

Controlling Affective Experience Interpersonally

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David R. Heise

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Introduction

I was on a sabbatical leave some years ago, had just completed visiting scholars at the University of Illinois, and was off to visit my mother in the middle of Missouri. That's a long lonely drive for someone still in the role of a gregarious professional, so I responded positively when I saw a young man hitchhiking at the entrance to the expressway. I stopped, he got in my car, and he told me he was on his way to a town fifty miles down the road. I was glad to have a diversion for an hour of my long trip.

I told him about myself and asked him what he was doing in Champaign-Urbana. Matter-of-factly he said, "I was in a mental hospital, and they just released me. I'm going home now."

Spending an hour alone on a highway with a fellow straight out of a mental hospital made me apprehensive—an emotional response ratifying the American stereotypes of a mental patient and mental illness. I thought of stopping and dropping him off, but his potential response scared me. Anyhow the option was unacceptable because there is a logical order in "giving a lift" that cannot be breached comfortably.

Thinking that I'm a social psychologist with a professional orientation toward mental patients, I rapidly shaped an experience that confirmed the meaning of my passenger and the meaning of myself. I stepped hard on the gas pedal to reduce our time together, and I asked him what kinds of problems he was having.

"I think people are talking about me," he said. "And I think people control my thoughts. When people touch their faces or scratch themselves, they're controlling what I think."

Gripping the steering wheel tightly, hoping desperately that my beard would not itch, I asked him more questions about his problems and his background.

It turned out that he accepted his thoughts as delusions, although a bit reluctantly. On the personal side, he described himself as passive and unassertive in social relations.

I had asked all the questions I could think of, and still there were 25 miles to go. Again my self identities came to the fore to shape a next experience. Being both a social psychologist and a professor, I decided to profess some social psychology in order to fill the time.

"I have a theory," I told him, "that explains why you have those thoughts. The way you describe yourself, you're a person who believes you're powerless and submissive with others?" He agreed cautiously.

"Well, we all want real life to confirm what we believe. People talking about you and controlling your thinking means you're powerless and submissive, so that's the kind of thing you want to happen. The trouble is, people seem to be doing other things most of the time. So you figured out those signals that show that people are controlling you even when they act like they're doing something else. That's a clever solution. Now you've got them controlling you all you want."

My passenger stared out at the highway with a thoughtful demeanor.

"In fact," I continued, "your problem should get worse when you feel too important. Say you have to stand up and talk; or you do a job and the result is perfect. That's when you most need things to happen that make you feel helpless again. So that may be when you most notice people touching their faces and scratching themselves, controlling your thoughts."

I paused and asked, "What do you think of my theory?"

After a moment of quiet thought he nodded and said, "Makes more sense than what the doctors told me."

Clever fellow – he understood and appreciated affect control theory! No longer could I think of him in the stereotype of mental patient. He was acting more like a student, and I actually was encouraging him to continue with school by the time he left my car.

Affect Control Theory

Sociologist Loren Demerath (1993) would say I enjoy telling this anecdote because it exercises my personal understandings. The story indeed does exercise my understandings of affect control theory (Heise, 1979; Smith-Lovin and Heise, 1988; MacKinnon, 1994) in a number of ways.

Affect control theory's general framework draws on identity theory, as established by George McCall and Jerry Simmons (1966), Sheldon Stryker and Richard Serpe (1994; Stryker, 1968), and Peter Burke and Judy Tully (1977). According to identity theory, we engage people in the context of specific identities, like driver, hitch-hiker, social psychologist, and mental patient. Furthermore, according to affect control theory, we expect lived experience to confirm our sentiments about how good or bad, how powerful or powerless, how lively or quiet such people are supposed to be.

