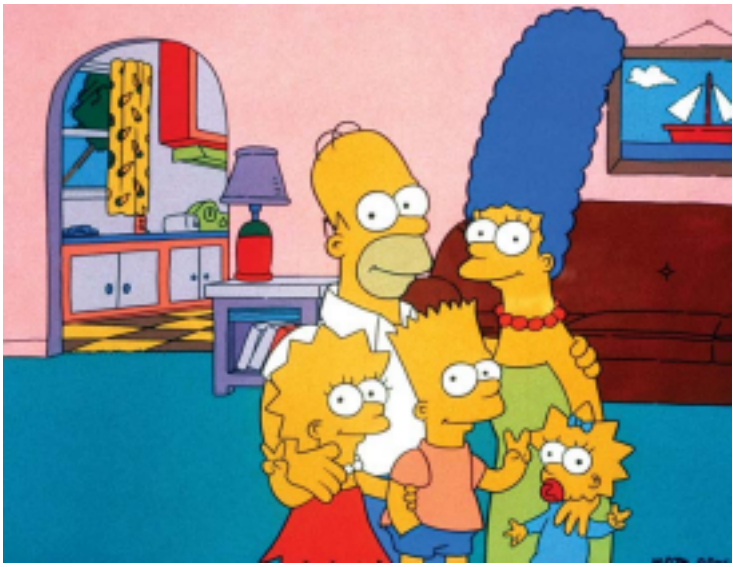
- What type of “front” do you encounter when you enter each situation?
- How does the “region” or setting (location, scenery, and props) a! ect your presentation of self there?
- Can you identify “backstage” and “frontstage” regions for each situation? Which of your activities are prepara tion and which are performance?
- What type of “personal front” (appearance, manner, dress) do you bring to each situation?
- How are your facial expressions, body language, and so forth (“expressions given o! ”) di! erent in each situation?
- What kinds of things do you say (“expressions given”) in each situation?
- How do you modify what you do and say in each situa tion? Are there things you say or do in one that would be inappropriate, strange, or even absurd in the other?
- Who are you in each situation? Do you present a slightly di! erent version of yourself in each? Why?



As you observe the most minute aspects of your interactions, you will probably discover that you perform somewhat di! erent versions of yourself in the two situations. “Doing student,” for instance, might be very di! erent from “doing boyfriend.”

A " nal Go! man-inspired question to ask is this: does engaging in impression management mean that we have no basic, unchanging self ? If we bring di! erent selves to di! er ent situations, what does that say about the idea of a “true self ”? This issue is an important one, and we hope you use your Data Workshop " ndings to pursue it in greater depth. There are two options for completing the Data Workshop.

- *Option 1 (informal)*: Take some informal notes about your observations in step 1, and jot down some of your responses to the questions asked in step 2. Compare your notes and experiences with other students in small group discussions. Use this as a way to learn more about yourself and others in the group.
- *Option 2 (formal)*: For step 1, use ethnographic meth ods of data gathering. Create written " eldnotes that record your actions, interactions, and thoughts during each 30-minute observation period. Be as detailed as possible in writing your " eldnotes. Then write a three to four-page essay analyzing your experiences by ad dressing the questions in step 2. Make sure to refer to your " eldnotes in the essay, and include them as an at tachment to your paper.

Agents of Socialization

Since our sense of self is shaped by social interaction, we should now turn our attention to the socializing forces that have the most signi" cant impact on our lives. These

Lasting Infl uence The family is the original group to which each person belongs, and it is the most important socializing agent.

Family Has the Longest

forces, called **agents of socialization**, provide structured situations in which socialization takes place. While there are a variety of such in# uences in American society, notably religion, as well as our political and economic systems, we will focus here on what may be the four most predominant agents of socialization: the family, schools, peers, and the mass media.

The Family

The family is the single most signi" cant agent of socialization in all societies. It's easy to see why. The family is the origi nal group to which we belong. It is where early emotional and social bonds are created, where language is learned, and where we " rst begin to internalize the norms and values of our society. Most of our primary socialization, which teaches us to become mature, responsible members of society, takes place within the family. It is not surprising, then, that the family has perhaps the most long-lasting in# uence on the individual.

