress.

The tensions that emerge as a person tries to successfully balance societal expectations for all of the roles of adulthood can lead to negative outcomes, such as divorce or depression. This is particularly true for women. Societal expectations have socialized women toward marriage, motherhood, and a career. Yet society has not provided the structure to help the women successfully navigate all of these competing roles. For this reason, many women find themselves overwhelmed, contributing to rates of depression that are higher than those of men. Societal expectations for men are somewhat less complex. Still, the expectation of financially caring for a family looms large in our society. As the American population ages, an additional burden of caring for elderly parents while simultaneously supporting young adult children threatens to overwhelm the American family.

Old Age and the End of Life

The later years of adulthood also offer unique opportunities for socialization. People are living longer than ever before, and the population of elderly is growing. Currently in America, about one person in eight is over the age of 65. That number is expected to double by the year 2030, when it will reach about 72 million Americans. This **graying of America**—the increasing proportion of the population over the age of 65—will doubtless have significant effects not only on the economics of the United States but also on the values and beliefs we hold as well. This has spurred an increase in the study of aging and the elderly, known as **gerontology** FIGURE 3-14.



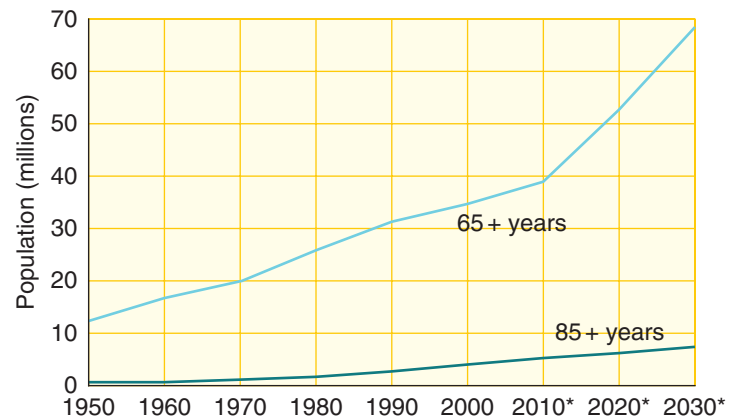
In some cultures, the idea of adolescence is unknown. Instead, children complete a rite of passage into adulthood. In the Masai tradition, male children must kill a lion to progress into adulthood.

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Graying of America The increasing proportion of the population over the age of 65.

Gerontology Study of aging and the elderly.

FIGURE 3-14 By the year 2030, the number of Americans over the age of 65 is projected to exceed 70 million. Data from the US Bureau of the Census, 1999. Health-United States.



* Projected

Increasing demands for health care, retirement, and other social benefits will likely be strained as the proportion of elderly Americans rises relative to the proportion of working adults. This will likely force a re-evaluation of these programs and services. Additionally, as seniors become more visible in society, there will likely be a change in the way in which they interact and integrate with the younger generation. Rather than be tucked away in a nursing home or retirement community, the growing number of elderly in America will be more likely to appear in mainstream society.

We are socialized to think of old age as a period of physical and mental decline. However, this is the reality only for a minority of seniors in our society. Although old age does increase the risk of injury, disease, and chronic illness, advances in modern medicine have allowed an increasing number of seniors to lead active lives through the retirement years. Only about 16% of seniors said that they could not walk a quarter mile unassisted, and fewer than 5% require assisted living. Nearly three fourths of seniors describe their health as good or excellent.

In developing nations, the elderly are often given more social power and more respect than in developed nations. This is because in developing nations, the elderly have had time to accumulate land and other scarce resources. They are also believed to have a considerable amount of wisdom and knowledge—a fact that makes them highly valued in that society. Societies in which the elderly have the most wealth, power, and prestige are called **gerontocracies**. In contrast, in the developed world, the elderly typically have less social power. It should be noted, however, that the demographic group with the most accumulated wealth is the elderly. However, the wealth is masked by the limitations of a fixed income, which often makes the elderly seem poorer than they really are. In other words, because the elderly often have a fixed monthly disposable income, it often appears that their economic resources are more limited than they actually are. Rather, the lack of social power probably comes from the view that the elderly in developed nations are out of touch with the rapidly changing technologies and the related social environment. Their knowledge and wisdom are seen as obsolete.