When, for example, I recognized myself as a social psychologist and my car passenger as a mental patient, I needed to come up with an action that would best confirm those identities. The act of analyzing him was near perfect, being in the behavioral repertoire of a psychologist, appropriate for a patient, and producing impressions of each person that were close

to the culturally-given sentiments for the two identities. A psychologist is supposed to be somewhat good, potent, and reserved; a patient is supposed to be evaluatively neutral, but quite powerless and quiet. A psychologist's act of analyzing the patient reproduces those feelings well.

Emotions emerge partly from the identities of the people involved. For example, I felt anxiety when I viewed my car passenger as a mental patient, but I felt congenial after I had turned him into a student. Since emotions are intricately tied to the identities that we hold, emotions reveal those identities both to ourselves and to others—an insight secured for us by the research of Arlie Hochschild (1983) and Shirley Staske (1996), among others. Emotions also arise from actions. Positive actions with valued others produce pleasant emotional states like calmness, pride, or happiness. Wicked actions involving valued others produce unpleasant emotions like anger, fear, shame, or joylessness.

Events that disconfirm sentiments seem unlikely. For example, as soon as I realized I had picked up a mental patient and perhaps put myself at risk, I had a sense of strangeness – "This can't be happening!" An event that causes a little disconfirmation seems odd; an event that creates greater disconfirmation seems extraordinary or uncanny. A happening that wrecks havoc with important sentiments seems impossible even when we acknowledge that it has happened.

Disconfirmations of sentiments that are minor but persistently in the same direction tune-up our sentiments to better fit impressions being produced in actual experiences (Burke and Cast, 1997). Cecilia Ridgeway and her colleagues (e.g., Ridgeway and Blackwell, 1997; Ridgeway et al, 1998) are showing how small adjustments of this sort create and maintain a culturally-shared meaning system. For example, repeated encounters with males who exercise power based on their special resources pressure us gradually to develop a feeling that males are potent, and this sentiment helps us make sense of our interactions with males.

Larger disconfirmations of sentiments create a sense of strangeness and constitute meaning breakdowns that have to be repaired. Strangeness might be repaired behaviorally by creating new events that transform distorted impressions of ourselves or others back to normal. Another kind of repair is to provide new identities that fit the observed actions so that happenings no longer seem so strange. We can change a person's identity through attributions of mood, of personality traits, or of status characteristics. We also can label a person with a new situational identity, as when I switched from seeing my hitch-hiker as a mental patient to seeing him as a student.

Huge disconfirmations of sentiments cause us to go even further in our mental maneuvers. For example, most of us have developed or will develop a conviction that an afterworld exists where a loved one who just died is not really dead. Thereby we acknowledge that a death that seems affectively impossible is true, but only in one possible world.

In summary, affect control theory is concerned with all the things we do and feel as we keep our experiences in line with our sentiments.

Now I want to consider how affect control theory touches contemporary research topics in sociological social psychology. I consider a variety of topics – control systems; status, power, and agency; culture; sex; self; event structures. The only overarching theme in these topics is that all are areas of recent research activity.

Control Systems

First, let me touch on control systems.

We humans actively control deviations from our preferred states. Whenever we determine that our actual paths are deviating in some sense from our ideal paths, we work in order to get ourselves back on target. Thus the theory of control systems is a fertile source of insights into human social relations.

Crowd researcher Clark McPhail instigated one of the most striking simulations in sociology – a computer program that has each separate individual trying to control his or her spatial relationships with others in a group – keeping some distance from everyone but staying close to leaders. The output is a dynamic graphical display that shows movement, milling, and structural emergence in crowds (McPhail, Powers, and Tucker, 1992). You can watch a group of individuals swarm behind a leader and form a circle around the leader when the leader stops.

Peter Burke (1997) developed another computer simulation in which each individual in an exchange network uses payments to control time commitments. A person decides on how much to offer another person so as to spend some preferred amount of time in network exchanges and so as to get a particular exchange accomplished in a reasonable amount of time. Actors operating this way in a computer simulation end up with payment outcomes that are very similar to those of real actors in laboratory experiments. Burke's ingenious formulation of exchange as a process controlling commitment provides new insight into how people use time and how they commit themselves to organizations.

