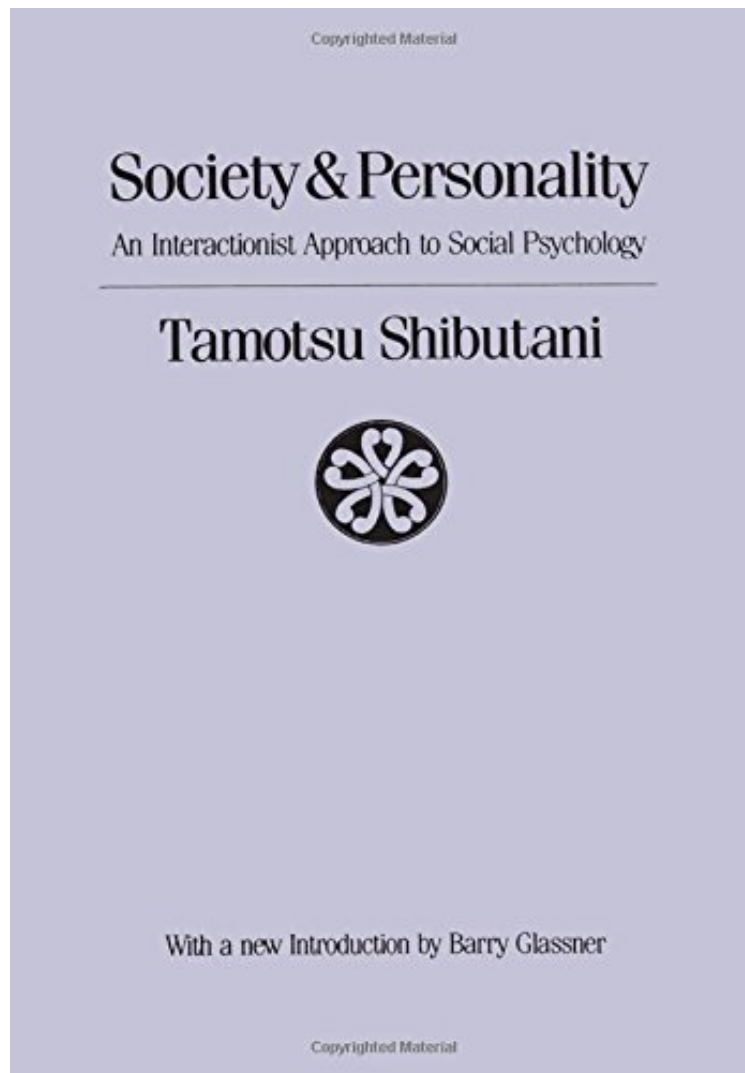


[Ebook pdf] Society and Personality: Interactionist Approach to Social Psychology (Social Science Classics Series)


## Society and Personality: Interactionist Approach to Social Psychology (Social Science Classics Series)

*Tamotsu Shibutani*

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**Tamotsu Shibutani : Society and Personality: Interactionist Approach to Social Psychology (Social Science Classics Series)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Society and Personality: Interactionist Approach to Social Psychology (Social Science Classics Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy hitoshigood3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Classic book illuminating interactionalist approach to social psychology.By kieviteThe key difference between this book and a typical social psychology textbook is that Shibutani book is interesting. Really interesting. All

