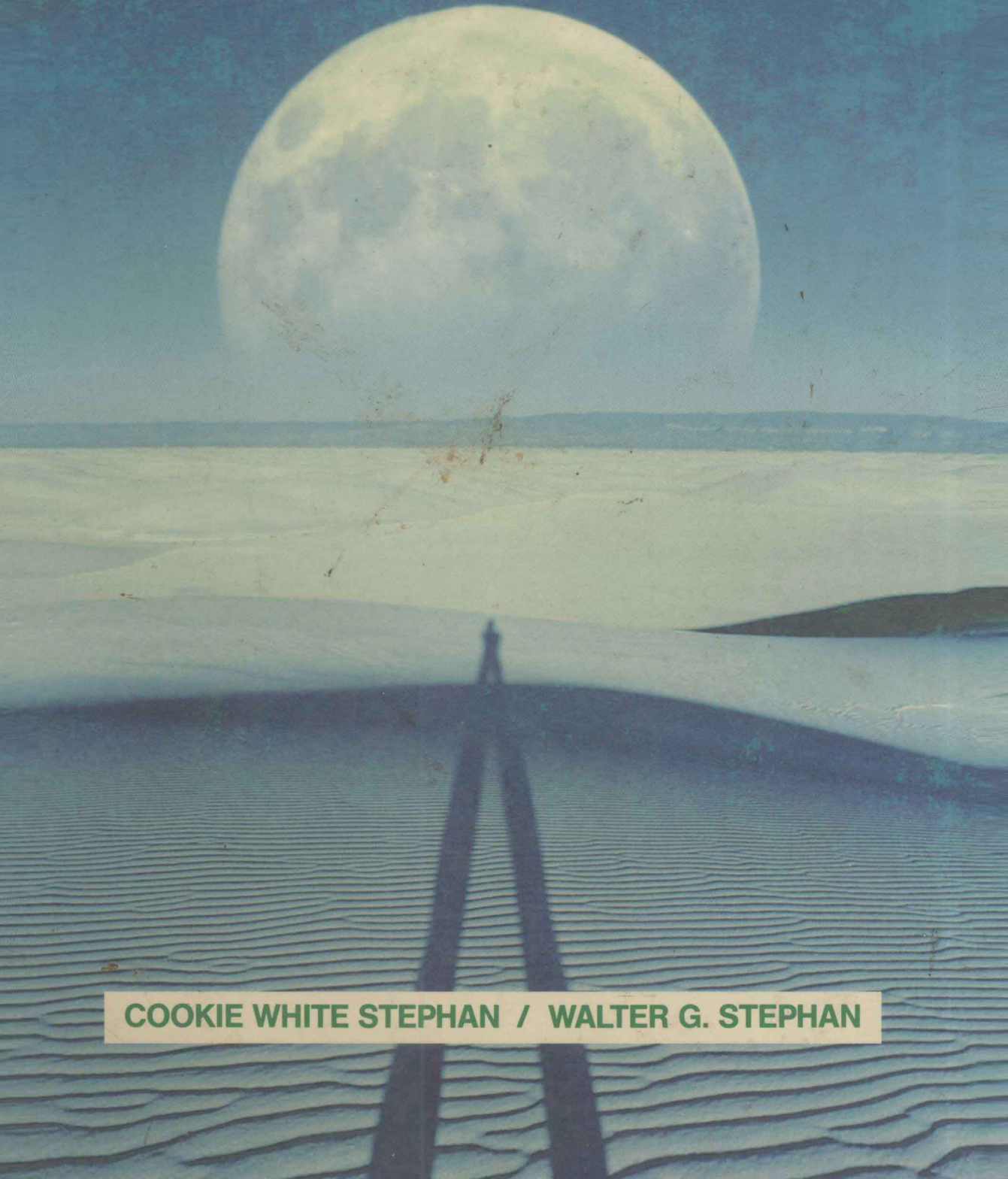


Two Social Psychologies



COOKIE WHITE STEPHAN / WALTER G. STEPHAN

Two Social Psychologies

An Integrative Approach

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*To our parents,
Janie and Neil White and Peg Stephan,
and to the memory of Jim Stephan.*

The Dorsey Series in Sociology

Consulting Editor

Charles M. Bonjean

The University of Texas at Austin

Instructor's Preface

We believe this book is unique among introductory social psychology books. In it, we attempt to integrate and synthesize the theory, methods, and literature of sociological social psychology (SSP) and of psychological social psychology (PSP). In Chapter 1, "The Two Social Psychologies," we introduce students to the definitions of social psychology, levels of analysis, methodology, and theoretical perspectives first of SSP and then of PSP. Within SSP, we distinguish between the symbolic interactionists and those from the personality and society perspective. After the introductory, theory, and methods chapters, the students hear no more of the two social psychologies, for we feel that labeling topics or studies as being sociological or psychological detracts from the main purpose of learning about the exciting world of social psychology. Despite the absence of material labeled as SSP and PSP, throughout the text the instructor will find the combined influence of both disciplines.

