image that will bring about the desired behavior from others. Dramaturgy sees these interactions as governed by planned behavior designed to enable an individual to present a particular image to others.

Types of Social Interaction

When two individuals are in each other's presence, they inevitably affect each other. They may do so in tentionally, as when one person asks the other for change for a quarter, or they may do so uninten tionally, as when two people drift toward opposite sides of the elevator in which they are riding. Whether intentional or unintentional, both behaviors represent types of social interaction.

Nonverbal Behavior

Many researchers have focused attention on how we communicate with one another by using body move ments. This study of body movements, known as *ki nesics,* attempts to examine how such things as "slight head nods, yawns, postural shifts, and other non verbal cues, whether spontaneous or deliberate, affect communication (Samovar, Porter, & Jain, 1981). Samovar, Porter, and Jain describe various cultural as pects of nonverbal communication.

> Many of our movements relate to an attitude that our culture has, consciously or uncon sciously, taught us to express in a specific man ner. In the United States, for example, we show status relationship in a variety of ways. The ritu alistic nonverbal movements and gestures in which we engage to see who goes through a door first, or who sits or stands first, are but a few ways our culture uses movement to commu nicate status. In the Middle East, status is under scored nonverbally by which individual you turn your back to. In Oriental cultures, bowing and backing out of a room are signs of status re lationships. Humility might be shown in the United States by a slight downward bending of the head, but in many European countries this same attitude is manifested by dropping one's arms and sighing. In Samoa humility is commu nicated by bending the body downward.

The use of hand and arm movements as a means of communicating also varies among cultures. We all are aware of the different gestures for derision. For some European cultures, it is a closing fist with the thumb protruding between the index and middle fin gers. The Russian expresses this same attitude by moving one index finger horizontally across the other.

In the United States, we can indicate that things are okay by making a circle with one's thumb and index finger while extending the others. If you make this

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The use of hand and arm movements, eye contact, and norms of nonverbal behavior are markedly different for Arab Bedouins than they are for Americans.

gesture in Japan, you are signifying "money." And in Arab countries, if you bare your teeth while making this gesture, you are displaying "extreme hostility."

In the United States, we say good-bye or farewell by waving the hand and arm up and down. If you wave this way in South America, you may discover that the other person is not leaving but moving to ward you. That is because in many countries, the ges ture we use as a sign of leaving actually means "come." Eye contact is another area in which some interesting findings have been reported. Samovar, Porter, and Jain explain that in the United States, the following has been noted:

1. We tend to look at our communication partner more when we are listening than when we are talking. The search for words frequently finds us, as speakers, looking into space, as if to find the words imprinted somewhere out there.
2. The more rewarding we find the speaker's mes sage to be the more we will look at him or her. 3. The amount of eye contact we try to establish with other people is determined in part

by our perception of their status. . . . When we address someone we regard as having high status we at tempt a modest-to-high degree of eye contact. But when we address a person of low status, we make very little effort to maintaining eye contact.

4. We tend to feel discomfort if someone gazes at us for longer than ten seconds at a time.

These notions of eye contact found in the United States differ from those of other societies. In Japan and

AP/Wide World Photos **Spontaneous cooperation that arises from the needs of a particular situation is the oldest and most natural form of cooperation.**

China, for example, "it is considered rude to look into another person's eyes during conversation." Arabs, in contrast, use personal space very differently; they stand very close to the person they are talking to and stare directly into the eyes. Arabs believe that the eyes are a "key to a person's being and that looking deeply into another's eyes allows one to see another's soul."

The proscribed relationships between males and fe males in a culture also influence eye contact. Asian cultures, for example, consider it "taboo for women to look straight into the eyes of males. Most men, out of respect for this cultural characteristic, do not stare directly at women." French men, on the other hand, accept staring as a cultural norm and often stare at women in public (Samovar, Porter, & Jain, 1981; Axtell, 1998).

Exchange

When people do something for each other with the express purpose of receiving a reward or return, they are involved in an **exchange interaction.**

Most employer-employee relationships are ex change relationships. The employee does the job and

is rewarded with a salary. The reward in an exchange interaction, however, need not always be material; it can also be based on emotions such as gratitude. For example, if you visit a sick friend, help someone with a heavy package at the supermarket, or help some one solve a problem, you will expect these people to feel grateful to you.

Sociologist Peter Blau (1964) pointed out that

ex change is the most basic form of social interaction. He believes social exchange can be observed every where once we are sensitized to it.

Cooperation

A **cooperative interaction** occurs *when people act together to promote common interests or achieve shared goals.* The members of a basketball team pass to one another, block off opponents for one another, rebound, and assist one another to achieve a common goal—winning the game. Likewise, family members cooperate to promote their interests as a family—the husband and wife both may hold jobs as well as share in household duties, and the children may help out by mowing the lawn and washing the dishes.

