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Edited by

Gerard P. Hodgkinson
The University of Leeds, UK

and

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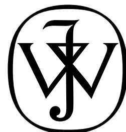

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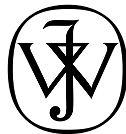

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EDITORIAL FOREWORD

This is the twenty-second volume of the *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. In line with previous volumes, the chapters we have commissioned have been authored by a number of the world's leading researchers, reflecting the rich diversity of advances occurring both within the mainstream and at the leading-edge of the field.

Continuing the tradition of state-of-the-art critical overviews that have established this series as the major reference work of choice for individuals seeking authoritative, up-to-the minute coverage of developments from around the globe in the field of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Blake Ashforth and colleagues offer a wide-ranging and insightful critique of theory and research on 'socialization in organizational contexts' and Wayne Cascio contributes an in-depth appraisal of advances in assessing 'the costs – and benefits – of human resources', centred on the metrics used to assess the linkages between key HRM practices and outcomes at the level of the individual and the organization. Equally comprehensive and informative are the reviews by Philip Dewe and Cary Cooper on 'coping research and measurement in the context of work related stress' and Rabi Bhagat and colleagues on 'cultural variations in individual job performance'. Further thought provoking contributions in the present volume address the challenges in 'conducting meaningful research in a fast-paced and volatile world of work' (Anne Marie Ryan and Elaine Pulakos) and review developments in relation to 'organizational learning' (Linda Argote and Gergana Todorova) and 'strategies for reducing work-family conflict' (Debra Major and Jeanette Cleveland).

GPH
JKF
June 2006

Chapter 1

SOCIALIZATION IN ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXTS

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The survival of an organization depends partly on its ongoing ability to integrate new members into the fold while simultaneously allowing if not encouraging organizational change. Organizational socialization is the process by which individuals become part of an organization's pattern of activities (Anderson, Riddle & Martin, 1999). This broad definition accommodates the impact of both the organization on the individual and the individual on the organization (the latter is often referred to as individualization or personalization), and–given that socialization is continuous–recognizes that individuals may be organizational newcomers or veterans.

Why does socialization matter? First, because work contexts are complex, dynamic, designed for multiple purposes, and, for the newcomer, more or less novel, their meaning is inherently equivocal. As various perspectives (e.g., social learning theory, Bandura, 1977; social information processing theory, Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; social comparison theory; Festinger, 1954) maintain, individuals socially construct meaning, giving particular weight to the views of credible people–in this case, veteran insiders. For example, Salzinger (1991) studied two cooperatives that specialized in domestic worker placement. In one, management regarded domestic work as stopgap work and provided no training. In the other, management regarded domestic work as a profession, provided training, and held supportive meetings where workers discussed their

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experiences. Members of the first co-op came to regard their work as unimportant, whereas members of the second came to regard it as a skilled occupation. The work was essentially the same: it was the social construction of the work that differed. Through socialization, newcomers gain a sense of what the organization is all about and why it's important, as well as their place within it.

Second, socialization facilitates work adjustment. Research has connected various forms of socialization to many adjustment variables, ranging from attitudes (particularly job satisfaction and organizational commitment) to behavior (e.g., performance, role innovation), and personal change (e.g., in values, beliefs) to stressors (particularly role ambiguity and role conflict) (e.g., Bauer, Morrison & Callister, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Nelson, 1987; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a; Wanous, 1992). As Fisher (1986, p. 101) noted, depending on the socialization process, 'the outcomes . . . can vary from outright rebellion to creative change of the organization by the new member to rigid conformity; from satisfaction and commitment to disillusionment and turnover' (see also Bauer et al., 1998). Effective socialization helps transform the newcomer into a contributing member, thereby replenishing if not rejuvenating the organization as a system.

Finally, early socialization experiences appear to strongly affect the course of long-term adjustment, triggering either a success cycle or a failure cycle (Hall, 1976). Positive experiences can foster learning, confidence, and credibility, thereby paving the way for further growth opportunities and additional learning, confidence, and credibility. For example, Berlew and Hall (1966) found that AT&T managers randomly given initially demanding assignments tended to perform better and have higher salaries four to five years later than managers randomly given less demanding assignments. Bravo, Pieró, Rodriguez and Whitely (2003) found, in a sample of office technology workers and machine operators, that having a role model and a set timetable for assumption of the new role predicted lower role conflict (directly) and lower role ambiguity (indirectly), both of which were associated with developing career strategies.

