• Truth is subjective and co-created by the participants in the research process
• Complete objectivity is often impossible
• The study of interaction is believed to be value-relevant
• No concern for control or ability to generalize; focus is providing rich descriptions
  • “Research-then-theory”

• Critical approach
  • Those in power shape knowledge in ways that perpetuate the status quo
  • Researchers seek to change the status quo to resolve power imbalances and give voice to the silenced
  • These imbalances are often reproduced accidentally through social norms

• Approaches to knowing
  • The types of questions one asks about the world influences how and what one chooses to research
  • Three major types of questions
    • Ontological
      • The study of being/not-being, or the nature of reality
      • The three approaches’ views on ontology
        • Empirical: general laws govern human interactions and free choice is limited
        • Interpretive: people have free choice and the researcher’s job is to co-create reality
        • Critical: there is choice and constraint in the power structures they wish to change
    • Epistemological
      • How we go about knowing and what counts as knowledge
      • The three approaches’ views on epistemology
        • Empirical: strive for control over research process and rely on statistical tests
        • Interpretive: rely on their own and their participants’ explanations/interpretations
        • Critical: focus on power imbalances
    • Axiological
      • The role of values in theory and research
      • The three approaches’ views on axiology
• The Systems Approach
  o Systems can be described in terms of six properties
    ▪ Wholeness
    ▪ Interdependence
    ▪ Hierarchy
    ▪ Boundaries
    ▪ Calibration/feedback
    ▪ Equifinality
• Evaluating Communication Theory
  o Scope
    ▪ The range of behaviors covered by the theory
  o Logical consistency
    ▪ The extent to which the theory makes sense and does not contain contradictions
  o Parsimony
    ▪ The simplicity of the explanation of the theory
  o Utility
    ▪ The usefulness of the theory's explanations
  o Testability
    ▪ The ability to investigate a theory's accuracy
  o Heurism
    ▪ The extent to which a theory has generated new thinking and research
  o Test of time
    ▪ The ability of the theory to remain applicable and relevant through time
• The research process
  o Scientific method uses deductive logic
    ▪ Moving from the general (theory) to specific (observations) using hypothesis derived from theory
  o Operationalization
    ▪ Researcher specifies how concepts will be measured
    ▪ Turns abstract concepts from the theory into concrete variables
  o Make observations/collection of data
    ▪ Researcher codes or directly measures the occurrence of the concepts
• The research process
  o Grounded theory approach uses inductive logic
- Enmeshment: extent to which partners identify themselves as part of a system
- Life scripts: clusters of past or present episodes that create a system of manageable meanings with others
- Cultural patterns: images of the world and a person’s relationship to it
- Individualism: prioritizing personal needs or values over the needs or values of a group (I-Identity)
- Collectivism: prioritizing group needs or values over the needs or values of an individual (we-identity)
- Loop: the reflexiveness of levels in the hierarchy of meaning
- Charmed loop: rules of meaning are consistent throughout the loop
- Strange loop: rules of meaning change within the loop
- Coordination: trying to make sense of message sequencing
- Resources: stories, symbols, and images that people use to make sense of their world
- Constitutive rules: organize behavior and help us to understand how meaning should be interpreted regulative rules: guidelines for people’s behavior
- Unwanted repetitive patterns (URPs): recurring, undesirable conflicts in a relationship

**NOTES**

- CDT as a glance
  - Cognitive dissonance is the feeling of discomfort resulting from inconsistent attitudes, thoughts and behaviors
  - People are motivated to reduce dissonance and will:
    - Ignore opposing viewpoints
    - Change their beliefs to match their actions (or vice versa)
    - Seek reassurances after making a difficult decision

- Principles of consistency theories
  - Mind is intermediary between stimulus and response
  - New stimuli are organized into a pattern with other previously encountered stimuli
  - If the new stimulus is inconsistent, then people feel discomfort

- Types of cognitive relationships
  - Constant relationships
    - Belief that fitness is important/working out regularly
  - Dissonant relationships
Assumptions of URT