Interaction

People do not interact with one another as anony mous beings. They come together in the context of specific environments and with specific purposes. Their interactions involve behaviors associated with defined statuses and particular roles. These statuses and roles help to pattern our social interactions and provide predictability.

Figure 5–1 Status and Master Status

Generally, each individual occupies many statuses at one time. The statuses of a female executive at major television network include author, wife, mother, pianist, and so on. Other statuses could be added to this list. However, one status—vice-president for programming—is most important in patterning this woman's life. Sociologists call such a status a master status.

Elements of Social

Statuses

Statuses are *socially defined positions that people*

Volunteer campaign worker

Pianist

occupy. Common statuses may pertain to religion, ed ucation, ethnicity, and occupation: Protestant, college graduate, African American, and teacher, and so on. Statuses exist independently of the specific people who occupy them (Linton, 1936). For example, our society recognizes the status of politician. Many people occupy that status, including President George W. Bush, Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator Hillary Clinton, and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. New politicians appear; others re tire or lose popularity or are defeated, but the status, as the culture defines it, remains essentially un

Wife

Mother

Author

Sister

Guest lecturer

changed. The same is true for all other statuses: oc cupational statuses such as doctor, computer analyst, bank teller, police officer, butcher, insurance adjuster, thief, and prostitute; and nonoccupational statuses such as son and daughter, jogger, friend, Little League coach, neighbor, gang leader, and mental patient.

It is important to keep in mind that from a socio logical point of view, status does not refer—as it does in common usage—to the idea of prestige, even though different statuses often do contain differing de grees of prestige. In the United States, for example, research has shown that the status of Supreme Court justice has more prestige than that of physician, which in turn has more prestige than that of sociol ogist (Nakao, Keoko, & Treas, 1993).

People generally occupy more than one status at a time. Consider yourself, for example: You are some one's daughter or son, a full-time or part-time college student, perhaps also a worker, a licensed car driver, a member of a church or synagogue, and so forth. Sometimes one of the multiple statuses a person oc cupies seems to dominate the others in patterning that person's life; such a status is called a *master status.*

For example, George W. Bush has occupied a number of diverse statuses: husband, father, state governor, and presidential candidate. After January 20, 2001, however, his master status was that of president of the United States, as it governed his ac tions more than did any other status he occupied at the time. A person's master status will change many times in the course of his or her life cycle. Right

now, your master status probably is that of college student.

Five years from now it may be graduate student, artist, lawyer, spouse, or parent. Figure 5–1 illus trates the different statuses occupied by a 35-year-old woman who is an executive at a major television network. Although she occupies many statuses at once, her master status is that of vice-president for programming.

In some situations, a person's master status may have a negative influence on the person's life. For ex ample, people who have followed what their culture considers a deviant lifestyle may find that their mas ter status is labeled according to their deviant be havior. Those who have been identified as ex-convicts are likely to be so classified no matter what other sta tuses they occupy. They will be thought of as ex convict-painters, ex-convict machinists, ex-convict writers, and so on. Their master status has a negative effect on their ability to fulfill the roles of the statuses they would like to occupy. Ex-convicts who are good machinists or house painters may find employers un willing to hire them because of their police records. Because the label *criminal* can stay with individuals throughout their lives, the criminal justice system is reluctant to label juvenile offenders or to open their records to the courts. Juvenile court files are usually kept secret and often permanently sealed when the person reaches age 18.

Some statuses, called **ascribed statuses,** are *con ferred on us by virtue of birth or other significant*

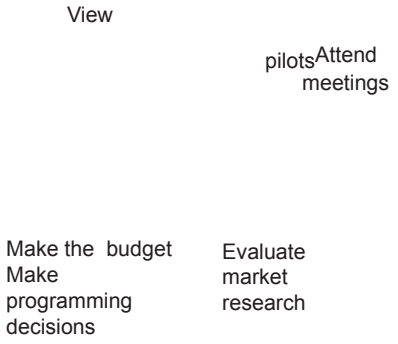
Rick Gomez/CORBIS

This woman's ascribed status is female; her achieved status is based on her profession.

factors not controlled by our own actions or deci sions; people occupy them regardless of their inten tions. Certain family positions, such as that of daugh ter or son, are typical ascribed statuses, as are one's gender and ethnic or racial identity. Other statuses, called **achieved statuses,** are *occupied as a result of the individual's actions*—student, professor, garage mechanic, race car driver, artist, prisoner, bus driver,

Figure 5–2 Status and Roles

The status of vice-president for programming at a major television network has several roles attached to it, including attending meetings, making programming decisions, and so on.



husband, wife, mother, or father.

