Emotions in Ritual Theories

Meredith Rossner and Mythily Meher

10.1 Introduction

The Opening Ceremony to the 2012 London Olympics was an absolute spectacle. Athletes representing over 200 countries processed through the Olympic Stadium, cheered on by 80,000 spectators and watched by 900 million viewers across the world. Filmmaker Danny Boyle, the ceremony's choreographer, orchestrated an astonishing display of British history and culture, replete with Mary Poppins' floating down from the sky on umbrellas, a flock of sheep grazing on pastoral land, David Beckham driving a speedboat, workers from the Industrial Revolution forging the Olympic Rings, music from the Beatles, Sex Pistols, and Queen, an 18 m tall replica of Harry Potter's Voldemort, the Queen and James Bond (reprised by Daniel Craig) skydiving into the stadium, nurses and hospital volunteers dancing in an ode to the National Health Service, with performances by Paul McCartney, The Arctic Monkeys, and the London Symphony Orchestra. The crowd cheered and sang, and viewers at home where enthralled. Sarah Lyal (2012), writing in the New York Times, summed up the ceremony's effect:

> With its hilariously quirky Olympic opening ceremony, a wild jumble of the celebratory and the fanciful; the conventional and the eccentric; and the frankly off-the-wall, Britain presented itself to the world as something it has often struggled to express even to itself: a nation secure in its own post-empire identity, whatever that actually is.

One way to read this event is as Britain's attempt to reclaim a national identity and affirm a shared set of symbols and morals. Another layer of reading may consider the 'face' that Britain presented to the rest of the world. Unlike the Beijing Olympics opening ceremony 4 years earlier, which was a masterpiece of synchronization and grandiosity, this event eschewed an official story of British pride and was self-consciously chaotic, reminding the rest of the world of the best parts of Britain: its diversity, its social democratic values, its humor.

One year earlier, London had the world transfixed by a very different spectacle. Riots broke out in the suburb of Tottenham in August, 2011, quickly spreading through the city's neighborhoods and erupting across the rest of England. The uproar sparked in response to the police shooting of a local teenager, Mark Duggan. Adolescents and adults from a variety of social and ethnic backgrounds channelled their frustrations over police-community relations, racial tension, cuts to public services, increases in tuition fees, a general sense of injustice, as well as boredom and desire for material goods into the furore. Over 4 days, people gathered to riot, protest, battle the police, and loot. About 2,500 shops were ransacked, causing £300 million in damage in London alone. Nearly 2000 people were

M. Rossner (✉)
London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK
e-mail: m.rossner@lse.ac.uk

M. Meher
University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia

arrested for rioting, though many more were involved.

In qualitative interviews, many rioters described a feeling of being sucked into the group activity; of finding themselves smashing windows, setting cars on fire, stealing mobile phones and sneakers from shops, and fighting with the police. One rioter told researchers that being part of it was "like a dream…I was actually doing it. I felt alive, there's no word to explain it. It was like that first day it happened will always be the best day of my life forever—I swear to God" (Lewis 2011). Some reported a sense of euphoria surrounding the looting. As one 16 year old girl recalled, "Everyone was smiling. It was literally a festival with no food, no dancing, no music but a free shopping trip for everyone" (Lewis et al. 2011, p. 30). A third rioter, a 19 year old student, remarked that, "When I went outside for the first time, I could feel like, that the air was, it wasn't how it normally was, it was like an unspoken kind of feeling just floating around. It actually made me feel really strong. It made me feel really powerful" (Carter 2011).

There are a number of approaches to thinking about these two events. A sociologist might start by looking at the larger social and cultural frameworks encompassing them. They could analyse how Susan Boyle came to represent British culture, or provide an anti-capitalist critique of the spectacle surrounding global sporting events like the Olympics. Sociologists can (and have) also provided important analysis of the context in which the riots took place, documenting the sense of injustice and alienation felt by a generation of British youth.

Another approach is to study the micro-level dynamics of the events themselves. What happens when people to come together, either to celebrate a nation hosting the Olympics, or to express their anger and frustration at that same nation? How does the act of participating in such an event (in person, watching it on television, or by reading updates on twitter) help us to define who we are as individuals, what's important to us, what our values are, what kind of society we belong to? These are the questions that ritual theorists ask, and they will drive this chapter's discussion.

10.1.1 Features of a Ritual

In common parlance, 'ritual' connotes something that is done out of habit or tradition, perhaps with a certain hollowness. When we yet again observe a politician engage in empty rhetoric, we dismiss it as 'mere ritual.' This dismissal might be issued to describe ceremonial acts deemed token and empty of felt significance. There is a sense that if something is 'ritualized' it has lost its power or that those participating in the event are following the herd, enacting routine for routine's sake. We also often think of rituals as deeply personal habits, like a morning 'coffee ritual'. We tend to evoke the word 'ritual' to describe several little idiosyncrasies or routines about the way we do our business. The 'ritual' of ritual theory, however, departs from the ways the word is used in everyday speech.

In sociology, ritual theory is premised on the idea that meaning is generated in and by repeated social interactions. By 'meaning' we refer to the forces that compel members of a society to engage in ways that maintain social and emotional solidarity *despite* personality differences. In the course of interactions, morals, symbols and emotions shared by a social group are exchanged, reiterated, strengthened or manipulated. In short, rituals are interactions where people mutually focus their attention on a common object, resulting in a shared reality, a sense of solidarity, and symbols of group membership (Collins 2004). Rituals can be large and small, formal and informal, planned or spontaneous, and are at the heart of all social life; from world-scale spectacles like the Olympic Games, through identified rituals like graduation ceremonies, down to such banal interactions as 'liking' a friend's content on Facebook. Through ritual, collective sentiments are solidified, comprising a felt effect, whether that is nationalism, the poignancy of a rite of passage, or the simple confirmation that one's contribution to the social network has merit.

Notably, an analysis grounded in ritual theory takes the *encounter*, not the individual, as the key unit to understanding social life. This theoretical position departs from the more common sociological approach that sees social meaning
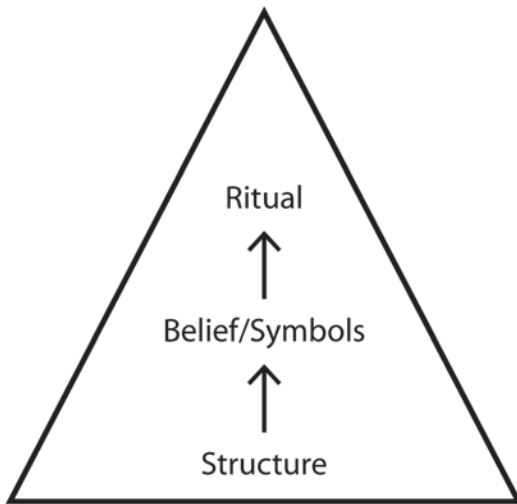
Fig. 10.1 Structural view of ritual
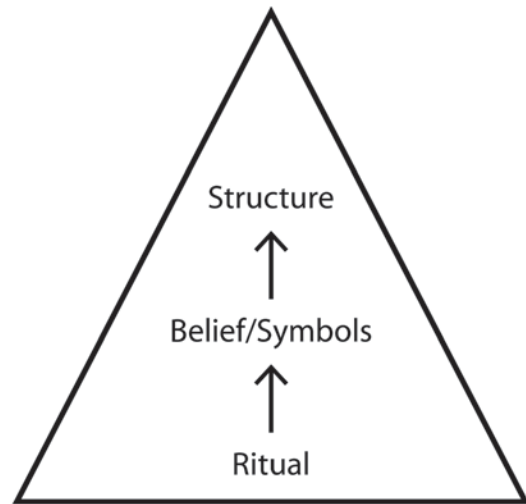
Fig. 10.2 Radical microsociology

as originating within individuals who, in acting upon the world, shape the society they inhabit. Erving Goffman, one of the main sociologists to advance a ritual perspective, famously wrote that the object of study is "not then, men and their moments. Rather, moments and their men" (Goffman 1967/1982, p. 3).

