Reconsidering Durkheim's Assessment of Tarde: Formalizing a Tardian Theory of Imitation, Contagion, and Suicide Suggestion[1]

Seth Abrutyn[2] and Anna S. Mueller[3]

Emile Durkheim summarily rejected Gabriel Tarde's imitation thesis, arguing that sociology need only concern itself with social suicide rates. Over a century later, a burgeoning body of suicide research has challenged Durkheim's claim to a general theory of suicide as 4 decades worth of evidence has firmly established that (1) there is a positive association between the publicization of celebrity suicides and a spike in the aggregate suicide rate, (2) some social environments are conducive to epidemic-like outbreaks of suicides, and (3) suicidal ideas or behavior spreads to some individuals exposed to a personal role model's suicidal behavior—for example, a friend or family member. Revisiting Tarde, the article examines why Tarde's theory deserves renewed attention, elucidates what he meant by imitation, and then formalizes his "laws" into testable theses, while suggesting future research questions that would advance the study of suicide, as well as other pathologies. Each "law" is elaborated by considering advances in contemporary social psychology as well as in light of its ability to supplement Durkheim's theory in explaining the "outlier" cases.

KEY WORDS: contagion; Durkheim; emotions; imitation; social psychology; suicide suggestion; Tarde.

INTRODUCTION

In *Suicide*, Durkheim (1951 [1897]:123) took serious, but ultimately dismissed Tarde's (1903) "imitation" thesis because he considered imitation to be "a purely psychological phenomenon." Of course, Durkheim's dismissal likely had more to do with the implications of Tarde's *social* psychological theory for his own theory of suicide. As such, he settled on a strategy of accepting "that the idea of suicide may undoubtedly be communicated by *contagion*.... [and that] no other phenomenon is *more readily contagious*" (Durkheim 1951 [1897]:131–132, emphasis mine), while in the same breath arguing that it was the *social rate of suicide* that was of true sociological significance. Tarde's eventual marginalization in American sociology, and the conventional wisdom that Durkheim "won" the debate (Tarde 2010:136–142; cf. Sorokin 1928), obscures an important question: whether it is worth reengaging Tarde's social psychological theory of the spread of emotions, ideas, and behaviors. At least two reasons underscore answering in the affirmative. First, the last 2 decades or more has seen a massive body of theoretical and

empirical work on contagion in academia (Ali, Amialchuk, and Dwyer 2013; Bartholomew and Goode 2000; Christakis and Fowler 2007, 2008, 2013; Collins 2004; Fagan and Davies 2004; Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson 1994; Hatfield, Rapson, and Le 2009; Norton et al. 2003) and pop social sciences (Gladwell 2000); especially germane for this article, a robust literature surrounding the sociological study of the spread of suicidal ideas or behaviors—or, what is more commonly called suicide *suggestion* (Phillips 1974)—poses challenges to Durkheim's original thesis as conventionally formulated. Second, these studies have spent less time evaluating or developing theoretical logic that explains contagion, preferring instead to rely on psychological traditions like social learning theory (Akers and Jensen 2006) or network explanations that substitute explanation with structrual conditions like homophily. Thus, a disconnect exists: Durkheim's theory remains the most elaborate sociological explanation, yet it does not seem to fit a significant set of cases; perhaps, Tarde's work—modified and updated—may hold some theoretical promise.

There are several good reasons to believe that Tarde's thesis likely does offer contemporary sociology some useful principles, not least of which stems from the fact that—stripped of the academic context and competition—Durkheim's own theoretical trajectory closely aligns with Tarde's own logic. Constrained by historical and sociocultural constraints, Durkheim's could never imagine social psychology being a legitimate subfield of sociology. In addition, Durkheim's crude use of maps and geographic diffusion as evidence against Tarde's thesis no longer holds up when subjected to modern sophisticated cluster analyses (Baller and Richardson 2002; Gould 2001). Hence, to accept imitation or contagion as causal mechanisms of suicide was tantamount to denying the central sociological importance of integration and regulation. In hindsight, of course, this debate seems shortsighted and, Durkheim today would have seen the compatibility of Tarde's theory with his own. In both the *Rules,* parts of *Suicide* (cf. pp. 277–294; see also Gane 2005), and ultimately in the *Elementary Forms*, Durkheim not so subtly shifted to the interaction level and a serious concern for emotions (Alexander 1988; Marks 1974). But because he had committed to a deductive frame in *Suicide*, he could not give a fair or nuanced appraisal of Tarde's theses.

