

I think we can all agree....

Garfinkel is BASED



Nooooo not that guy, this guy!



BUT

As Marvel has taught us

Even our heroes have flaws



This is Garfinkel's.

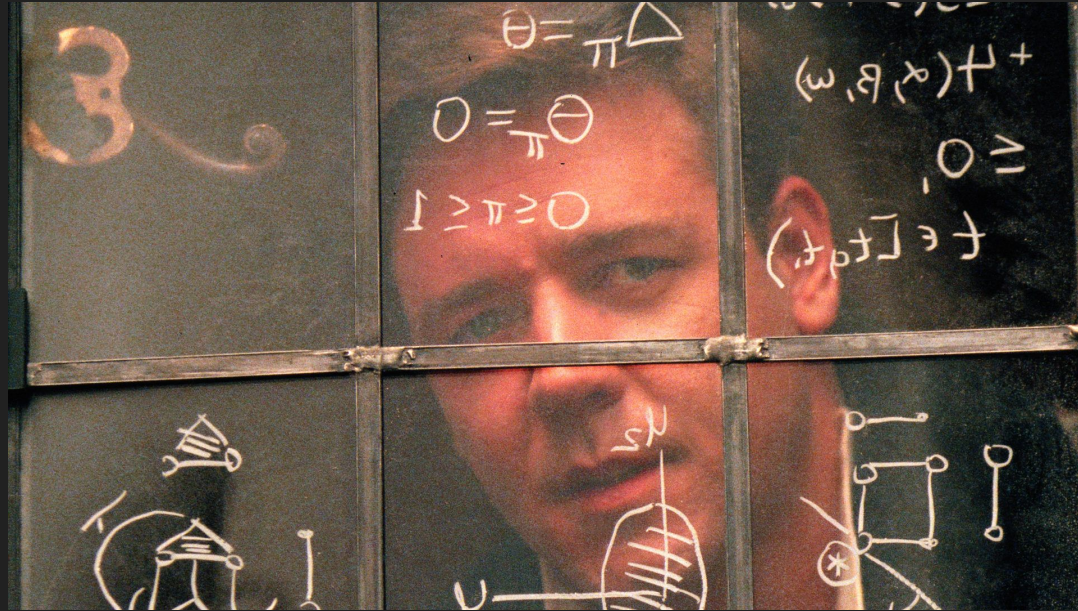
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SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT**

The big problem

Back in the 60s ethnomethodology was still figuring things out. There was a lot to figure!

Meanwhile, game theory is really heating up

Important men like Russell Crow were making big breakthroughs in modeling dynamical systems



But our important figure here is Schelling



Nooooo not Friedrich Wilhelm, this Schelling!



Tommy for short



He wrote a book called Strategy of Conflict

His key concept is “tacit bargaining” This is a situation where ONE guy wants to do something with ANOTHER guy but they can’t decide what

Tacit bargaining: “a game of strategy in which adversaries watch and interpret each others' behavior, each aware that his own actions are being interpreted and anticipated, each acting with a view to the expectations that he creates.”

First we have to understand “game of strategy”

“Game of strategy” is NOT: “game of skill,” “game of chance”