This differs from the more traditional anthropological definition of rituals as rites or ceremonies thought to reflect the larger social structures, cultures, and values found in any given society, but set apart from everyday life (See Fig. 10.1). Symbols and metaphors within these rituals were seen to provide a doorway to the transcendental, or comprised their own model of the ideal cultural system (Geertz 1966; Turner 1969/1995). The ritual tradition in sociology, led by Durkheim, Goffman, and Collins, takes the inverse approach, one that Collins terms radical microsociology (see Fig. 10.2). In this tradition, rituals, the repeated actions of focused attention, are what constitute belief, values, cultures, and ultimately, the social structure.

Rituals create the microfoundation of social life. This is important to the sociology of emotions because rituals are grounded in emotional exchanges, which connect people across a range of different situations in space and time. Though sociology has been criticized for excluding the

emotional life from its purview, ritual theories are an exception, and pave a way towards further remedying this, offering a wide ranging sociological theory that is elegant in design and ambitious in scope.

In this chapter, we will explore the tradition of ritual theory in sociology, and discuss its implications for the sociology of emotions. We begin by tracing the intellectual heritage of ritual theory, initiated by Emile Durkheim, revamped by Erving Goffman, and then further coalescing with the work of Randall Collins. We then consider the different methodologies and approaches available to conduct research on rituals and social interaction, building on this with an exploration of select areas of research in sociology that draw on ritual theory to illuminate the social processes, including the study of criminal justice and punishment, violence, social movements and activism, economics and financial markets and consumption. This list is neither comprehensive nor exhaustive, but provides a select view of how research agendas are being advanced by ritual theory. Highlighting emergent ideas and nascent challenges for contemporary sociology to contend with, we conclude by questioning the concept of solitary and technology-mediated rituals and the uneasy relationship with macro-sociology and social structure.

10.2   Lineage of Ritual Theory

10.2.1   Emile Durkheim: Collective Effervescence and Sources of Morality

Philosophers, historians, and anthropologists have long been studying the role of rituals in ancient and contemporary cults, practices, religions, and beliefs. This was a popular subject for nineteenth century intellectuals, though the concept and theory of ritual remained relatively abstract in their work. Emile Durkheim's empirical agenda changed this. Durkheim was primarily committed to the development of sociology as a discipline. He wanted to show that behaviors and phenomena that were long considered private or individualistic, such as religious belief, criminal punishment, or even suicide, were actually *social* phenomena that produced our commitment to or membership in a culture or society. Over a number of different works[1], he explores the idea that interactions between socio-culturally bounded groups of people serve to simultaneously produce and reinforce the symbolic order that unites them.

Durkheim first developed a theory of rituals in his study of Australian Aboriginal rites and religious ceremonies, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912/1996). The data for this study was largely drawn from Spencer and Gillens' (1898) account of lifeways amongst Australian Aboriginals in and around Alice Springs. Spencer and Gillens' book, with its detailed descriptions and photographs, provided the data for a systematic empirical case study. A contemporary reader

may find this study naïve, as indeed, it has been suggested that Durkheim and his contemporaries saw the Australian Aboriginals as representing some kind of 'primitive' form of social organization in which the sophisticated and complex European society in which these intellectuals were living had its evolutionary roots. However, Durkheim was clear that he meant for this study to reveal our common humanity, rather than single out or exoticize a foreign race.
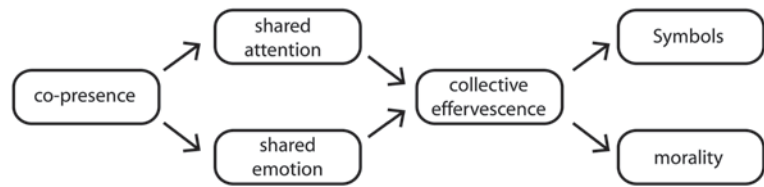
Durkheim draws on Aboriginal religious practices as well as examples from political history to develop a model of a ritual. These 'elementary forms' are meant to underlie not only religious organization, but all aspects of social life. There are two main features:
1. Group assembly
2. Collective effervescence

Group assembly means that people gather from across a wide geographic area to occupy the same place at the same time, with the express purpose of taking part in a group activity. This implies that there is something physical about ritual interaction; the bodily experience of being part of a group is an empirical reality.

As bodies come together in space and time, there arises a feeling of shared experience or "a condition of heightened intersubjectivity" (Collins 2004, p. 35), where the group becomes aware of a feeling of 'groupness', thus creating a collective conscience that is greater than the sum of its parts. This—Durkheim's notion of collective effervescence—is a significant concept that has catalyzed the sociological study of rituals. The two components that lead to collective effervescence are shared action and shared emotion. People are *doing* things together—praying, singing, watching. They are also *feeling* things together—sharing the electricity or buzz generated by the event. The feeling of collective effervescence is familiar to anyone who has experienced any kind of powerful religious or sporting event, concert, piece of theatre, political rally, riot, and so on. The feeling of 80,000 people singing Beatles songs along with Paul McCartney at the London Olympics opening ceremony described earlier in this chapter is a good example.

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[1] While Durkheim's work on ritual tends to focus on his empirical work on religion, much of his earlier work hints at the ritual basis for social solidarity; one could read the *Division of Labor in Society, Suicide*, and *The Rules of the Sociological Methods* as case studies of the different ways of social organization dictate the types of rituals that you participate in. For example, societies characterized by mechanic or organic solidarity dictate what type of rituals people living in those societies participate in. Similarly, the concept of Anomie and later classification of anomic suicide is also a study in the lack of solidarity or shared morals that come from lack of rituals of social integration.

Fig. 10.3 Durkheim's model of ritual

When people come together and focus their attention and their emotions into a state of collective effervescence, the ritual results in two broad outcomes (see Fig. 10.3):

1. Symbols of the relationship
2. A shared set of morals

Durkheim emphasizes the production of symbols, which act as markers of group identity. A symbol is an object (or idea, word, or person) that comes to represent the group and its attendant solidarity. These symbols remind us of the powerful feeling we felt during the ritual. We charge up objects with symbolic meaning as a shortcut to representing the intense feeling of collective effervescence:

> The sentiments aroused in us by something spontaneously attach themselves to a symbol which represents them…. For we are unable to consider an abstract entity, which we can represent only laboriously and confusedly, the source of the strong sentiments which we feel. We cannot explain them to ourselves except by connecting them to some concrete object of whose reality we are vividly aware… The soldier who dies for his flag, dies for his country; but as a matter of fact, in his own consciousness, it is the flag that has the first place (Durkheim 1912/1996, p. 250)

Symbols become sacred, which distinguishes them from the profane, or the realm of the everyday. They take on an otherworldly quality, which in religion is often associated with a deity. In the context of Aboriginal religion, sacred symbols take the form of totems, which instil worshipers with a sense of the divine. Perhaps cynically, Durkheim suggests that while participants in a religious ritual may believe that they are experiencing the divine, in reality they are experiencing their own solidarity, that is, the collective effervescence created and reinforced by their actions. The symbols act as a reminder of this. In keeping with this, most forms of contemporary religion rely on symbols; the cross, the Star of David, the star and crescent, for instance, all evoke the divine.

Symbols, when backed by rituals, can wield enormous power. We come to hold these symbols as sacred, and disrespect and desecration (such as flag burning) are seen to be highly offensive. However, in order for these symbols to retain their power, they need to be 'recharged' by more rituals. This can perhaps explain why the opening ceremonies for the Olympics have become increasingly lavish and over-the-top; each subsequent spectacle renews its symbols, such as the Olympic torch that is carried from Athens to the host city, the flag with its five interlocking rings representing the coming together of all nations, or the anthem that is played to mark the opening of the games. When people lose interest in ritual, for whatever reason, its symbols come to lose meaning. Take for example, current debates in a number of countries across the world over the wearing of a poppy to commemorate fallen WWI soldiers. Poppies were originally worn in the lead up to Armistice Day, November the 11th, as a symbol of remembrance. Over time, rituals to mark this day have faded as new generations are increasingly less invested in them. Some have argued that poppies have lost their meaning, as they are worn by politicians and celebrities as an empty act of populism. The once strong symbol, without meaningful rituals to back it up, has (arguably) faded.

A final feature of rituals is their affirmation or reaffirmation of a shared morality. This is a collective sense that a group's actions and beliefs are right, and that violations of the group norms are wrong. Durkheim describes this in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1912/1996), but he articulates it most clearly in his writings on crime and punishment in *The Division of*

Labor in Society (1893/1997), *Moral Education* (1961/2002), and the *Rules of the Sociological Method* (1985/1992).