Miller McPherson and Thomas Rotolo (1996) analyzed voluntary organizations, using a model in which individuals control the extent of their associations, with the ideal number of associations varying by a person's socioeconomic position. In this case the focus is on how organizational compositions change as people control their commitments in the face of demands from multiple organizations. McPherson and Rotolo found that an organization's membership slides up or down the social scale depending on which people currently are least burdened by associations relative to their desired levels. For example, were the middle class to suffer an organizational drought, working class organizations would begin expanding their membership upward to fill the vacuum. The McPherson-Rotolo model shows how inter-organizational competitions emerge from individual people controlling their commitments.

Affect control theory is another example of a control theory application in social psychology. A person's definition of the situation provides a self identity and an identity for other, and those identifications set sentiments that should be reflected in experiences. The person builds events to push experiences in a direction that affirms the sentiments associated with situational identities. If something happens to deflect experiences away from identity confirmation, then a person builds corrective events to get social interaction back on track. Second-order control of meaning arises in social interaction in the occasional circumstance where experiences cannot be made to fit the current definition of the situation. In that case a person redefines the situation in terms of some set of identities that is confirmed by the experiences, so that experiences reflect meanings as usual.

Status, Power, Agency

Much of the complexity of interpersonal behavior comes from people trying to control experiences along multiple dimensions of social relations. I turn now to the main dimensions of interpersonal control: status, power, and agency.

T. David Kemper and Randall Collins (1990) offer two bases for interpersonal stratification of people: status and power. By status they mean others' voluntary compliance with your desires – the extent to which others are pleasing you because they want to. People accord status to you when they value what you are and what you do (Kemper, 1972). So a person seeking status can work to fit others' values, or join a group where people appreciate the person's specialities. For example, knowing

a lot about mushrooms is irrelevant in most social situations, but Gary Alan Fine (1996) found that such knowledge was a basis of status in a mushrooming club. Your status increases as more people esteem you, and you become a sociometric star. Esteem from numerous others corresponds to popularity in informal peer groups. Morris Zelditch and Henry Walker (1984) suggested that it translates to legitimacy in formal organizations, and Rebecca Ford and Cathryn Johnson (1998) found empirically that esteem from one's superordinates does enhance one's authority.

Power arises from others' calculated compliance with your wishes – the extent to which people cater to you in order to get what you can give them. As Joseph Whitmeyer (1994) noted, power fades if the resource that you dispense loses value. Power involves setting up a contingency in which your behavior controls others' behavior as others try "to increase outcomes they value positively and to decrease outcomes they value negatively," to use the words of Linda Molm (1994: 164). Acquiring valued resources is an obvious way to acquire power, but so is going among dependent others who need what you already have. For example, Spencer Cahill and Robin Eggleston (1994) point out that one acquires power merely by being a walker when amongst wheelchair users. Power relationships link together in exchange networks and markets. Tallman, Leik, Gray, and Stafford (1993) in one recent article and Edward Lawler and Jeongkoo Yoon (1996) in another article note that people in exchange networks have a backward-looking understanding of the payoffs associated with their actions in terms of reinforcement histories, whereas rational choice in a market situation involves prospective estimation of outcomes. Michael Macy (1995) examined strategies that people use to transform recent experiences into rational decisions for the immediate future.