Of course, we all must face the fact of our mortality. However, in developed nations, death is coming later than ever before in human history. In America, only about 15% of people die before the age of 55. More than ever, people are living longer, happier lives. However, when death approaches, we can identify a process by which people come to grips with their own mortality.

Psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross identified five distinct stages leading to acceptance of death. At first, a person is in *denial* about his or her impending death. He or she may claim that everything is fine, that he or she is healthy, or that there is some mistake. The second phase is *anger*. The person may see death as an injustice, as something unfair. The individual will eventually transition into *negotiation*, in which the person attempts to bargain with God in exchange for his or her life. The fourth

Gerontocracies Societies in which the elderly have the most wealth, power, and prestige.

stage, *depression*, is the knowledge that the person is actually going to die, but the knowledge is accepted only unwillingly. Sadness is common at this stage. Finally, the person comes to terms with his or her mortality during the *acceptance* stage. All of the anxiety about death fades, and the person seeks to make the most of the time that he or she has left **FIGURE 3-15**.



FIGURE 3-15 Elisabeth Kubler-Ross identified five distinct stages in the acceptance of death.

An aging population means a changing culture. As the population of the country ages, our culture is gradually becoming more comfortable with discussing death and planning for it. Discussing death has ceased to be taboo and is now an integral part of planning the life course. Many businesses have emerged to help people prepare for end of life, including estate planning and financial planning for the surviving spouse or children. This is particularly important for women, since they typically outlive men.

Although it remains widely used and accepted, Kübler-Ross's research has been criticized for a couple of reasons. First, critics such as Worden (1991) and Corr (1993) contend that Kübler-Ross's model is too linear and rigid. Rather, people do not necessarily pass through the stages of grief in the same order; and some people seem to experience more than one stage at the same time. Others, such as Bonanno (Bonanno et al. 2002) have attempted to replace Kübler-Ross's stage model with a model of resilience. Bonanno asserts that resilience, a personality characteristic that measures the ability to deal with change and stress, means that some people will grieve more than others, and some people may not grieve at all. Still others have criticized Kübler-Ross for ignoring cultural differences in grieving. For instance, while in American society, grieving is largely a personal matter, in other cultures, grieving for a loved one is a public matter.

Resocialization and Total Institutions

Sometimes, initial attempts at socialization are not sufficient to ensure that an individual will fully adopt the values, beliefs, and behaviors that a society expects. In those cases, people are often confined to a **total institution**, a place where a person is set apart from the rest of society and controlled by an authority within a structured environment. Examples of total institutions include psychiatric hospitals and prisons. In these facilities, the behavior of residents is strictly controlled. Everyone generally wears the same uniforms, eats the same food, sleeps at the same time, and has the same leisure activities to choose from.

The purpose of a total institution is **resocialization**, which is the process of changing a person's personality through careful control of that person's environment. Currently more than 2 million Americans are undergoing the process of resocialization in total institutions **FIGURE 3-16**. This process occurs in two stages. First, authority figures break down the person's existing sense of identity. This is often done through confiscating their personal possessions and replacing them with a standard uniform and/or a standard appearance, such as very short hair, that makes everyone in confinement look alike. After stripping away the individual's identity, the staff then strips away the person's sense of independence through frequent searches, examinations, and invasions of private space. The person may be referred to only as a number, thereby losing his or her name and the identity that goes with it.

Total institution A place where a person is set apart from the rest of society and controlled by an authority within a structured environment

Resocialization The process of changing a person's personality through careful control of that person's environment.

FIGURE 3-16 Prisons are an example of a total institution that attempts to resocialize inmates.

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The second stage in the process is the construction of a new identity. This is often done through a system of rewards and punishments that seeks to make the identity of the person compliant. Correct behavior may be rewarded with a personal item or a luxury, such as watching television. Punishment for incorrect behavior might include solitary confinement or the removal of a personal item.

