



**Sociology Virtual Learning**

**High School/Lesson 19**

**Agents of Socialization: Media**

**April 15, 2020**



## Sociology

Lesson: April 15, 2020

**Objective/Learning Target:** The student will analyze the role of mass media in socializing people.

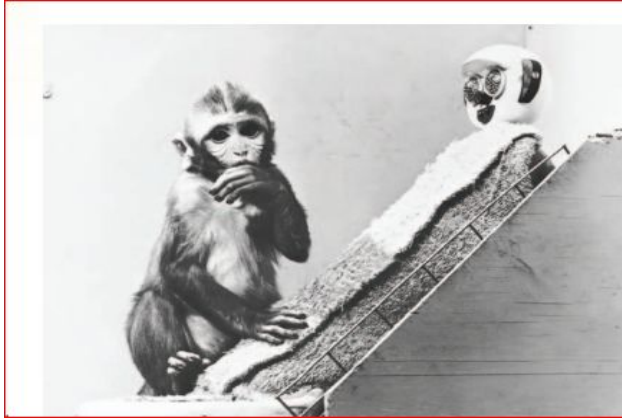
# Warm Up:



Look at this picture and answer the following questions on a piece of paper.

1. What might be happening in this picture?
2. Are people and animals born already knowing how to interact with the world?

# Warm Up:



Monkeys fail to develop psychologically and socially when deprived of their mothers. **Can we generalize from monkeys to human children?**

Look at this picture and answer the following questions on a piece of paper.

1. What might be happening in this picture?
2. Are people and animals born already knowing how to interact with the world?

*It looks like the monkey is being raised in captivity without a parent. The model looks like it was made to look like another monkey.*

*The second question makes me think of the “nature vs. nurture” argument. I know that even though people (and some animals) learn how to interact in the world by being with other people or agents of socialization that we have been learning about this week.*

# Warm Up

Read the following statements about the role of media in the socialization process.

On your paper. Write the number of each statement and write an “A” for agree or a “D” for disagree.

1. Watching aggressive behavior on television significantly increases violent behavior in society.
2. Media consumption has no influence on people’s behavior or actions.

# Warm Up (answers will vary):

Compare your thoughts to what social scientists have to say.

1. Watching aggressive behavior on television significantly increases violent behavior in society. *Social scientists have been reluctant in the past to recognize a causal connection between television violence and real-life violence. However, based on hundreds of studies involving over ten thousand children, most now conclude that watching aggressive behavior on television significantly increases aggression in society (Dudley, 1999; U.S.Department of Health and Human Services, 2001; Donnerstein, 2004).*

# Warm Up

Now, compare your ideas to what social scientists have to say.

2. Media consumption has no influence on people's behavior or actions.

*The mass media display role models for children to imitate. Learning these role models helps to integrate the young into society. The mass media also offer children ideas about the values in their society. They provide children with images of achievement and success, activity and work, equality and democracy.*

# Review

Review: This week you've looked at how people learn about social expectations and how to interact with other people. In sociology this is called **socialization**. So far, you've learned about the agents of socialization of family, school and peers. Today we are going to look at the role **mass media** has on the socialization process.





# Lesson - Vocabulary

Read over the vocabulary for today's lesson, and refer back to this slide as needed.

**Agents of Socialization-** are the people, groups or institutions that teach us what we need to know in order to participate in society.

**Mass Media-** Means of communication designed to reach the general population. Examples of mass media include television, movies, radio, social media, magazines, and the Internet.

# Lesson -

Read the following excerpt from an article that discusses how social media can socialize teens. You will have an activity to do when you finish reading:

It should come as no surprise that the pressure to be available 24/7 on social media is a very real challenge for today's teenagers. Aside from the fact that their grasp of and dependence on social media far exceeds that of many adults, they also are using social media at much greater rates too. In fact, a report by Common Sense Media found that 75 percent of American teenagers have social media profiles. Social media is a daily part of life for the vast majority of teens.

A report by Common Sense found:

51 percent of teens visit social networking sites on a daily basis

More than a third of teens visit their main social networking site several times a day.

1 in 4 teens is a heavy social media user, using at least two different types of social media each day.

# Lesson (article continued):

## How Does the Teen Brain Respond to Social Media?

For many teens, social media can become almost addictive. In a study by researchers at the [UCLA brain mapping center](#), they found that certain regions of teen brains became activated by "likes" on social media, sometimes causing them to want to use social media more.

During the [study](#), researchers used an fMRI scanner to image the brains of 32 teenagers as they used a fictitious social media app resembling Instagram. The teenagers were shown more than 140 images where "likes" were believed to be from their peers. However, the likes were actually assigned by the research team.

# Lesson (article continued):

As a result, the brain scans revealed that in addition to a number of regions, the nucleus accumbens, part of the brain's reward circuitry, was especially active when they saw a large number of likes on their own photos. According to researchers, this area of the brain is the same region that responds when we see pictures of people we love or when we win money. What's more, researchers say that this reward region of the brain is particularly sensitive during the teen years, which could explain why teens are so drawn to social media.

In another part of the study, researchers could see a correlation between social media and peer influence. Participants in the study were shown both neutral photos and risky photos. What they found is that the type of image had no impact on the number of likes given by teens in the study. Instead, they were likely to hit "like" on the popular photos regardless of what they showed. Researchers believe this behavior shows that peers can have both a positive and negative influence on others while using social media.

# Lesson

After reading the article excerpt, write three possible questions that could be used to discuss the role that mass media, specifically social media has on socialization.



# Lesson (possible answers):

After reading the article excerpt, write three possible questions that could be used to discuss the role that mass media, specifically social media has on socialization. Find someone in your home or a friend on social media to discuss your questions with if you are able to.

Answers will vary....I had the following questions:

Are there any positive ways that social media socializes people?

Does the effect social media has on people depend upon the age of the user?

How important is social media in the socialization process of teens?

Should social media consumption be limited or monitored for pre-teens and teens?

# Lesson Reflection:

Reflect on the role that **mass media** has played in your own socialization process. How has it influenced your behavior or interactions with others? Do you think it has more influence on younger or older people?

# Additional Resources:

1. [5 Ways Social Media Affects Teen Mental Health \(full article\)](#)
2. [Socialization \(textbook chapter\)](#)
3. [Parents may fret, but teens & even experts say social media use has its benefits \(USA Today video & article\)](#)