As Van Maanen and Schein (1979; Schein, 1971; Van Maanen, 1982) argue, socialization is most intense at boundary crossings, whether vertical (rank or level), horizontal (one's function), or inclusionary (one's centrality)–in short, 'up, around, and in' (Schein, 1971, p. 418). Organizations are concerned about the fit of the individual, and the individual is receptive to organizational cues about what needs to be learned. Indeed, the degree of novelty can provoke 'upending experiences'–i.e., 'deliberately planned or accidently created circumstances which dramatically and unequivocally upset or disconfirm some of the major assumptions which the new man holds about himself, his company, or his job' (Schein, 1968, p. 4). Upending experiences can 'unfreeze' (Lewin, 1951) the individual, motivating learning and possibly personal change.

Organizational entry involves all three boundaries and so is particularly intense (Louis, 1980), and, given the notion of success and failure cycles, particularly consequential. Not surprisingly, then, most socialization research has focused on the aftermath of organizational entry for relative newcomers to the labor force–as we will in this chapter. (See Black, 1992, and Hill, 1992, for examples of managers; Nicholson & West, 1988, Kramer, 1996, and Kramer & Noland, 1999, for examples of job change, transfer, and promotion; Hall, 1980, for later career socialization issues; Feldman, 1989, regarding the resocialization of veterans; and Spenner & Otto, 1985, for an example of research on the longer-term effects of work and the organization on individual change and adjustment.) Later, under 'Questioning our Default Assumptions,' we briefly extend our focus to other groups.

The chapter is divided into three sections. First, we review certain historical perspectives on organizational socialization, including some early roots of socialization research, socialization stage models, socialization tactics, socialization content (newcomer learning), and newcomer proactivity. Second, we examine cross-currents in socialization research, that is, major themes that flow across the historical perspectives. These include organizational context, localized socialization, individual differences, and the role of time. Third, we briefly question the apparent default assumptions embedded in socialization research, such as the notion that socialization pertains to raw recruits and traditional work arrangements. Directions for future research will be offered throughout the chapter. However, given space constraints, we offer only a few methodological recommendations (for discussions of methodological issues see the reviews by Bauer et al., 1998, Fisher, 1986, Jablin, 2001, Saks & Ashforth, 1997a, and Wanous & Colella, 1989). As we will see, the research on socialization is as diverse as it is intriguing.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

As a process that mediates between the organization and the individual, socialization can be–and has been–broached from a number of perspectives. We outline five such perspectives, in rough chronological order: early roots of socialization research, socialization stage models, socialization tactics, socialization content (newcomer learning), and newcomer proactivity.

Early Roots of Socialization Research

Current models of organizational socialization have many roots. Three of the most important are life course socialization, occupational socialization, and socialization in total institutions.

Life course socialization

Eclectic perspectives on socialization through the life course, particularly adult socialization, have informed thinking on organizational socialization (e.g., Becker, 1964; Brim, 1966; Clausen, 1968; Mortimer & Simmons, 1978; Rosow, 1965). Socialization occurs in diverse social domains–including family, school, youth organizations, and part-time jobs–as one matures and adopts new or altered roles in those domains.

Jablin (2001) reviews the impact of various social domains on workplace socialization. He concludes that families, particularly parents, have a huge influence on vocational choice, general attitudes to work, stereotypes of gender-appropriate work, and skills for role negotiation and information-seeking. Indeed, 'our homes may be one of the most important sources of on-the-job training' (p. 737). Educational institutions (from preschool to college) affect vocational choice, learning strategies, interpersonal competencies, and knowledge of organizational activities and attributes (e.g., status differentiation, hierarchy, division of labor). Organized sports teach members about teamwork, discipline, and concentration. Finally, the media–especially television programs–often transmit distorted and stereotypic information about organizational life and specific occupations. Jablin quotes Lichter, Lichter and Amundson (1997, p. 79), who analyzed prime-time shows over 30 years: 'no other occupation or institution was criticized as heavily as business, in terms of either the frequency or proportion of negative thematic portrayals.' Further, organizations are often depicted as places 'where workers tell off bosses and warm personal relationships are infinitely more important than economic productivity' (Lichter, Lichter & Rothman, 1994, p. 419). The upshot of these social domains is that individuals are predisposed to view work, organizations, and specific occupations in certain ways even before they actually begin working.

Bush and Simmons' (1981) review of the life course socialization literature suggests several provocative ideas that are reflected in various models of organizational socialization. First, role acquisition is a key element of socialization. Social domains consist of networks of interlocking roles, and the newcomer necessarily enters one or more roles when entering a domain. A role situates the individual, providing a platform for interaction, learning, stress coping (regarding role ambiguity, conflict, and overload), and possibly role redefinition. Second, both continuity and discontinuity characterize adult life. Role transitions tend to build on earlier transitions, but unique circumstances may precipitate change. Even the small shifts in values and behaviors that typify short-term adjustments may result in dramatic changes over the long-term. Third, foreshadowing our later discussion of stages of organizational socialization, various stage models of life course socialization have been proposed. However, the universality of such models remains controversial. Accordingly, we argue later that stage models should be seen as heuristics for thinking through

potential socialization challenges. Fourth, contrary to conventional wisdom, role transitions (other than those involving loss) are often experienced positively rather than negatively. (This is likely to be particularly true in organizational contexts because organizational entry, promotions, and transfers are normative and typically desirable.)