In the *Rules* (1985/1992), Durkheim makes his now famous case that crime is a 'normal' part of any functioning society; a society of absolute conformity would be inflexible and incapable of evolution, whereas deviant behavior is a vehicle for growth and change. Durkheim writes:

> Imagine a society of saints, a perfect cloister of exemplary individuals. Crimes properly so called, will there be unknown; but faults which appear venial to the layman will create there the same scandal that the ordinary offence does in ordinary consciousness. If, then, this society has the power to judge and punish, it will define these acts as criminal and will treat them as such. (1985, p. 68–69)

Not only is crime a normal and expected part of any society, but it serves a positive function by allowing us to develop collective rituals of punishment that affirm our moral order. Durkheim argues that we feel emotionally affronted when our norms are violated, and that punishment allows for an emotionally expressive ritual to condemn violators while at the same time reinforcing the very moral order that was violated. Punishment teaches us our boundaries and morals. Garland refers to this as the "moral circuitry" (1990, p. 33) of crime and punishment, where a criminal act, by violating a norm, threatens that norm's very existence by suggesting that it (and its symbolic representations) are weak and worth of violation. A punishment is a passionate response to this violation, which in turn rebuilds and reinforces that norm, leading to a "virtuous circle set off by crime" (Garland 1990, p. 33).

While contemporary punishment rituals are seemingly rational and mechanized events (Foucault 1977) they have become "routinized expressions of emotion" (Garland 1990, p. 35) that are emotive responses hiding behind a veneer of legal rationality. It is for this reason that Sherman (2003) has criticized contemporary punishment rituals, noting the disconnect between punishment as an emotionally expressive ritual, that at the same time assumes that an offender is a rational actor. He argues for a more "emotionally intelligent" ritual that can acknowledge the emotional basis of criminal acts while simultaneously condemning the wrongdoing and asserting the larger moral order. Restorative justice, discussed later in this chapter, is an example of this type of punishment ritual.

Durkheim's studies of the role of ritual in social life reflect an early draft of what Collins (2004, 2009) will later call 'radical microsociology'. Rather than arguing that rituals are a reflection of the larger social structure and its attendant inequalities, Durkheim argues that rituals come first. Rituals both create and represent the moral force and beliefs of society.

This may leave us wondering, where do rituals come from? How do we develop and transmit these ideas? This question is only indirectly addressed by Durkheim, largely through his conception of social facts. Social facts, he argued, have power in and of themselves. They precede human consciousness and exist independently of it, externally to humans, thus comprising an order that individuals learn their way into. It is through their influence that individuals think and act in certain ways. Durkheim observes that he himself, as a brother, a husband and a citizen,

> perform[s] duties which are defined, externally to myself… Even if (these duties) conform to my own sentiments and I feel their reality subjectively, such reality is still objective, for I did not create them; I merely inherited them through my education (Durkheim (1895/1982, p. 1).

Durkheim's synthesis of culture and socialization was revolutionary and would become the cornerstone of ritual theory in the social sciences. Successive theorists have developed ritual theory towards discerning the origin of social facts, which Durkheim himself never specified. His scope, operating at the level of broader structural and social processes, is deeply sociocentric, leaving little room for understanding the spaces in which individuals engage in more subtle negotiation of cultural norms. Nearly fifty years after Durkheim's death, Erving Goffman addressed this close-endedness with gusto. Goffman explored negotiations of self and other norms in face-to-face interaction, in doing so, opening possibilities for ritual theory at the micro-level.

10.2.2 Erving Goffman: Rituals of Everyday Life

Durkheim's main contribution to the study of ritual was his exploration of the ways that rituals create and affirm a moral order. Erving Goffman both develops and subverts this idea in a series of studies expanding the concept of ritual. If Durkheim's sociology can be said to celebrate society, Goffman's celebrates the individuals therein, for it dwells on the intimate, mundane and micro level of exchange. In Durkheim's conception, social facts exist without a creation story; they precede society. In interacting with one another, exchanging rituals and symbols we reiterate and re-inscribe these social facts, strengthening them. Goffman, by contrast, hones in on the way that each of us use our knowledge of the rituals, symbols, games, rules, and orders to position ourselves strategically in relation to the social facts. Durkheim paints a picture of how rituals create society; Goffman shows how society and its rituals create the self.

Goffman attunes us to the taken-for-granted interaction rituals of everyday life. Traditionally thought of as empty gestures, or just good manners, Goffman shows the ways these exchanges reveal ourselves, our status, and the social organization of our community. They serve similar functions to the types of rituals studied by Durkheim and the social anthropologists. Goffman makes this explicit in 'The nature of deference and demeanour' (1967/1982) where he sets out to 'explore some of the senses in which the person in our urban secular world is allotted a kind of sacredness that is displayed and confirmed by symbolic acts' (1967/1982, p. 47). These symbolic acts are what he calls 'ceremonial rules' or 'rituals' where our obligations to others and our expectations of them (and vice versa) are played out. Examples of these are to be found in the everyday exchanges we have with people as we go about our day—salutations, introductions, pardons, pleasantries, apologies, openings and closings. Even the simple exchange around enquiring after another's well-being 'how are you?' is symbolically rich. Goffman explains:

> I use the term 'ritual' because this activity, however informal and secular, represents a way in which the individual must guard and design the symbolic implications of [their] acts while in the immediate presence of an object that has a special value for [them] (1967/1982, p. 57)

In this definition of ritual, Goffman echoes Durkheim's emphasis on the sacred and symbolic elements of ritual interaction. Indeed, in a footnote to this definition he acknowledges the similarities to a definition by Radcliffe-Brown:

> There exists a ritual relation whenever a society imposes on its member a certain attitude towards an object, which attitude involves some measure of respect expressed in a traditional mode of behavior with reference to that object (Radcliffe-Brown, cited in Goffman 1967/1982, p. 57)

So, when an object deserves an attitude entailing some measure of respect (in other words, it is sacred), then the way we express this respect is a kind of ritual. The 'objects' in Goffman's world are the self and other people that we interact with. In his approach, the self and other become sacred, ritual-worthy entities.

As Collins has noted (2004, p. 23–25), Goffman uses many of the same elements of ritual as Durkheim. His analysis of ritual also centers on co-presence and the development of a shared focus (what he calls a 'focused interaction'). There is an emphasis on what is to be treated as sacred as well as a basis of social solidarity. He observes that we are so committed to the interaction order that we will go to great lengths to avoid disrupting it, to almost comic effect. To demonstrate this, Goffman coins the term 'studied non-observance' to describe instances where interactants studiously avoid acknowledging another's faux pas, for example by ignoring the fact that someone has spinach in their teeth. On the one hand, this is to protect the conversational partner from becoming embarrassed by the spinach in their teeth. But also, it is to prevent the spinach observer from becoming embarrassed by pointing out that their partner has spinach in their teeth. Both having spinach in your teeth and having to tell someone they have spinach in their teeth are disruptions to the interaction order that we take pains to avoid.

Over and over again in Goffman's sociology, we see rituals fail, and the lengths we go to correct this, whether it's through protecting the face

of others or saving our own. He depicts this in the essay 'Response Cries' in *Forms of Talk* (1981) where he examines our compulsion to mutter to ourselves when we make a minor gaffe, like saying 'ooops' when we trip on the sidewalk. This is a powerful theoretical and methodological point that is later picked up by Collins and others: that the moral order only becomes visible when it is violated, and that we endeavour enthusiastically to restore it. We learn what is important to us when it is challenged (a point made evident in a different context by Garfinkel's (1967) breaching experiments).

Across many different works, Goffman develops a range of metaphors to explore the ways we "pay ritual homage to the projections of self" (Fine and Manning 2003, p. 468). These make up the 'interaction order' or 'the ground rules for a game, the provisions of a traffic code or the rules of syntax of a language' (Goffman 1983, p. 8). He draws on data from a variety of sources, including ethnographic observations of social relations in a small village in the Shetland Islands, the social organization of a mental asylum, observations and interactions with gamblers, con artists, salesmen, as well as advertising materials, etiquette manuals, and works of literature.

