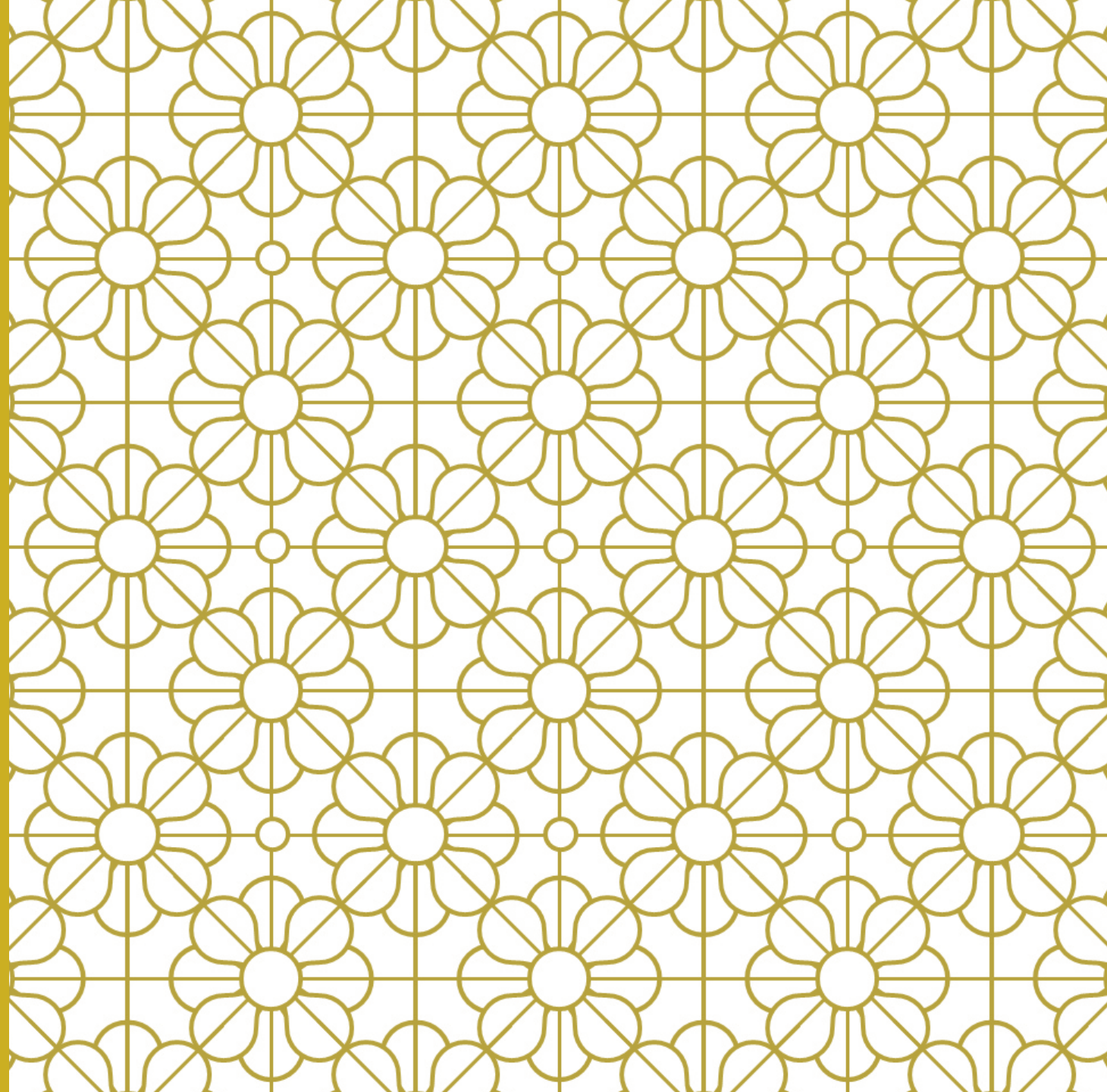


BODY, HEALTH AND SOCIETY

Embodied information
in face-to-face interaction





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCsJKaoxr6I>

**MR. BEAN AND
EMBODIED INFORMATION IN FACE-TO-FACE
INTERACTION**

EXERCISE 1

- Apply the two bodies and techniques of the body concepts on this video
- = find an example that could be explained by using these theories

