

# Example of symbolic interactionism essay

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**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Welsh, J. *Dramaturgical Analysis and Societal Critique* Piscataway, New Jersey. Transaction Publishers. 1990. The original inspiration for dramaturgical sociology, the subject of this chapter, derives from the greatest playwright in the English language: William Shakespeare. It was Shakespeare who adorned London's famous Globe Theater with the Latin motto *Totus Mundus Agit Histrionem* (All the World is a Theater) and who wrote the following lines for Jacques in *As You Like It*: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players."

For Erving Goffman (1922–1982), arguably the most original American theorist of the second half of the 20th century, the metaphor of life as theater is rich in meaning. He sees all human interaction as, in some ways, very much like a grand play. He is not, however, as concerned with sweeping generalizations about the human condition as he is with the particulars of daily life—the micro-level interactions between individuals that, when taken together, constitute the human experience. At this micro level, he argues, the world is much more like a stage than we commonly realize.

Adams, Gregory. *All the World's a Stage*. New York: Basic Books. 1963. It is Goffman's claim that if we understand how a contemporary American actor can convey an impression of an angst-ridden Danish prince during a presentation of *Hamlet*, we can also understand how an insurance agent tries to act like a professional operating with a combination of expert knowledge and goodwill. If we understand how a small stage can be used to represent all of Rome and Egypt in *Antony and Cleopatra*, we can also understand how the Disney Store creates a sense of adventure and wonder in any local mall. Also, if we can understand the process by which two paid

actors convince us that they are madly in love in Romeo and Juliet, we can understand how flight attendants manage and use their emotions for commercial gain. In this chapter, we will attempt to explain aspects of Goffman's metaphor by taking insurance agents, employees of the Walt Disney Corporation, flight attendants, and car salespeople as examples of how people create alternate realities. Beyond the metaphor of social life as dramatic ritual, Goffman sensed the potential for alienation brought about because of the problems of authentically embracing a role rather than feeling a certain ambivalence or distance from it. This alienation is also critical to Goffman's analysis.

Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self In Everyday Life*. New York: Doubleday. 1959. Dramaturgy consist of stages refer to the three separate fields where various individuals with various roles they perform.

The front stage is the part where actors properly carries out and performs to traditions that have meanings to the viewers. Actors are conscious that they are being observed on the things they act accordingly. Front stage is a constant performance. He speak front stage includes a segregation between personal front and setting. The two notions are essential for the actors to be successful on their presentations. Setting is the view that should be there for the actors to present; if it's not present, performance of the actor will not be possible.

Personal front composed of equipments that are necessary for the performance to be possible. These equipments are normally undistinguished by the viewers as a fixed demonstration of actors and the presentation. The personal front can be divided into two different concepts, manners and

appearance. Manners mean to the ways the actors present themselves.

While appearance is associated to the personal front equipments that are mirrors of the social status of the actors. The manner of the actors says to viewers what they should expect from their presentation.

Back stage is where presenters are available but viewers are not, and the performers can leave of their characters with fearless feeling on disturbing the presentation. Backstage is where the information is oppressed in front stage or different type of casual actions might come out. No members of the viewers can come out in the back. The actors have to take myriad ways to assure this.

Outside, or off-stage, it is the area where individuals are not included in the presentation yet, they may are not conscious that they are not involved. It is where actors as an individual person encounter the members of the audience separately of the performance of the team on the front stage. Performances that are specific might be endowed when the audience is sectioned as such.

Boundaries or Borders are essential as they stop or limit motion of individuals in different regions. Presenters are necessary to plot borders to initiate who has the access to the presentation, how and when.

A crucial part of Goffman's dramaturgical metaphor is the role. Generally, the role is the particular image that a single actor wants to convey. It is the essence, the contrived sense of self, that the individual wants to project to the world. Just as an actor may adopt the role of a troubled Danish prince or a blues-loving ex-con, individuals in social settings must adopt the traits necessary to the understanding of reality they want to project. For instance,

Guy Oakes argues that to effectively sell insurance, one must adopt the role of the dedicated and knowledgeable professional.

Of course, most people in white-collar careers must put on a display of professionalism. However, Oakes suggests that, in many ways, the insurance agent has a more difficult task than other professionals. For various reasons, there is a widespread public perception that insurance agents are sleazy and underhanded. As one of the insurance agents Oakes (1990) interviewed stated, “ You really get shit on in this business

Perhaps the most important means of getting an audience to understand a role is a script; certainly theater as we know it relies on scripts. Goffman claims that scripts are vital to interpersonal interaction as well. Of course, most interpersonal communication is relatively improvisational—we make it up as we go along. In everyday life, however, some elements of conversation are pretty well scripted. If a person asks a casual acquaintance how he or she is doing, the acquaintance is likely to reply with a simple “ Fine, yourself?” rather than a sincere, well-thought-out description of what he or she is really thinking or feeling at the moment. This is a fragment of conversation we are so used to employing that it feels automatic. Thus, scripts can allow us a great deal of convenience; they constitute a taken-for-granted quality in which, rather than creating our lines out of whole cloth, we borrow from a stock of well-worn scripts.