Goffman famously develops dramaturgical metaphors from the theatre as well. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), he discusses social interaction as a performance: we present ourselves in the front region, or front stage, where we are aided in the use of props, costumes, our teammates, and the audience. For instance, if we want to project ourselves as a confident intellectual, we may dress a certain way, use certain words, surround ourselves with certain types of colleagues or friends, or carry certain books around. The back region, or backstage, is where we prepare ourselves for the rituals that occur in the front region. Here, we do the dirty work: reading magazines and blogs to know what kind of books to like and clothes to wear; quietly strategizing with close friends and loved ones about how to project our best self, or just to take a break from the front stage.

Goffman was unique, while sometimes frustrating, in his use of multiple metaphors throughout his scholarship. However, there is a certain consistency concerning ritual interactions, the self, and symbolic action. In later essays, he develops some ideas from *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959), using metaphors of 'the face' or interactions as 'facework'. When we interact with each other, we take a 'line' or a statement of the self and express it in the 'face' we put forward. Co-participants work with us to maintain this face, helping us save face if it slips. Goffman's concept of face is similar to his concept of *demeanor*, or how you present yourself in an interaction to indicate your perceived status relative to those around you, and your expectations for how others should act. *Deference* is the way others help to maintain your demeanor (or face). Considering the example used above, we may slip and lose face when we mispronounce the name of a foreign intellectual, or say something that reveals that we have not actually read the book we claim to have read. Others may attempt to help us save face by sympathizing, or joking about how hard it is to pronounce such names.

In other works Goffman focuses on people who occupy marginal spaces, either because they break the rules (like the patients in *Asylums* (1961)), they are barred from or unable to participate in 'normal' society (the physically handicapped and the criminal in *Stigma* (1963a)), or they are particularly adept at manipulating encounters to their benefit (con men in 'Cooling the Mark Out' (1952) and spies and push salesmen in *Strategic Interaction* (1970)).

His analyses resist simplicity by being embedded in detailed attentiveness to each context and encounter. In *Asylums*, he shows how the structure of the situation compels patients to act 'crazy' whilst institutionalized: the hospital set up, the lack of privacy, curtailment of freedom, and the treatment by doctors and nurses deprive patients of a back stage, and deny them a face. They resort to outbursts or other strategies in order to assert some form of identity.

The individuals that Goffman depicts are keenly sensitive to the rules that pattern what kind of rituals we engage in, and recognize that it is through these rituals that we present ourselves to

Fig. 10.4 Interaction ritual chains (adapted from Collins 2004)
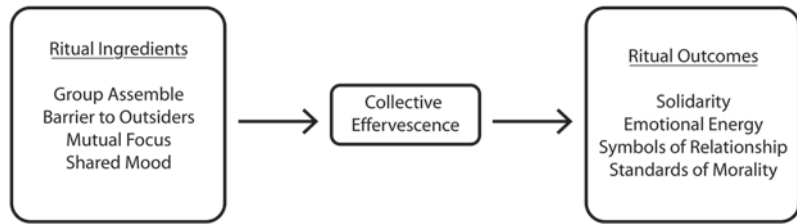
the world. In his writings, he plays up the fragility of each encounter, the constraining qualities of structure, and the actual work that goes into creating a successful interaction ritual. The social order as he sees it is as flexible and changeable as the individuals engaging in and with it. There is also a playfulness to Goffman that is unique among sociologists. While he treats the topics of the self, social interaction, and symbols as very serious and worthy of intellectual inquiry, he does so from a remove, subtly mocking the process and us for participating in it. This is perhaps what makes him so widely read but rarely imitated - we like to make fun of ourselves but find it hard to do in a meaningful way.

He is known as a sociologist of everyday life, famous for showing how, like the formal rituals of religion, everyday interactions contain elements of the sacred and the moral. His approach, in different writings that span nearly 25 years is at times controversial, exhilarating, and frustrating. Both detailed and expansive, it defies the orderly linear narrative that characterizes most scholars' oeuvres. Nonetheless, his insights struck a chord with readers both inside and out of the academy. He is one of the very few sociologists whose work is read outside of sociology, and although written half a century ago, his work comes across as relevant and timeless.

There can be a cynical reading to Goffman's approach: that society is a facade and we are all sneaky strategists vying to present ourselves in the best possible light. However, Goffman does not say that our front stage—the face we present—is somehow not our true 'self'. Rather, through interaction ritual, we assert our face and also show respect for the faces of others; the ritual is a forum of social collaboration that simultaneously produces identity and morality. He seems to show considerable affection for the small courtesies and etiquette of everyday life, saying that without them social interaction would be quite difficult, even barbarous. We are morally obliged to uphold the interaction order. Rituals that open, sustain, and close encounters are all important ways that we mark occasions, assert and negotiate our identity, and come to identify the self as a sacred object.

10.2.3 Randall Collins: Chains of Ritual Interaction

Goffman illuminates the value of examining encounters and the micro-situational components of an interaction. Building on this, Randall Collins has over the years developed a more robust theory of interaction rituals chains, demonstrating the source of their affect. Much like Goffman, Collins defines rituals broadly as any encounter where participants mutually focus their attention. He conceives of social interaction as a series of rituals that build cumulatively to enable varying levels of positive or negative emotional energy. Building on key concepts from Durkheim and Goffman, and drawing on data from a wide array of courses, he identifies the main ingredients and outcomes for a successful ritual (see Fig. 10.4). The primary elements are:

1. Co-presence
2. Barrier to outsiders
3. Mutual focus of attention
4. Shared mood

As with Durkheim, rituals here are embodied experiences: Collins argues that emotions are contagious and physical co-presence is necessary for the positive benefits of an interaction ritual to be felt. Co-presence can help to create a physical or metaphorical barrier to outsiders, marking this group or this space as sacred. When people gather together

and a space is well demarcated, a shared mood and mutual focus of attention can be created.

In a successful ritual, over time, shared emotions and mutual focus build, feeding back in each other to develop rhythmic coordination and synchronization in conversation, bodily movements, and emotions. This shared focus escalates into what Collins calls 'rhythmic entrainment', ratcheting up the feeling that the experience is mutual and shared. Participants become "caught up in the rhythm and mood of the talk" (Collins 2004, p. 48). This feedback loop feeds on itself. As emotions are aroused during an interaction participants become even more invested in and entrained by the interaction. This leads to greater emotional intensity, thus perpetuating and intensifying the feedback loop (see also Hallett 2003).

When this happens, the interaction ritual comes to be marked by the type of collective effervescence described so well by Durkheim. Indicators of this are:

1. Feelings and expressions of solidarity
2. Symbolic representations
3. Emotional energy (in the short and long term variations)
4. A sense of morality coupled with a desire to chastise those who deviate from the moral order

Solidarity is a feeling of interconnectedness within and membership to a social group. It can be observed by watching interactions closely: people synchronize their body movements, make sustained eye contact, and follow the rules of turn-taking. Interactions are smooth, not stilted, and people are more likely to touch, smile, and express emotion. A shared sense of morality arises, whether it be consistent with larger societal norms, as with the patriotism of the London Olympics, or an alternative standard of morality as was on display during the London riots, where rioters felt a shared sense of injustice at the police but also a shared sense of empowerment at their ability to fight them. Similarly, solidarity in a successful interaction ritual is accompanied by momentary bursts of emotional energy or 'charge'. This is a rush of confidence, invincibility, or power akin to the high rioters described feeling during the furore.

Collins makes a useful distinction between short-term and longer-term emotional outcomes (1990). Short-term outcomes include immediate feelings of group solidarity and a momentary rise in emotional energy. This solidarity creates symbols of group membership which remind participants of positive feelings, and theoretically extend the high emotional energy to future interaction rituals. This way, the 'charge' of short term emotional energy can be translated into a long-term emotional state. Participants can add to their stock of symbols and emotional energy and take solidarity-creating interactions into the future. In this way, interaction rituals develop from separate encounters into a series of ritual chains.

Emotional energy is not a constant variable. It waxes and wanes over time, and needs to be recharged with new interaction rituals. Like a battery, an individual will need to engage in more solidarity-producing interactions in order to be 'recharged'. Once the initial interaction ritual ends, the individual enters the market for ritual interaction (Collins 1993) where they will endeavor to reinvest their stocks of emotional energy in future interaction rituals. The more they invest, the bigger the long-term payoff. In this process, people become emotional energy seekers, always moving toward the highest emotional energy payoffs they can find relative to their current resources.