Not everyone responds positively to resocialization. While some people do indeed rehabilitate and adopt the values of the dominant culture, others become resentful of the control. People confined to total institutions for long periods of time may lose the skills necessary to successfully reintegrate into society and may therefore need to be institutionalized for the rest of their lives. In fact, some research (Bowers and Pierce 1980) has found that harsh punishments such as the death penalty may even increase crimes rates through a **brutalization effect**. The brutalization effect occurs because individuals see punishment by law enforcement as legitimizing violence, therefore making it appropriate to use violence against others as a means to solve problems. For most of us, however, socialization itself is effective. It does raise a question, though, of just how socialized we are. Does socialization restrict our behaviors, or does it help us to achieve our human potential within society?

Brutalization effect The idea that executions increase the rate of violence in society.

How Socialized are We?

Socialization really is the process of creating the sociological imagination. Socialization is the intersection of our cultural history and our personal biography that shapes us into the person we become. It influences our values, beliefs, and behaviors. It influences how we think about the issues in our lifetime and how we behave toward those issues. Yet we must be careful not to see socialization as the only thing that makes us who we are. As already noted, our biological predispositions also play a role in the person we become. For example, biology can shape our personality in subtle and not-so-subtle ways, making some types of socialization more or less effective. Additionally, agents of socialization, for example, schools and mass media, often send contradictory messages. Even the same agents of socialization may send different messages at different times or in different social situations. What determines which of these messages are adopted and which are rejected? Just how much does socialization really influence our beliefs and behaviors?

Sociologists are not in agreement about how much socialization really influences a person's values, beliefs, and behaviors. Sociologists ask these kinds of questions when they study the extent to which individuals in a society think and act freely. This inquiry has led some sociologists to conclude that the influence of socialization on our behavior is pervasive and deterministic. In other words, our culture determines who we become, and our choices are limited to those that our culture offers us. Other sociologists argue

that although society profoundly influences who we become, we are nevertheless free to choose which societal beliefs and values to accept and which to reject. It seems reasonable to suggest that some people are more influenced by the forces of socialization than others. Although far from settled, these and other forms of sociological inquiry offer unique insights into who we are in the context of the world in which we live.

CONCEPT LEARNING CHECK 3.4






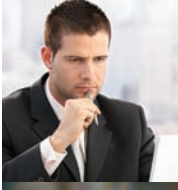


Socialization through the Life Course

Match the life event to the most likely stage in the life course.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Infancy | A. Making friends for the first time |
| 2. Childhood | B. Mixed-sex peer groups |
| 3. Adolescence | C. Resignation about death |
| 4. Adulthood | D. Family recognition and bonding |
| 5. Old age | E. Starting a family of your own |

Visual Overview Stages of Development

Although all social theorists agree that development occurs in stages, they disagree about the number and nature of those stages. Socialization, though strongest during the early years of development, is a life-long process and can occur cognitively, morally, and psychologically.

		Freud	Erikson	Piaget	Kohlberg	Mead
	Infant 0–18 months	Oral Stage	Oral Sensory trust vs. mistrust	Sensori-motor	Preconventional	Imitation
	Toddler 18 months– 3 years	Anal Stage	Muscular-Anal autonomy vs. self-doubt	Sensori-motor	Preconventional	Imitation
	Early Childhood 3–6 years	Phallic Stage	Locomotor initiative vs. guilt	Pre-operational	Conventional	Play
	Middle Childhood 6–12 years	Latency Stage	Latency industry vs. inferiority	Concrete- operational	Conventional	Game
	Adolescence 12–18 years	Genital Stage	Adolescence identity vs. role confusion	Formal- operational	Post- conventional	
	Young Adulthood 19–40 years		Young Adulthood intimacy vs. isolation			
	Middle Adulthood 41–60 years		Middle Adulthood generativity vs. stagnation			
	Old Age 60 years–death		Maturity ego integrity vs. despair			

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Visual Summary Socialization



3.1 Socialization through Societal Experience

- Socialization is the lifelong process by which a person learns the beliefs, values, and behaviors of his or her society.
- Social contact is essential for socialization.
- Social isolation has significant and irreversible developmental effects.
- There are three basic levels to socialization: primary socialization, secondary socialization, and adult socialization.