Roles

Statuses alone are static—nothing more than social categories into which people are put. Roles bring statuses to life, making them dynamic. As Robert Linton (1936) observed, you occupy a status but you play a role. **Roles** are *the culturally defined rules for proper behavior that are associated with every status.*

Roles may be thought of as collections of rights and obligations. For example, to be a race car driver you must become well versed in these rights and ob ligations, as your life might depend on them. Every driver has the right to expect other drivers not to try to pass when the race has been interrupted by a yel low flag because of danger. Turned around, each driver has the obligation not to pass other drivers

under yellow-flag conditions. A driver also has a right to expect race committee members to enforce the rules and spectators to stay off the raceway. On the other hand, a driver has an obligation to the owner of the car to try hard to win.

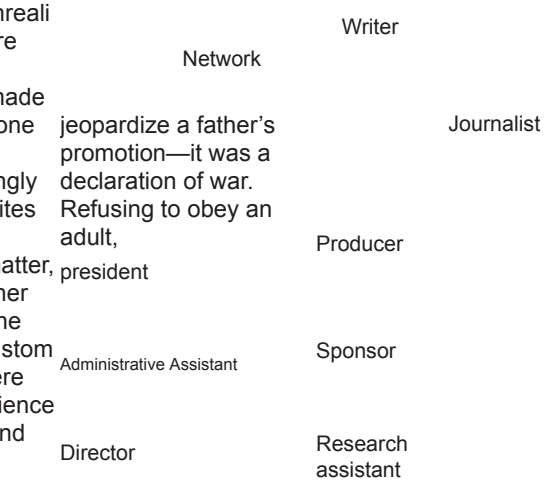
In the case of our television executive, she has the right to expect to be paid on time, to be provided with good-quality scripts and staff support, and to make decisions about the use of her budget. On the other hand, she has the obligation to act in the best inter est of the network, to meet schedules, to stay within her budget, and to treat her employees fairly. What is important is that all these rights and obligations are part of the roles associated with the status of vice president for programming. They exist without regard to the particular individuals whose behavior they guide (Figure 5–2).

A status may include a number of roles, and each role will be appropriate to a specific social context. For example, as the child of a military officer, Kay Redfield Jamison found that children had to learn the importance of statuses and roles and the proper be havior to be displayed toward those who occupied those positions.

> [The] Cotillion was where officers' children were supposed to learn the fine points of man ners, dancing, white gloves, and other unreali ties of life. It also was where children were sup posed to learn, as if the preceding fourteen or fifteen years hadn't already made pected to do this. I saw the line of crisply crino lined girls in front of me and watched each of them curtsying neatly. Sheep, I thought, Sheep. Then it was my turn. Something inside of me came to a complete boil. It was one too many times watching one too many girls being ex pected to acquiesce; far more infuriating, it was one too many times watching girls willingly go along with the rites of submission. I refused. A slight matter, perhaps, in any other world, but within the world of military custom and protocol—where symbols and obedience were everything, and where a child's misbehavior could jeopardize a father's promotion—it was a declaration of war. Refusing to obey an adult, however absurd the request, simply wasn't done. Miss Courtnay, our dancing teacher, glared. I refused again. She said she was very sure that Colonel Jamison would be terribly upset by this. I was, I said, very sure that Colonel Jamison couldn't care less. I was wrong. (Jamison, 1995)
>
> it painfully clear, that generals outrank colonels, who, in turn, outrank majors and captains and lieu tenants, and everyone, but everyone, outranks children. Within the ranks of children, boys al ways outrank girls.
>
> One way of grinding this particularly irritating pecking order into the young girls was to teach them the old and ridiculous art of curtsying. It is hard to imagine that anyone in her right mind would find curtsying an even vaguely tolerable thing to do. But having been given the benefits of a liberal education by a father with strongly nonconforming views and behaviors, it was be yond belief to me that I would seriously be ex

Figure 5–3 Role Sets

People's role behaviors change according to the statuses of the other people with whom they interact. The female vice-president for programming will adopt somewhat different roles depending on the statuses of the various people with whom she interacts at the station: a writer, a journalist, her assistants, and so on.



Role Sets

All the roles attached to a single status are known col lectively as a **role set.** However, not every role in a par ticular role set is enacted all the time. An individual's role behaviors depend on the statuses of the other people with whom he or she is interacting. For ex ample, as a college student you behave one way to ward other students and another way toward pro fessors. Similarly, professors behave one way toward other professors, another way toward students, and yet a third way toward deans. So the role behavior

we expect in any given situation depends on the pairs of statuses that the interacting individuals occupy. This means that role behavior really is defined by the rights and obligations that are assigned to statuses when they are paired with one another (Figure 5–3).

