

“ Symbolic Interactionism Notes ” Web Release

著者	KUWABARA Tsukasa
journal or publication title	Discussion papers in economics and sociology
volume	1701
page range	1-6
year	2017-09-06
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/10232/00029815

Kagoshima University Computing & Communications Center

“Publications,” 2003, No. 16¹

Special Feature

Introduction of Study Cases

“Symbolic Interactionism Notes” Web Release²

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I have been studying sociological theory, specifically the theory of symbolic interactionism, since graduate school. I first came into contact with this theory after my admission to the Department of Regional Science of the Faculty of Letters at Kumamoto University in April 1988. There, I switched from the “Folklore Studies Course” to the “Sociology Course” and began studying medical sociology, with a primary focus on the communication and interactions occurring between the medical staff and patients in hospice care. During this research, I studied the theories of sociologists, B. G. Glaser and A. L. Strauss.

In 1993, after I had earned my degree and, was an auditing student of the university’s Graduate School of Literature, I learned that Strauss had played a role in developing the theory (both a perspective and a method) called symbolic interactionism. I subsequently made this my specialty, as my interest shifted to the theory itself, drifting away from medical sociology. I have been posting and archiving relevant information on my homepage

[<http://warp.da.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1165035/ecowww.leh.kagoshima-u.ac.jp/staff/kuwabara/index.html>] since 2001. Below is a detailed list of items that can be found there.

- (1) “Bibliography of Symbolic Interactionism”
- (2) “Graduation Thesis Abstract”
- (3) “Master’s Thesis”
- (4) “Master’s Thesis Abstract”
- (5) “Doctoral Thesis”

¹ https://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.cc.kagoshima-u.ac.jp/about/information/ccc_kouhou_2003_no16.html

² This article is the English version of the following paper: T. Kuwabara (2003) [= <http://hdl.handle.net/10232/4198>].

- (6) “Doctoral Thesis Abstract”
- (7) “The First Chicago School of Sociology and Blumer’s Symbolic Interactionism”
- (8) “The Social Nature of the Self”
- (9) “Interaction and Mutual Consent”

About (1) “Bibliography of Symbolic Interactionism”

[<https://megalodon.jp/2016-0609-1313-46/ecowww.leh.kagoshima-u.ac.jp/staff/kuwabara/SI.htm>]³

Symbolic interactionism (SI) is a sociological and social-psychological perspective propounded by the American sociologist Herbert George Blumer (1900–1987) in the beginning of the 1960s. It focuses on the social interaction of humans—symbolic interaction in particular—and tries to explain such phenomena from the “actor’s perspective.” The historical origin of SI is normally traced back to the works of George Herbert Mead (1863–1931). Mead published many works in his lifetime, but his impact on SI came mainly from (1) published lecture transcripts and notes taken by his students and (2) the interpretation of Mead’s work by Blumer, who was one of his students. Blumer published many papers in the 1950s and 1960s, systematizing SI. For a period of time, SI was synonymous with Blumer’s work. However, new leaders of SI appeared in the 1970s and 1980s, such as Norman Denzin, Anselm Strauss, Sheldon Stryker, and Gary Fine, which resulted in the theory being explored in new directions, as well as in the development of various criticisms. Furthermore, in the 1980s, Erving Goffman developed the method of dramaturgy. I have tried to assemble as many research papers and bodies of work, both domestic and international, relating to SI as possible. In enumerating the literature, I followed the explanatory notes in *Sociology of Social Processes*

[<http://warp.da.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1195815/ecowww.leh.kagoshima-u.ac.jp/staff/kuwabara/doctor.htm>] as a general rule. This bibliography is currently being linked to the sites listed below:

- 1) “The Research Society of Sociology and Social Science Foundations”
<http://www.wakhok.ac.jp/~harie/kisokenlist.html>⁴
 (The Research Society of Sociology and Social Science Foundations is based on the principles of “questioning the foundations” and “ensuring sufficient discussion,” and it is led by Hironao Harie of Wakkanai Hokusei Gakuen University.)
- 2) “Sunday Sociology” <http://thought.ne.jp/luhmann/list/weblist03.html>⁵