Lutfey and Mortimer's (2003) more recent review of the life course socialization literature suggests several additional ideas that have permeated the organizational literature. First, foreshadowing organizational research on newcomer proactivity, symbolic interactionist perspectives suggest that individuals are not passive recipients of socialization, but active players who seek out opportunities to engage others in their environment, who socially construct their environment, and who attempt to alter that environment. Second, whereas childhood socialization is focused on learning basic values (e.g., independence, honesty) and skills (e.g., language, social competence), adult socialization is focused on learning context-specific skills. (In the same vein, Schein, 1971, p. 413, argues that organizational socialization focuses less on personality than on more 'labile selves.')

In sum, diverse research on socialization over the life course reveals that newcomers are far from blank slates on which the organization can simply inscribe itself, and that organizational scholars can profit greatly from research on socialization in other social domains.

Occupational socialization

A second major root of socialization models is ethnographic research on particular occupations (and, to a lesser extent, organizations) and the educational institutions that bestow occupational credentials on students. The Chicago School of Sociology provided much of the impetus, with classic studies of occupations ranging from executives to teachers, and physicians to thieves (see Barley, 1989, for an overview). These and other ethnographic studies are largely descriptive, opting for richly nuanced discussions of the lived experiences of individuals in specific settings. The Chicago sociologists eschewed rigorous construct definitions and conceptual frameworks in favor of organic heuristics that could be extended to other occupations and life histories (Barley, 1989). These tendencies remain alive today, with many occupational (and organizational) ethnographies offering only loose ties with the conceptual literature. Indeed, ethnographies can be profitably viewed as secondary data, providing much grist for *ongoing* theory development (Hodson, 2001).

These ethnographies reveal the vibrant nature of occupational cultures: their patterned rounds of life, their ideologies and value systems, and their rituals, narratives, jargon, and markers of progress and status (Coffey & Atkinson, 1994; Trice, 1993; Van Maanen & Barley, 1984). The ideologies are

particularly noteworthy as they routinely privilege the occupation and explain away uncomfortable possibilities. For example, neophyte nuclear weapons scientists are socialized to think that their efforts are preserving world peace rather than escalating weapons research and thereby threatening peace (Gusterson, 1996). Given the symbolic interactionist tradition that inspired many ethnographies, a major emphasis is on how occupational members are embedded in rich interpersonal networks and socially construct their reality (e.g., Adler & Adler, 1991; Hallier & James, 1999; Ibarra, 1999; Van Maanen, 1975). Socialization thus appears to be as much about proactive role-making as reactive role-taking (Graen, 1976).

Two foci, in particular, of occupational (and organizational) ethnographies continue to offer much promise for socialization theory development. One is the *phenomenology* of socialization, the raw experience of exploring and becoming immersed in occupational and organizational life. Quantitative treatments of socialization tend to focus on relatively bloodless constructs like job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance, assessed in periodic snapshots. In contrast, ethnographies are rife with 'real time' instances of joy, aggression, ambivalence, hope, doubt, cynicism, empathy, frustration, and sharing–in short, the stuff of living. Ethnographies can be plumbed for a better understanding of what drives the range of human experience and with what effects. For example, emotions provide potent signals about what matters and how one should respond (e.g., fight or flight). Scott and Myers (2005) describe how novice firefighters are trained to read and calibrate their anxiety in the face of danger; Schweingruber and Berns (2005) discuss how–through stories, role plays, positive framing, and positive self-talk–neophyte door-to-door book salespeople are inoculated against emotionally debilitating failure; and Cahill (1999) describes how death is normalized for mortuary science students–through autopsy films, routine exposure to cadavers and associated smells, and the use of jargon–so that they do not fear death or experience revulsion when working with cadavers (cf. Ashforth & Saks, 2002; Reio & Callahan, 2004).

A second promising focus is the 'lumpiness' of socialization, the events that may serve as 'turning points' (Cressey, 1932; Hughes, 1958) in one's progression from outsider to insider. Quantitative treatments of socialization tend to implicitly assume a more or less stable set of forces that steadily push and pull on newcomers (Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). In contrast, Louis (1980) describes how surprises prompt sensemaking; Gundry and Rousseau (1994) and Teboul (1997) discuss how newcomers learned about their organization's culture and their place within it by decoding critical incidents; Stohl (1986, p. 232) suggests that messages from 'older and wiser' veterans regarding specific events can evolve into memorable maxims that frame the newcomers' understanding of the organization's normative system; and Bullis and Bach (1989) found that graduate students reported a variety of turning points during their first eight months, from representing the organization to handling

disappointments. Planned events such as orientation sessions, hazings, developmental assignments, status reviews, and parties, and unplanned events such as an invitation to lunch from coworkers, an overheard remark, negative feedback from a client, and being entrusted with privileged information, have manifest and latent, substantive and symbolic lessons (e.g., one is valued, one has much to learn) (e.g., Gundry & Rousseau, 1994; Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 1991).

