**SOC 3120 Social Psychology**

 **Prof. J.S. Kenney**

**Overheads Lecture 15**: **Themes & Variations in the Sociology of Emotion**

\* Today we review themes/variations in the sociology of emotions

\* Theorists/researchers vary on eight sub-themes:

(1) Micro vs. Macro;

(2) Quantitative vs. Qualitative Methods***;***

(3) Positivism vs. Anti-Positivism;

(4) Political Economy of Emotions;

(5) Gender Analysis;

(6) Managing vs. Accounting for Emotions;

(7) Prediction vs. Description;

(8) Biosocial vs. Social Construction.

\* Each will be dealt with in turn.

 (1) **Micro vs. Macro:**

\* Randall Collins:

 - Macro-processes rest on micro-foundation of emotion

 (e.g. order, conflict, and stratification)

 - Interaction rituals/common activity/mood at micro-level

 - Power and status=increase/decrease of emotional energy

 - Interaction ritual chains cumulate across time/space

\* Michael Hammond:

 - Human inbuilt need for dependable emotional gratification

 - We rank various sources of “affective maximization” by

 experience

 - Historically little economic surplus/all share problem

 - Over time, hierarchies develop/ some deprived/ others gain

- Time differentiation: future designated as repository of a superior level of affective maximization for deprived

 - Belief systems invoked to allow elite affective

 maximization/alleviate emotional deprivation for rest

\* Thomas Scheff:

- Shame (disapproval) and pride (approval) regulate social conduct like auto-pilot

- Accumulating across society = micro basis for macro effect: social control

- Overt vs. bypassed shame explains how present but infrequently noticed

\* Norman Denzin:

 - Focus on media depictions of class, gender and emotion

 - Define proper and legitimate emotions

 - Serve to shape individual desires / self definitions

 underlying cultural experience of emotions

\* Steven Gordon:

 - Link through social structure and personality

 - Social structure influences emotional behavior/motivation

 - Culture influences emotional quality, intensity, object, &

 setting

 - Questions re: content

 intermediate elements

 social change

 cultural relativity

 - Key distinction:

 (1) Emotion=inborn/undifferentiated bodily arousal

(2) Sentiment=socially learned composite (i.e. sensations/gestures/relationships/labels)

 - Questions re: long term character

 social constraints overriding physiological

 - Emotions transformed into sentiments by:

 (1) Differentiation

 (2) Socialization

 (3) Management

 - Analysis of micro-macro goes in both directions.

 **(2) Quantitative vs. Qualitative Methods:**

\* Whether emotions can be measured/quantified or by nature qualitative

\* Smith-Lovin and Heise: affect-control theory:

 - Argue false dichotomy: both aspects evident

 - calculate EPA profiles based on linguistic meanings

 of cultural behaviors, identities, objects, and emotions

 - enables prediction of emotions in particular situations

 - assumes actors behave to maintain fundamental identities

 signalled by emotional discrepancies

\* More qualitative approach:

 - Hochschild - Thoits - Clark

 **(3) Positivism vs. Anti-Positivism:**

\* Two opposing views:

 (1) Emotions as objective phenomena determined by structural/ interactional conditions;

 (2) Impossible to measure emotions objectively/ subjective, cognitive constructions inseparable from perceptions

\* Former (positivist) view:

 Kemper: Physiological basis of emotions

 Social determination

 Four primary emotions (fear, anger, joy, and depression)

 Evolutionally adaptations to social-environmental

 contingencies

 Emotional outcomes predicted by power/status in any

 culture

 Smith-Lovin & Heise: EPA profiles predict emotions

\* Opposite view:

 Norman Denzin:

 Inappropriate to treat emotion as variable

 Opposes positivist theory (explanation by prediction)

 Emotion examined as “lived experience”

 Focuses on forms of emotional feeling

 **(4) Political Economy of Emotions:**

\* Whether need to examine historical/economic/political context of emotion

\* Norman Denzin:

 -emotions fundamentally rooted in:

 History, Political economy, race, class and gender

 - expressed in cultural effects (e.g. media):

 bureaucratization

 commodification

 mass-mediated reality

 deconstruction of major sustaining myths/ relativism

 - examines of how emotion “lived” in such a context:

 ideological endorsement of certain emotions as suitable/

 desirable

\* Arlie Hochschild:

 - focus on “emotional labour” in response to feeling/expression

 rules

 - methods: surface vs. deep acting

 - employment situations: studied emotional labour of flight

 attendants

 - emotion has become commodity: feeling rules set by employers

 **(5) Gender Analysis:**

\* Hochschild:

 - Gender ideologies: justifications for maintenance or change

 in social relations in working families: women bear brunt of

 “Second shift”

 (1) Traditional families

 (2) Egalitarian families

 (3) Transitional

 - Discrepant gender ideologies = powerful emotions

\* Peggy Thoits:

- In face of distressing emotions, men and women choose different management strategies:

 Women: catharsis, social support, reevaluation &

 expression

 Men: think through, exercise, and stoic acceptance

\* Other theorists: Denzin, Clark, and Gordon

 **(6) Managing vs. Accounting for Emotions:**

\* Management vs. explanation of what causes emotions

\* Management approach popular:

 - Anti-positivist/ interactionist

 - Hochschild, Thoits and Clark

 - Emotions not irrevocable/biologically guided

 - Emotions subject to social direction/enhancement/

 suppression

 - Construction via expression norms/ feeling rules

 - Individuals can control/manage emotion in line with these

\* Peggy Thoits:

 - Accepts Hochschild’s 4 part definition of emotion:

 (cues, physiological reactions, expressive gestures & label)

 - Postulates behavioral and cognitive management

 - Emotional deviants can work on any 1 part of emotion in

 either behavioral or cognitive fashion to cope/conform

\* Candace Clark:

 - Emotions and “place” (relative rank on power/status/

 intimacy)

 - Place claims limited by self-concept/emotions signal

 divergence

- Emotion functions: (1) signal function; (2) place marker (both inter and intra-personally)

 - Emotional micropolitics: emotions as tactical weapons:

 (i) Expressing negative/withholding positive emotions

 (ii) Expressing positive/withholding negative emotions

 (iii) Controlling another's level of emotional arousal

 (iv) Eliciting feelings of loyalty and obligation

 (v) Patronizing

\* Management approach also evident in Gordon and Smith-Lovin/Heise

  **(7) Prediction vs. Description:**

\* Positivists favour both description and prediction:

 Kemper

 Smith-Lovin and Heise,

 Thoits,

 Hammond,

 Collins

\* Favor descriptive approach (reflect interactionist view):

 Gordon

 Hochschild

 Clark

 Denzin

 **(8) Biosocial vs. Social Construction:**

\* Role of biological /physiological influences in approaches varies

 - Gordon denies importance: essentially social constructionist

 - Hochschild: “interactive” approach: biology part of emotion

 complex, but manageable

 - Kemper: emphasizes links between physiological/sociological

 processes in emotion formation

  **Conclusion:**

\* Field very broad

\* Differences provide opportunity for research, debate, and synthesis.