CLASS OUTLINE

Revision

Reading reflections

Examples

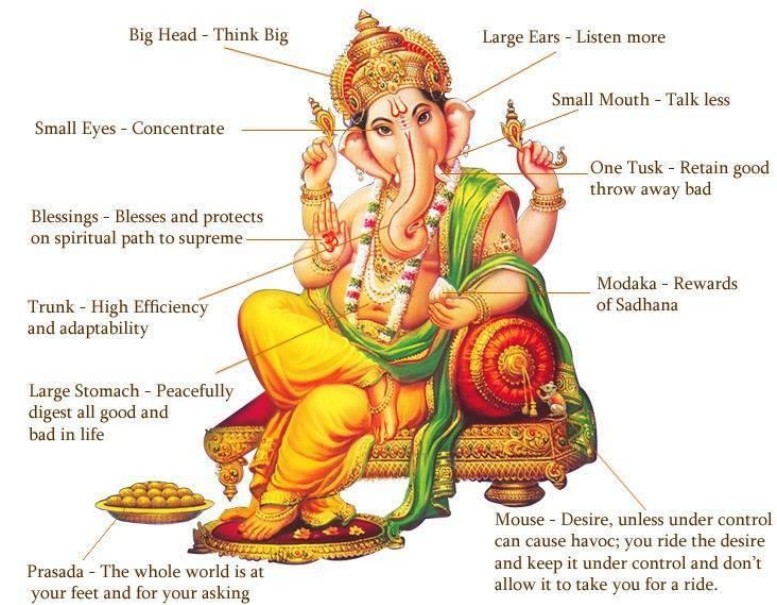
Erving Goffman

Discussion

REVISION

MARY DOUGLAS AND BODY

- Metaphor of society
 - The society is exteriorized on the bodies of its members
 - Naturalization of social order (e.g. Man vs. Woman; Left vs. Right; Healthy vs. Ill; We vs. Them)
 - Mean of cultural expression
-
- → body symbolism serves social aims – organic system is an analogy to the social one
 - → individual experience is culturally determined (e.g. cultural imperative of a care of own body, conceptions of sleep and motion regimes...)
 - → to make social norms correspond with individual ones – the need of normative of body regulation
-
- **Microcosm mirroring the society as whole**
 - **Social distance – the distance from physiological origin**
 - **The more strict the social order, the more strict the physical order**



<https://diybabyblog.wordpress.com/2015/02/28/>

<https://www.techdonut.co.uk/business-software/essential-business-software/office-suites>



REVISION

MARY DOUGLAS: SOCIAL BODY - UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCE

= society as an collective phenomenon, which with its system of meanings determinates, how the physical body will be experienced
(Soukup 2014)

- „Social body limits the ways the physical body is perceived.“
- „Physical experiences of body are always modified by social categories, through which the body is understood, support certain understanding of society.“ (Douglas 2003: 66 in Soukup 2014)



CONTRIBUTION OF MARY DOUGLAS' WORK

IN ANTHROPOLOGY OF BODY (HEŘMANSKÝ 2014)

- BODY
 - Universal symbol
 - Basic scheme for all the symbolics
 - Socially constructed in terms of a form into which the crucial values, norms and hierarchies are imprinted → body is a symbolic medium of a society
 - In rituals through the physical body the form of the social body is strengthened

BODY IN MAUSS' AND DOUGLAS ' WORK

- Douglas
 - body as a representation of a society (i.e. healthy body – social unity vs. sick body – social disharmony)
 - unconscious correspondence between body understanding/experience and society
- Mauss
 - individual body – a tool for an imitation of socially effective actions
- common things
 - continuous exchange of meanings among social and natural world
 - Mind vs. Body

SYNOPSIS INSTRUCTIONS

Your name should be used

- As part of the **title of the document** (e.g. Wolfova_Goffman)
- Included **in the document** (Alzbeta Wolfova, title of the reading, synopsis)

Structure

- Introduce (and explain) the main argument
- Contextualize it a bit
- **Ask question**

1-2 paragraphs long

EMBODIED INFORMATION IN FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION

ERVING GOFFMAN

- How was the text for reading?

Situating the reading

- time
 - space
 - discipline
 - methodology
- What is the text about?
- What is the main argument?
- Questions/ Comments?
 - √
 - +
 - -
 - ?

ERVING GOFFMAN

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erving_Goffman)

- *1922 – 1982
- Canadian-American sociologist, social psychologist
 - 73rd president of the American Sociological Association; Berkley; university of Pennsylvania
 - 1970 co-founder of American Association for the Abolition of Involuntary Mental Hospitalization
- Study of symbolic interaction – dramaturgical analysis
 - **Symbolic interactionism:** how individuals interact with one another to create symbolic worlds, and in return, how these worlds shape individual behaviour (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbolic_interactionism)
 - background: inspired by Émile Durkheim Sigmund Freud...
- Work:
 - 1959: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre.
 - 1963: *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*. The Free Press.



