Soc 1

Lecture 2

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Winter 2009
“The Institutional Construction of the Self (Part 2)”

I. Announcements:
http://www.soc.ucsb.edu/faculty/mohr/classes/soc1/

Readings available for next week by Friday

First writing assignment due tomorrow at 6:00 PM

Adds/Drops through Add Codes (see TA for section)

Questions?
The Institutional Construction of the Self

II. Review:
A. Individual Centered vs. Institutional Centered Approaches.

B. The “Self” a cultural construct — varies

C. Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) — Self as embodied in very strong “role” expectations (Zuni)
II. Review:

D. Roman Society ("personae")—"citizen" changes rights and expectations and begins to change experience of selfhood
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II. Review:

E. Christian ("personne") — Dualisms of self and a more complex moral calculus
II. Review:

F. Luther & Calvin
— More personal relationship with God (even more complex internal moral dilemmas). (Note: Not to Disparage any particular approach).
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II. Review:
G. The Enlightenment — from moral dilemmas of self to scientific dilemmas of the universe
Cogito Ergo Sum—I think therefore I am, (René Descartes, 1596-1650)
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II. Review:

H. Mauss: Evolution of The Western Self. 

Main idea — Society creates conditions according to which room for us to sculpt our own identity.

(Limited —> Extensive)
II. Review:
I. Max Weber: (1864-1920)
A consequence of Calvinism the conditions lead to the creation of a particular kind of self (a’la Benjamin Franklin)
More and more selves of this type leads to change in overall society (Rational Capitalism)
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II. Review:

J. Self as Foundation of Society:

1. Thomas Hobbes (1589-1679): *The Leviathan*
How to reconcile power of individuality & Feudal Estates?
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II. Review: T. Hobbes

State of Nature: War of all against all...

...the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short
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2. Adam Smith  
(1723-1790): (Scottish)  
An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776)

The Invisible Hand guided free markets emphasizing that if individuals are left alone to pursue own interests, needs, rational calculations, then the greatest good for the greatest number will result

Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men (1755)

“The first man who, having fenced in a piece of land, said "This is mine," and found people naive enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars, and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows: Beware of listening to this impostor; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody.

Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains, The Social Contract (1762)

1761 forced to flee Paris
4. The American Revolution

(1776): “The Declaration of Independence”

Rejects the Rights of a Monarch to govern “free men”

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it....
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Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good.”
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II. Review: Individual Centered Approach

1. The individual is *logically prior* to society.
2. The individual is a *rational*, calculating person, who knows his or her needs (desires, wishes) and acts in such a way as to rationally maximize the fulfillment of those desires.
3. Society is the result of a *social contract*, entered into (implicitly) by all the members of the society.
4. Society has no legitimate right to infringe upon the *natural civil liberties* of the individual.
5. Social institutions consist of the accumulated *aggregate outcome* of all the rational choices made by all the individuals that are members of that society.
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III. What is an Institutional Centered Approach?

1. Berger and Berger. What is an institution? (The Case of Language).
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III. What is an Institutional Centered Approach.

2. Examples of Institutions:

- A hospital
- A prison
- A family
- A Marriage
- A handshake
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III. What is an Institutional Centered Approach.

4. Language as THE fundamental institution:

A. It Objectifies Reality (makes things concrete, reduces flux) makes stability.
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III. What is an Institutional Centered Approach.

4. Language as THE fundamental institution:

B. Have Coercive Power:
   - Cannot wish it away
   - transgressions are sanctioned
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III. What is an Institutional Centered Approach.

4. Language as THE fundamental institution:

C. Has moral Authority:
   - Right to legitimacy
   - moral indignation is involved
III. What is an Institutional Centered Approach.

4. Language as THE fundamental institution:

D. Has Historicity:
   - Preceded the individual
   - Will outlast the individual
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III. What is an Institutional Centered Approach.

4. Duranti: Explains history of linguistic arguments showing how language shapes thought.

Cultural Relativism Hypothesis.