Thus, revisiting Tarde seems ripe with positive potentials toward the greater goal of crafting a robust sociological theory of suicide (for a review, see Wray, Colen, and Psecosolido 2011; see also Abrutyn and Mueller 2014; Bearman 1991; Cooney and Phillips 2013; Manning 2012; Pescosolido 1990)—and, more generally, a theory of social pathologies. While this larger goal of building a general theory is beyond the scope of this article, we turn instead to Tarde's (1903) *Laws of Imitation* to see if (1) there is anything relevant to modern sociology in Tarde's thoughts beyond its application to crowds and mass communication (van Ginneken 1992) and, if so, (2) whether these useful theoretical insights can be modified via advances in contemporary social psychology such that cases of suicide *suggestion* can be better explained without necessarily abandoning Durkheim. Tarde's work has already found its way, superficially, into the study of suicide suggestion (Phillips 1974); the term *suggestion* having been drawn from one of the synonyms Tarde (1903:43, 76, 203) himself uses when talking about imitation. We say

superficial, because his name is often evoked, but with little theoretical depth (Katz 1999; Kral 1994), and often in conjunction with rational-choice/behavioral theories like social learning theory that Tarde would not likely have used himself (Akers and Jensen 2006; for an example, see Baller and Richardson 2009). Tarde's theory continues to be oversimplified via a crude, and often tacit, connection between *imitation* and mimicry—an association that becomes untenable when one carefully reads Tarde (1903:15), and discovers that he (1) never characterizes imitation as such in explicit definitional form or in implicit conceptual framing, (2) uses various synonyms like *suggestion* that imply cognition and modifiers like *sympathy*-imitation that evoke emotions, and (3) often makes statements like emotions, attitudes, or behaviors are "transmitted through language" which is the "great vehicle of all imitations."

It is argued, then, that Durkheim's theory can be supplemented and expanded by considering Tarde's potential contributions—especially, once modified via modern sociological theory. Durkheim's theory, as conventionally understood, cannot explain the massive amount of suicide research that has established a positive association between (1) publicized political/entertainment celebrity suicides and temporary increases in audience suicide rates (Romer, Jamieson, and Jamieson 2006; Stack 1987, 2005), (2) fictionalized media suicides and copycats (Pirkis and Blood 2001; Stack 2009), and (3) personal role model's suicidal behavior—for example, a family member or friend—and the probability of those exposed having suicidal thoughts (Baller and Richardson 2009; Bjarnason 1994; Niederkrotenthaler et al. 2012; Tishler 1981), and attempts (Abrutyn and Mueller 2014; Bearman and Moody 2004). The ultimate goal, then, is not to eliminate Durkheim as some critics have suggested (Nolan, Triplett, and McDonough 2010), but rather to acknowledge the fact that social psychology must be considered a part of the study of suicide. Many of these social psychological processes can be found in Tarde's work, and we believe, deepen our understanding of the sociological forces surrounding suicide, provide explanatory mechanisms that replace vague ones like "vicarious rewards," and help point suicidology in new and fruitful directions. The discussion begins by asking and answering the question "Why does Tarde matter in the first place?"

GABRIEL TARDE REVISITED

Why Tarde Matters

Tarde holds either one of two places in contemporary sociology. For most sociologists, he is probably a forgotten or ignored classical theorist (Abrutyn 2013c) who, if they have heard of him, was "demolished" in a debate with his contemporary, Emile Durkheim (Tarde 2010:136–142; see also Katz 1999). Durkheim's argument rested on the search for external, normative social forces that had become *sui generis* to the individual, while Tarde offered a social psychological perspective consonant with the collective behavior theories of the late nineteenth century (Sorokin 1928, 1957). Tarde, whose argument would find plenty of supporters today, questioned

how, after excluding...individuals, we can have a society from a remnant. If the students and the professors are excluded from a university, I do not think there remains in it anything by the name. Durkheim apparently tries to return us to the realism of the Middle Ages. (In Sorokin 1928:466)

Those more familiar with Tarde likely know him through Terry Clark's introduction to a series of Tarde's (2010) writings on communication and social influence. This latter group of scholars have focused their attention on his work on mass communication (Katz 1999) and crowd psychology (van Ginneken 1992), rather than formalizing his theoretical laws. Tarde's work, however, extends far beyond mass communication. As noted above, Tarde still matters because he provided one of the first analyses of the spread of emotions, attitudes, and behavior—social processes that have become increasingly relevant to the social and biological sciences (for a recent review, see Christakis and Fowler 2013) and in the ether of American society in "pop" books like *The Tipping Point* (Gladwell 2000). Moreover, we believe Tarde's laws—as refracted by modern social psychology—complements and extends theories examining diffusion (Henrich 2001; Rogers 2010), social learning (Akers and Jensen 2006), and even network theories that rely on homophily as an explanatory mechanism (DiMaggio and Garip 2012; for a critique, see Shalizi and Thomas 2011). Because these theoretical areas tend to come at the spread of behaviors or emotions from very different starting points, they too have overwhelmingly ignored the rich experimental social psychological programs in sociology (Burke 2006) and the central insights of the sociology and neuroscience of emotions (Franks 2006; Massey 2001; Turner 2007). Tarde's interest in emotions and social psychological processes offers a bridge to putting a diverse body of literatures into dialogue with each other.