Skill



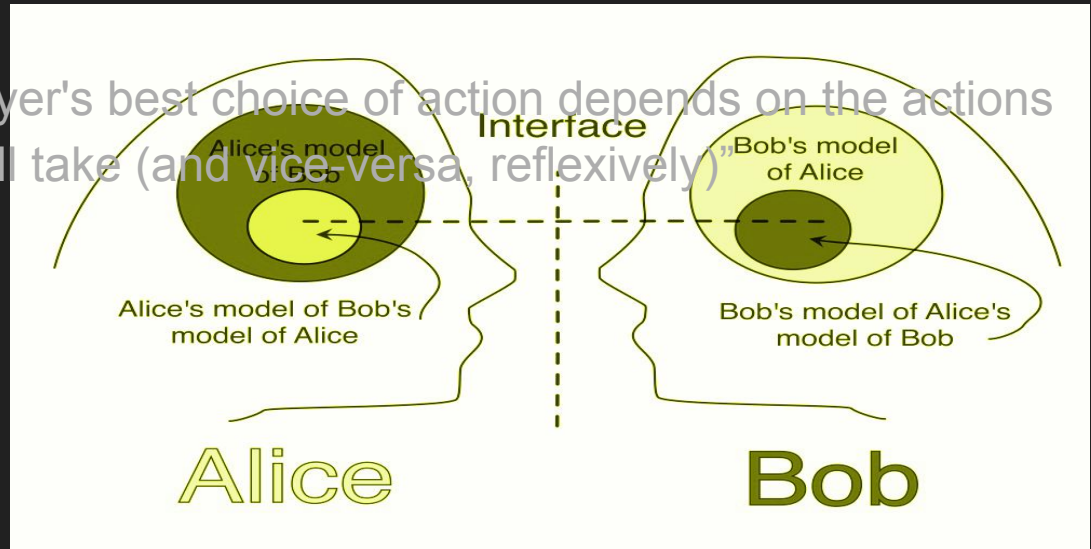
Chance



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It's not enough to be good! It's not enough to be lucky! You have to model you opponent.

“any situation in which each player's best choice of action depends on the actions (he expects) the other player will take (and vice-versa, reflexively)”



“Which is best” “I’m gonna do the best one”



Nonono you don't understand

Some situations are pure conflict, like rock paper scissors

But others people want to come to an agreement! Coordination AND conflict

What's important is that both sides want to come to an agreement, but they have conflicting preferences how to agree!

The vendor at the market wants to make a sale. The buyer wants the thing being sold! But maybe they have different prices in mind, so they haggle.

Schelling says: *What if they couldn't haggle? what if they had one opportunity to come to a price agreement, and they couldn't discuss it up front? This would be a tacit bargain*

It turns out a lot of daily interactions are like this!

I want to go to see Avengers: Age of Ultron and you want to watch Last Airbender, but most of all, we want to see a movie together!

I like keeping the dishes clean in the sink but my roommate likes leaving them dirty but most of all, we want a harmonious household

I want a promotion but my boss doesn't want to give it to me BUT he doesn't want to hire a new employee if I leave

this is important
remember it

These are called *mixed games*

In other words, interaction is a game



MOM!



be a
man
son

You might think Garfinkel would love this new theory...

...you'd



(this is not
funny)

...you'd



(okay but really
this is not funny
it's just
supposed to
“intratextual
formalism” deal
with it)

He said, in a very famous chapter of his book,

“To help collect my thoughts about the various occasions on which Agnes had to pass, I tried to think of these situations as a game. When I did so only a comparatively small amount of the material can be handled without severe structural incongruities.”

Study question: Did he like the theory??

Answer: nonononono

Goffman agreed; the microsociologist wrote

THEORY.ORG.UK TRADING CARD



Erving Goffman

American sociologist, 1922-1983, whose readable classic *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) saw social interaction as 'performances' by individuals, which vary according to context, usually intended to please the current 'audience'. Not merely micro-level social psychology, this book suggests how identities and ideologies are reproduced on a grand scale (see Giddens and structuration, card #1).

For more, see www.theory.org.uk/goffman

[Card 6 of 12]

STRENGTHS: New model of social action, fully explored

WEAKNESSES: May be too cynical. Is any behaviour 'real'?

SPECIAL SKILLS: Accidentally invented postmodernism?

“The idea of all-out, zero-sum, opposition, and of a pure and tight game, does not cover all that is to be considered. And while the notion of a game of coordination expands matters a little too much is left out

Erving, you forgot all about the MIXED GAME

Erving, did you do the reading??

My dog ate my
homework

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These were “the guys”!

These were the best and brightest! They didn’t do their homework!

The rest of the world followed. No mixed games in microsociology. Game bad



James Coleman, a reviewer
at the time (19 “69”) wrote of
Garfinkel’s treatment:

“not only an ethnomethodological disaster in
itself but also evidence of the more general
inadequacies of ethnomethodology”



“garfinkel lists some appropriate elementary
points about games but in contrast to the
belabored points elsewhere in the book these
occupy only one paragraph... I would like to
see sociologists devote further serious
treatment to games as a contribution to the
methodology of their use I found no such
treatment here”



Another reviewer,

Bernard



hoped for the beginning of a new school, “social interactionism,” that blended the strategic insights of Schelling with the ethnomethods of Harold Garfinkel and the microsociology of Erving Goffman.

Because these men didn’t do their homework, it never happened.



Next week, we'll dive deep on what this theory might have looked like, and its possibility of resurrection by none other than computational neuroscientist Karl Juniper Friston