One much studied category of events is rites of passage (Hallier & James, 1999; van Gennep, 1960). These are more or less ritualized affairs with actors, scripts, settings, and props, a major purpose of which is to facilitate, test, and/or affirm the newcomer's assumption of the relevant identity, thereby recognizing 'a "change of soul"' (Caplow, 1964, p. 176; Ashforth, 2001). Anderson-Gough, Grey, and Robson (2001, p. 117) describe how audit trainees became fixated on their upcoming professional exams, viewing them less as a test of expertise and more of 'the general "character" or "calibre" of the examinee.' Kadushin (1969) found that music students came to think of themselves as professionals rather than as students when they won talent competitions, performed for pay, and joined the union. Thus, ethnographies can also be studied for how the nature, variety, timing, and sequencing of events affects the trajectory of socialization.

Additionally, peers, supervisors, and mentors–the primary '"agents" of socialization' (Bauer et al., 1998, p. 167)–impart a great deal of information to newcomers in narrative form, that is, as event-driven stories, myths, and folklore that vividly highlight both positive and negative cultural cues in action (Brown, 1985; Kitchell, Hannan, & Kempton, 2000; Pentland, 1999; Swap, Leonard, Shields & Abrams, 2001). Given the rich details, engaging storylines, and recognizable characters, narratives invite the listener to vicariously experience and collude in deriving the 'moral.' Thus, narratives provide memorable vehicles for identification and knowledge–including the tacit knowledge that is otherwise difficult to articulate. Many ethnographies are rife with such storytelling, providing scholars with insight into how newcomers construct a sense of the workplace from the bricolage of events.

Socialization in total institutions

A third major root of socialization models involves the 'total institution,' defined by Goffman (1961, p. xiii) as 'a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life.' Ethnographic studies of military institutions (Dornbusch, 1955), correctional institutions (Wheeler, 1969), prisoner of war camps (Schein, 1961), and psychiatric hospitals (Goffman, 1961), among others, provided rich descriptions of how individuals were actively remade in the organization's image. Much like the occupations noted above, a major appeal of total institutions for

scholars appears to be their relatively unique mission, strong culture, and rigorous 'people processing' mechanisms (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). For much the same reason, ethnographic research has also been popular in organizations that approximate total institutions, such as the demanding and emotionally intense workloads of professional schools (Becker, Geer, Strauss & Hughes, 1961), the residence living of college (Van Der Ryn, 1971), and the physical isolation of company towns (Walkowitz, 1978). Research on socialization in total and near-total institutions has continued apace, with more recent examples including studies of a fire department (Scott & Myers, 2005), trawler (Bourassa & Ashforth, 1998), and medical schools (Hafferty, 1991; Pratt, Rockmann & Kaufmann, 2006).

Because total and near-total institutions exercise strong control over their members and are often intent on rebuilding those members, they reveal certain socialization processes in their most extreme form. They also create the impression that socialization is about situationism, where a strong situation overwhelms the newcomer, rather than about interactionism, where individual differences interact with situational variables (Schneider, 1983), or about proactivity, where the newcomer actively investigates and affects the situation. A common theme in the early ethnographies of total institutions is the tactics–particularly divestiture–that would come to be known as institutionalized socialization (described later). Bourne (1967), for example, described the personal changes wrought by U.S. Army basic training. Recruits are isolated at a fort, their heads are shaved, civilian clothes are traded for a uniform, and minor infractions are relentlessly punished, such that the recruits 'are forced into a highly infantile role' (p. 195). This role induces disillusionment with oneself and the army. However, aided by lenient scoring, the recruits are then reinforced for their 'skilled' rifle shooting. In rapid succession, the recruit becomes proficient in hand-to-hand combat, tactical skills, and other capabilities. Although the dropout rate is approximately only 1%, the recruit is induced to feel pride at successfully surviving the training and becoming a member of the army. In nine short weeks, the recruit's tattered civilian identity has been remade into that of a skilled soldier.