Meanwhile, Durkheim's *Suicide*, has held up well in the broader sociological community (Wray et al. 2011), despite numerous theoretical flaws (Johnson 1965; Pope 1976), methodological problems (Kushner 1994; Stark, Doyle, and Rushing 1983), and some spotty empirical evidence supporting his typology (Breault 1994; Nolan et al. 2010). Without question Durkheim's theoretical argument remains powerful when its most basic principles are isolated from the nineteenth-century constraints on his own sociological imagination (Pescosolido 1990): (1) the structure of suicide is shaped by the structure of social relationships and (2) the most important dimensions of social relationships are (a) the level of attachment (*integration*) and (b) the clarity and stability of moral guidance (*regulation*). Despite these basic principles, however, the question of how the macro and the micro are linked—that is, how integration or regulation can explain *why* one person kills him-/herself vis-à-vis any other in the group—remains an open question. While it may be true that religion, for instance, has protective effects against suicide, Durkheim is silent on what microdynamics would make some individuals within a "protective" faith more susceptible than others. Moreover, Durkheim's theory obfuscates the simple truth Tarde's implies: suicide is a *choice*, which means the idea of self-harm must be "acquired" from without and a conscious decision made (Kral 1994). Thus, social psychology matters because we are influenced by real people, especially those whom we would deem significant other—for example, recent research has found that being exposed to a friend or family member may lead to the *development of new* suicidal

thoughts or behaviors (Abrutyn and Mueller 2014), which demands better explanations than the common "underintegrated" or "underregulated" argument.

Although Tarde was less interested in suicide and more so in the general "diffusion" of ideas and behaviors via social intercourse between persons, groups, or even cultures, it is entirely plausible that some of his theoretical principles are worth revisiting. Tarde's (1903) major text, *The Laws of Imitation*, may not equal Durkheim's four major volumes or lasting impact on the discipline, but the analysis below posits a road map that may very well link Durkheim's macrolevel forces (integration and regulation) to the recent network-suicide advances (Pescosolido 1990) to the microdynamics that lead people to actually attempt or commit suicide. Of course, not every case of suicide is one in which *suggestion* plays a role, but a general theory must account for all cases and not just some.

Revisiting Tarde's Theory

We turn now to the central question "What is imitation?" according to Tarde. Typical of many classical sociologists, he never bothers to precisely define the term *imitation*, nor does he use it consistently from page to page. At times, Tarde analogizes imitation to the pulsation of light waves or water ripples.[4] If we consult Durkheim (1951 [1897]:124–125) for an answer, we find that he identifies three common usages: (1) the process by which people gathered together "mutually transform one another by their reciprocal influence";[5] (2) a drive to be in harmony with our social milieu and, thereby, the drive to adopt customs and practices without conscious appraisal; and (3) the unconscious reproduction of an act for no reason besides mimicry. Though Durkheim associates all three with Tarde, he is sympathetic to the first definition—which is more social psychological—while staunchly attacking the last one and implicitly tying Tarde to mimicry.

If Tarde was guilty of anything, it was choosing the word *concept*, as Durkheim's criticism and the colloquial meaning behind the term converged to obfuscate Tarde's more nuanced argument. Tarde (1903:207) stridently believed people adopt new behaviors and attitudes through *interaction*, especially *symbolic* interaction, noting that acquiring "ideas precedes imitation of their expression." That is, people must come to perceive a person's or group's attitudes and behavior as salient, internalize the pattern and, especially, the meanings attached to the act, and then "decide" whether the action fits with their own value orientations, cherished norms,

---

[4] As an aside, there is a fascinating, albeit underdeveloped, evolutionary theory of culture in Tarde—a theory that anticipates the rise of "memes" in some sociocultural evolutionists accounts (Lenski 2005). That is, ideas as waves lead to either *repetition* in others (conformity), *opposition* in which the waves may destroy each other (Darwinian selection), or *adaptation/invention* occurs in which one wave supplants another or they combine to form something more efficacious (Spencerian-like selection).

[5] Of course, in hindsight Durkheim's argument that the third was imitation, while the first was more closely related to Tarde seems ironic given Durkheim's later work on religion and rituals (1995 [1915]), and the long tradition of interaction rituals theory (Collins 2004; Goffman 1967). As Durkheim began to wrestle with the transformation of individual consciousnesses into a collective consciousness, he realized it was through recurrent interaction and the positive emotion it generated that led to external representations (totems) and internalized, shared moral values (the *conscience collective*). Again, it is this reason that leads us to conclude that Durkheim was more sympathetic to Tarde than he let on, and had he been born 50 years later, he would have made use of Tarde's work.

and self-interest. Drawing inspiration from Tarde, Kral (1994:246) echoes this sentiment when he asserts that "suicide is not impulsive but premeditated," and that requires "both purposeful planning and as an archetype regarding something quite specific." How do we plan? We learn from the people, groups, and cultural milieu to which we are anchored (Baechler 1979; Shneidman 1993), especially those who we come to consider significant others (Aron and McLaughlin-Volpe 2001). What makes Tarde's work so powerful is that he avoids the behavioral psychology and utilitarianism that would lead him to consider apery or conditioning sociologically relevant vis-à-vis the power of social relationships; imitation, or what is perhaps more fittingly called suggestion, is a process by which ideas are appropriated through interaction and evaluated based on the exposed person's own social psychological disposition. And thus while Tarde talks of "fashion" imitation (e.g., Simmel 1904), the majority of the book is devoted to imitation based on intercourse (Katz 1999); even those "imposed" from superiors involve a cognitive, moral/aesthetic, and/or affectual dimension.