3.2 Understanding Socialization through Theorists and Their Research

- Socialization can be understood in a variety of ways, but always as a process that occurs in stages.
- Freud believed that the development of personality required proper social attachment and development.
- Freud believed that personality stabilized during adolescence.
- In contrast to Freud, Erikson believed that development of the personality was a lifelong process.
- Erikson identified eight stages of development, each with a normative crisis that must be successfully dealt with for proper development.
- Piaget identified four stages to cognitive development.
- Kohlberg identified three levels and six stages of moral development in boys.
- Gilligan expanded Kohlberg's research to include girls and discovered that girls develop moral sentiment differently than boys.
- Charles Horton Cooley theorized that personality emerges through social interaction as individuals interpret how they think others see them and adjust their behaviors accordingly.
- George Herbert Mead believed that the self emerges through three stages of play that become increasingly social.



3.3 Agents of Socialization

- The family is the strongest agent of socialization.
- Other important agents of socialization include religion, work, school, and mass media.
- Peers replace family as the strongest agent of socialization during adolescence.
- Increasing violence in mass media may have a negative impact on youth, as it socializes them toward violent behaviors.
- Emerging social media will offer new forms of socialization.



3.4 Socialization through the Life Course

- Socialization is a lifelong process.
- In infancy, socialization is oriented toward attachment to caregivers and mastering early developmental milestones.
- In childhood, the social sphere widens as the child begins to develop friendships.
- School becomes an important influence in the socialization of the child.
- During adolescence, peers become the most important agent of socialization.
- During adulthood, socialization centers around beginning a family and work.
- During old age, a person is socialized toward acceptance of the end of life.

CHAPTER REVIEW TEST

3.1 Socialization through Societal Experience

1. Carl turned 16 and went out with his friends to a club rather than spending time with his family. Carl is experiencing:
 - A. primary socialization.
 - B. secondary socialization.
 - C. adult socialization.
 - D. critical socialization.
2. The idea that learning a new language is more difficult as a person gets older is an example of the:
 - A. critical period hypothesis.
 - B. socialization hypothesis.
 - C. language learning hypothesis.
 - D. sociological imagination.

3.2 Understanding Socialization through Theorists and Their Research

4. As a teenager, Glenda finds it very difficult to learn to speak French. Her difficulties might be the result of what phenomenon?
 - A. Secondary socialization
 - B. Critical period hypothesis
 - C. Primary socialization
 - D. Adult socialization
5. Arthur is reflecting on his current career, wondering if his work has helped to make the world a better place for future generations. According to Erikson, Arthur is experiencing a:
 - A. moral dilemma.
 - B. crisis of self.
 - C. ego crisis.
 - D. normative crisis.
6. Jerome is in Erikson's adolescent stage. The normative crisis he will likely experience is:
 - A. generativity versus stagnation.
 - B. intimacy versus isolation.
 - C. identity versus role confusion.
 - D. trust versus mistrust.
7. Boris considered his football team a second family that helped shape his values of hard work and perseverance. Cooley would say that for Boris, the football team is a:
 - A. normative crisis.
 - B. primary group.
 - C. generalized other.
 - D. secondary group.
8. Gene has just signed up for little league baseball. As he learns how all of the positions work together on the team, he will master Mead's _____ stage.
 - A. game
 - B. play
 - C. latency
 - D. imitation
9. Tyra is beginning to read, but her mother still has to help her with difficult words. This is an example of:
 - A. formal operations.
 - B. secondary socialization.
 - C. scaffolding.
 - D. preconvention.
10. Ivan just got married. He is quickly learning about the responsibility that is involved with managing a household. What level of socialization is Ivan experiencing?
 - A. Secondary socialization
 - B. General socialization
 - C. Primary socialization
 - D. Adult socialization
11. Bart's coach has also served as a mentor, helping Bart through some very rough times in his life. According to Cooley, Bart's coach would be:
 - A. a significant other.
 - B. part of a primary group.
 - C. a generalized other.
 - D. part of a secondary group.
12. Jeannette is a teacher. Every time she lectures, she notices students falling asleep in class. Jeannette concludes that she is not a very good teacher. This is an example of:
 - A. the looking-glass self.
 - B. self-actualization.
 - C. secondary socialization.
 - D. primary socialization.
13. Belinda is playing dress-up while her mother gets ready to go out for the evening. Belinda is in which of Mead's stages of development of the self?
 - A. Play
 - B. Imitation
 - C. Operational
 - D. Game
3. Every time that Aram and his brother Artashes fight, their mother punishes them and explains that violence is not an appropriate way to solve problems. Aram is experiencing:
 - A. adult socialization.
 - B. secondary socialization.
 - C. primary socialization.
 - D. peer socialization.