Most research has focused on the role of mothers in child-rearing practices (Goode 1982), although attention has recently turned to the signi" cance of fathers as well as siblings and other relatives. For example, Scott Coltrane's book *Family Man* (1997) looks at historical changes in the roles of men as active parents and how men feel about their involvement in their children's lives. The family has such a powerful impact on us in part because as children we have little or no outside contact (until we start school) and there fore no basis for comparison. The family is our world.

The family is also *in* the world. Where a family is located, both geographically and socially—its ethnic, class, religious, educational, and political background—will a! ect family members (Lareau 2003). For example, one of the most im portant lessons we learn in families is about gender roles: we see what moms and dads, sisters and brothers are expected to do (like mow the lawn or fold the laundry) and convert these observations into general rules about gender in society (Chodorow 1978).

Schools

Many people remember their school years with fondness, dread, or perhaps relief that they're over! No wonder school makes such a great subject for bad dreams and movie scripts. Public elemen tary and secondary schools were " rst established in the United States in the 1800s.

agents of socialization social groups, institutions, and individuals (especially the family, schools, peers, and the mass media) that provide structured situations in which socialization takes place

hidden curriculum values or behaviors that students learn indirectly over the course of their schooling because of the structure of the educational system and the teaching methods used

Socialization di! ers from family to family because each family has its own particular set of values and beliefs. A single family can also change over time. As years pass, children may not be raised in the same way as their older siblings, for the simple reason that parents have no experience with babies when their " rst child is born but plenty of experience by the time the youngest comes along. Nor are all aspects of social ization deliberate; some in fact are quite unintentional (as when a father's violent temper or a mother's depression is passed down to the next generation).

While attendance was uneven at " rst, education advocates believed that schooling played a critical role in maintain ing a democracy (though blacks and women still lacked the right to vote) and in shaping future generations of citizens. Over the years, schools have gradually taken on greater re sponsibilities than merely teaching a prescribed curriculum. Schools now provide physical education, meals, discipline, and child care, all formerly the provinces of other social institutions.

When children begin attending school (including pre school and day care), it may be their " rst signi" cant experience away from home. School helps them to become less dependent on the family, providing a bridge to other social groups. In school, children learn that they will be judged on their behavior and on academic performance. They learn not only formal subjects but also a **hidden cur riculum** (P. Jackson 1968), a set of behavioral traits such as punctuality, neatness, discipline, hard work, competi
tion, and obedience (to be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 11). The socialization children receive from teach ers, sta! members, and other students occurs simultane
ously and overlaps with what they learn in the family. Recently, there has been increasing scrutiny regarding the role of teachers, especially in public schools. Because teach ers are such potent role models for students, parents are con cerned about the moral standing of those who are in charge of teaching their children, as well as their training and com petence. There is increasing pressure for schools to take on even more responsibilities, including dealing with issues that used to be taught at home or in church—such as sex, violence, drugs and alcohol, and general morality and citizenship.

Peers

Peer groups are groups of people who are about the same age and have similar social characteristics. Peers may be friends at school or from the neighborhood, members of a sports team, or cabin mates at summer camp. As children get older, peers often become more important than parents as agents of socialization. As the in# uence of peers increases, the in# uence of parents decreases. While the family still has the most long-lasting in# uence on an individual, it is peers who have the most intense and immediate e! ect on each other.

By adolescence, young people spend more time with their peers than with their parents or anyone else (Larson and Richards 1991). Membership in a peer group provides young people with a way of exercising independence from, and possibly reacting against, adult control. Young people tend to form peer subcultures that are almost entirely cen tered on their own interests, such as computer gaming or disc golf or garage bands, with distinct values and norms re
lated to those interests.

The need to "" t in" with a peer group may seem over whelming to some young people. Some will do almost any thing to belong, even betray their own values: Bradley and Wildman (2002) found that peer pressure was a predictor of adolescent participation in risky behaviors such as dan gerous driving, unsafe sex, and drug and alcohol use. Peer groups, while providing important and enjoyable social bonds, can also be the source of painful self-doubt, ridicule, or rejection for many young people.

The Mass Media

The mass media's role as one of the most signi" cant sources of socialization is a somewhat recent phenomenon. Tele vision began appearing in American homes a little over

How Are Television Shows a Socializing Agent? How is wealth depicted on a show such as *Gossip Girl?*

50 years ago, and usage of the internet has become wide spread only in the last decade. Yet for many of us, it would be almost impossible to imagine life without the mass media— whether print, electronic, or digital. This huge explosion, the dawning of the Information Age, is something we already take for granted, but we don't always see the ways in which it is changing our lives.