A third kind of stratification relates to social participation in small groups, as studied long ago by Robert Freed Bales (1950), or recently by James Balkwell (1995). This dimension of interpersonal stratification can be called Agency. Agency is indicated by the predominance of your contribution in a group – the extent to which others let you promote your values and agenda by dominating conversation and mutual action. An agency hierarchy is a structural characteristic of a group that is not easy to change: for instance, John Manzo (1996) found that requiring participation at the beginning of a jury deliberation distributes agency for a while, but agency stratification emerges as usual after the requirement for equal participation is dropped. Expectation states theory developed by Joseph Berger and his colleagues (Berger, Cohen, and Zelditch, 1966) postulates that people with attributes conferring some kind of privilege are accorded agency when a group is struggling to find a leader for a task and information on individual productivity is lacking. Jan Stets found such a phenomenon in discussions among married couples (1997: 199); she reported that "Men, older people, the more highly educated, and those high in occupational status are more likely to give their opinion, and giving one's opinion is the most frequently occurring task behavior in these discussions."

Agency is a social product, not merely an aspect of personality. For one thing, people concede more time to a person who knows how to accomplish a group task (Berger and Conner, 1969). Ethnomethodological research has clarified that agency also grows as others are less attracted to their own opportunities for activity in the situation. For example, Douglas Maynard (1996: 128) found that deliverers of bad news "may provide cues and lead-ins that allow recipients to guess at what's coming, and thereby participate in the construction of a new world." This approach to delivering bad news allows recipients to exercise agency, which is a good thing in itself, and it also allows the bearers of bad news to escape being the agents of unpleasant events. Philip Manning and George Ray (1993) found that shy people pass up opportunities to participate and talk about themselves, granting agency to others, though these same people do seek agency when the conversation turns to topics they value.

The status, the power, or the agency that group members give to one person limits what they can give to others. Christina Randall and Charles Mueller (1995) found that those who receive less are dissatisfied. So the emergence of privilege for some fosters competition and conflict from others.

This is true with regard to status stratification. Patricia and Peter Adler (1995) describe status conflicts occurring among ten to thirteen year old children in which the children employ vicious and deceitful behavior as they vie for popularity and deflate the aspirations of others. Michael Lovaglia and Jeffery Houser (1996) see such a process as self-controlling, with the integrative emotional dispositions of the favored compensating for the disintegrative emotional dispositions of the disfavored. However, the unrelieved negative emotions of chronic scapegoats could sap the scapegoats' commitment to peers, leaving embittered social outcasts as the crushed rubble of status battles. Another kind of status competition pits co-workers against family members. Matthews, Conger, and Wickrama (1996) showed that family relationships become more hostile and unsupportive when co-workers are winning this competition.

Competitions for power can take the form of fragmentation in exchange networks: as Noah Friedkin (1995) observed, the power of privileged people in an exchange network declines as less powerful members of the network begin exchanging with each other. Toshio Yamagishi and Karen Cook (1993) found that people are attracted to exchanges with specific individuals, and John Skvoretz and Michael Lovaglia (1995) found that people prefer to exchange in particular with those who choose them back for further exchanges. Lawler and Yoon (19: 89) found that positive emotions produced by successful exchanges become a "relation specific asset" that keeps the actors committed to the relationship. So, people sacrifice some optimality in exchanges for trust, and for confidence in a sure thing, and in a broader context this draws power away from the privileged. The empowered also may fight each other directly. Laura Miller (1997) describes an instance of Army men using gossip, slow-downs, and low-level sabotage to undermine the rising power of military women.

People also compete for agency. Gene Lerner (1996) describes a subtle form of agency competition in which a co-conversationalist completes another's speech act, and in the process steals the other's agency by converting the other's emerging action into something that was not intended. Conversational interruptions, as studied for example by Lynn Smith-Lovin and Charles Brody (1989), are a more direct way of competing for agency.

These three dimensions of interpersonal stratification – status, power, and agency – correspond to the three dimensions of affect – Evaluation, Potency, and Activity – which were established as universals of human response by psychologist Charles Osgood's cross-cultural research (Osgood, May, and Miron, 1975). A person with high status is felt to be likeable, good, nice. A person who has high exchange-dependency power is viewed as more powerful, strong, and dominant according to research by Samuel Bacharach and Ed Lawler (1973) and more recently by Rebecca Ford and Cathryn Johnson (1998). A person with high agency talks a lot in group discussions and dominates interpersonal space by eye contacts and gestures, and thus seems noisy, energetic, and lively. Thus a person's position on the three dimensions of interpersonal stratification transform into sentiments on the three dimensions of affective meaning that are central in affect control theory.