3.3 Agents of Socialization

14. Amy has been in daycare since she was six months old. Which of the following is not a likely outcome of Amy's experiences in daycare?
 - A. Amy will learn to read earlier than her peers who have not attended daycare.
 - B. Amy will be more aggressive than her peers who have not attended daycare.
 - C. Amy will have stronger bonds with her mother than her peers who have not attended daycare.
 - D. Amy will act out when challenged by an authority figure.
15. LaToya's parents both have working-class jobs. What would we predict about the way they parent LaToya?
 - A. They are likely to spank LaToya when she is not compliant.
 - B. They encourage LaToya to be creative in her approach to problems.
 - C. They try to get LaToya to comply using reason.
 - D. They encourage LaToya to express herself openly.
16. Herman and Albert are standing by their school lockers talking about how lazy some of the minority students in their class are. This is an example of:
 - A. primary socialization.
 - B. hidden curriculum.
 - C. anticipatory socialization.
 - D. corridor curriculum.
17. Jose wants to own his own restaurant. He uses his current job as a line cook to practice skills he will need to achieve his goal. This is an example of:
 - A. primary socialization.
 - B. adult socialization.
 - C. anticipatory socialization.
 - D. secondary socialization.
18. Ted is in prison undergoing a rehabilitation program. Ted is experiencing:
 - A. anticipatory socialization.
 - B. resocialization.
 - C. primary socialization.
 - D. secondary socialization.

3.4 Socialization through the Life Course

19. Elmer is more interested in hanging out with his friends than with his family. He has also taken up smoking because his friends think it is cool. Elmer is likely in what life stage?
 - A. Adolescence
 - B. Adulthood
 - C. Infancy
 - D. Childhood
20. Vinny was so aggressive and disruptive that his parents sent him to a special boot camp to try to make him compliant. At the boot camp, they tell Vinny when to sleep and when to get up. They tell him when to eat and even when to go to the bathroom. Vinny is experiencing:
 - A. anticipatory socialization.
 - B. primary socialization.
 - C. total institution.
 - D. adult socialization.
21. Dobu lives in a society in which the elders are highly respected, have most of the social power, and control most of the wealth. Dobu lives in a:
 - A. matriarchy.
 - B. gerontocracy.
 - C. filiarchy.
 - D. pastorality.

CHAPTER ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Rates of attention deficit disorder are higher among boys than among girls, especially at younger ages. How might this be explained using concepts of socialization?
2. Discuss why rates of successful resocialization are low in total institutions.

CHAPTER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you think the media influence the way in which we perceive and understand other agents of socialization, such as school or the family?
2. What has a greater affect on humans: nature (biology/ evolution) or nurture (socialization)? How do your viewpoints compare or differ to your beliefs about the differences between men and women? Share your thinking with the class.
3. How might anticipatory socialization be beneficial to an individual? How might it be detrimental?
4. Based on what you read about primary socialization and the critical period hypothesis, should social workers and the court system have more leniencies in removing toddlers from abusive homes? Should all parents have to undergo mandatory parenting courses? Why or why not? How does society balance the well-being of children versus the rights of biological parents?