Many sociologists question whether the media may have even usurped some of the functions of the family in teach ing us basic norms and values and giving advice on common problems. As an example, take the people of Fiji, a South Pa ci" c island that lacked widespread access to television until 1995. A group of Harvard Medical School researchers took this unique opportunity to study the e! ects of television on the native population—speci" cally, they were interested in the ways in which Western programs in# uenced eating hab its and body image among adolescent girls in a culture that "traditionally supported robust appetites and body shapes" (A. Becker et al. 2002).

Through surveys and interviews with the young women (the mean age was around 17) in 1995, just months after television was introduced and again in 1998, the research ers ascertained that Western television was in fact a! ecting body image and corresponding behaviors among the girls. In those three years the percentage of subjects whose survey responses indicated an eating disorder jumped from 12.5 to 29.2, and the percentage who reported self-induced vomit ing as a form of weight control rose from none to 11.3. Di eting and dissatisfaction with weight were prevalent—and 83 percent of the girls who were interviewed reported that they felt television "had speci" cally in# uenced their friends and/or themselves to feel di! erently about or change their body shape or weight" (A. Becker et al. 2002). The women of Fiji only recently encountered mass me dia. How do we measure the cumulative e! ect of the ubiq uitous exposure to the mass media that pervade American society, day in and day out? Whose messages are we listen ing to, and what are we being told about ourselves and each other? On average, Americans watch between two and seven hours of television per day and spend more hours listening to the radio, CDs or iPods, reading, watching movies, play ing video games, sur" ng the web, or sending instant messag es and e-mail. By the time young people graduate from high school, they will have spent far more time with the mass me dia than in the classroom. While some worry that this means kids are lost in a fantasy world, Hodge and Tripp (1986) have argued that watching TV actually helps kids learn to distinguish between reality and fantasy, an important devel opmental milestone. In addition to their ability to entertain,

the media also have great potential to inform and educate. It is clear that we internalize many of the values, beliefs, and norms presented in the media and that their powerful in# u ence in our lives only stands to increase as we proceed into the Information Age.

ANALYZING MASS MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE

Television as an Agent of Socialization

Television is a powerful and surreptitious agent of socialization. It is everywhere, and we devour it—so it seems important to ask what kinds of messages we are getting about our society from our viewing. How does TV socialize us? This Data Workshop will use content analysis (see the discussion of using existing sources in Chapter 3) to help you answer this question.

Choose one of the most popular TV series currently on the air—at the time of this writing, your choices might include *Lost*, *House*, *CSI*, or *The O! ce*. Choose a regular drama or comedy series rather than a newsmagazine, talk show, game show, or reality show.

Now choose some aspect of social status and individual identity that you want to focus on: for example, gender (how women or men are portrayed), race/ethnicity (how a particu lar ethnic group, such as African Americans or Latinos, is portrayed), sexuality (heterosexuals, gay men, or lesbians), class (poor people, wealthy people, or the middle class). For instance, you might look at the depiction of women in *Gossip Girl* or men in *Two and a Half Men*, the role of
Latinos in *Law & Order* or African Americans in *Grey's Anatomy*, or the portrayal of the middle class in *Weeds* or the wealthy in *90210*.

Watch an episode of your chosen program in its entirety (you might want to TiVo or videotape the program or look for an episode on DVD or online so that you can re-view it if you need to). Take notes as you watch; note the program's content with reference to your particular topic choice. To give you an example of how to do this workshop, we use depictions of the working (in brackets below) as our topic and the program *Ugly Betty*. You should substitute your own choice of topic and cur rent program for each of the following questions:

1. In the program, how many [working class] characters are there? How does the number of [working class] charac ters compare with the number of other characters? Are the [working class] roles major characters or minor char acters? How can you tell?

2. What types of roles do the [working class] characters have? What are their activities, attitudes, and interactions like on the show? What kinds of things do they do and say that tell you who they are and what they are like?

3. Are the portrayals of [the working class] positive or nega tive? Humorous or serious? One-dimensional or multi dimensional? How can you tell?