Although we have cast life course socialization, occupational socialization, and socialization in total institutions as 'early roots' of socialization research, scholars continue to study these areas and generate intriguing findings. Moreover, much of the qualitative research that historically informed these areas remains riveting reading even today–and is still capable of generating novel insights into the dynamics of socialization. However, as Van Maanen (1984, p. 238) notes, 'Organizational researchers have overstudied relatively harsh and intensive socialization and ... understudied socialization of the more benign and supportive sort.' Although accounts of 'harsh and intensive socialization' may be gripping, they wrongly imply that socialization is only about dramatic and revolutionary transformation. Mundane and evolutionary change also plays a major role in socialization.

Socialization Stage Models

Many researchers have attempted to distill the socialization process into a generalizable sequence of stages. However, stage models have not attracted much research attention during the last 20 years. This may be attributable to their mixed empirical support, the ascendance of other socialization perspectives (particularly socialization tactics and newcomer proactivity), and the pessimistic evaluation they received in Fisher's (1986) influential review. Indeed, Bauer et al. (1998, p. 153, their emphasis) state that 'these models were not true "process" models in that they focused on the sequence of *what* occurs during socialization, yet paid relatively little attention to *how* those changes occur.'

Stage models are prescriptive in that each stage is based on more or less successfully resolving the challenges of the previous stages. As such, we believe that stage models continue to provide a useful heuristic for thinking through the challenges that newcomers (and their employers) tend to face. As Wanous (1992, p. 210, his emphasis) puts it, 'Even if research has yet to establish the *precise sequences* of events, it is probably correct to consider the issues raised by the stage models to be relevant for most newcomers at some point early on in their careers with an organization.' Accordingly, we refrain from delving into the details that differentiate one model from another. Instead we provide a general comparison of how existing stage models are aligned and, to a lesser extent, misaligned to underscore assumptions and trends across the models. In making this comparison we have omitted models that were derived from specific professions in order to increase comparability and generalizability (Fisher, 1986, provides a solid review of some of these more specific models).

Table 1.1 compares the models across four relatively agreed upon stages: anticipation, encounter, adjustment, and stabilization. *Anticipation* occurs before organizational entry and includes activities through which individuals develop expectations regarding the organization in preparation for entry (e.g., job search, asking questions of family, friends, and contacts, reading media accounts and organizational self-portrayals). Similarly, during this stage the organization is often providing some combination of idealistic and realistic images of itself (through, for example, press releases, recruitment and selection activities, and internships). *Encounter* involves new members actually entering the organization and confronting its realities and contending with the discrepancies between expectations and experience. The result is often visceral; a sense of conflict (Wanous, 1992), shock (Hughes, 1959), and surprise (Louis, 1980) that prompts learning. *Adjustment* involves individuals resolving the demands of their new reality, such as becoming integrated into interpersonal networks and changing one's self-image, as well as insider and organizational activities designed to foster newcomer adaptation. These processes produce a mutual sense of commitment (Anderson & Thomas, 1996). Finally, *stabilization* focuses on the signals and actions that indicate that individuals are bona fide

Table 1.1 Socialization stage models

	Author		Anticipation	Encounter	Adjustment	Stabilization	
Initial Models	Buchanan (1974)			Basic training / initiation	Performance	Organizational dependability	
	Porter, Lawler & Hackman (1975)		Prearrival	Encounter	Change and acquisition		
	Feldman (1976)		Anticipatory socialization	Accommodation	Role management		
	Schein (1978)			Entry	Socialization	Mutual acceptance	
Integrative Models	Fisher (1986)		Anticipatory socialization	?	?	?	
	Falcione & Wilson (1988)		Anticipatory socialization	Encounter	Metamorphosis		
	Wanous (1992)			Confrontation / Role clarity	Locate	Sign posts	
	Bauer et al. (1998)		Anticipatory socialization	Accommodation / confrontation	Adaptation / metamorphosis		
Specialized Models	Jablin (1987)–Communication			Entry	Assimilation		Exit
	Nelson (1987)–Stress		Anticipatory socialization	Encounter	Change and adjustment		Outcomes
	Nicholson (1987)–Role transistions		Anticipation	Encounter	Adjustment	Stabilization	
	Kram (1988)–Mentorship			Initiation	Cultivation	Separation / Redefinition	
	Moreland & Levine (2001)–Group		Investigation	Socialization	Maintenance	Resocialization	Remembrance
	Anderson & Thomas (1996)–Group		Anticipation	Encounter	Adjustment		
	Anderson, Riddle & Martin (1999)–Group	Antecedents	Anticipation	Encounter	Assimilation		Exit

organizational insiders, including promotion, sharing of organizational secrets, lower stress, termination of mentoring, and integration into a group (Anderson et al., 1999; Kram, 1988; Nelson, 1987). There appears to be more consensus across the models on the occurrence of the first stages, perhaps because they have events that more clearly demarcate transitions (e.g., hiring can be viewed as an event marking the transition from anticipatory socialization to encounter), whereas the events demarcating later stages are often more subtle and gradual (Wanous, 1992).