Tarde's sophistication is further deepened when considering how language plays a role in imitation. In American social psychology, four basic symbolic interactionist assumptions have come to be accepted (Burke 2006): (1) behavior is oriented toward objects (2) whose meanings emerge out of symbolic interaction in which (3) people develop self and identity, and (4) come to share an intersubjective reality with others who share the common meanings. These fundamental principles are not far removed from Tarde's (1903:15ff.) own notion of imitation, which seems to generally hinge on language. He provides a list of modes or types of imitation, which are founded on shared language: custom-based, fashion, sympathy, obedience, precept/educative, naive, and deliberative. As he works through this list, it becomes apparent that each type or mode of imitation is distinguished by the cultural information they spread, and the diversity in cognitive and social mechanisms related to their operation. For instance, custom-based imitation is not simply automatic or habitual, but group-specific traditions predicated on the communication of ideas and behaviors via symbolic interaction, whether bodily or linguistic, and which only make sense within a specific cultural framework. A more telling clue as to Tarde's intentions is found in his inclusion of *sympathy* imitation, which he draws directly from Adam Smith's theory of moral sentiments; the same theory that undergirds Cooley's and Mead's theory of the development of a social self via self-reflexivity developed in interaction.

Consider, as evidence of Tarde's nuanced symbolic interactionist position, his particular evolutionism: unlike many contemporary evolutionary theories that conceptualize "memes" as "whole" cultural blocks of information like "genes" (e.g., Lenski 2005), Tarde (1903:22) rejected the premise that attitudes or action spread *en toto*—that is, copycatting was an exception to the basic rule of imitation: adoption of any actions or attitudes occurred through the adaptation, modification, and integration of the idea to the person's or group's preexisting cultural "assemblage." Moreover, behaviors and attitudes do not just spread, as they may be blocked, slowed, or weakened by larger historical or sociocultural forces (pp. 30–31). Thus, it is incorrect to see Tarde's position as advocating a

simplistic "monkey see…" perspective or that people adopt things because they are rewarding, as the process is multisequenced and generally begins with deliberate, conscious choices being made by actors as they communicate with each other. Once more significant others adopt the behavior or attitude, the strength of the suggestion increases, but there is no inevitability in Tarde's writing. Even conformity is conceptualized by Tarde as requiring some cognitive and evaluative interpretation and synthesis. Therefore, even in the moments where the least conscious spread of ideas or behaviors occurs, there is a period in which choices are being made. Although these choices are made under various levels of social pressures via individuals and networks of persons, it is impossible to deny that the process by which people adopt new behaviors and attitudes, in Tarde's work, is inextricably linked to the presence and influence of people facilitated by way of symbolic language.

   In sum, this briefest of reviews demonstrates Tarde's sophistication. Imitation was not psychological, but *social* psychological. As Kral (1994:248) and others (Katz 1999) have cogently argued, ideas do not just hop from one mind to the next, but must be *communicated*: "An idea once planted may become readily accessible and difficult to replace." It may seem oversimplistic to suggest that *telling* someone about your suicidal thoughts, plans, or attempts will contribute to the spread of these behaviors, but it brings suicide suggestion into the social psychological world of Tarde. Explanations like homophily do not posit an actual explanation, conflating the structural logic of some relationships with mechanisms that allow behaviors or attitudes to be transmitted from one person to the next. This same problem is what forces us to reconsider Durkheim's original thesis: while integrative or regulative aspects of social bonds remains important for describing the structural logic of a group or set of ties, it does not explain *why* or *how* suicides spread from one person to another. Tarde's interest in the spread of ideas and their fruition into attitudes and behaviors seems as good a starting point for thinking about the spread of suicide, or any behavior. Durkheim's externalist position constrained his ability to systematically approach social psychological dynamics like emotions (cf. 1951 [1897]:293), which may explain why most sociological research on suicide has refrained from entering into dialogue with social psychology. The consequence has been the emphasis on empirical research over theoretical development, where "mechanisms" like "vicarious rewards"—which, of course, are never actually tested but offered as speculation—or structural conditions like homophily replace theoretical explanation, or are simply conflated with contagion (Aral, Muchnik, and Sundararajan 2009; Shalizi and Thomas 2011). Conversely, Tarde's work anticipates the importance of emotions, both as a contagious microphenomena (Hatfield et al. 2009) as well as essential mechanism through which behavior and attitudes spread (Lawler, Thye, and Yoon 2009) or become normative (Mackie, Maitner, and Smith 2009). His work provides us with a common point through which the rich suicide suggestion and, more broadly, contagion literature can be brought into dialogue with the equally rich social psychological and emotions scholarship. Though Tarde never says he has *five* laws, and perhaps one could discern a greater number, below delineating what we think are the five basic principles or laws of Tarde's imitation thesis.