- People experience uncertainty in interpersonal settings, which generates cognitive stress
- When strangers meet, their primary concern is to reduce their uncertainty and increase predictability
- Interpersonal communication is a developmental process that occurs in stages, and it is the primary means of uncertainty reduction
- The quantity and nature of information that people share changes through time
- It is possible to predict people's behavior in a law-like fashion

Axioms of URT

- Axioms are truisms drawn from past research and common sense
  - Axioms are the foundation of URT
  - Require no further proof; must be accepted as valid
  - Indicate the relationship between uncertainty and other concepts
- Negative relationship between uncertainty and verbal communication
- Negative relationship between uncertainty and nonverbal affiliate expressiveness
- Positive relationship between uncertainty and information-seeking behavior
- Negative relationship between uncertainty and levels of intimacy
- Negative relationship between uncertainty and rate of reciprocity
- Negative relationship between uncertainty and similarities between people
- Negative relationship between uncertainty and liking

Theorems of URT

- Theorems are theoretical statements derived from axioms, positing a relationship between two concepts
  - All axioms were combined to create twenty-one theorems
  - If A is related to B, and B is related to C, then A must be related to C

Additional Axioms of URT

- Negative relationship between uncertainty and interaction with social networks
- Negative relationship uncertainty and communication satisfaction

Expansions of URT

- Antecedent conditions when one seeks to reduce uncertainty:
  - Potential to reward or punish
• Scope
  o Self-disclosure is too narrowly interpreted
  o View of relationship development is too linear
  o A relationship is more than self-disclosure
  o View of relationship disengagement is too linear
• Heurism
  o SPT has yielded hundred of studies
  o Various types of relationships have been studied
    ▪ Families
    ▪ Teachers
    ▪ Marriages
    ▪ Physician-patient
  o Effects of culture on the penetration process

CHAPTER 11
RELATIONAL DIALECTICS THEORY

KEY TERMS
• Monologic approach: an approach framing contradiction as either/or
• Dualistic approach: an approach framing contradiction as two separate entities
• Dialectic approach: an approach framing contradiction as both/and
• Totality: acknowledges the interdependence of people in a relationship
• Contradiction: the central feature of the dialectic approach; refers to oppositions
• Motion: refers to the processual nature of relationships
• Praxis: refers to the choice-making capacity of humans
• Autonomy and connection: an important relational tension that shows our conflicting desires to be close and to be separate
• Openness and protection: an important relational tension that shows our conflicting desires to tell our secrets and to keep them hidden
• Novelty and predictability: an important relational tension that shows our conflicting desires to have stability and change
• Interactional dialects: tensions resulting from and constructed by communication
• Contextual dialects: tensions resulting from the place of the relationship within the culture
- Group-individual → community group
- Ordered activities-emergent activities → community group
- Inclusion-exclusion → community group
- Acceptable behavior-unacceptable behavior → community group
- Presence-absence → families/stepfamilies
- Joy-grief → families
- Informing-constituting identity → televised friendship
- One parent-two parent authority → stepfamilies
- Control-restraint → stepfamilies

Responses to Dialectics
- Primary strategies to manage dialectical tensions
  - Cyclic alternation
  - Segmentation
  - Selection
  - Integration
    - Neutralizing
    - Disqualifying
    - Reframing
- Characteristics of strategies that manage dialectical tensions
  - Improvisational
  - Affected by time
  - Complicated by unintended consequences

Integration
- Communication tradition
  - Socio-cultural
- Communication context
  - Interpersonal
- Approach to knowing
  - Interpretive

Evaluating RDT
- Parsimony
  - Too few dialectics
  - Some new dialectics could fit into existing structure, preserving parsimony
- Utility
  - Explains the push and pull of relational life better than other models
  - Views relationships as dynamic rather than static
- Heurism
• Certain images that are prevalent in society (ads, commercials, etc.) we start to believe the ideas they perpetuate about success, masculinity, etc.
• They become reproduced and perpetuated – and not always on purpose

- When arousal occurs, we tend to pay more attention to the message in order to understand the source of the arousal.
  - False
  - When arousal occurs we actually pay less (not more) attention to the message