Structure of the Book

Our attempt at integration and synthesis has taken a variety of forms beyond our introduc-

tion to both social psychologies in the first chapter. First, we give equal attention to sociological and psychological theories and methods in Chapter 2, "Theories of Social Psychology," and in Chapter 3, "Methods of Social Psychology." We start the theory chapter with one predominant SSP theory, symbolic interactionism, and discuss its two primary schools of thought. We then cover role theory and exchange theory, theories used in both SSP and PSP, and end the chapter with social learning theory, a theory popular in PSP. In the methods chapter, we include the SSP research techniques of surveys, in-depth interviewing, and participant observation, as well as the PSP techniques of field and laboratory experiments.

Second, we include some chapters typically found only in books written for SSP (e.g., Chapter 4: "The Self"; Chapter 8, "Deviance"; and Chapter 16, "Collective Behavior") and some usually found solely in PSP books (e.g., Chapter 9, "Person Perception;" and Chapter 11, "Attraction"). Third, within each topic we present the subtopics and research of concern to professionals from each discipline. Finally, where there is overlap of subtopics and research, we attempt to integrate the findings from the two disciplines.

As we tell the students at the end of Chapter 1, we believe that social psychology is the richer for the contributions of the disciplines of both sociology and psychology. The more we understand about PSP, as well as SSP, the greater our own knowledge of the entire enterprise of social psychology and the more we have to offer to our students.

This book contains 17 chapters; 3 introductory chapters, and 14 topic chapters. The topic chapters are independent units; any number of them can be used in any order. Thus, the instructor may select chapters that emphasize SSP, PSP, or both disciplines equally.

A number of people made important contributions to the book. Our sincere thanks to Chuck Bonjean for his constant support and encouragement. Chuck also deserves special thanks for his helpful comments on two

versions of the manuscript. Thanks also to Kathleen Crittenden, Lynn Smith-Lovin, Marilyn Brewer, Sheldon Ungar, Donald Matlock, and John Stolte, who read the entire manuscript, and to James House, Sharon Wolf, and Victor Johnston, who read parts of it. Finally, thanks go to Maria Telles-McGeagh for typing portions of the manuscript.

Cookie White Stephan
Walter G. Stephan



Student's Preface

We believe that social psychology is a fascinating topic. We know that it has many useful applications to everyday life. This book was written to share some of the ideas and applications of social psychology with you. We have tried to write a “user friendly” textbook. This preface outlines what we have done to make this book easy to use. It also offers suggestions about how to read this book in a way that will help you learn the material.

Organization within the Chapters

Every chapter begins with an outline and ends with a summary. At the beginning of each chapter we briefly discuss the main topics to be covered. The material in the chapter is divided into three levels of subheads. These subheads form a hierarchy; the primary subhead indicates the main topic to be discussed, the second subhead is used to divide the main topic into subcategories, and the third level is used for more detailed information. Generally, the first and last paragraphs under each subheading contain the most valuable information. New ideas are presented and material is sum-

marized in these paragraphs. In like manner, the first and last sentences in each paragraph usually are the most important.

Each chapter also contains additional material to lighten your reading. In each chapter, boxes supplement the ideas presented in the text. Tables, figures, and cartoons are also included to help you understand the ideas in the text. So you can focus on the important material, direct references to most authors and the dates are not included. Authors are mentioned when a person has done something particularly noteworthy, or when it may be easier to remember the material by associating it with a name.

Study Tips

To learn the material in our book, or in any other book, you must *comprehend* and *organize* the information you are reading. You will remember more if you follow a few simple rules. You should read the text in blocks of time. How long this period should be for any particular person depends on the person's reading rate, ability to concentrate, and alertness. A half hour may be too short; but an hour could be too long, if you are no longer paying attention to what you read. Try to study in an environment that is free from distractions.

When you start a chapter, read the outline first. It will indicate both the topics to be covered and the way the topics are organized. Next, read the summary. The summary expands on the topic headings. You may find as you read the summary that you do not understand all the concepts and findings. Don't panic—this is useful information. It indicates those ideas to which you should pay special attention when reading the chapter. After you have read the summary, decide how much material you are going to read during this session. Preview this material in the text by skimming it. Skimming the material will give you an idea of the central topics to be covered and the flow of these ideas.