TARDE'S FIVE LAWS

In our estimation, there appear to be five "law-like" propositions. The first two are basic laws that rely on assumptions that people are rational and, very often, they are subject to the taken-for-granted milieu they inhabit; the other three modify both of these laws by "predicting" what sorts of microlevel phenomena may accelerate, amplify, or, when considered in their converse, constrain the spread of ideas, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors. Though less will be said about the first two, given the lack of novelty, they are worth elucidating because they provide the latter three with a foundation from which contemporary social psychology can help formalize and hone Tarde's original theses. Ideally, we would like to empirically evaluate each law, but this task is beyond the scope of this article and, thus, extant studies that appear to lend credence to the principle will be posited when appropriate.

The First Law: Logical Imitation

At the foundation of four of the laws is what he called his *law of logical imitation*. In essence, if all things remain equal, a person will prefer "a given innovation to others because he thinks it is more *useful* or more *true* than others" (Tarde 1903:141, emphasis added). That is, people will rationally weigh one idea versus existing solutions to determine their relative efficacy or truth. Noteworthy, Tarde (1903:154) distinguishes between two types of evaluative processes people may undergo: instrumental rationality and substantive rationality. The corollary to this law is that *as new inventions are adopted and deemed good, the old inventions they replace increasingly become abandoned and deemed poor in comparison*. The two takeaway points are (1) people do not just adopt new behaviors or attitudes, but rather they must come to the conclusion that they are superior and (2) there are several reasons for thinking a new behavior or attitude is more useful or true. Thus, a potentially suicidal person may see suicides in the cinema that he or she can identify closely with (Stack and Bowman 2012), and as such an idea becomes planted and "become readily accessible" (Kral 1994:246).[6] On the other hand, he or she may read about a martyr or are told stories about heroic, altruistic suicides and when faced with similar circumstances, he or she may "imitate" the martyr or soldier (e.g., Riemer 1998). Tarde reminds us, however, that the logical law is only a law in the abstract sense, because there are several *extra-logical* influences that refract the decision-making process causing "preferences and aversions" that determine the "victory or defeat" of rival ideas and behaviors (Tarde 1903:189ff.). That is, two people exposed to two different sociocultural milieus and possessing different social psychological experiences may not "interpret" the same suicidal ideas as each other.

Before delineating these "extra"-logical influences, it is worth pointing out that this "law" is quite consistent with contemporary social science. First, plenty of

---

[6] The same point can be made about acquiring coping skills necessary for withstanding the emotional distress and psyche that often pushes people toward suicidal thoughts (Niederkrotenthaler et al. 2010).

empirical evidence supports Tarde's assertion that people are naturally "rational" (Camerer 2007; Turner 2010; Turner and Maryanski 2009). Perhaps the strongest support can be found in Henrich's (2001) meta-analysis of over 3,000 studies of cultural diffusion. Though he found that "pure" rational decision making was absent in all cases, he noted that new ideas, behaviors, and attitudes were most likely to spread via *direct biases* in which the exposed person(s) made choices based on the role model, their ability to identify with the model, and the level of intimacy and trust.

Second, sociological rational-choice theory has *always* held that rationality is (1) constrained by the structural and cultural milieu in which actors are located (Collins 1975; Molm 2006), (2) altered by power relationships (Cook and Emerson 1978), and (3) only as good as the amount and breadth of information individuals have access to (Granovetter 1985). Third, sociologists recognize that many rewards are not quantifiable and subjectively evaluated, and thus what is "objectively" good may not be desired as much as what one considers best (Blau 1964)—hence the importance of adding substantive rationality to the equation. Thus, by the end of Tarde's first section on his laws, he concludes that *logical imitation* is the foundation for all types of suggestion or imitation, but "evolutionary" forces and, especially, *extra-logical influences* are central to the dynamics affecting the spread of behavior and attitudes.

The Second Law: Customary Imitation

Tarde's second law may best be termed the *law of customary imitation*. Rather elegantly, Tarde notes that ideas or behaviors that are either defined, perceived, or articulated by their innovators as related to existing traditions, mores, or accepted ideas will spread faster and more readily than "competitors" perceived as alien, new, or incommensurate with the community's values and norms. Weber's (1968) work on authority would come to emphasize this very point: radical ideas are considered dangerous by the established stratification system, and thus political or religious innovations must be framed within the context of some ancient traditions that have been forgotten (Eisenstadt 1982), in accordance and congruence with current moral order (Machinist 1986), or through the rearticulation of extant doctrine and dogma as recently discovered or reinterpreted (Albertz 1992). In other words, *suicide* as an idea and, then, expressed in emotional distress or suicide attempt, can become a patterned action consistent with a shared cultural conscience and cultural memory. Though most societies are pro-life and against suicide, some Native American reservations are frequent sites of epidemic-like outbreaks (Walls, Chapple, and Johnson 2007), suggesting that negative, pathological behavior can become an element of a group's culture despite Durkheim's prediction that integration and regulation should be protective.