EXERCISE

- Answer following questions

GUIDING QUESTIONS

GOFFMAN, E. (2007) [1963]. EMBODIED INFORMATION IN FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION, PP. 82-86. IN FRASER, M., GRECO, M., THE BODY: A READER. ROUTLEDGE, OXON, NEW YORK.
GOFFMAN, E. (1963). INTRODUCTORY DEFINITIONS, PP. 13-30. IN GOFFMAN, E., BEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC PLACES. NEW YORK, THE FREE PRESS.

- 1.
 - What kind of interactions are at stake?
 - What are crucial communication conditions for face-to-face interaction?
 - What is the difference between embodied and disembodied message?

- 2.
 - In what ways is the communication under study mutual?
 - What makes people accessible?

- 3.
 - What is the normative public regulation?
 - How and why are people disciplining their bodies?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

GOFFMAN, E. (2007) [1963]. EMBODIED INFORMATION IN FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION, PP. 82-86. IN FRASER, M., GRECO, M., THE BODY: A READER. ROUTLEDGE, OXON, NEW YORK.
GOFFMAN, E. (1963). INTRODUCTORY DEFINITIONS, PP. 13-30. IN GOFFMAN, E., BEHAVIOUR IN PUBLIC PLACES. NEW YORK, THE FREE PRESS.

- What kind of interactions are at stake?
 - Exchange of expressive messages.
- What are crucial communication conditions for face-to-face interaction?
 - Naked senses, embodied transmission and mutuality of the transmission.
- What is the difference between embodied and disembodied message?
 - The presence of the body.
- In what ways is the communication under study mutual?
 - Bodily co-presence and accessibility through naked senses makes each giver a receiver and each receiver a giver.
- What makes people accessible?
 - See above, and also, in co-presence people function not just as physical instruments but as a communicative ones.
- What is the normative public regulation?
 - Rules which we follow in regard to handling our body in public – always depended on a kind of interaction we are undertaking or expecting to undertake.
- How and why are people disciplining their bodies?
 - Accommodating their behaviour, body front according to the situation (situational properties)

EXERCISE 3



DISCUSSION

- What is the relationship between the individual (body) and society according to Goffman?
 - How is this relationship exercised?
- How is Goffman's approach different from the approach of Douglas and Mauss?
 - *How and why is the body disciplined?*
 - *What does the absence of this discipline mean?*
- Can you think about more examples of this theory application?
 - *In relation to:*
 - Gender
 - Beauty
 - Eating
 - Illness
 - Health
 - sexual behaviour
 - Death

SYNOPSIS QUESTIONS

- **If there is an intrinsic 'self', you only have the 'self' you display for others. I wonder how this works when you are alone.** How can you be yourself when you are not in a social situation?
- How is the communication mutual?
- Are there **any positive examples of non-compliance** and whether the movement towards greater freedom of self-expression can be considered as progress or as the marginalization of society?
- Main reason behind people's urge for validation from the audience for their actions ?
- Is it about the regulated norms we need to follow in order to be accepted in a society ? Do I need to sit 'properly' in a public sphere because I am not gonna be supported by the audience ? **Is this validation something that is relevant to today's society ?**

NEXT CLASS

Habitus, body as both, the outcome and structuring principle

Compulsory reading:

- Wacquant, L. (1998): Pierre Bourdieu. In R. Stones, ed., *Key sociological thinkers*. London, Macmillan Press. Pp. 220-225
- Bourdieu, P. (2007) [1984]. *Belief and the Body*. In Fraser, M., Greco, M., *The body: A reader*. Oxon, New York: Routledge. Pp. 87-91

Guiding questions:

- What is habitus, social field, social structure, capital?
- What is the relationship among these?
- What role does the body have in Bourdieu's theory?
- What is the main Bourdieu's focus? (in contrary to symbols in Mary Douglas 's approach)
- What is symbolic capital, what role does it have for an individual and how it is created?

Discussion questions:

- What is the relationship between the individual (body) and society?
- How is Bourdieu' s approach different from the approach of Douglas and Mauss and Goffman?
 - Symbolic body/social body; body techniques; normative of social situation...
- Can you think about more examples of this theory application?
 - In relation to gender, beauty, illness, eating, health, sexual behaviour, death