Power and status play out in interaction rituals by influencing each other and lead to stratified rituals. Broadly speaking, power rituals in an interaction determine who is an 'order giver' and who is an 'order taker', while status rituals show the extent to which an individual is part of a group. People who have power and status in an interaction are more likely to have more positive long-term benefits in the form of emotional energy. This aspect of ritual theory provides a novel way to study stratification and inequality, from the bottom up. Rather than look at social structure and its impact on the individual, this perspective examines the ways inequalities are played out on the micro interactional level.

While Collin's model is largely derived from Durkheim and Goffman, he elaborated two concepts that broaden and advance ritual theory, perhaps making it even more relevant to the

sociology of emotions. The first is his concept of emotional energy both as an outcome of a ritual and a motivator for future ones. The second is the idea of a 'market' for ritual interaction where rituals are strung together into chains.

Emotional Energy is a generalized emotional state, referring to the sentiments and affects that a person takes away from an interaction but also brings to further interactions. Successful interaction rituals will increase your emotional energy, endowing you with by confidence, enthusiasm, and initiative. Failed interactions or status depriving rituals reduce stock, amounting to feelings of depression, poor esteem, lack of initiative. It is literally draining. In this sense, emotional energy is a kind of capital. If we happen to have some, we will use it to invest in new interactions in order to gain some more. This is why we look for more interactions rituals that we perceive will result in a boost in emotional energy. For example we may agree to go out to a crowded new restaurant even though we know it will be a long wait and possible poor service. We go because we want to be part of the buzz, and want some of it to rub off on us. This is also why we are especially disappointed when this does not come to fruition, if for instance the atmosphere was wrong at the trendy new restaurant, or the assemblage of people failed to bring about any collective effervescence.

Collins makes the simple yet controversial statement that we are drawn to rituals that make us feel good and avoid ones that make us feel bad. We are constantly seeking to maximize our stock of emotional energy, and once we enter the interaction ritual market, this desire for emotional energy is a motivational force that pulls and pushes us from one encounter to the next. This is an interesting twist on a utilitarian rational choice perspective, one that allows for the theory to broaden out from a micro perspective. It's not that we are rational choice robots calculating utility in every single situation. Rather, as we move from interaction to interaction we seem to maximize emotional energy, and this guides the kinds of interactions that we find ourselves attracted to and in. Chains of ritual interaction connect micro level theory to mezzo and macro levels of analysis, and also incorporate concepts foundational to sociology, such as conflict, stratification, power, and status. This way, Collins' model is comprehensive yet flexible, proposing a radical microsociology that puts human bodies and human emotions at the core of social institutions.

10.3 Methodological Approaches and Challenges

Ritual theory can identify rituals as dynamic events that build solidarity, create and reinforce shared symbols, and offer individuals opportunities to choose how they engage with the ritual and the co-participants. It also suggests a means of reading these events, for determining how successful a ritual might be, who its key and peripheral participants are, showing when new cultural symbols come into being and, conversely, when the power of older symbols begins to diminish.

For example, one could read the London riots as a particular form of interaction ritual; as part of a chain of ritual interactions starting with repeated negative interactions with the police over time, building into an outburst over the shooting of Mark Duggan, and culminating into mass riots. As they looted and fought the police, participants developed a rhythm to their mayhem, which culminated in a feeling of solidarity and emotional energy. Ritual theory identifies and names processes that underscore these and other social relationships, namely processes for which there may not be an accurate, existing language. In other words, it gives us a set of concepts and terms through which to make sense of the riots' symbols, morals, and political agendas.

A methodological challenge implicit in ritual theory is that, given its broad applicability, when is it useful to identity an interaction or event as 'ritual'? Or, in Collins' (2004, p. 15) words, "if everything is a ritual then what isn't?" We consider this challenge in more detail when discussing the potential of using ritual theory to understand actions enacted alone. Similarly, the components of a ritual dynamic are seldom that straightforward, for instance, it can be difficult to discern whether collective effervescence is an

ingredient or an outcome. This is not a question that can be directly answered, for each event will be different. Applying ritual theory entails embracing this fluidity, as it concerns processes that are inherently dynamic, and deals intimately with emotions over time.

The dynamic, messy nature of lived life, and therefore rituals, comprise variables that cannot always be pre-determined or measured. Because of this, the use of ritual theory in research tends to rely on qualitative methods (live or video observation, participant-observation, interviews). Observational techniques are important for discerning the components of a ritual event: What are the ingredients of this interaction? How successful is it? What causes variations on mutual focus and emotional cohesion to occur? What are the consequences of these variations on the participants' overall focus and cohesion? Interviews can help researchers glean information on the types of past encounters and narratives that have contributed to the energy and positionality of any particular person participating in a ritual event. At the same time, individuals are not necessarily adept at accurately describing emotions and interactional dynamics to an interviewer. Observational methods are useful for balancing such inaccuracies. Indeed, in an attempt to isolate the micro and situational details of an interaction, sociologists are increasingly using photographic and video data as a supplement to observation (for examples, see Collins 2009, Klusemann 2010, Rossner 2011).

10.4   How Rituals Help Us Understand Social Phenomena

Ritual theory has helped us to better understand a wide range of social phenomena, from seemingly mundane interactions such as sharing a cigarette to large-scale global social movements. The theory, especially as conceptualized by Collins, comes with a set of empirically testable precepts that allow for incorporation into a wide range of areas in sociology. We provide an in-depth discussion of how a ritual framework can help us understand punishment and criminal justice, followed

by a select survey of other areas of sociological inquiry that have benefited from ritual analysis.

10.4.1   Rituals of Punishment and Justice

Ritual theory has proven extensively valuable in the realm of criminal justice. The concept of ritual has been used to explore architectural and ceremonial aspects of court (Tait 2001), the dynamics of a trial (Rose 2010), the role of victims in court (Rock 2010) prison life (Carrabine 2005), and police citizen interactions (Peterson 2008). It is applied both theoretically—in terms of understanding the institutions, structures, forces and feelings undergirding contemporary punishment – and practically, since by conceiving of restorative justice and post-prison reintegration processes as ritual events, there is scope for comprehending how they may be improved. Indeed, Karstedt (2006) has argued that rituals are particularly important in the justice system because they have the power to transform the negative emotions that tend to be associated with an offence (such as anger or fear) into positive feelings of solidarity and shared morality.

Rituals of punishment are integral to contemporary justice processes. Garland describes punishment as "irrational, unthinking emotion" (1990, p. 32) that is structured and ritualized into a rational guise of justice. In his framing of modern punishment, Garland takes up Durkheim's contention that punishment for a deviant act, whether it be criminal or simply violating a social norm, affirmed a society's moral and emotional commitment to that norm. This reading of Durkheim suggests we can truly understand the nature of punishment if we enlarge our focus from offenders to a perspective encompassing punishment and its broader social purposes and forces; in essence, he calls on us to reframe punishment as ritual. This vantage point prompts a slew of questions pertinent to understanding penal systems as social institutions, rather than merely as a tool for crime-control, such as: what social function does punishment perform? How have contemporary forms of punishment come about? And, what might

punishment's unintended costs to and effects on society be (Garland 1991, p. 119)?

Key to Garland's reading of Durkheim is the idea that rituals act as a mode of legitimization through which social groups create beliefs that are ideologically powerful, and so surround that group's practices with legitimacy. Justice rituals take formal, authoritative forms. Consider the imposing grandeur of a judge's bench, the bureaucratized sequences of legal paperwork and the strict choreography of courtroom dynamics. Their semblance of ordered impartiality belies the assault criminal activity poses to our moral order.

One of the limits of this reading is that contemporary punishment is no longer the public display of guillotines and floggings that Durkheim alluded to when composing his theories about punishment as ritualized expression of emotion. Instead, it happens behind closed doors, through legal channels, in courtrooms or deep behind the walls of a prison (Foucault 1977) [2]. What form

does the ritual take then? What purpose does it serve? Garland synthesizes Durkheimian rituals of punishment alongside Foucauldian notions of power and discipline in the justice system, and Marxist readings of penal colonies as serving an economic function. These crossovers demonstrate ritual theory's compatibility with other theoretical lineages for understanding social phenomena.