4. What image(s) of [the working class] does this program portray? In other words, what messages do the words, pictures, plot lines, and characters convey to viewers about [the working class] in general?

In the case of *Ugly Betty*, there are some stark contrasts between Betty Suarez's working-class family and the wealthy Meade family, the powerful executives who own *Mode* maga zine where Betty works. There are some other working-class characters on the show in addition to the Suarez family, like *Mode* seamstress Christine McKinney or sandwich shop owner Giovanni "Gio" Rossi. The show gives us a window into the worlds of the working class and the wealthy, where we can see their di! erent work experiences, lives at home, choices of leisure activities, and even divergent aspirations. While one group is " ghting for control over a fashion empire, another is focused on trying to make ends meet, get a green card, or have a baby.

Now come the really important questions:

5. How does the content of this program contribute to our socialization process? What do we learn about [the working class] in society from watching the program? After " nishing your analysis, what do you think about TV's powers of socialization?

Changing the World

Sister Pauline Quinn and Training Dogs in Prison

Can adopting a puppy change the world? According to Sister Pauline Quinn, a Dominican nun, it can when the dogs are adopted by prison inmates and trained to help the disabled! Sister Pauline knew something " rsthand about life in a to
tal institution, and not just the convent. Born Kathy Quinn, she was once a chronic runaway because of a dysfunctional family life and was eventually institutionalized for lack of another place for her to go. For several years afterward she was homeless, staying in abandoned buildings and trying to avoid getting picked up by the police as a vagrant. Kathy Quinn could well have died on the streets of Los Angeles, but instead her life was turned around when she found Joni, a German Shepherd.

Quinn felt that the dog was the beginning of the process of resocialization that helped return her to being a function ing member of society. It was the " rst time she had a true friend, one whose unconditional love was restoring her badly damaged self-esteem. Her time in institutions had left her “de personalized,” stripped of any positive identity with which to tackle the demands of life on the “outside.” The understand ing and a! ection she received from Joni began to heal Quinn of the traumas she had sustained in her youth. The work that Quinn did in training Joni transformed not only the dog but the person as well, eventually leading her to a happier and more productive life devoted to helping others.

Quinn was particularly drawn to the plight of women prisoners and believed that they too could " nd similar ben e" ts through contact with dogs. She knew that life in prison could be extremely depersonalizing, especially for women, and that rehabilitation, if it was o! ered at all, was too often unsuccessful, returning convicts to the streets without hav ing rebuilt their lives. In 1981, with the assistance of Dr. Leo Bustad, a professor of veterinary science at the University of Washington, she approached the Washington State Correc
tional Center for Women and proposed that inmates volun teer to train puppies adopted from local shelters and rescue organizations to become service and therapy dogs. The re sult was the Prison Pet Partnership Program.

The women selected to participate in the program get more than just dogs to train; they get the opportunity for substantial resocialization, which helps them to develop new, positive identities and learn valuable social skills that can translate to the outside world. The labor-intensive process of training a dog is perfectly suited to the needs and abilities of inmates, who have a great surplus of time and a desperate need to " nd constructive ways to occupy it. The rigors of dog training, which place an emphasis on achieving discipline and obedience through repetition and positive reinforcement, is a lesson not lost on the trainers. During the months of training, the animals even sleep with the inmates, providing added psy chological bene" ts. Prisons report signi" cant improvements in morale and behavior once dog training programs are in place. Allowing prisoners access to the dogs’ unconditional love and giving the prisoners a chance to contribute to society in a meaningful way increase the likelihood that the prisoners will reenter mainstream society successfully.

While the program was originally motivated by Sister Quinn’s desire to change the lives of prisoners, she was thinking of more than just the inmates, arguing that “things like this are part of a chain reaction of good.” It begins with

There are two options for completing the assigned work.

- *Option 1 (informal)*: Prepare written notes that you can refer to during in-class discussions. Discuss your reac tions and conclusions with other students in small-group discussions. Listen for any di! erences or variations in each other’s insights.
- *Option 2 (formal)*: Write a three- to four-page essay an swering the questions posed above. Make sure to refer to speci" c segments of the TV show that support your analysis.

Adult Socialization

Being an “adult” somehow signi" es that we’ve learned well enough how to conduct ourselves as autonomous members of society. But adults are by no means completely socialized.