We have organized the table to highlight three different categories of stage models: initial models, integrative models, and specialized models. Although there is considerable overlap between the second and third categories in terms of when they were published, these three categories provide a rough view of the evolution of stage models. With the exception of Porter, Lawler and Hackman (1975), who distilled their model from a review of research, all of the initial models were derived from or informed by empirical research conducted by their originators. The initial models tend to depict socialization as a linear, lockstep sequence (Wanous, 1992). A comparison of these four models reveals that, even from the outset, socialization researchers had difficulty agreeing upon when socialization starts and ends: some researchers consider anticipatory socialization integral to socialization whereas others do not, and some consider stabilization as integral to socialization whereas others do not.

We have named the second set of stage models 'integrative models' because the authors were attempting to blend the initial models. The majority of the integrative models are derived from reviews of the extant literature and tend to be less detailed and descriptive than the initial models. Their authors tend to agree that stage models serve more as heuristics (Fisher, 1986) or conceptual frameworks (Bauer et al., 1998). These integrative models have also helped to solidify the importance of anticipatory socialization as a precursor to the dynamics of actual organizational entry.

The final set of stage models, 'specialized models,' deal with the impact of mentors (Kram, 1988) and groups (Anderson & Thomas, 1996; Anderson et al., 1999; Moreland & Levine, 2001) as socialization agents, and highlight the effects of communication (Jablin, 1987), the importance of role transitions (Nicholson, 1987), and the relationship between socialization and stress (Nelson, 1987). Taken as a whole, these models enrich our understanding of socialization in three ways. First, whereas the initial models described socialization as a linear process, the specialized models highlight non-linearity–the stages are less discrete and more fluid as elements of the stages may overlap, specific elements may not occur (e.g., lack of reality shock), and events and emergent issues may cause a newcomer to recycle through the stages (e.g., Hess, 1993). Moreover, if viewed together, these models underscore the fact that individuals are often being socialized into multiple collectives simultaneously (e.g., occupation, team, department, organization, industry). For example, Anderson et al. (1999) note that individuals can be undergoing

socialization into multiple groups simultaneously but be in different stages across the groups. Similarly, an individual could be fully socialized into, say, a mentor relationship but still be beginning socialization into a new group or role.

Second, the specialized models display a greater sensitivity to the beginning and ending phases. The initial models tend to disagree about the occurrence of the anticipation and stabilization stages, whereas the integrative models are more apt to ignore the stabilization stage. In agreement with the integrative models, the specialized models demonstrate agreement on the importance of anticipation. In contrast, the specialized models show a greater inclination toward extending socialization into stabilization and even beyond. This inclination is probably related to the level of detail that can be provided by restricting the scope of the model. For instance, Nelson's (1987) stress model emphasizes outcomes of stress and in so doing, extends the impact of socialization beyond the organization, into the individual's family and into addictive behaviors such as smoking, drinking, and drug abuse. Moreland and Levine's (2001) model notes that even after stabilization, if mutual commitment erodes, groups may need to resocialize members and that this will either produce better person-group convergence or lead to the individual's exit. Anderson et al. (1999) note that exit affects both the individual and the group as each tries to make sense of what has occurred and justify the exit. The process of justification has the potential of surfacing relational issues within the group and potentially changing group norms (Bettenhausen & Murnighan, 1991).

Finally, these specialized models expose the importance of proximal, local elements in socialization. We discuss the importance of localized socialization later; however, in reference to stage models, models that focus on proximal sources of socialization provide a more precise picture of how interpersonal and group relationships may literally guide individuals through the stages of socialization and hence the rites that lead to 'insidership.' In other words, if socialization stage models are viewed as a fluid gestalt, like a set of ocean waves, models focused on proximal sources would act as the subsurface currents generating the force of the waves. For example, the assignment of a mentor to a newcomer, what Kram (1988) refers to as 'initiation,' is a clear signal of entry. Similarly, the final stage of mentorship, in which the newcomers detach from their mentors and redefine themselves as independent actors, provides a rich turning point that signifies insidership. These proximal, interpersonal transitions provide the momentum that helps drive the newcomer through the process of socialization.

Future socialization research should more actively integrate the heuristics of stage models with other socialization perspectives. Chen and Klimoski's (2003) study of the impact of team expectations on newcomer performance provides a good example. These authors use a three-stage model (anticipation, encounter, and adjustment) as a heuristic to generate and test their framework. The authors note that specific theories do not indicate when each socialization

phase begins and ends, but the three stages provide a conceptual rationale for the causal relations between their constructs as well as a methodological rationale that guided their three data collection periods. Such studies check our assumptions regarding what occurs in each stage and thereby help cultivate our understanding of the flow of events over the course of socialization.