³ <https://archive.is/dVCJP>

⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20030422190203/http://www.wakhok.ac.jp/~harie/kisokenlist.html>

⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20030501180940/http://thought.ne.jp/luhmann/list/weblist03.html>

- (Book guides, analects, translations, etc., relating to the German sociologist N. Luhmann. Created by Taito Sakai.)
- 3) “Electronic Bibliography of Sociological Works (Osaka University)”
<http://risya3.hus.osaka-u.ac.jp/Links/bib.html>⁶
 (A collection of links to online sociological literary works.)
 - 4) “Secondary Reference List Regarding Mead (Domestic)”
<http://isweb43.infoseek.co.jp/school/taka-y02/>⁷
 (Created by Takanori Yamao, Sakushin Gakuin University.)
 - 5) “Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior”
<http://www.geocities.co.jp/WallStreet/4716/index.html>⁸
 (“Key Points of Symbolic Interactionism”
<http://www.geocities.co.jp/WallStreet/4716/symblicinteraction.htm>⁹)
 - 6) “Kenichi Wakita’s Homepage” <http://www.anna.iwate-pu.ac.jp/~wakita/index.htm>
 (“Links” <http://www.anna.iwate-pu.ac.jp/~wakita/link-2.htm>)

About (2) “Graduation Thesis Abstract” (Sociology Course, Regional Science Department, Faculty of Letters at Kumamoto University)

[<https://web.archive.org/web/20141109084918/http://www.geocities.jp/ptk20120118/phd29a.jpg>]

The paper attempts to explicate the mechanism by which brain death and organ transplant issues are generated using William Fielding Ogburn’s theory of cultural lag. When discussing social change, Ogburn argued that the culture changes rather than society, and he categorized culture into material culture, adaptive culture, and spiritual culture (the latter two types are collectively referred to as “non-material culture”). According to Ogburn, the speed at which each of these three cultures changes is not the same, resulting in a lag. In other words, whereas material culture changes quickly, adaptive culture lags behind in its speed of changing, and spiritual culture lags even further. Ogburn coined the term “cultural lag” for this phenomenon, and the rapid cultural changes occurring in modern society have made it a prominent social issue. This paper (Graduation Thesis, Kumamoto University) clearly shows that the brain death and organ transplant issues that have arisen in Japan are results of this cultural lag: material culture = state-of-the-art medical technology, particularly that of respirators, angiorrhaphy, and immunosuppressants; adaptive culture = law, particularly the Organ Transplant Law; spiritual culture = Japanese people’s view of life and death,

⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20030401233605/http://risya3.hus.osaka-u.ac.jp/Links/bib.html>

⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20021021185248/http://isweb43.infoseek.co.jp/school/taka-y02/>

⁸ <https://web.archive.org/web/20021022054354/http://www.geocities.co.jp/WallStreet/4716/index.html>

⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20011129085416/http://www.geocities.co.jp/WallStreet/4716/symblicinteraction.htm>

and of how to treat the dead person's remains. (Economic Society of Kagoshima University, 2001, *Journal of Economics and Sociology, Kagoshima University*, No. 54: 80–81)

About (3) “Master’s Thesis” [<http://hdl.handle.net/10232/17478>]

The entire text of “Rethinking the Relationship between Actors and Society in Herbert Blumer’s Symbolic Interactionism,” submitted to the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the Graduate School of Tohoku University, as the author’s master’s thesis.

About (4) “Master’s Thesis Abstract” - Quoted from the periodical *Societas* (Tohoku University Department of Sociology), 1996, Vol. 15: 72–75

[<http://hdl.handle.net/10232/7917>]¹⁰

About (5) “Doctoral Thesis”

[<http://warp.da.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/3492948/ecowww.leh.kagoshima-u.ac.jp/staff/kuwabara/doctor.htm>]

The entire text of *Sociology of Social Processes*,¹¹ submitted to the Faculty of Arts and Letters of the Graduate School of Tohoku University in March 2000, after completing the coursework in the university’s doctoral program in March 1999.¹² This paper has also been published as *Sociology of Social Processes*, Kwansai Gakuin University Press BookPark (2000). Currently, these pages are linked to the following sites:

“Sunday Sociology” =

<https://web.archive.org/web/20080109133027/http://socio-logic.jp/list/weblist02.html>

“Electronic Bibliography of Sociological Works” =

<https://web.archive.org/web/20040404025553/http://risya3.hus.osaka-u.ac.jp/Papers/>

About (6) “Doctoral Thesis Abstract”

[<http://megalodon.jp/2016-0611-1123-31/ecowww.leh.kagoshima-u.ac.jp/staff/kuwabara/summary.htm>]

The contents of this page are “Thesis Abstract” and “Thesis Examination Result Abstract” with slight revisions to the former paper, both of which appear on pages 248–259 of a booklet called *Doctoral Thesis: Abstracts and Examination Result Abstracts, Faculty of Letters, Volume 11* (conferred in 1999).¹³ The contents on this page have

¹⁰ T. Kuwabara. Master Thesis Abstract. Ulatas [<https://archive.is/VrjKF#selection-225.0-225.6>]. 2017-09-03. URL:<https://web.archive.org/web/20170903101650/http://www.peeep.us/342f8d47>. Accessed: 2017-09-03. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/6tCOzqUqn>).

¹¹ <http://warp.da.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/257958/www.sal.tohoku.ac.jp/guide/grad2000/pages/p16hakushigo.html>

¹² <https://archive.is/cVsT7#selection-311.62-311.97>

¹³ <http://www.webcitation.org/6tFJnmniC>

also been published as the following: Tsukasa Kuwabara, 2001, “Introduction to a sociological perspective of Symbolic Interactionism (3) (The Summary of a doctoral dissertation, Tohoku University) ”, *Journal of Economics and Sociology, Kagoshima University*, No. 54: 69–86.

About (7) “The First Chicago School of Sociology and Blumer’s Symbolic Interactionism”

[<http://megalodon.jp/2016-0611-1126-44/ecowww.leh.kagoshima-u.ac.jp/staff/kuwabara/Blumer-as-CS.htm>]

Aside from publishing the *Journal of Economics and Sociology, Kagoshima University*, the Department of Economics, Faculty of Law, Economics and Humanities has a program that releases research results in *Discussions Papers In Economics and Sociology*. My manuscript on this page is published through this program: Tsukasa Kuwabara, 2002, “The First Chicago School of Sociology and Blumer’s Symbolic Interactionism,” *Discussion Papers In Economics and Sociology*, No. 0203, The Economic Society of Kagoshima University.

About (8) “The Social Nature of the Self” and (9) “Interaction and Mutual Consent”

These articles have been contributed to two textbooks. The first one is included in *Social Psychology of Ego and Self*, edited by Mamoru Funatsu and Kiyoshi Ando (Hokuju Publishing, 2002). The latter appears in *Social Psychology of Interaction*, edited by Isamu Ito and Naohito Tokugawa (Hokuju Publishing, 2002). Both articles have been revised and posted online. ¹⁴

¹⁴ <http://www.webcitation.org/6tFJg6wNS> & <http://www.webcitation.org/6iE8obYd3>

Editor's note¹⁵

Not long ago, I made a big mistake by writing the wrong title on my manuscript. I titled the manuscript “Introduction to a sociological perspective of Symbolic Interactionism (3) (The Summary of a doctoral dissertation, Tohoku University)” instead of the correct title, “The Summary of a doctoral dissertation, Tohoku University: Introduction to a sociological perspective of Symbolic Interactionism (3)” (refer to the headers of the odd-numbered pages of *Journal of Economics and Sociology, Kagoshima University*, No. 54 [pp. 71 to 83¹⁶]).¹⁷ Whereas this type of mistake would have been unthinkable when papers were handwritten, it now results from frequent use of the cut-and-paste tool in word processing. However, now that word processors are becoming increasingly popular, I think we should try to be more sensitive toward language than ever before. This is what I have started thinking lately. (Tsukasa Kuwabara, Faculty of Law, Economics and Humanities)

¹⁵ This article is the English translation of the following paper: Kuwabara et al. (2003) [= <http://hdl.handle.net/10232/6939>].

¹⁶ <https://archive.is/LTBTG#selection-369.0-369.75>

¹⁷ <https://archive.is/hDj6w#selection-285.0-285.65>