Sister Pauline Quinn, pictured on the left, has started dog training programs in prisions in 19 states. Participants include the inmates pictured on the right.

the rescue of an unwanted animal that would otherwise be put down, gives emotional support and job training to pris oners, and " nally provides handicapped and disabled peo ple service animals that improve their lives.

Service animals trained to work with disabled people cost as much as $10,000 to train, so making more of them avail able can transform the lives of the people they’re placed with. The original program, in the Washington penal system, has now placed over 700 dogs as service, seizure, or therapy dogs as well as pets. Only about one out of every 15 dogs has what it takes to work as a service or therapy dog, but the others are released into the community as “paroled pets,” whose in
tensive training now makes them much more adoptable than they were before.

Life is continually presenting us with new situations and new roles with unfamiliar norms and values. We are constantly learning and adjusting to new conditions over the life course and thereby participating in secondary socialization.

For example, your college training will teach you a great deal about the behaviors that will be expected of you in your chosen profession, such as responsibility and punctuality. But after graduating and obtaining a job, you will likely " nd further, unanticipated expectations. At the very least, you will be socialized to the local culture of a speci" c workplace,

Prisons in at least 19 states have established similar dog training programs. The vast majority of them are funded without any state money, using only donations, and some times becoming nearly self-supporting by running grooming and kennel businesses. Military prisons have begun compa rable programs to train service dogs for disabled veterans. Re gardless of the speci" c mission each program pursues, prison pet training programs provide proof that changing the world always transforms those who give as much as it does those who receive. In 2001, the story of Sister Pauline Quinn and the prison dog training program was made into the original Lifetime TV movie *Within These Walls.*

where new rules and customs (like “Always be closing!” in a real estate o$ ce) are observed. As your career unfolds, such episodes of

Total Institutions The military, prisons, and cults are examples of total institutions where individual's identities are stripped away and reformed.

socialization will recur as you take on di! erent responsibilities or switch jobs.

Other examples of altered life circumstances include mar rying, being divorced or widowed, raising a family, moving to a new community, losing a job or retiring—all of which re quire modifying attitudes and behaviors. For example, being divorced or widowed after many years of marriage means jumping into a dating pool that may look quite di! erent from the last time you were in it—"safe sex," "splitting the check," and other new norms may be hard for older daters to as similate. Adult socialization often requires the replacement of previously learned norms and values with di! erent ones, what is known as **resocialization**. Facing a serious illness or grow ing old also often involves intensive resocialization. In order to cope with a new view of what their aging body will permit them to do, people must discard previous behaviors in favor of others (not working out every day, for example).

Another dramatic example of resocialization is found in **total institutions** (Go! man 1961), places such as prisons, cults, and mental hospitals, and in some cases even board ing schools, nursing homes, of resocialization is similar: all previous identities are sup pressed and an entirely new, disciplined self is created. Relatively few adults experience resocialization to the degree of the total institution. All, however, continue to learn and synthesize norms and values throughout their life as they move into di! erent roles and social settings that present them once again with the challenges and opportuni ties of continued socialization.

Statuses and Roles

resocialization the process of replacing previously learned norms and values with new ones as a part of a transition in life

total institution an institution in which individuals are cut off from the rest of so ciety so that their lives can be controlled and regulated for the purpose of system atically stripping away previous roles and identities in order to create new ones

status a position in a social hierarchy that carries a particular set of expectations

monasteries, and the military. In total institutions, resi dents are severed from their previous relations with so ciety, and their former iden tity is systematically stripped away and re-formed. There may be di! erent ends to ward which total institutions are geared, such as creating good soldiers, punishing cri - minals, or managing men tal illness, but the process

While agents of socialization play an

important role in devel oping our individual identities, so does the larger sca! olding of society. This happens as we take on (or have imposed upon us) di! erent statuses and roles.

A **status** is a position in a social hierarchy that comes with a set of expectations. Sometimes these positions are formalized—"professor," "president," or even "parent." Parental obligations, for example, are written into laws that prohibit the neglect and abuse of children. Other statuses are more informal—you may be the "class clown," for in stance, or the "conscience" of your group of friends. The contours of these informal statuses are less explicit but still widely recognizable. We all occupy a number of statuses,