Culture

I turn now to how culture, sex, and self contribute to stability and change in social relations. First, consider culture.

Popular views of public opinion in America presume divergent and constantly shifting sentiments regarding almost everything as a result of mass media coverage. In fact, though, social psychological research continues to find that the mass

media are conservative in every sense of the word and therefore unlikely to instigate change. For example, John McCarthy, Clark McPhail, and Jackie Smith (1996) revealed that only the most massive protest demonstrations are likely to get mass media coverage, so only ideas that already are familiar get aired. And Thomas Ford (1997) showed that television sitcoms are perpetuating invidious traditional stereotypes that are far from funny in their impacts on minorities.

Survey research shows that most American sentiments are not divergent or shifting. A recent issue of *The Social Change Report* edited by Theodore Caplow (1997) reported that most attitudes assessed in the General Social Survey have remained stable over a 20 year period - even for controversial topics like abortion. Attitudes that were skewed in positive or negative directions 20 years ago almost always are skewed the same way today. Sentiments attached to concepts are part of culture, and, as Carmi Schooler (1994) has noted, culture is the most stable aspect of human affairs.

Though differences and changes in sentiments are few, some do exist. Shalom Schwartz and his colleagues (Schwartz and Huisman, 1995; Prince-Gibson and Schwartz, 1998; see also Wilson, 1973) find two underlying dimensions in evaluation variations. One dimension contrasts valuing self-enhancement with valuing self-transcendence, while the other dimension contrasts valuing change with valuing security and tradition.

The fact that most cultural sentiments are stable and largely homogeneous within a society means that most respondents report much the same thing when asked about their sentiments, so their reports actually are largely redundant. In fact, anthropologists who analyzed this issue mathematically (Romney, Weller, and Batchelder, 1986) concluded that the contours of subjective culture can be defined with near-certainty by tapping the views of just a half dozen good informants. Affect control theory research uses this principle in acquiring dictionaries of affective meanings to represent culture. Ratings of each identity, behavior, setting, or attribute are acquired from just 50 or 60 respondents.

Sex

Much recent research focuses on sex, and I turn to that topic next.

Sociological research often finds that females and males think alike despite their different chromosomes. For example, in a report of a large social survey Umberson, Chen, House, Hopkins, and Slaten (1996 : 855) wrote, "We find that men and women are similar in their psychological reactions to the nature and quality of their relationships." Barbara Meeker and Gregory Elliott (1996) found no differences in how female and male supervisors responded to deviance in mixed-sex work groups. Affect control theory research has revealed that males and females arrive at impressions of actors in essentially the same complex way (Smith-Lovin and Heise, 1998; Smith, Matsuno, and Umino, 1994). Moreover, Cathryn Johnson (1993; 1994) has shown that formal leadership roles can wipe away male or female styles of behavior; Walker, Ilardi, McMahon, and Fennell (1996) found this, too.

Males and females think alike even to the extent of agreeing that we should think differently about males and females. For example, Willie Jasso and Murray Webster (1997) found that both males and females thought males should earn more than females in 1970s Baltimore; and Griffith, Sell, and Parker (1993) found that both males and females view high performing males as more deserving of reward than high performing females. Martha Foschi (1996) found that both males and females demanded more of females than of males in order to perceive the other as the better performer. Melissa Milkie, Robin Simon, and Brian Powell (1997) found boys and girls pretty much agreed in appreciating mothers for cleaning, cooking, driving, and emotional support, while fathers were appreciated for recreational offerings.