Why all this preparation? Memory depends on organizing information. Knowing the structure of the chapter before you read it will help you to organize the information in your mind.

Thus, it will make it easier to recall later. Now you are ready to read the material.

As you read, you can increase your comprehension and memory of the material. You should underline definitions of terms, the central ideas in a theory, the main research conclusions on a topic, and other information you consider to be important. This will allow you to review the material more easily later. Reading a little faster than usual may help keep you alert by making you work a little harder. However, vary your reading rate according to the difficulty of the material. For more complex material, you should read slowly and carefully; but you can often read illustrations of ideas relatively quickly.

Try to make reading an active process. Relate the ideas in the text to your own life. If you can imagine examples from your own experience that illustrate the ideas in the text, you are more likely to remember them. Ask yourself questions as you read. For instance, if the topic is cognitive dissonance, you might ask yourself "What is dissonance?" or "Have I ever experienced dissonance?" Asking yourself questions after you read the material is also useful in remembering information.

Recalling information is one of the most effective techniques of improving memory. After you have read a section, try to remember the material. If you can't remember it immediately

after reading it, you won't be able to remember it later. As you are reading, ask yourself if you understand the ideas being presented. If you are having difficulty, read the material again. You can't answer questions about ideas you don't understand. When you have finished reading, review the material in your mind. Ask yourself questions, such as, "How is this material organized?" and "What are the main ideas in this material?"

Asking questions, thinking of examples, and questioning your understanding, help you to remember. The reason is that these techniques make you process the new information more thoroughly and relate it to other information you already know. Building connections between new ideas and old ones makes the new material easier to remember.

Now, remember the suggestions that we have just made. This will give you practice in using these techniques and increase the chances that you will remember to use them when it counts.

We hope you enjoy reading this book. If there are things that you dislike, or that you particularly like, let us know. You can send us letters at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, or the Department of Psychology, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM 88003.

**Cookie White Stephan
Walter G. Stephan**

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1

CHAPTER

The Two Social Psychologies

What Is Social Psychology?

Sociological Social Psychology

Definition

Level of Analysis

Methodology

Theoretical Perspectives

Psychological Social Psychology

Definition

Level of Analysis

Methodology

Theoretical Perspectives

Why a Synthesis of Social Psychologies?

Symbolic Interactionism and Attribution Theory: Similarities

The Robbers Cave Experiment: An Integrated Strategy

Group Formation

Intergroup Conflict

Intergroup Cooperation

The Two Social Psychologies and This Book

WHAT IS SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY?

Topics studied by social psychologists include the following:

Jack and Susan have been friends since childhood. While Susan has been romantically interested in Jack for years, he has always thought of Susan as a little sister. At the end of their sophomore year at college, Jack and Susan rode home together in his car. While on the freeway, a car pulled out in front of them. Jack managed to miss the other car, but his car left the freeway and overturned. Luckily, Jack and Susan emerged with only minor bruises. While they were waiting for a tow truck to come, Jack realized that he was in love with Susan. Why should this terrifying experience provoke a feeling of love in Jack?

Over the last 10 years there has been a tremendous increase in Ku Klux Klan membership and a rise in KKK activities. During this time, the Nazi party has begun to form active groups in many different countries in Europe. Why does racial hatred exist? Why do some people respect all humans but others dislike and distrust people from racial groups different than their own?

To see whether "sanity" could be distinguished from "insanity," a psychologist, David Rosenhan, had eight sane people admitted to 12 different mental hospitals (1). While it was common for the other patients to detect the presence of the sane "pseudopatients," not a single mental health professional recognized that these pseudopatients were sane. Later, Rosenhan told the personnel at the hospitals that he would admit more sane persons to one of these hospitals. Despite the fact that he admitted no more sane persons, 41 real patients were believed by at least one staff member to be sane pseudopatients. If the "insane" can identify insanity but persons trained to detect insanity cannot, what is insanity? How do you think the label of "insanity" influenced the judgments of the mental health professionals about the pseudopatients?

Sharon, Tom, and Jennifer have worked all semester on an art project for their beginning

art class. When they hand it to their professor, she says, "This is very extraordinary!" and walks away. Sharon thinks that the professor liked the project very much. Tom thinks that the professor didn't like the project at all. Jennifer thinks that the professor was just surprised that such a big project was turned in on time. Which one of these students is right? Why would there be a disagreement among them concerning the interpretation of the professor's remark?