Tarde's second law finds theoretical elaboration in much of the social psychological literature on consistency (Burke 1991; Heise 1977; Ridgeway 2006). For most people, socialization and recurrent interaction crystallizes certain predictable, normative dimensions of social life such as what they can expect from people

displaying certain status characteristics or what their identity means to themselves and, therefore, what it should mean to others. Humans appear to prefer some degree of stability over constant change, and it is within this context of "ontological security" that ideas and/or behaviors linked to accepted traditions and customs will spread more easily than those that seem bizarre; moreover, ideas, attitudes, and behaviors become drenched or coated in emotional undercurrents that give meaning to identity and relationships (Hochschild 1983; Summers-Effler 2004; Turner 2007). Again, the evolution of religious systems provides a multitude of examples in which religious entrepreneurs were more likely to be successful when they were able to attach their new, and potentially radical cosmological and soteriological ideas to preexisting or supposedly lost ones (Abrutyn 2013a, 2013b). This was such a common practice of the world religions that a chasm between the official religion as reproduced by elites and the way they "sell" it to the masses by tolerating some syncretism and superstition (Sharot 2001). If we turn to suicides, religious frames impose customary patterns of suicide whether it be the imperative Durkheim talked of in which Hindu women are expected to throw themselves on their husbands' pyres, Christian martyrdom, or more modern cultural imperatives found in kamikazes.

The Third Law: Emotional Imitation

It is with the third law that we turn to some potentially fruitful ideas for constructing a more robust theory of suggestion. Tarde's (1903:194–213) third law is the first of which we must do some theoretical lifting to make the law interesting and useful for modern sociologists. The law itself hinges on the notion that adopting new behaviors *requires* the internalization of the idea behind the behaviors first. Tarde introduces, unsystematically, the importance of collective emotions, which come to undergird much of his discussion regarding the third law. He notes, for instance, that emotions help explain the contagion of ideas and, subsequently, behavior: "the intensity of everybody's desire increases in proportion to its spread, through the *effect of mutual reaction*" (p. 196). He further remarked that there is no mixture more conducive to suggestion than that of "volition, together with emotion and conviction" (p. 198). And though it is getting ahead of our discussion, he expects superiors or prestigious people to be most effective at suggesting new behaviors or attitudes when they are able to elicit emotions from their audience (van Ginneken 1992).

The third law finds decision making, and even custom, as shaped by the underlying socioemotional moorings that tie people to each other, and to their group (Tarde 1903:204–207). That is, while the first law presented above argues that ideas and behaviors must resonate with a person's perceived self-interest and/or deeply held value orientations, the texture and color of the decision-making process is greatly affected by the emotionality of the interaction and relationship. The third law comes to define emotions as a powerful engine along which new behaviors/ideas become deeply attached to existing social psychological characteristics, acquire meaning, and undergird culturally resonant justifications, motivations, and

expectations surrounding the adoption of the new behavior/attitude. Contemporary social scientists have become increasingly aware of the centrality and powerful consequences emotions have for human action and organization (Collins 2004; Ekman 1982; Lawler et al. 2009; Mackie et al. 2009; Massey 2001; Turner 2007). Tarde's third law amazingly, if rather surprisingly, anticipates these recent advances. Borrowing a term from Randall Collins's (2004) interaction rituals theory, the third law will be labeled the *law of emotional entrainment*.

Social Psychology Meets Emotions. The immediate implications of Tarde's third law can be found in the social movements literature, which has long argued crowd/collective behavior is driven, at least in part, by emotional contagion (Smelser 1963). But it can be argued that Tarde's third law may be one of the most essential mechanisms explaining the spread of ideas and behaviors, especially suicidal ideas and behaviors. First, a growing body of research has found that humans are wired to pay close attention to faces and emotions (Damasio 1994; Ekman 1982), and it is the complex emotional "palettes" humans evolved that generate tremendous diversity in social bonds and act as the conduits along which ideas and behaviors spread (Turner 2007). Second, as Durkheim (1995 [1915]) himself noted, positive affect is the foundational microdynamic generating social solidarity (Collins 2004; Goffman 1967) because recurrent interaction produces norms of reciprocity and obligation (Blau 1964), and attaches us to collective actors (Lawler et al. 2009), and entire social systems. It comes as no surprise, then, that the majority of social psychological theories of consistency (e.g., Burke 1991, 2006) and recent research into rational choice behavior (Camerer 2007) have turned to emotions to better explain the phenomena these scholars are studying because emotions "influence and can limit individuals' perceptions, thought processes, and behavior...as well as affect health via emotional physiology" (Larson and Almeida 1999:5; see also Damasio 1994).

Fourth, dyads, groups, and even societies develop emotional "profiles" that provide framing and feelings rules that govern expressiveness, intensity and duration of feeling and expression, and provide a vocabulary for labeling emotions and the subsequent motivation for acting (or not acting) on them (Clark 1997; Hochschild 1979). Fifth, these emotional profiles come to undergird the "generalized other" members of groups internalize and use to evaluate new ideas and behaviors vis-à-vis existing group customs, values, and norms, thus giving emotional timbre to old and new ideas and behaviors (Mackie et al. 2009). Ultimately, these emotional profiles can become embedded in the person's, relationship's, group's, community's, or society's *emotional biography* (Summers-Effler 2002). In particular, powerful social emotions like *shame* or *pride* act as powerful self-regulating forces (Kemper 1978; Tangey and Dearing 2002) that can also be repressed in ways that generate anger, fear, melancholy sadness, and other negative emotions that have been empirically linked to pathological or destructive behavior—for example, domestic violence (Lanksy 1987), homicide (Lewis 1976), marital quarrels (Scheff and Retzinger 2001 [1991]), and self-harming behaviors like anorexia (Scheff 1989). Sixth and final, emotions spread from one person to the next, and often precede or concomitantly accompany ideas and behaviors given meaning and emphasis because of the emotion (Hatfield et al. 1994; Norton et al. 2003); that is, like