Lori Britt and I (1992) studied how people develop impressions of others involved in self-directed behaviors. We found that males and females process such events in the same way, but they use different principles for thinking about females and males. Everyone applies evaluative consistency more when considering females. For example, it is worse for a valued female to harm herself than for a male to do so, even if the male is valued just as much and engages in exactly the same action. In effect this means that we expect women to be more moral than men.

Or so it is in North America. Recent affect control theory research in Japan by Herm Smith and his Japanese colleagues (Smith, Matsuno, and Ike, 1998) finds differences in how the sexes think about attributions! In Japan, males as opposed to females are more concerned with evaluative consistency in attributions and with matching goodness and weakness. In effect, Japanese males are more concerned with morality than are Japanese females. Given only the Japan research, we might decide that the male chromosome carries a disposition to think morally. However, in the context of the extensive U.S. research showing no differences between male and female thinking, we are better off concluding that Japanese males are being socialized to give more attention to morality, while Japanese females are being taught otherwise. Meanwhile, North American males and females are being socialized to think alike, even though both are being conditioned to expect more morality from females than from males.

Self

Some recent sociological social psychological research focuses on the self, and I turn to that topic now.

A self is the epitome of individuality. For example, a positively valued self protects one from debilitating aspects of a sociocultural system, like an unfair division of labor in one's primary relationship, according to research by Monica Longmore and Alfred Demaris (1997).

Yet the self also has a pronounced sociocultural component. Michael Ichiyama (1993) showed that self evaluations are responsive to the evaluations of others in a peer group, making self-esteem a social product in just the way connoted by the notion of a looking-glass self (Cooley, 1902). Some studies suggest a cultural component to the sense of one's own potency, as well. Mirowsky, Ross, and Van Willigen (1996) found that most Americans believe that they are responsible for their own achievements and they attribute internal control to their fellow Americans, too. Meanwhile Saad Al-Zahrani and Stan Kaplowitz (1993) found that Americans on the whole are more internal in their accounts than are Saudis.

Studies in the affect control tradition offer a similar picture. We have asked thousands of people to rate "I, myself" and the results are nearly as convergent as for any other cultural concept. Most people rate themselves as good, fairly powerful, and lively.

Where does all this convergence come from? In the first place it appears to be transmitted intergenerationally. Toby Parcel and Elizabeth Menaghan (1993) found that mothers who esteem themselves and have a sense of mastery raise children with relatively few behavior problems, possibly because the children also have a positive sense of self. Robert Roberts and Vern Bengtson (1993; 1996) found that parental affection in adolescence generates esteem for self, and that self-esteem often lasts for decades. Second, self sentiments are regenerated day by day from successful personal performances. Peter Callero (1994) has pointed out that we each assemble the content of self from culturally defined roles, so that the person we are trying to be very likely fits our personal competences. Donald Reitzes and Elizabeth Mutran (1994) found that being a competent worker and a confident, social spouse are the kinds of ratings that predict high self esteem.

Third, we are embedded in social systems that structurally constrain our views of self. This is illustrated by individual effects of the transition from socialist to capitalist societies in East Europe, as studied by of Melvin Kohn and his co-workers (Kohn, Slomczynski, Janicka, Khmelko, Mach, Paniotto, Zaborowski, Gutierrez, and Heyman, 1997). They made use of an idea offered by Tim Owens (1993): that positive and negative self esteem items vary independently enough to warrant postulating self-deprecation and self-confidence components of the self. In socialist Poland, managers were more self deprecating than workers. In transforming Poland, managers are *less* self deprecating than workers, following the capitalist pattern we know in the USA and Japan. Evidently the self concepts of managers and workers are related to the predicaments that confront them in socialist and capitalist societies. As Jacek Szmataka and David Willer (1995) note, the socialist manager has to pay all workers regardless of output which puts the manager in an unrewarding position; on the other hand, a capitalist has exclusive firing-hiring relations with surplus labor and therefore it is the laborers who are in the unrewarding position.