- Be familiar with...
  - Symbols
  - Critics of Social Penetration Theory
  - Relational Dialectics Theory (RDT)
  - Segmentation
  - The difference between ontology, epistemology, and axiology
  - The positivistic, interpretive and critical approaches to conducting research
  - Symbolic Interaction Theory
  - Social Exchange Theory

CHAPTER 12 (13)
COMMUNICATION PRIVACY MANAGEMENT THEORY

KEY TERMS:
• Microtheory: a theory with limited boundaries
• Macrotheory: a theory with extensive boundaries
• Private information: information about things that matter deeply to a person
• Private disclosures: the process of communicating private information to another
• Intimacy: the feeling state of knowing someone deeply in all ways because that person is significant in one’s life
• Private boundaries: the demarcation between private information and public information
• Collective boundary: a boundary around private information that includes more than one person
People make decisions about controlling their private information based on rules.

Privacy rules have two main features:
- Rule development
  - Privacy Rule Development
    - Decision-making criteria for developing privacy rules
      - Cultural
      - Gender
      - Motivation
      - Contextual
      - Risk-benefit ratio
- Rule attributes, which refer to the ways people acquire rules and the properties of these rules
  - Private information co-ownership and guardianship
    - When private information is shared, the boundary around it is called a collective boundary (question 3).
    - When private information remains with an individual, it is called a personal boundary.
  - Boundary coordination
    - How we manage private information that is co-owned
      - Boundary linkage
      - Boundary ownership
      - Boundary permeability
        - Thick boundaries
        - Thin boundaries
  - Private information boundary turbulence
    - Boundary turbulence exists when the rules of boundary coordination are unclear.
    - When people experience boundary turbulence, they make adjustments to reduce it and achieve coordination.
    - Turbulence occurs for various reasons.

Integration
- Communication tradition
  - Socio-cultural
- Communication context
  - Interpersonal
- Approaches to knowing
• Communication context
  o Organizational
• Approach to knowing
  o Positivistic/empirical
Evaluating OIT
• Logical consistency
  o People are not always guided by rules in an organization
  o Organizations are not static units in society
• Utility
  o Explains the complexities of information processing
• Heurism
  o Prompted considerable scholarly discussion

CHAPTER 22 (24)
SPIRAL OF SILENCE THEORY

KEY TERMS
• Public: legal, social, and social-psychological concerns of people
• Opinion: expression of attitude
• Public opinion: attitudes and behaviors expressed in public to avoid isolation
• Quasi-statistical sense: personal estimation of the strength of opposing sides on a public issue
• Pluralistic ignorance: mistaken observation of how most people feel
• Ubiquity: the belief that media are everywhere
• Cumulativeness: the belief that media repeat themselves
• Consonance: the belief that all media are similar in attitudes, beliefs, and values
• Dual climates of opinion: difference between the population’s perception of a public issue and the way the media report on the issue
• Train test: assessment of the extent to which people will speak out
• Last-minute swing: jumping on the bandwagon of popular opinion after opinions have been expressed
• Hard core: group(s) at the end of the spiral willing to speak out at any cost

NOTES

SST at a Glance
• Media have profound effects on public opinion
• Mass media work with majority opinion to silence minority beliefs
Audience Decoding
- An audience decodes a message from a position
  - Dominant-hegemonic
    - Professional codes
  - Negotiated
    - Application of “local condition”
  - Oppositional
    - Image of beauty

Integration
- Communication tradition
  - Critical
- Communication context
  - Mass/media
- Approach to knowing
  - Interpretive

Critical Strengths of Cultural Studies
- Logical Consistency
  - Audiences and counter-hegemony
- Utility
  - Translates into daily life and practice
- Heurism
  - Concepts applied to various studies

CHAPTER 23
USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY

KEY TERMS
- Mass Society Theory: the idea that average people are the victims of the powerful forces of mass media (24)
- Limited effects: the perspective replacing Mass Society Theory; holds that media effects are limited by aspects of the audience’s personal and social lives
- Individual Differences Perspective: a specific approach to the idea of limited effects; concentrates on the limits posed by personal characteristics
- Social Categories Model: a specific approach to the idea of limited effects; concentrates on the limits posed by group membership