lightning preceding thunder, emotions come before ideas/behaviors occur (Franks 2006), because it is emotions that provide the meaningful motivation and justification associated with actions and their potential rewards (Lawler et al. 2009; Turner 2010). What's more, our ability to empathize with significant others makes us especially prone to mimicking or adopting intimate others' behavior (Davis 2006), even if self-destructive or self-harmful (Larson and Almeida 1999).

Emotional Entrainment and Suicide. Emotions play an especially important role in Durkheim's (1951 [1897]:293) conceptualization of suicide, as evidenced by his table on emotional morphology. Altruistic suicides seem particularly emotionally driven, as he remarks that martyrs commit suicide "purely for the *joy* of sacrifice" (p. 223) as their faith in the supranatural and the afterlife produce "*enthusiasm* [spurred on by] a faith eagerly seeking *satisfaction*" and which affirms "itself by acts of extreme *energy*" (pp. 225–256, emphasis added). Shortly after, Durkheim provides similar imagery to "the epidemics of suicide [that] devastated monasteries" during the Middle Ages believing they were filled with "passionate enthusiasm" and caused "by excesses of *religious fervors*" (pp. 228–229, emphasis added), while characterizing the army hero who throws himself on a grenade as driven by the "*espirit de corps*" (p. 229). Durkheim appears to be saying that *contagious episodes*, or what he calls *moral epidemics*, are "active suicides" driven by a "collective resolve" which "springs. . . [from a] *passionate* impulse" (pp. 131–132). The common environment that Durkheim notes as being the wellspring for suicidal epidemics consists of an emotional profile that *primes* people for self-harm behavior—a conclusion that fits research on "other-harm" behaviors (Lansky 1988; Scheff and Retzinger 2001 [1991]), and may also condition collective rituals generating powerful effervescing emotions that compel suicide bombings (Ginges, Hanse, and Norenzayan 2009). This explanation may very well prove insightful for understanding, explaining, and perhaps predicting modern suicidal epidemics. Consider the cases: Native American reservations (Walls et al. 2007), military bases (Booth 2010), psychiatric wards (Taiminen, Salmenpera, and Lehtinen 1992), prisons (Cox and Skegg 1993), and high schools (Davidson 1989; Gould 2001). All of these examples present physically and/or socioculturally closed environments in which negative emotions are easily generated and, thereby, easily spread.

What varies perhaps can be found in the degree of permanence or normativity a particular negative valence of emotions has: in the first four examples, many members' relationships with each other may constantly be defined by negative emotional exchanges predicated on extant conditions, a self-concept shaped by the dominant group's prejudice and discrimination, and, consequently, feelings of shame. The dynamic in high schools, however, is different as there is no need to assume negative emotions are regularly abound. Rather, these environments contain still-developing humans with less stable self-concepts and thus negative or positive emotions may easily "wash" over the group just as rapidly as they dissipate.

Though there are no studies to our knowledge comparing the "lethality" of suicide suggestion cases, it would be a worthwhile endeavor to examine whether personal role models are more likely to spread suicide than, say, fictionalized or real celebrities. As a recent study suggests, the deep emotional anchorage found in

relationships with significant others may make exposure to personal role model's suicidal behavior more lethal (Abrutyn and Mueller 2014). That is, it could be posited that the greater the emotional bond between group members or between members and the collective, the more attuned they are to each other and, thereby, the more vulnerable they are to the spread of ideas, attitudes, and behaviors (Hatfield et al. 2009). Significant others are especially likely to be oriented toward each other's emotions (Kimura, Daibo, and Yogo 2008), and thus suicidal ideas and behaviors should more readily spread when modeled by friends or family members.

Tarde's insights raise several other research questions that could drive future research. For instance, are adults as susceptible to suicide suggestion via emotions as adolescents and children are? Previous research on personal role models has overwhelmingly examined children (Niederkrotenthaler et al. 2012) and teenagers (e.g., Abrutyn and Mueller 2014; Baller and Richardson 2009; Bearman and Moody 2004; Bjarnason 1994; Tishler 1981), which leaves this an open question worth asking. This question could be made more general to encompass any type of behavior, including pro-social behaviors. A second question: Can one social relationship's negative emotional qualities be moderated by other positive social relationships? This becomes interesting when we consider significant others vis-à-vis nonsignificant others, or two personal role models against each other (is a parent more important than a friend?). Thus far, most research on suicides, or more generally on delinquency, ignore the importance of emotions (e.g., DiMaggio and Garip 2012) when they could clearly supplement each other.