Events

Event structure is the last social psychological topic that I will discuss.

We humans design behaviors to control our feelings, but more is required to achieve logical sequences of social interaction. For instance, if you run a simulation of social interaction based on affect control theory, you sometimes find one person greeting another in the middle of an interaction, even though a greeting logically can occur only at the beginning of an encounter. Thus we know from research with affect control theory that affective factors bound acceptable behavior, but cognitive factors complete the determination of what is happening at a given moment.

As Judith Howard (1994) noted, cognitive matters in social interactions receive attention from symbolic interactionists, ethnomethodologists, and cognitive scientists in sociology, such as Tom Fararo and John Skvoretz (1984), and Kathleen Carley (1986).

My own contribution is event structure analysis, which focuses on the logical structuring of interpersonal happenings. The basic idea is that accomplishing an action has prerequisites and consequences, and organizing these linkages systematically defines a script or grammar describing how a certain kind of happening is accomplished. William Corsaro and I (1990) specified the logical structure of a game in which children approach and flee a monster, and showed that a generalized logical structure applies in both U.S. and Italian cultures. Larry Griffin (1993) applied event structure analysis in studies of historical processes, and in the process he elaborated the theoretical foundations of the approach. Donna Eder and Janet Enke (1991) showed that a logical structure among pro and con remarks about an absent person underlies the process of adolescent gossiping.

In the 1990s Alex Durig and I (1997) took this perspective a step further and developed a frame for describing any particular event in terms of eight facets: agent, action, object, instrument, alignment, setting, product, and beneficiary. One benefit was a better understanding of why events have prerequisites. If an event produces an object, instrument, setting, or actor for a later event, then the later event cannot occur until the preliminary event happens. Another benefit was an understanding of how collaborative productions get routinized in social organizations to the point that others can use those social interactional sequences as a means to accomplish some outcome.

We coined the term macroaction to refer to the situation where a person uses a social organization as an instrument of individual behavior. Buying dinner for a friend is a simple example of a macroaction. You place the order with a waitperson, which sets as many as a half-dozen employees of a restaurant into organized activity, producing the meal that you give your

friend. Macroactions are important in social psychology because they create large-scale societal phenomena as a by-product of social interactions among individuals. As a personal action, a macroaction is interpretable from the perspective of interactionist theories. Meanwhile the organized collective activity that is instigated by macroactions can be viewed from the perspective of organizational or community or societal theories.

Conclusion

There ends my quick look at some current research in sociological social psychology, and at the ways that affect control theory relates to the endeavors. I wish to take one final minute, though, to express gratitude to those who made important contributions to the development of affect control theory.

The earliest encouragement came from Mae Gordon and Herman Smith after my first public presentation of the theory at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 1971. Bruce Biddle offered encouragement after reading my 1973 draft of a book manuscript on the theory.

Lynn Smith-Lovin joined the research program in the mid-1970s. She helped me obtain and manage an NIMH grant that deepened the empirical basis of the theory and that supported a first generation of graduate students working on the theory. About the same time, Neil MacKinnon used a sabbatical leave to learn affect control theory and prepare himself for his full-scale reproduction of the research program in Canada. Later, Herman Smith wrote a textbook that discussed the theory (1987), and he then replicated the core research in Japan (Smith et al, 1994; Smith et al, 1998). Andreas Schneider replicated some of the work in Germany (1997). Dawn Robinson, Lynn Smith-Lovin, and Olga Tsoudis (1994) applied affect control theory to studies of courtroom situations. Linda Francis (1997) applied the theory in her ethnographic study of support groups, and Amy Kroska (1997) used the theory in understanding family divisions of labor. James and Beverly Wiggins published a textbook on sociological social psychology that gives considerable attention to affect control theory (1994).

I am grateful to all of these people, and many others, who have helped me better understand and explain affect control in social relationships.

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