Socialization Tactics

Prior to Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) landmark work, socialization research tended to focus on discrete activities such as newcomer orientation, training, apprenticeship, and mentoring. What was missing, however, was an overarching framework that suggested how and why such practices had the effects that they did. Van Maanen and Schein argue that organizations implement six bipolar tactics to integrate new employees. First, the *collective (vs. individual)* tactic involves grouping newcomers together and putting them through common learning experiences. Second, the *formal (vs. informal)* tactic includes separating the newcomers from organizational insiders via activities such as training and orientation classes. Third, the *sequential (vs. random)* tactic takes the newcomer through a lock-step series of adjustment experiences. Fourth, the *fixed (vs. variable)* tactic entails following a set timetable for moving from one adjustment experience to another. Fifth, the *serial (vs. disjunctive)* tactic involves learning the new job from a role model such as a mentor, supervisor, or more experienced peer. Finally, *investiture (vs. divestiture)* affirms the newcomer's incoming identity, capabilities, and attributes such as when one is hired because of one's previous training or experience. Jones (1986) argues that the collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture tactics form a constellation termed *institutionalized socialization* wherein the organization encourages lock-step integration into the organizational milieu.[1] The opposite set of tactics (i.e., individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divesture) form *individualized socialization* wherein the newcomer is left on his or her own to walk the tightrope of adjustment.

A 1997 review by Saks and Ashforth (1997a) reported that institutionalized socialization is associated with lower role ambiguity, role conflict, and intentions to quit, and higher task mastery, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The positive attitudinal effects may be attributable not only to the instrumental payoff of institutionalized socialization (e.g., enhancing role clarity), but to the symbolic payoff noted earlier (i.e., demonstrating that the newcomer is valued) (Riordan, Weatherly, Vandenberg & Self, 2001). Research since 1997 has reinforced these findings (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Bravo et al., 2003; Cooper-Thomas, van Vianen & Anderson, 2004; Fogarty, 2000;

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[1] It should be noted that Van Maanen and Schein (1979, p. 253) argue that the fixed and investiture tactics *discourage* a 'custodial orientation.' However, subsequent research, cited later, has generally supported Jones' reformulation.

Hart & Miller, 2005; Hart, Miller & Johnson, 2003; Riordan et al., 2001; Seibert, 1999; cf. Jaskyte, 2005). Recent research has expanded the number of outcome variables; specifically, institutionalized tactics predict increased person-organization fit (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Gruman, Saks & Zeig, 2006; Kim, Cable & Kim, 2005), person-job fit (Gruman et al., 2006; Riordan et al., 2001), social integration (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Bravo et al., 2003; Gruman et al., 2006), on-the-job embeddedness (Allen, 2006), organization-based self-esteem (Riordan et al., 2001), increased expatriate adjustment (Feldman, Folks & Turnley, 1998; Harvey & Kiessling, 2004; Palthe, 2004), fewer perceived psychological contract violations (Robinson & Morrison, 2000), lower turnover (Allen, 2006), and, at the subunit level, knowledge transformation and exploitation (although not knowledge acquisition and assimilation) (Jansen, Van Den Bosch & Volberda, 2005).

Interestingly, Riordan et al. (2001) found that the collective tactic was *positively* associated with turnover at a large bank six months after entry. Riordan et al. speculate that perhaps newcomers in high-turnover positions were socialized collectively for reasons of efficiency. However, the finding is also consistent with Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) suggestion that collective socialization may occasionally backfire: incipient ill will may become contagious and gain momentum.

One particularly intriguing consequence of the socialization tactics is role innovation. Research generally indicates that institutionalized socialization is negatively associated with role innovation or, alternatively, that individualized socialization is positively associated with innovation (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Baker, 1995; Jones, 1986; King & Sethi, 1992; Mignerey, Rubin & Gorden, 1995). At first blush, this makes good sense because the 'sink or swim' approach implied by individualized socialization encourages–indeed, almost mandates–that newcomers find their own way, increasing the likelihood of innovation (even if unintended). However, it should be remembered that the tactics connote only a process, not particular content. While studies suggest that organizations tend to use the institutionalized tactics to encourage role conformity, these tactics can instead be used to encourage newcomers to innovate, albeit in a more deliberate and structured manner than in the default approach of the individualized tactics (Ashforth & Saks, 1996).