It would be difficult to describe the wide-ranging, unorganized assortment of role behaviors associated with the status of television vice-president for pro gramming. Sociologists find it more useful to de scribe the specific behavior expected of a network tel evision vice-president for programming interacting

with different people. Such a role set would include the following:

Vice-president for programming/network president

Vice-president for programming/other vice presidents

Vice-president for programming/script writer

Vice-president for programming/administrative assistant

Vice-president for programming/television star Vice-president for programming/journalist Vice-president for programming/producer Vice-president for programming/sponsor

The vice-president's role behavior in each case would be different, meshing with the role behavior of the individual(s) occupying the other status in each pairing (Merton, 1969).

Role Strain

Even though most people try to enact their roles as they are expected to, they sometimes find it difficult. *When a single role has conflicting demands attached to it,* individuals who play that role experience **role strain** (Goode, 1960). For example, the captain of a freighter is expected to be sure the ship sails only

when it is in safe condition, but the captain also is ex pected to meet the company's delivery schedule be cause a day's delay could cost the company thousands of dollars. These two expectations may exert com peting pulls on the captain, especially when some defect is reported, such as a malfunction in the ship's radar system. The stress of these competing pulls is not due to the captain's personality, but rather is built into the nature of the role expectations attached to the captain's status. Therefore, sociologists de scribe the captain's experience of stress as role strain.

Role Conflict

An individual who is occupying more than one sta tus at a time and who is unable to enact the roles of one status without violating those of another status is encountering **role conflict.** Not long ago, preg nancy was considered "women's work." An expec tant father was expected to get his wife to the hospital on time and pace the waiting room anxiously await ing the nurse's report on the sex of the baby and its health. Today, men are encouraged and even ex pected to participate fully in the pregnancy and the birth of the child. A role conflict arises, however, in that although the new father is expected to be in volved, his involvement is defined along male gender role lines. He is expected to be helpful, supportive, and essentially a stabilizing force. He really is not al lowed to indicate that he is frightened, nervous, or possibly angry about the baby. His role as a male, even in twenty-first-century American society, conflicts with his feelings as a new expectant father (Shapiro, 1987).

As society becomes more complex, individuals occupy increasingly larger numbers of statuses. This increases the chances for role conflict, which is one of the major sources of stress in modern society.

Role-Playing

The roles we play can have a profound influence on both our attitudes and our behavior. Playing a new social role often feels awkward at first, and we may feel we are just acting—pretending to be something that we are not. However, many sociologists feel that the roles a person plays are the person's only true self. Peter Berger's (1963) explanation of role-playing goes further: The roles we play can transform not only our actions but also ourselves.

One feels more ardent by kissing, more humble by kneeling, and more angry by shaking one's fist—that is, the kiss not only expresses ardor but manufactures it. Roles carry with them both certain actions and emotions, and attitudes that belong to these actions. The professor putting on an act that pretends to wis dom comes to feel wise.

Institutions and Social Organization

Anyone who has traveled to foreign countries knows that different societies have different ways of doing things. The basic things that get done actually are quite similar—food is produced and

distributed; peo ple get married and have children; and children are raised to take on the responsibilities of adulthood. The vehicle for accomplishing the basic needs of any society is the social institution.

Social Institutions

Sociologists usually speak of five areas of society in which basic needs have to be fulfilled: the family sec tor, the education sector, the economic sector, the re ligious sector, and the political sector. For each of these areas, social groups and associations carry out the goals and meet the needs of society.

The behavior of people in these groups and asso ciations is organized or patterned by the relevant **so cial institutions**—*the ordered social relationships that grow out of the values, norms, statuses, and roles that organize those activities that fulfill society's fundamental needs.* Thus, economic institutions or ganize the ways in which society produces and dis tributes the goods and services it needs; educational institutions determine what should be learned and how it should be taught; and so forth.

Of all social institutions, the family is perhaps the most basic. A stable family unit is the main ingredi ent necessary for the smooth functioning of society. For instance, sexual behavior must be regulated and children must be cared for and raised to fit into so ciety. Hence, the institution of the family provides a system of continuity from one generation to the next.

Using the family as an example, we can see the dif ference between the concept of group and the concept of institution. A group is a collection of specific, identifiable people. An institution is a system for or ganizing standardized patterns of social behavior. In other words, a group consists of people, and an in stitution consists of actions. For example, when so ciologists discuss *a* family (say the Smith family), they are referring to a particular group of people. When they discuss *the* family, they are referring to the family as an institution—a cluster of statuses, roles, values, and norms that organize the standardized patterns of behavior that we expect to find within family groups. Thus, the family as an American in stitution typically embodies several master statuses: those of husband, wife, and, possibly, father, mother, and child. It also includes the statuses of son, daugh ter, brother, and sister. These statuses are organized into well-defined, patterned relationships: Parents