Of course, while punishment rituals may supply onlookers with solidarity and a shared morality, the offender suffers. Many have argued that criminal trial and punishment are meant to degrade an offender, diminish their status, and reduce their stock of emotional energy. A total institution like a prison (or Goffman's *Asylum*), consists of interaction rituals that deny the prisoner status, face, and eventually a sense of self.

Maruna (2011) has aptly noted that there is something missing in this sequence. We have developed elaborate status degradation rituals to mark punishment, but we lack rituals at the other end to re-integrate an offender back into society. Maruna has argued for the introduction of 're-demptive rituals' that symbolize to an offender that they are still part of a moral community after they have served their punishment. Otherwise, an offender is left with nothing but a stigmatized self and little hope for redemption.

John Braithwaite has offered both a theoretical advancement in how we think of justice ritual and the role of emotions, and a practical solution to the problem put forth by Maruna. In *Crime, Shame and Reintegration* (1989), he asserts the ritual importance of shaming as a social response to crime. He sees shaming as serving the social function of chastising offenders and reasserting social norms, but distinguishes between two types of shaming: reintegrative and stigmatizing. Stigmatizing shaming is akin to a status degradation ritual that casts offenders as irrevocably deviant. To be shamed in this manner is tantamount to being symbolically and physically banished from society. According to Braithwaite, this type of ritual is most often enacted in criminal justice.

Its inverse, reintegrative shaming, makes a distinction between the offence and the offender.

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[2] While punishment may not be the public spectacle it was historically in France and England, with public executions and floggings, media and technology has since emerged that has allowed for more public access to and participation in punishment rituals, either through the more access to events taking place inside the courts or prisons (such as the live-blogging of high profile trials, sentencing hearings, and executions), 'shaming' punishments such as sex-offender registries, or the recent popularity of websites, blogs, facebook pages, etc. devoted to a form of internet vigilante justice for wrongdoing, either perceived or imagined. Arguably, through new media and its attendant rituals, values are reaffirmed, upheld, and negotiated. This demonstrates the complex texture of emotional communities that make up any society—they may be numerous factions responding differently to the source of stimuli. And so in this way, punishment rituals remain a means through which competing social values can be expressed and disputed. An example that demonstrates the social complexity of justice and punishment is the public response to the capture and execution of Saddam Hussein, whose public hanging was recorded on a mobile phone and broadcast through the internet. Unlike the official footage of the event, which did not show the hanging, this leaked video showed the full event with audio of witnesses jeering at Hussein. Amidst the hot criticism against the US government for Hussein's capture and punishment, this emotional display at the hanging drew added reproach, in part because it exposed the backstage of this supposedly official and rational process.

While the criminal act is to be condemned, the actor's self and sense of social belonging is to be preserved. Punishment in this schema is a form of symbolic and material reparation, over the course of which an offender is forgiven and welcomed back into the circle of a moral society. Rituals of reintegrative shaming uncouple shame from punishment. Braithwaite (1989, p. 75) explains this using Goffmanian notions of the split self to describe the way an offender's self-hood is managed in such interactions: there is the self that is blameworthy and targeted appropriately, and the self who joins the community in apportioning this blame. This second self is framed as enduring. The first is castigated and cast off; the second is forgiven and reintegrated.

Largely inspired by Braithwaite's work, justice rituals as status-elevation have re-emerged with the growing popularity of the restorative justice movement, where victims, offenders, family, and friends come together to collectively discuss the offence, its impacts, and how best to address the harm. This movement can be seen as an explicit attempt to inject some reintegrative rituals into a justice system that tends towards stigmatization.

Restorative justice conferences are intentionally deeply ritual events, and the language of ritual has long been used to describe restorative justice encounters (Zehr 1990; Retzinger and Scheff 1996; Braithwaite and Mugford 1994; Karstedt 2006; Maruna 2011). Collins' theory of interaction ritual chains lends itself well to understanding the process of restorative justice. Indeed, using concepts derived from interaction ritual chains, Rossner (2011, 2013) has explored the ritual and emotional dynamics of restorative justice conference.

Schematized this way, the conference itself creates an arena for emotional energies to emerge and play out. The general process and the script facilitators use to guide discussion seek to structure these energies into a trajectory, ideally one that begins with unabashed expression of fear and anger, then pivots on apology/remorse to cohere towards reconciliation, forgiveness and solidarity. Over the course of the encounter, participants become rhythmically entrained and

synchronized, culminating in symbolic reparation marked by the expression of remorse and forgiveness. Observations and interviews with facilitators and participants suggest that conferences can be successful at creating intense solidarity within the group, and enabling symbolic and material reparation that leave participants with elevated emotional energy (Rossner 2013). On the other hand, they can also fail to achieve these outcomes, leaving participants flat, deflated, or angry.

Outbursts of emotion are conceived of as central to a conference's success. Participants' expression of emotions makes an opportunity for the conference participants to engage emotionally towards cohesive ends. This positive, uplifting emotional energy carries forward into participants' emergent senses of self in the conference's aftermath (Rossner 2012). To the contrary, of course, when emotional expression is not coupled with a shared focus of attention and the creation of symbols that are meaningful to the group, then this transformation from negative to positive may not occur, leaving participants underwhelmed or with a feeling of unresolved tension (Rossner et al. 2013).

Restorative justice has gained popularity and prowess in the justice system due, in part, to a conference's capacity to reintegrate offenders into the fabric of society, demonstrating the importance of reintegration rituals. However, as Maruna (2011) has pointed out restorative justice rituals are usually part of a sentencing hearing, and are not an option in most cases for an offender who is being released from prison. Maruna argues that reintegration after prison is a process worthy of symbolic and moral re-inclusion rituals. Yet, it is one that many societies with established and intricate penal systems handle awkwardly, if at all. This transition is often secretive and unceremonial. Certainly, it is deeply significant for the families, friends and lovers involved, and in some cases, for victims/victims' families, each of whom may bring personal rituals to bear upon the offender's release. But there is significant imbalance between the severance from society that convicted persons experience through state-level rituals, and the relatively hushed, ritual-poor shift

back into society. As Maruna and others contend, this is an area where sociological scholarship and justice practices could be harnessed towards crafting a more integrative ritual effect.

Indeed, as we have seen, ritual theory can help us better understand the sociology of justice and punishment, highlighting the complex play of emotions at work. Interaction rituals are at play at every point in the justice process, where the self is affirmed, negotiated, or denied; shared morals are asserted or challenged; and solidarity and emotional energy emerge.

10.4.2 Smoking and Sex Rituals

In *Interaction Ritual Chains* (2004)*,* Randall Collins explores his particular synthesis of ritual theory as it relates to sex and smoking—two very different, but similarly potent yet ordinary interactions. In the chapters dedicated to each phenomenon, Collins challenges physiology-centric explanations of their appeal. Biology and society cannot be truly divided by a clean line. And bodies and emotions play into social interaction. Consequently, there is more to tobacco dependence than biological addiction, he argues, just as there is more to sexual desire than evolutionary drive.

With smoking rituals, Collins seeks to explain how tobacco is consumed as an object of attachment or of revulsion where context is crucial. The historical location and culture surrounding any instance of tobacco consumption and influences its symbolism and meaning. It is a lifestyle ritual, within which boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are erected. As with all cultural and ritual institutions, such boundaries shift like strata over time. At the turn of last century, for example, smoking and carousing went hand in hand. Carousing was itself deeply symbolic; a private and elite activity that in its bawdiness, sexual licentiousness and hedonism turned a nose up at the religious, civil and familial institutions dear to society's upper echelons. Tobacco was central to this domain and the men participating in it. The only women likely to be joining in were prostitutes. In the changing tides of subsequent

decades, carousing rituals and elegant rituals blended (Collins 2004, p. 330). Women could have responded to this shift with one of two main motives, says Collins. They could have derided tobacco for its unsavoury associations, or overthrown their exclusion by smoking themselves. "This is a typical dilemma created by all exclusionary rituals: to attempt to destroy the ritual that imposes lower status on outsiders, or to force one's way in" (Collins 2004, p. 330).