four parts of it. It does not kill the interest in social psychology like most textbooks do. On the contrary it provokes interest to this subject, the desire to learn more. And this is a great achievement in itself, making the book a classic--in-all this is a very interesting groundbreaking book from a talented author which still did not lose its value despite being originally published in 1961. Shibutani made important contributions to the field of sociology, being one of the founders of Symbolic Interactionism approach. This is not your run-of-mill sociology book and it does contain great insight into human behavior interpreted via lenses of Symbolic Interactionism approach. Among other things it helps to providing a proper context for understanding such fundamental questions as "How satisfying is success won at the cost of personal integrity?" and "Is brutality used in the attainment of noble ends self-defeating?" -- a pertinent questions for anybody living in the epoch of neoliberalism that we are living in. The book consists of four parts: Social control, Motivation, Interpersonal relations, Socialization. Here is one quote (p. 474) that gives you the idea of quality of writing: == start of the quote == "In any perplexing situation there are usually a number of alternative solutions, and new behavior patterns develop through a process of natural selection. One solution is chosen, repeated, and eventually becomes fixed in habit. Selection is apparently on the basis of expediency; men continue to do those things that work and are in some way gratifying. Although it is customary in sophisticated circles to eschew such crude hedonism as being outmoded, actually all current theories of socialization in some way depend upon it. Learning consists of the persistence of behavior patterns that bring pleasure and the extinction of those that result in pain. The substitution of words like "gratification" and "deprivation" or "euphoria" and "disphoria" does not alter the basic argument.<sup>3</sup> Thus, habits of all kinds -- particular ways of consummating impulses -- emerge through successful adjustments and become fixed through repetition. As the acts are repeated, they are executed with greater speed, accuracy, and nicety of coordination; useless movements are eliminated. As behavior patterns become well established, they become more abbreviated, automatic, and unconscious; socialization is a form of adaptation. Experimental studies of learning are often set up as if the organism acquired its habits in social isolation. But among the most important of the life conditions to which all human beings must adjust is the presence of other people, who become involved in socialization as agents of instruction, as models to be imitated, and as sources of reinforcement. By inflicting punishment and providing rewards, they place limitations upon the avenues along which personal growth can take place. The manner in which each individual is oriented toward his world is set by the necessity of coming to terms with the demands of other people. For human beings, learning is not the accretion of discrete skills by an isolated organism; it is a continuous communicative process in which men meet their difficulties together and in adjusting to one another evolve new ways of approaching various aspects of their environment. The important role played by other people in socialization is underscored by the fate of children who somehow manage to survive in spite of their isolation. There have been numerous reports of abandoned or lost children being reared by wild animals, but most of them are hoaxes. Fortunately, there are a few accounts that stand up reasonably well under careful scrutiny, and they are remarkably consistent. The most carefully documented and detailed record is the case of two girls found in India -- Kamala, whose age was estimated at eight, and Amala, whose age was estimated as a year and a half. They were captured by a missionary in a den of wolves and brought back to his orphanage, where daily records were kept of their behavior.<sup>4</sup> Among other authenticated accounts is the case reported by Davis of Anna, a five year old girl found in 1938 on a Pennsylvania farm. Anna was the illegitimate child of a frightened mother, who kept her alive but otherwise avoided all contacts with her.<sup>5</sup> All three of these girls were maturing biologically, but there was no socialization. In spite of their organic development these creatures were incapable of participating in concerted action." == end of quote == His other important book "Improvised News: a sociological study of rumor" (1966) can be considered as a continuation of this one -- attempt to apply concepts developed in this book to one particular phenomenon.

Being an "interactionist" approach to social psychology, *Society and Personality* deals with people, not as isolated individuals, but as participants in groups. The aim of the book is to help the reader develop an orderly perspective, a consistent point of view from which to see his (or her) own conduct and that of his (or her) fellows. Propositions about behavior seen from the viewpoint are presented, and relevant evidence, both descriptive and experimental, is examined and evaluated. The author draws upon the two great intellectual traditions of pragmatism and psychoanalysis, and attempts to integrate them into a single, consistent approach. All concepts are reduced to behavioristic terms defined always in terms of what people do. In this way, it is possible to draw freely on these two schools, and at the same time, avoid much of the jargon of both. Other approaches to the study of human behavior are frequently mentioned and sometimes discussed, but the objective is to give the reader one perspective rather than confuse him with many. Of course, this standpoint is presented as only one of many possible ways of looking at people. Although the book's basic ideas are drawn from two main schools of psychological thought, relevant material has been gathered from other sources as well: sociology, ethnography, linguistics, experimental psychology, and clinical data from psychiatry. One very important extra feature is the List of Personal Documents, compiled by the author to guide interested readers to first-person accounts: biographies, diaries, clinical records, each of which provides a valuable record of human experience.

About the Author Tamotsu Shibutani is professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is the author of *Social Processes: An Introduction to Sociology* and *Improvised News: A Sociological Study of Rumor*, and is the editor of *Human Nature and Collective Behavior: Papers in Honor of Herbert Blumer* (Transaction, 1973). Barry Glassner is the president of Lewis Clark College and was formerly professor of sociology and executive vice provost at the University of Southern California. He has authored *Essential Interactionism*, and co-authored *A Rationalist Methodology in the Social Sciences* and *Drugs in Adolescent Worlds*.