Sociological Theory 4/4/06

Gear Shift

- From macro → Micro
- Unit of Analysis in Micro
  - The individual

Mead

- Central Concept
  - Concept of self & its construction in social relations
  - Processes of development
- Language
  - Central to Symbolic Interactionism

  - **Symbolic**
    - Humans communicate thru symbols
    - Capacity for & the need for symbols
    - Gesture – A type of Symbol
    - Ex. - The Middle finger here means one thing, and in other countries means something different
    - Ex. 2 – Showing the sole of your foot in America means nothing, yet it is an insult in Iraq

  - **Interactionism**
    - Having a sense of other vs. self
      - The self is social
      - Need to interact in order to develop self & processes
    - Roles
      - Have to understand all the roles in order to know what yours is
      - Must play first, then the game
        - Play = play at something, take on a role
      - More on roles...
    - Communication

  - **BIG IDEA** – symbols organize our interaction socially

- Self
  - Entity
• Object to self
• Difference btw I & me – last 2 pages
  ▪ Object – me
    • How the self sees itself in others...
  ▪ Subject – I
    • Response of the self to others

  o Reflexivity
    ▪ The ability of the subject to be an object to itself
    ▪ Rooted in social construction, Hegel(German idealism)
    ▪ The self is “me”, & being conscious of it is the “I”

  o Difference btw Consciousness & Selfhood
    ▪ Consciousness
      ▪ awareness of outside environment
      ▪ can be aware of self
    ▪ Selfhood
      ▪ Cognitions
      ▪ Emotions
      ▪ Sensations
      ▪ Agency

• More On Roles
  o 2 main applications
    ▪ **dramaturgical**
      ▪ people take specific roles from theatre
      ▪ these roles define who they are and what they do
      ▪ ex. – actors, scripts, stage directions, etc.
    ▪ **Structural**
      ▪ Society as architecture
      ▪ Foundations, glass ceilings, etc.
      ▪ Window cleaner, tenet, landlord
      ▪ Where you are is relative to others & resource centers
      ▪ top of the pyramid, center of the basement, etc.
      ▪ sets of behaviors/attitudes that are associated to levels of position
      ▪ location, location, location