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*Book Review*

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**Theories of Practice: Symbolic Interactionist Translations.** By James A. Forte. University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 2001, ISBN 0-7618-2025-6, pp. 512, \$68.00, cloth.

For those teaching a theory course in an applied or a practice program, consider adopting Forte's *Theories of Practice* as your text. I also recommend it to veteran practitioners who need an intellectual tune-up. This is a well-organized, easy-to-read, nonideological book by a practitioner who seeks to advance the state of practice. Forte seeks to advance practice by advancing communication among our diverse set of practitioners.

Forte believes the special qualities of symbolic interaction make it useful as a "lingua franca." This does not mean he wants everyone to convert to symbolic interactionism. However, he argues we will all be better practitioners if we can use the insights of various perspectives. His goal is to increase three of our perspective-taking powers:

They are: perspective-taking depth, the capacity to grasp the central assumptions, images, ideas, and models used in the symbolic interactionist framework; perspective-taking accuracy, the capacity to decode correctly the language of particular theories of interest; and perspective-taking range, the capacity to identify and use a variety of theoretical traditions to guide professional action. (Forte, p. 20)

In his 10 core chapters, Forte systematically examines 10 theoretical perspectives: social behaviorism, psychodynamic interactionism, sociocognitive science, interactionist role theory, systemic interactionism, critical interactionism, feminist pragmatism, interactional naturalism, symbolic ecology, and economic interactionism. For each perspective, he provides a short "History of Conversations" between the perspective and symbolic interactionism, then elaborates on areas of agreement and disagreement. This is followed by a discussion of areas of collaborative theorizing and research and a section called translations, where he provides examples of how some terms used in the perspective have been translated into interactionist concepts. The final section in each chapter is entitled "Exemplar of the Fruits of Dialogue" where a collaborative practice example is described. These examples cover such diverse matters as battered women, self-concept, prison conditions, counseling and therapy, the homeless, working

conditions, marital quality, and sympathy. Each chapter has an extensive bibliography.

This is a scholarly book written by a scholar-practitioner for practitioners and would-be practitioners. I found it engaging. I found it theory affirming. I found it practice affirming. I recommend it to you highly.

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