

SA502 Symbolic Interaction (SI) Selfie Assignment

Symbolic Interaction ppt selfie or visual essay - worth 100 point

This is your SI assignment for this class. The previous assignments asked you to compare theories, apply theories to real life situations and examine how specific theories may manifest in real life structural arrangements. For this assignment I want you to apply the terms and concepts of symbolic interaction to your own life. You are to create a PowerPoint (visual essay or short movie if you have the skills) that applies the concepts of symbolic interaction (below) to your own social reality. I'm calling this a symbolic interaction selfie.

Background: Blauner's notes that symbolic interactionists, ...

assume that the key elements in children's milieus are the symbols and understandings that guide the individuals around them. This common set of symbols and understandings which make a child's social environment symbolic are given great prominence by this perspective.

In simple terms, Blauner noted that 1. People act towards things based on the meaning those things have for them. 2. Meaning arises during social interaction; in essence meaning is a social product. 3. Meanings can be modified through the process of interpretation.

One of the key concepts in this perspective of is "socialization" which is *how* we are trained or *how* we learn social meanings and how to be members of society. We are all socialized by multiple people and institutions, and these experiences influence who we are, how we think, how we act, and how we help to create society. Another important idea in this paradigm is the concept of "social role". Goffman states that we all play these roles like actors on a stage. One of my former professors at Mizzou, Bruce Biddle literally wrote the book on role theory, called what else, *Role Theory*". He argued that we all play "roles" in society and these roles depend on our social positions and often these roles may conflict.

Assignment Instructions: In PowerPoint, (Essay or movie) apply the following concepts related to the paradigm of symbolic interaction to your life. You must use at least 10 terms from the list below. On each slide define the term, explain how this term relates to you and include a photo that illustrates the concept. You can use photos from your real life or other images or symbols to support your ideas. This assignment can be completed using the texts and notes from the class. You may also use outside sources but they must be sociological sources, the definitions must also be sociological, in other words do not use layman's definitions of these terms. I am looking to see that you fully understand the sociological application of SI terms and you can apply it to your own life. You can be creative and approach this assignment several ways. You can use funny or serious examples from your life to illustrate the terms selected.

1. Symbols – What symbols are important to your life? What do these symbols mean to you?
2. Front (region) often call "front stage" – What is an example of your front stage behavior and how would it differ from the back stage behaviors you have? (Goffman)
3. Impression management – What strategies of impression management do you practice? (Goffman)
4. Emotional Labor- Are there any areas in your life where you employ emotional labor? (Hochschild)
5. Role – What roles do you play? (Lecture notes)
6. Role conflict - What role conflicts do you have? (Lecture notes)

7. Role strain – Are there instances of role strain in your life? (Lecture notes)
8. Stigma – Do you belong to any stigmatized groups? (Goffman)
9. Rites of passage - Have you been through any rites of passage? How did you feel after crossing to the next status?
10. Dyad and triad – What dyads and triads influence your life or have influenced your life in the past. (Simmel)
11. Definition of the situation. Can you apply the definition of the situation to an incidence in your life? (W.I. Thomas)
12. Looking glass self – Who has influenced your sense of self. (Cooley)
13. Back Stage (Goffman)
14. Self fulfilling prophecy
15. Subjective Reality (Berger and Luckmann)
16. The difference between the I & Me (Mead)
17. Generalized other (Mead)
18. Significant other (Mead)
19. I or Me

Note: These are also some of the terms you will have to identify on the final exam for this class if we have one

If you are in law enforcement you may want to do this assignment based on your specific job. What symbols are important in policing, what roles do you play etc.? If you are a student only you may want to consider the symbols etc. related to your life as a student... or you can draw from several areas of your life to illustrate these concepts.

Squires Example of an Important Symbol: As a teacher one symbol that is really important to me is the “apple” because it represents teaching and student’s respect and recognition of the learning process. The story is that in the past students used to bring apples to the teacher as gifts to say thank you for teaching them. In my teaching career I have received several “apples’ from my students over the years. These apples were often symbolic and in the form of pins or earrings, some were statues, and some were posters on teaching with apples as illustrations. I also actually got some of real apples from students who were farmers. Although I don't know the real origin of the symbol and it really doesn’t have anything to do with the teaching process I still value and appreciate the symbolic meaning. When I get an apple from a student I feel good, like I have successfully played my teacher role.

