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## Social Interaction and Social Culture. Groups and Organizations

Social Interaction and Social Culture. Role conflict arises when a person is facing multiple roles that come with multiple statuses. On the other hand, role strain arises when a person is facing a single role with numerous statuses. In this book most of the characters are facing role conflicts. For instance, Doctorow is Lil's boyfriend and he has to be there for her when she needs him. Additionally, he is a sociology student and has to attend his lectures (Doctorow 56). Apart from these two roles and statuses, he is also a friend of other people such as Dan, and has to catch up with them frequently. This example indicates that the characters face role conflicts as they are faced with multiple roles that involve diverse statuses.

The achieved status emanates from merit, while the ascribed status comes to people naturally when they are born. The main character, Doctorow, is a sociologist, which forms part of his achieved status (Doctorow 58). He states that he attends a university where lecturers tend to be strict in their approach to the delivery of knowledge. However, at the end he manages to earn his degree. One of

Doctorow's statuses is ascribed. The second achieved status for the main character is being wealthy. He stands out as a wealthy individual as he lives with Lil. He achieves it with the help of persistence and hard work on his behalf. The key ascribed status for the main character is immortality. When he gets to the Bitchun society, he finds out that they have invented a cure for death. In such a way, he achieves the status of immortality through the technological advancement.

The societies described in the book are mainly characterized by organic solidarity. They exhibit organic solidarity because of their high level of technological advancement. They allow technology to drive their lives. For instance, technology has allowed them to find a cure to death and any disease. This is vital in keeping individuals alive for a longer time. The doctor tells Doctorow that he could choose whether to die or to live, because everything is in place to secure his life. More so, these societies entail organic solidarity in the sense that they attach supreme value to the dignity of an individual. There is mutual respect which boosts their progress. They are ready to cure aging individuals to ensure that they live longer. Organic solidarity is also shown through the societies' high material and moral density. Technology forms a significant part of the material density in the society. Thus, people adhere to the high standards of integrity in their duties (Doctorow 21). They are still able to work together toward prosperity even with the absence of the workplace culture. Every person is given adequate freedom to come up with new inventions that would enhance the position of the societies.

Additionally, the societies are *gesellschaft* societies. The high levels of formalities bring them out as such. For instance, Doctorow is

expected to be formal in his overall relationships with different people. He is more formal at the university because of the strict lecturers. Additionally, they are *gesellschaft* because they are based on an individual's self-interest. The focus on inventing the cure for death is only aimed at preventing any further deaths and ensuring that people live longer. The experiments conducted on Doctorow and Dan were only meant to keep them alive and prevent them from dying in the modern world. These societies are also goal-oriented as they believe in continuous achievements. They are not easily satisfied with the little they have. Lil informs Doctorow that technology will continue developing to provide a solution for everything in the modern world to be easily achieved.

*Groups and Organizations.* One of the most important primary groups presented in the book is family. The most direct example is Lil's family that is mostly characterized by affection. Lil is loved by her parents who take care of her even though she dates Doctorow. The family is a binding group and an indication of love among the members of society. Another primary social group shown in the book is a group of childhood friends. Doctorow and Dan have been friends since their early days, and are still together in Disneyland. They keep interacting and create more friendships through their interactions with one another. The last primary social group discussed in the textbook is love relationship. In the book, it is clear that there are diverse love relationships that last for a while (Doctorow 15). For instance, Doctorow is in a love relationship with Lil, which forms a significant unit in the society.

The key example of a secondary group described in the book is that of the doctor-patient relationship. Doctorow relates to Doctor Pete well

because he is the man behind his healing and continuous retrieval from death. This is a professional arrangement where the doctor offers his services as required by the profession in the modern world.

One of the formal organizations highlighted in the book is the university. Doctorow together with his friends attends lectures at the university. It is a formal organization because of its focus on bringing up enlightened individuals and boosting the growth of the society. Another vital formal organization is the highly advanced hospital where individuals are healed from death. Both Dan and Doctorow recover from mortality due to the highly advanced and modern medicine.

The kind of leadership present in the society is extremely dictatorial. This could be deduced from the university life that Doctorow and his mates were forced to face. For instance, there was an incidence where one lecturer stood and emphasized that the tyrannical rule of lecturers in the Department of Sociology must be eliminated for the progress of the university. They wanted a true Bitchun culture where the rights and freedoms of every individual are highly respected (Doctorow 61). The community's security officers also act in a tyrannical manner by stopping protests by caning students. It means that the society is still under the tyrannical rule that needs to be replaced by a more open and direct leadership where the rights of everyone are respected.

The key example of in-groups and out-groups discussed in the book include the old-fashioned generation and the second generation. Doctorow feels more psychologically linked to the old-fashioned generation because of his age. He does not feel connected to the

second-generation group that is mostly associated with young people such as Lil. The main reason is that he does not like crazy parties and the continuous restoration of life among dying individuals.

Conformity is exhibited in the instances where individuals such as Dan and Doctorow embrace the life of Disneyland. There was no other option for them but to conform to the attitudes and technological progress of the new world. This simplified their lives further, because otherwise they could easily interact. Obedience comes in line with their conformity. They obey most of the rules put in place by the university and respect the true Bitchun culture. The best way to survive in any given society is to respect their values and follow them devotedly.

# Works Cited

Doctorow, Cory. *Down and Out the Magic Kingdom*. New York: Tom Doherty Associates, LLC, 2003. Print.