5. In cultures that are more group centered, do you think children and adolescents experience Freud's id, ego and superego or Erickson's normative crises in the same way that children and adolescents do in western cultures that are more individual centered?
6. In what ways do interactions that occur in a classroom during a discussion reflect the main components of Cooley's looking glass self?
7. Using Mead's Development of the Self (imitation, play, and game stages) discuss why playing pee-wee sports or other organized group activities may be important agents of socialization for children in the U.S.
8. Share with the class your favorite cartoon characters from when you were a young child. Observe the nonverbal behaviors as your colleagues share their early childhood memories. Does the class appear more animated and lively? How does this reflect the influence of the mass media?
9. Does corridor curriculum exist in college? How does college facilitate anticipatory socialization?
10. In what ways is the military a total institution and how are soldiers resocialized into the values and norms of the military culture? How does this affect the reentry into society following active military duty for example soldiers coming home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?

CHAPTER PROJECTS

INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

1. Recall that at the elementary levels, schools tend to benefit females because they emphasize skills that are more consistent with the ways in which society socializes girls. Conversely, secondary schools tend to benefit boys because they emphasize skills that are consistent with the ways in which society socializes boys. Considering the ways in which society socializes gender roles in children, construct a plan to change elementary schools to be more amenable to the needs of boys. Construct a plan to change secondary schools to be more amenable to the needs of girls.
2. The essence of socialization is learning the beliefs, values, and behaviors that are considered acceptable to society. Through the process of socialization, individuals learn the moral boundaries of their culture. Design a test to determine where a child falls in Kohlberg's levels of moral judgment.
3. Interview an individual outside of your family who is at least 20 years older than yourself. Your questions should reflect *Erickson's Psychosocial Theory* and *Socialization through the Life Course*. Write a paper detailing your findings.
4. Write a self-reflection paper about your self-identity. Include in your paper *significant others* and *agents of socialization* that had the greatest impact on your personality development. How do you think your self-identity will evolve as you age and move through the life course?

GROUP PROJECTS

1. Find a public place such as a playground, restaurant, or mall with a play area where you can observe groups of children at play. Look for patterns in how children play and interact with each other and their significant others. Discuss how your observations are related to the material in this chapter. Write a summary of your findings.
2. Go online and search "Final Note on a Case of Extreme Isolation by Kingsley Davis." After you read the paper, discuss the two cases of Anna and Isabelle with your colleagues. How are the two case studies similar and how do they differ? What do these two examples teach us? Write a summary of your group discussion.

CHAPTER KEY TERMS

Adult socialization

Agents of socialization

Anticipatory socialization

Brutalization effect

Corridor curriculum

Critical period hypothesis

Cultural universals

Ego

Feral children

Game stage

Generalized other

Gerontocracies

Gerontology

Graying of America

Hidden curriculum

Id

Imitation

Looking-glass self

Mass media

Normative crisis

Play stage

Peer group

Primary groups

Primary socialization

Resocialization

Scaffolding

Secondary groups

Secondary socialization

Secular trend

Significant other

Socialization

Superego

Total institution

ANSWERS TO CONCEPT LEARNING CHECKS

3.1 Socialization through Societal Experience

1. [C] The Harlows' research with rhesus monkeys showed that monkeys suffer developmental effects as a result of prolonged social isolation.
2. [A] The following statement is untrue based on studies of feral children: Socialization has unlimited power to mold the human brain.

3. Primary socialization involves the development of skills learned in childhood. [A. Learning to share; C. Learning to talk].
4. Secondary socialization involves the development of skills in adolescence [B. Dating; F. Getting a driver's license].
5. Adult socialization involves socializing skills used in adulthood [D. Transitioning into a new career; E. Having children].

3.2 Understanding Socialization Through Theorists and Their Research

1. Socialization leading to an understanding of the self proceeds through three stages: the imitation stage, play state, and game stage. [George Herbert Mead]
2. Human personality develops throughout the life course as each person tries to resolve a central crisis associated with each of eight stages. [Erik Erikson]
3. The child develops a sense of self through play, progressing through three stages to the eventual emergence of the *me*. [George Herbert Mead]
4. Boys and girls are socialized toward morality differently, with girls being socialized toward an other-oriented moral system and boys being socialized toward an individualist moral system. [Carol Gilligan]
5. We watch the reaction that other people have to our behaviors and adjust our behavior accordingly so that we gain the approval first of primary groups and later of secondary groups. [Charles Horton Cooley]