It has been estimated that as many as 4 million children are abused every year in this country. Many of the abusing parents report that they were themselves abused as children. Since parents who themselves were abused know intimately the unfairness and terror of abuse, why would they abuse their own children?

Karen and Anne are talking about the grades they received on their French exam. Both of them did rather poorly. Although she does not tell Anne this, Karen believes that Anne did not do well because she is a poor student. However, Karen believes that she did not do well on the exam because she had a headache when she was taking it. Why should Karen excuse her own poor performance but blame Anne for her similarly poor performance?

In December 1978, 900 members of a religious group known as the People's Temple died in Jonestown, Guyana. While some of these deaths appear to have been murders, most were apparent suicides. Hundreds of these cult members voluntarily drank a poisoned fruit drink on the command of their leader, the Reverend Jim Jones. Jones told them that they had to commit suicide to show devotion to the cult, and they did. How could devotion to such a cult become more important than life?

Sally and Jon Johnson have eight-year-old twins, a boy and a girl. When the children in the neighborhood call their daughter a tomboy, the Johnsons are amused and somewhat pleased. But when the children in the neighborhood call their son a sissy, the Johnsons feel upset and concerned about their son. In both instances, the neighborhood children are talk-



Wide World Photos, Inc.

Mass Suicide at Jonestown—how could this have happened?

ing about a slight deviation from stereotypic sex-role behaviors. Why should the reaction of the parents be so different to the slight sex-role deviation of their son than to that of their daughter?

Robert has always had a low opinion of himself. During his freshman year, he seeks counseling for this problem. He tells his counselor that his father has always been very critical of him and has always told him that he would fail at whatever he did. The counselor thinks that the father's view of Robert is an important component of Robert's low opinion of himself. Why should his father's opinion be so influential for Robert? Why doesn't Robert simply reject his father's view of him?

Kitty Genovese was stabbed to death in the middle of the night outside her apartment in Kew Gardens, New York. Her screams awak-

ened 38 persons in her apartment building, who watched the crime through their windows. Despite the fact that the attack continued for 30 minutes before Ms. Genovese was killed, no one in the apartment building tried to help her or even call the police. Why did no one go to Ms. Genovese's aid?

These topics—falling in love, racism, the detection of deviance, subjective judgments of reality, child-abuse, attributions about the causes of behavior, cult membership, sex-role behavior, self-esteem, and helping—are examples of the subject matter of social psychology. The questions asked in these examples are some of the questions that social psychologists attempt to answer. After reading this book, you will know how social psychologists answer these and many other questions.

What is social psychology? Dorwin Cartwright defines social psychology as “that branch of the social sciences which attempts to explain how society influences the cognition, motivation, development, and behavior of individuals and, in turn, is influenced by them” (2). There are several important assumptions implicit in this definition. First, social psychologists study human behavior. Second, society is thought to influence human behavior. Third, the relationship between human behavior and society is presumed to be reciprocal. Society is influenced by its individual members and individuals are influenced by society. Fourth, overt behaviors are not the only subject matter of social psychology. The individual’s motivations and cognitions (thoughts) are also the subject matter of social psychology.

Social psychology is studied in two disciplines, sociology and psychology. These two disciplines have overlapping but somewhat differing definitions, levels of analysis, methodologies, and theories of social psychology. Cartwright’s definition is one that we believe most sociologists and psychologists would accept. The social psychology of sociologists and the social psychology of psychologists have much in common. In fact, these two social psychologies have more similarities than many professionals in these disciplines realize. We believe that the field of social psychology profits from interchanges between the two viewpoints. We further believe that you will benefit from an approach that combines both viewpoints.

In this chapter we will first introduce the two social psychologies, sociological social psychology (SSP) and psychological social psychology (PSP). We will explore the definition, level of analysis, methodology, and theoretical inclinations of the social psychology of each discipline. Then we will discuss the similarities between the two social psychologies. Finally, we will present a research example that illustrates the integration of the two approaches to social psychology.

The question of level of analysis concerns

the type of phenomena on which social psychologists focus. We can divide inquiry in social psychology into two groups: into *microsocial* processes, the events concerning individuals and groups of individuals; and into *macrosocial* processes, the events concerning larger groups, such as society’s political, economic, or religious groups. Most social psychology is microsocial, but some is macrosocial. While some social psychologists study individuals and their behaviors, others examine the behaviors of groups of individuals. Still other social psychologists examine even larger groups, such as institutions or societies. Take, for example, the topic of racial prejudice. Some social psychologists study individuals, asking why some people are prejudiced while others are not prejudiced. Other social psychologists study societies, asking why in some societies most people are prejudiced while in other societies most people are not prejudiced.

SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

There are two different perspectives within SSP (sociological social psychology); symbolic interactionism and the personality and society perspective (3). They are similar in many respects, because they both developed within the discipline of sociology. In our discussion of SSP, we will focus on some of the differences between the symbolic interactionist perspective and the personality and society perspective.

Definition

A sociological definition of social psychology is as follows: Social psychology is concerned with (1) social experience stemming from individuals’ participation in social groups, (2) interactions with others; (3) the effects of the cultural environment on both social experience and interactions with others; and (4) the emergence of social structure from these interactions.



"Look how everyone walks differently. You certainly can tell a lot about a person by the way he walks. But I don't know what it is."

© 1985 by Sidney Harris

All of us try to understand the meaning of human behavior.



Brent Jones: CLICK/Chicago

Level of Analysis

Sociologists stress groups and group behaviors, rather than individuals and individual behaviors. Social interactions are thus a primary topic for study by sociologists. Another important focus is the mutual influence of the society on the individual and the individual on the society. Sociological social psychologists feel strongly that the individual and the social environment must be studied together.

Sociologists who adopt the *symbolic interactionist perspective* view the explanation of social interaction as the primary task of sociology. Topics of interest to symbolic interactionists include the self, socialization, small groups, language, and roles. These topics are also studied by other social psychologists, but do not comprise their major focus. Sociologists who take the *personality and society perspective* regard the relationship between individual characteristics and characteristics of the society as the primary topic of social psychology. Topics of interest from the personality and society viewpoint in-



Meg Gerken: CLICK/Chicago

Social psychology is concerned with communication . . . and lack of communication.

clude the relationships between individual characteristics, such as personality traits, attitudes, or values, and society's institutions (e.g., occupational or religious organizations and social classes) or social processes, (e.g., social mobility and urbanization) (4).

If a symbolic interactionist were to study the process by which individuals achieve high levels of education, he or she might choose to study its particular meaning for individuals—for example, as an achievement of the role of scholar or as a stepping-stone to a high-paying job or as a symbol of status unmatched by others in one's family. A sociologist from the personality and society perspective would be more likely to study such a topic as the differential encouragement to continue in school that members of various social classes or religious groups receive from family and friends.

Methodology

Many sociologists from the symbolic interactionist perspective feel that human social behavior should not be studied out of context; rather, it should be studied in its natural “real life” setting. They insist that the methods used should be subjective—that they must capture the world of the persons being studied. These symbolic interactionists feel that such techniques as surveys and questionnaires should not be used, because the objectivity of surveys means that the perspective of the individual being studied is often ignored. These symbolic interactionists emphasize methods that incorporate the persons' views of themselves and of their worlds—the study of personal documents; rigorous observation, such as participating in the activities of the group under study; in-depth interviews; and discussions. Thus, their methods are *qualitative*, rather than *quantitative*. That is, they distinguish one class of objects from another (e.g., people who achieve education to receive a good job versus people who achieve education for the status of the education), rather than measuring the magnitude of a variable (e.g., the amount of encouragement

from parents to achieve higher education). Other symbolic interactionists do use some quantitative techniques. For example, these symbolic interactions use structured questionnaires designed to measure one's sense of self.

Sociologists from the personality and society perspective believe that social psychological concepts should be quantified and subjected to rigorous empirical tests. These sociologists often use standardized objective measures, such as surveys and questionnaires.

Theoretical Perspectives

Symbolic Interactionism. Symbolic interactionism is a major social psychological perspective. Symbolic interactionists believe that reality is socially constructed. For them, meaning is determined through social interaction. For example, the employees of the abortion clinics described in Box 1–1 knew that their clients probably came to the clinics holding negative stereotypes about abortions and abortion clinics. They thus attempted to manipulate the situation so that the clinics and the abortions would have positive meanings for their clients.

Symbolic interactionists also feel that meanings are in constant flux as a result of our experiences with the environment, our experiences with other individuals, and our understanding of others' experiences with the environment. For instance, after your first visit to your college campus, your school “meant” certain things to you, depending upon your first impressions of it. You may have found the campus large and impersonal, and you may have felt rather uncertain of your place in that new environment. After you entered school, however, your experiences there accumulated and the “meaning” to you of the college grew simultaneously. Your view of the school expanded to include your feelings about specific classes, professors, and other students. As you became more familiar with the campus, it probably seemed less large, strange, and impersonal, and you probably became more sure of your own role there.

Symbolic interactionists feel that the points