Collins describes four main kinds of tobacco rituals, dealing with tobacco as a prompt for: tranquillity, carousing, elegance, and work-oriented relaxation and concentration. In every case, social rituals play a part in determining the bodily experience of cigarettes (a point not unlike the one made by Becker (1963/1982) in his study of marijuana use). Addiction cannot explain all tobacco consumption as so many cigarettes are smoked socially, at parties and festivals, by people who associate them with atmospheres of conviviality and play. Addiction is not a purely chemical transaction accumulating at the cellular level. Whether as a respite from factory work, or a marker of teen rebellion, or an evocation subculture, smoking generates distinct kinds of emotional energies with groups. This is constituted by the company, the feeling of smoking in that environs and the postures of bodies together in that space. Each subsequent smoke evokes past energies and refreshes their significance anew. It is not tobacco that is the totem, as much as its smoke, smell, taste and the cigarette itself (Collins 2004, p. 318). "No one would have a stable experience of tobacco, or of coffee or tea, if they were not introduced to it through social rituals," Collins argues. "The completely isolated Robinson Crusoe smoker or coffee-drinker, in my opinion, would never come into being" (2004, p. 305).

Painting a curious picture of the converse, that is, tobacco revulsion, Collins argues that bodies were only sensitive to the ills of cigarette smoke after anti-smoking movements drew attention to its poisonous effects. Prior to that, most nonsmokers merely accepted smoke-filled rooms as a perhaps mildly annoying but inevitable and unavoidable part of daily life. "The ostentatious

coughing fits and angry outbursts that occur today are socially constructed in particular historical circumstances; they are constructed in bodies and not merely in minds" (Collins 2004, p. 337).

Collins takes a comparable stance when he claims that "sexual pleasure-constructing behaviour" (2004, p. 227) is learned. Biological determinism may configure sexual desire as fuelled by evolutionary drive and fulfilled by physiological pleasure. But only a portion of the plethora of sexual activities can be classed as exclusively "genital pleasure-seeking" (Collins 2004, p. 224). The rest—from hand-holding and french-kissing to fetish and so on—derive their erotic appeal from symbolic and social associations that are enacted on and replenished through the body. It would be facile to explain this as simple enculturation, Collins argues. Too much is left unexplained. The sociologist's job is to explain the mechanisms behind the scenes through which sexual excitement and pleasure come about.

In the explanation Collins provides, sexual interaction is framed as a (potentially) solidarity-producing interaction ritual. He isolates four important features of sex, mapping them out in terms of ritual theory: co-presence—sex being bodily co-presence of the highest order; mutual focus on one another's bodies and pleasure; emotional entrainment over shared mood of sexual excitement; and privacy, meaning a barrier to outsiders and a clearly marked inclusion/exclusion divide.

As with all rituals, these features are variable components, and may range from very low to very high in any counter. Unlike with most rituals, however, rhythmic patterns are a highly discernible and crucial feature of sexual encounter. It is in the intensification, entrainment, and synchronization of rhythms between love-makers that Collins believes an aspect of pleasure is created. These processes move closely alongside physiological rhythms, like a quickening heart pace, and the focus entailed by sharing a breath. There is the potential, if rhythms and focus are mutual and reciprocal to swiftly arrive at a place of collective effervescence and solidarity. "This is because sexual intercourse is the ritual

of love", Collins claims (2004 p. 236). Through sexualised, intimate and indeed, romantic, exchanges, social ties are generated, reiterated and symbolized. There is a Durkheimian component to this too, in that the solidarity and attachment that sex fosters may fade with time if it is not repeated and reinstated regularly.

10.4.3 Micro Level Theories of Violence, Economic Markets, and Social Movements

Collins' theory has led to an upswing of microsociological research that draws on rituals. Following the publication of *Interaction Ritual Chains* (2004), Collins proposes a micro level theory of violent encounters (2009). Taking Goffman's cue and zooming into to the dynamics of the encounter, he demonstrates how violent interactions are emotionally charged and full of tension and fear. This leads to a particular type of interaction ritual – participants develop a mutual focus and rhythmic entrainment, emotional energy is won or lost, and the interaction tends towards dysfunction. Klusemann (2010) elaborates this to look at mass atrocities during war. Drawing on video evidence of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, he dissects the evolution of a massacre, pinpointing the ritual build up and swings in emotional energy that led to the atrocity. The Srebenica massacre has generally been understood as stemming from orders from Serbian political and military leaders amidst a background of long-standing ethnic conflict. But according to Klusemann, such macro level explanations for civil massacres are an illusion. He claims that that there are specific "situational mechanisms" that lead towards or away from an accumulation of conflict, and the difference between a day long outbreak of violence and days of massacre lies in each event's respective interaction ritual chain.

Working in a different vein, Wherry (2008) uses the concept of interaction ritual chains to study the relationship between Thai and Costa Rican handicraft artisans and foreign consumers, detailing the strategies involved in 'framing authenticity' and ensuring that the ritual leaves the

consumer charged with emotional energy (and therefore likely to go back for more). Similarly, Brown (2013) uses ritual to theorize the mobilization of ethical consumption. He deftly shows how fair trade producers, promoters and consumers are drawn together in different types of rituals producing symbols and emotional energy of varying strengths, from dedicated activists participating in what they call the 'extraordinary experience' (sacred events) of visiting a fair trade producers' country for a reality tour, which results in high emotional energy and dedication to the cause, to the much lower intensity enjoyment of the status-enhancing and aesthetically pleasing experience of shopping in a fair commercial outlet.

Erika Summers-Effler has extended interaction ritual theory in a number of directions, developing sophisticated models of emotional rhythms, emotional energy, power, and status, drawing on a diverse array of situations and data, including feminist resistance (2002) activists participating in social movements (2010), victims of domestic violence (2004a), and early developing adolescent girls (2004b). She argues for the self as an analytic level of social life which is created by the productive tensions between bodies and the interaction order. Learning processes akin to enculturation are central to this proposition, though grounded in the body. Summers-Effler draws from biology and psychology to explain this. Symbols from collective experiences are stored as somatic markers and associated with bodily responses. Encountering those symbols again activates neural connections that evoke in a bodily way the interaction our bodies experienced with the environment at the time that symbol was generated (Summers-Effler 2007, p. 143). It is this socially and biologically produced response that we experience as emotion.

Summers-Effler further extends our understanding of stratified rituals (what Collins may call status rituals) and also rituals of subversions or resistance. Through in depth study of why and how people come to be affiliated with certain groups, and subsequently partake in their interaction rituals, believe in their symbols, and adopt their standards of morality, Summers-

Effler explored Collin's notion of a market for ritual interaction. Social movements are mobilised when individuals find that their emotional energy can be maximized through these alternative interaction rituals, most notably when an interaction rituals in the 'mainstream' tends towards status-deprivation rituals that lower their emotional energy. Several of these small groups enacting social change met failure regularly. As Summers-Effler explains, both the failures and the mundane daily activities drained members of emotional energy, and it was in these periods of 'flatness' that members were more likely to shift away from the group. The groups also regularly engaged in recovery rituals in attempt to level depleted energy sources, enthusiasm and morale. In this model, she not only shows how we are emotional energy seekers, but documents the ways that we can attempt to maximise or hold on to our stock of emotional energy using a range of defensive strategies to minimize the loss.

The diversity of this research demonstrates the myriad ways that our lives are filled with ritual, even in the most unlikely ways, such as amidst mass disorder and violence, or in the workplaces and cafes of our everyday lives.

10.5 New Directions for Ritual Theories

Since Durkheim first published the *Elementary Forms of Religious life*, we have been stimulated by a ritual framework through which to view social interaction and social organization. While the theory has become increasingly sophisticated, in many ways it stays true to Durkheim's initial concepts: bodies, workings in sync, leading to collective effervescence, symbols, and shared morality. This way of thinking has helped us to illuminate the social world, theorizing social interaction from its most basic micro-situational elements to the larger macro structures in which these interactions sit.

At the same time, there may still be aspects of ritual and social interaction that are under-theorized and can provide new areas for future research.

10.5.1 The Limits of Co-Presence: Solitary and Mediated Rituals

Collective effervescence, the 'encounter', co-presence, face-to-face: the proximity of another is assumed in all these phrases. Indeed, throughout the examples and studies presented so far, sociality bears hugely on ritual encounters and their emotional dimensions. Which raises the question of, how many people does it take to make a ritual? What scope is there for understanding how rituals conducted alone, like prayer or emailing, can also bear profound emotional affect? This question takes on especial significance in our current age, as human interactions are increasingly mediated by technology in novel and intimate ways.