3.3 Agents of Socialization

1. [D] Values that are taught through the presentation of standard school curriculum are called the hidden curriculum.
2. [B] Learning to play a role before entering that role is called anticipatory socialization.
3. [B, C] The following groups have the highest high school dropout rate: Native Americans, Hispanic Americans
4. [C, D] By adolescence, the following replace family as the strongest agent of socialization: School, peers.
5. [C] This term refers to the lessons that children teach one another at school while not in class: corridor curriculum

3.4 Socialization through the Life Course

1. Infancy [D. Family recognition and bonding]
2. Childhood [A. Making friends for the first time]
3. Adolescence [B. Mixed-sex peer groups]
4. Adulthood [E. Starting a family of your own]
5. Old age [C. Resignation about death]

ANSWERS TO CHAPTER REVIEW TEST

3.1 Socialization through Societal Experience

1. B. Secondary socialization occurs during adolescence as the individual's social sphere widens to include peers.
2. A. The critical period hypothesis states that there is an optimal period for learning certain skills, such as language.
3. C. Primary socialization is learned from the family in childhood and refers to basic values and behaviors acceptable to society.

3.2 Understanding Socialization through Theorists and Their Research

4. B. The critical window hypothesis suggests that it becomes harder to learn a foreign language as a person gets older.
5. D. Erikson identified eight normative crises that involve an individual reflecting on their individual lives and contributions.
6. C. In Erikson's theory, the normative crisis for the adolescent stage is identity versus role confusion.
7. B. Because his football team functioned as a second family, helping to shape his values of hard work and perseverance, the football team is a primary group.
8. A. Mead's game stage involves an understanding of how various roles interact with other roles.
9. C. Scaffolding refers to a kind of socialization whereby a parent or other person helps bridge the gap between a child's current skill level and a more advanced skill level.
10. D. At the conventional level, understandings of morality take a social focus. Morality becomes oriented toward rules that are applicable to the peer group.

11. B. Cooley defined primary groups as anyone with whom the individual has a close, personal relationship.
12. A. The looking-glass self is the process by which we adjust our behavior based upon our interpretations of how others see us.
13. B. During the imitation stage, children imitate the behavior of significant others even if they do not understand the action.

3.3 Agents of Socialization

14. C. Studies show that children who spend significant time in daycare have weaker ties with their mothers than other children.
15. A. Studies suggest that working-class parents are more likely to use physical punishment as a means of achieving compliance in their children.
16. D. The corridor curriculum refers to lessons that children teach one another at school while not in class.
17. C. Anticipatory socialization refers to learning to play a role before you enter it.
18. B. Socialization such as rehabilitation, with the goal of promoting prosocial values, is called resocialization.

3.4 Socialization through the Life Course

19. A. During adolescence, peers replace family as the primary agent of socialization.
20. C. A total institution is a place that maintains total control over a person's action with the goal of resocialization.
21. B. A gerontocracy is a society in which the elderly maintain most of the wealth and social power.

ANSWERS TO CHAPTER ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Rates of attention deficit disorder are higher among boys than among girls, especially at younger ages. How might this be explained using concepts of socialization? Studies show that at young ages, boys are less capable of sitting still than girls. They are also more aggressive than girls and have shorter attention spans. However, society in general and schools in particular are structured so that the expectations of proper behavior favor girls. For example, boys are expected to sit still in class for long periods of time. They are also expected to solve problems in a nonaggressive way. Because these expectations are contrary to the natural behaviors of boys, they manifest themselves as behavioral problems such as attention deficit disorder or hyperactivity. However, as schools shift to male-oriented patterns in the later grades, many of these behaviors disappear as the child gets older.
2. There are several reasons why rates of successful resocialization are low in total institutions. First, research shows that the effects of socialization are weaker at later ages. This means that the attempts at resocialization are likely to have a reduced impact on the individual. Relatedly, attempts at resocialization may be unsuccessful because the original socialization toward negative values is extremely strong, and efforts at resocialization have not been applied for a long enough time to overturn the original values. Finally, efforts at resocialization frequently take place in total institutions. The total control of a person can have negative consequences, such as making the person experiencing it reject the dominant values even more strongly. For all of these reasons, resocialization in total institutions is often unsuccessful.

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