Although there has been progress on the research directions suggested by both Bauer et al. (1998) and Saks and Ashforth (1997a), the work is still somewhat under-developed. As shown above, research *has* started to explore links between socialization tactics and other important adjustment outcomes. Another recent advancement concerns investigations into the link between institutionalized socialization and newcomer learning. Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002) found that institutionalized tactics predicted learning in the social, interpersonal, role, and organizational domains, and Anakwe and Greenhaus (1999) report that institutionalized socialization was associated

with task mastery. Hart and Miller (2005) found that the fixed and serial tactics lead to information about performance proficiency. Klein and Weaver (2000) also found that an orientation program (a formal tactic) was positively related to learning about goals/values, organizational history, and people (but not about politics, performance information, and language). We argue later that learning is central to the socialization process; clearly, more research on the link between socialization tactics and learning is needed–especially on the possibly mediating role of learning with respect to newcomer adjustment.

Scholars have also begun to consider how different conditions moderate the influence of socialization tactics on adjustment outcomes. For example, Kim et al. (2005) found that the relationship between institutionalized socialization and person-organization fit was enhanced by the newcomer proactive behaviors of positive framing and general socializing (but not by information- and feedback-seeking) and dampened by relationship-building with one's supervisor (but not by networking). Griffin, Colella and Goparaju (2000) conceived of socialization tactics as antecedents to and moderators of the newcomer proactivity process. Given the wide range of possible moderators, researchers should follow the above leads by including contextual variables that both drive and condition the use of socialization tactics (see our later discussions of 'Organizational Context' and 'Localized Socialization'). In short, while there has been progress, scholars have yet to fully map the moderating and mediating variables within the socialization process.

In addition to our previous suggestions, we see three promising directions for future research. First, studies routinely focus on individuals' perceptions of their organization's tactics: this approach needs to be revisited. To be sure, individual perceptions allow for variation across individuals within an organization and may therefore be appropriate for tactics that are more or less tailored to the individual (e.g., serial, investiture). However, most studies assume that the individual is acting as a reliable informant for organization-level practices. This assumption needs to be assessed with more objective measures of an organization's socialization tactics (e.g., archival measures, observation) and/or by testing for agreement and then aggregating individuals' responses. Further, in complex organizations with differentiated functions and occupations, it would be useful to assess whether *subunits* rather than the organization per se should be the referent for measures of socialization tactics.

Second, studies tend to assume that the six socialization tactics cluster at one pole or the other of the single institutionalized-individualized continuum. However, research summarized by Ashforth, Saks and Lee (1997) indicates that the tactics do not always covary. Perhaps most problematic is the investiture-divestiture tactic. If investiture is measured according to Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) original notion of affirming a newcomer's incoming identity (rather than as social support; see Jones, 1986), then investiture tends to be only weakly correlated with the other tactics (Ashforth et al., 1997). Bourassa and Ashforth (1998) suggest that although investiture tends to be positively

associated with the tactics of institutionalized socialization in most organizations, it is negatively associated in organizations that actively practice divestiture–that is, that seek to strip away newcomers' incoming identity–as part of a structured socialization program. Clear examples are total institutions such as the military (Bourne, 1967) and extended-sojourn fishing boats (Bourassa & Ashforth, 1998), as noted earlier. Further, given that socialization tactics may be used sequentially (e.g., collective socialization in a police academy, followed by individual socialization in a squad car), it may be useful to reassess the tactics during different phases of a socialization program or to devise measures that do not force a choice between one end of the continuum or the other.

Third, research should broaden the focus from socialization tactics to *sources* of socialization tactics. Research has started to discern various sources of tactics, namely, the organization, group (via occupational and localized norms), and leader-newcomer relationship (see 'Localized Socialization' below). For example, Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) found from a multi-organization study that the newcomer's organization, supervisor/mentor, and coworkers differentially affected adjustment outcomes. Similarly, Hart and Miller (2005) found that the organization and workgroup are each important sources of assimilation (see also Hallier & James, 1999, Holton & Russell, 1999, and Riddle, Anderson & Martin, 2000). As such, *simultaneous* investigation of the various sources of socialization tactics promises to provide more precise theoretical and practical predictions. For instance, do certain group tactics replace, enhance, or destabilize particular organizational tactics? Do the socialization tactic levels differentially influence newcomer proactivity, learning, and other adjustment outcomes?

In sum, Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) model has justifiably generated much research interest: it offers a comprehensive framework for combining a number of discrete socialization practices that had generated their own separate literatures. Moreover, their model continues to offer much promise for future research.

Socialization Content (Newcomer Learning)

For socialization to effectively bring the newcomer into the fold, the newcomer should come to know and understand (i.e., learn) the norms, values, tasks, and roles that typify group and organizational membership. As such, newcomer learning lies 'at the heart of any organizational socialization model' (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2005, p. 117; Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein & Gardner, 1994; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Klein, Fan & Preacher, 2006; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). Indeed, Saks and Ashforth (1997a) place newcomer learning as the conduit by which socialization factors (i.e., organizational-level tactics, group-level tactics, proactive behavior) influence other proximal outcomes (e.g., role clarity, person-organization fit,