Taking on the phenomena of solitary rituals within ritual theory's lineage, Campos-Castillo and Hitlin (2013) configure copresence as the *perception*, rather than the direct experience of, mutual entrainment with other actors. In doing this, they follow Goffman's definition of co-presence as describing a situation in which:

> persons must sense that they are close enough to be perceived in whatever they are doing, including their experiencing of others, and close enough to be perceived in this sensing of being perceived (Goffman 1963b, p. 17)

Their adaptation of this definition lays emphasis on an actor's imagination and perception.

> Copresence is the degree to which one actor (1) perceives entrainment with a second actor and (2) sees the second actor reciprocating entrainment, where entrainment is a linear function of the synchronization of mutual attention, emotion, and behavior (Campos-Castillo and Hitlin 2013, p. 171)

This configuration also departs from popular sociological thought in which copresence is a discrete variable—either present or absent. Instead, they consider it to be continuous and "intraindividual".

This allows for situations in which the other might be entirely imagined but willed into being believed, as with ghosts, or where the other is developed to constitute emotional energy for oneself, as with ancestors or spiritual deity in prayer. To examine the way that prayer operates as a powerful support mechanism for victims of intimate partner violence, Shane Sharp (2010) conceives of prayer as a social interaction between a corporeal person and an imagined counterpart. The women he interviews describe prayerful exchanges as a means of safely expressing or mitigating anger, of mediating emotions, and of self-empowerment towards managing their emotions. As one woman explains, "Talking to God's always helpful. … He'll help you find an answer…. It, it made me less angry at myself for letting it happen… I realized that it wasn't me… It was [my husband]" (Sharp 2010, p. 426). This configuration of ritual encounter involving unworldly or non-human characters, which can include fictional characters or the deceased, hinges on the recognition that even corporeal and human beings are not socially real unless they are also imagined (Cooley 1902, p. 122, in Campos-Castillo and Hitlin 2013, p. 170).

A similar pattern of relationality can be seen in interactions that are mediated by smartphones or the internet; the other is assumed, imagined, and reacted to accordingly (though, of course, there is scope for misreading textual symbols and misaligning a response, arguably more so in such mediums than in real-time, shared-space encounters). On this note, it is not that the physical and rhythmical synchronicity Durkheim pinned such importance on is rendered obsolete in such configurations. Rather, the capacity for such synchronicity finds relevance in other mediums, such as forms of linguistic matching in textual communication (Niderhoffer and Pennebaker 2002), or pauses and breaks to allow for technical glitches in video conferencing (Licoppe and Morel forthcoming).

What do we make of technology mediated rituals and solitary rituals? Do they test the boundaries of the Durkheim–Goffman–Collins model, or are they yet another example of the enduring ubiquity of ritual? Future research and theory can examine this.

10.5.2 Ritual, Macro-Sociology and Social Structure

Turner and Stets (2006) have suggested that current theorizing in the sociology of emotions is too focused on micro-situational dynamics and ought to engage further with macro-sociology. In saying this, they touch on an abiding tension within the social sciences to do with consolidating the micro and the macro. It is a matter of scale. On one hand, perspectives that are deeply structural (or macro) can be faulted for underplaying human agency and dismissing the capacity for structural changes to originate at the level of interaction, encounter and exchange. On the other hand, as Turner and Stets suggest, there is the risk that in dealing with the rich and exhaustive detail of a micro-level focus, more structural forces like the operation of power may be obfuscated.

The following questions locate the pertinence of this issue for this chapter's discussion: how can we reconcile the role of ritual in the social structure? Where do rituals come from, or, with respect to Durkheim, where do social facts come from? Ultimately, where does microsociology fit in with the grand scheme of things?

We can begin to address the tension underpinning these questions by tracing its history. Durkheim's legacy is a convenient place to begin. Somewhat ironically, the fork in the road between macro- and microsociology can be traced back to here, for although Durkheim essentially pioneered ritual theory, he is also a renowned structuralist.

Durkheim's tradition of ritual analysis evolved into a school of social anthropology that spread throughout Europe and America in the early part of the 20th century, most notably by his nephew Marcel Mauss in France and Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski in England. These scholars conducted a variety of studies exploring the ways that cultural ideas and practices are determined through ritual, though, while Malinowski advocated functionalism, Radcliffe-Brown did not consider his own approach functionalist.

At the same time, another wing of the Durkheimian tradition developed into what is now referred to as a structural or functionalist set of theories. Key theorists include Levi-Strauss, Bourdieu, and Foucault in France, and Merton and Parsons in the US. The 'moral order' that Durkheim wrote of is in keeping with the influential structural entities of Foucault and Levi-Strauss, and all three thinkers emphasize the structure's power over individuals. The significance that Durkheim attributed to symbols of society were talked about by Levi-Strauss in terms of understanding the language, or the rules of the game. Bourdieu (1977) endeavoured to distance himself from Levi-Strauss' binary, structuralist perspective by elucidating with the notion of *habitus* how the structure is inscribed upon and expressed through bodies. This concept retains the essence of ritual theory for its emphasis on how in order to be incorporated into any social niche, one must learn its symbolic moral order and grow into its image.

Contemporary theorists have further reconciled these two wings, most notably Collins with interaction ritual chains. Collins argues that rituals fit somewhere in between structure and ideas; they are "the nodes of social structure and it is in rituals that a group creates its symbols" (2004, p. 26). He argues that in structural thinking, like with Levi-Strauss,

> it is methodologically easier simply to correlate ideas with types of society, or, even further from the context of social action, to correlate ideas with each other; one no longer needs to do the micro ethnography of ritual action. Ritual drops out, leaving the system of symbols as the object for analysis (2004, p. 26)

Collins argues that failing to include the study of encounters or rituals, and only focusing on symbols, misses a key element of a structural theory.

Do we need a better theory of power and status in ritual? Kemper (2011) has argued that structural components of relational interactions need to be more explicit in the study of ritual interactions. This is the opposite view of Collins, who argues for a radical microsociology that puts the encounter first. However, it is clear that power and status are 'social facts' that will determine the type of interaction rituals one participate in,

and the type of emotional energy and solidarity that is drawn from it. Summers-Effler has made further headway conducting research on how stratified interaction actually works. This is one of the key areas that contemporary sociologists are compelled to address. There is scope for the sociology of emotions to contribute to this debate, for instance by exploring the role of emotional energy in enhancing or diminishing power.

10.6   Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has canvassed the terrain of ritual theory in sociology. We have presented rituals as instances of bodies (real, virtual or imagined) coming together, focusing their attention and emotion into a shared rhythm, producing or reinforcing symbols, group solidarity, and ultimately the social order. Followers of ritual theory take a radical microsociological approach, suggesting that rituals and micro-level interaction are the foundation of all of social life, and the building block of social institutions and macro structures. This is Durkheim's social glue; the interconnectedness of life as we engage in ritual interaction.

We opened this chapter with a comparison of the London Olympics opening ceremony and the London riots. They are analytically similar, and have similar elements: bodies together, sharing the same emotions and focus of attention, feeling a sense of interconnectedness and a swell of emotional energy. This energy manifests itself in one way with Olympic spectators reporting that they felt 'patriotic', and in another with rioters who say they felt 'powerful'. As demonstrated in the examples throughout the chapter, ritual theory allows us an analytic lens through which to make sense of social life, big and small, sacred and mundane.

Rituals are a compelling topic. Most people will experience their intensity, knowingly or not, whether it be the collective effervescence from a religious event or its secular counterpart, the jostling and jockeying over social niceties in polite interaction with acquaintances, or the intense synchronization and emotional attunement with a close friend or loved one. Rituals are not an abstract or difficult concept to grasp. They are right here, in the moment; we move in and out of them as we go about our lives. Even reading about ritual theory can evoke symbols for us, reminding us of instances of solidarity and emotional energy in our own lives. This itself can enhance our emotional energy. If the main concepts presented in this chapter—shared attention, shared emotion, solidarity, emotional energy, symbolic representations—seem intuitive to us, it is because they are familiar.

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