The Fourth Law: Prestige Imitation

Tarde (1903:233) predicts that those who fit the prototype of the most wealthy and/or powerful in a society or "those persons who, through their eminent and timely talents, are on the road to fame and fortune" will be more likely to spread ideas and behaviors than vice versa. The fourth law, as such, is termed the *law of prestige imitation*. In part, Tarde implies in the previous section on emotional entrainment that superiority allows an "energetic and authoritative man" to wield "an irresistible power" over those in awe (p. 198). Tarde, however, expands this assertion to predict that prestige and power impose a bias on lower-status folks, and thereby, we should expect the flow of innovation to be from high classes to low classes (cf. Simmel 1904).

Social Psychological Theory. Status expectations and status belief theories illuminate the process by which some status characteristics come to be cues informing persons of their own expected competence and efficacy as well as other's (Ridgeway 2006). When a status characteristic, like gender or age, becomes correlated with differential access to valued rewards like income or education, status beliefs—or beliefs that people believe *most* people hold about the worth and esteem of each status distinction—emerge that shape our expectations (Turner 2010). Both the deference shown the higher status persons, the confidence the higher status person unwittingly and wittingly displays in interaction, and the close attention people pay to behavior,

dress, and other dispositions lead to evaluations and assumptions about what is "good" and "appropriate," as well as what goals and, presumably rewards, should be pursued (Goffman 1967). Hence, Simmel's (1904) fashion was based on the belief that lower status persons adopt the behaviors and ideas, modes and fashions of the higher status people because of a sometimes correct, oftentimes misattributed, belief that adopting them will bring the lower status folk greater status mobility (Collins 1975).

Returning to Henrich's (2001) meta-analysis of cultural diffusion studies, we find a significant number of practices and knowledge adopted because of what he terms *prestige-bias* (cf. Friedkin and Johnson 1997). Prestige-biases emerge because observers come to believe that the status and charisma of the role model is somehow connected to the behavior and practice; the adoption of which can transfer some of that status and charisma to the adoptee. Family and gender studies have revealed similar findings, noting that negative emotions, stress, and pathologies are more likely to spread from men to women (Kimura et al. 2008; Larson and Almeida 1999) and parents to children (Cummings and Davies 1994). Indeed, framing and feelings rules often compel subordinate individuals to do more emotion management and work to not only compensate for the superordinate's inability or desire not to do that work (Hochschild 1983), but also as a defense mechanism protecting against the potential loss of the social bond (Scheff and Retzinger 2001 [1991]; Summers-Effler 2004).

Prestige and Suicide. Do prestige-biases spread suicides? To our knowledge, there have been no systematic analyses testing this thesis. It stands to reason that persons deemed significant do spread suicide. In Phillips's (1974) landmark study, he recounts a famous anecdote about the publication of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* in the 1780s. In the story, the protagonist, Werther, kills himself when his love goes unrequited; as the story goes, many of Goethe's friends (and then others in the town and region), upon reading the book, shot themselves just like Werther did, creating an epidemic that led to the book being banned. Labeled the "Werther effect," Phillips found that celebrity suicides were associated with spikes in suicide rates, a finding that generally holds up for political and entertainment celebrities (Stack 1987)—for example, Marilyn Monroe's suicide was followed by a 13% and 10% spike in American and British suicide rates, respectively (Phillips 1974), while the average celebrity's effect is 2.5% (Stack 2005). Collectivist societies may be at even higher risks, as a famous South Korean actress hung herself in 2008 followed the next day by another actress's apparent copycat suicide and then the first actress's brother's copycat suicide, which was positively associated with a 66% increase in national suicide rates (Fu and Chan 2013).

It may also be true that fictionalized accounts act as prestige triggers. Smoking in films, for instance, has been found to have correlations with teenage smoking rates (Charlesworth and Glantz 2005). It seems entirely plausible, then, to think that movies or literature could provide influential characters whose own pro-social, antisocial, or self-harming behavior makes the idea real, meaningful, and, in some cases, morally upright (for an exhaustive discussion, see Stack and Bowman 2012; see also Kral 1994). Indeed, in a landmark study, Niederkrotenthaler and his

colleagues (2010) found the opposite of the Werther effect, the "Papageno" effect in which fictionalized characters who contemplated suicide, but in the end found a way to cope and continue living *had protective effects* on audiences. To be sure, this may be the only study to our knowledge of the protective consequences of fictionalized characters, but one that should compel future research endeavors not only in suicide but also other types of behaviors. An equally interesting question is how ordinary people who have high status in our networks or groups may affect suicidal behavior. For example, does a suicide attempt or completion by the high school quarterback have greater implications for the potential spread of suicide than that of a loner or outcast?

The Fifth Law: Propinquity and Imitation

Tarde's final law emerges from his thoughts on democratic societies, the growth of mass media, and the evolution of "public opinion" (cf. Katz 1999). He concludes that "the influence of a model's example is efficacious inversely to its distance" from those exposed (Tarde 1903:224). Tarde, notably, is vague as to what exactly constitutes "distance," though he leaves some clues when he asks, if there is "nothing more natural than that those who love each other should copy each other" (p. 215). Yet, his discussion of distance implies multiple dimensions of distance, and thus this law may best be called the *law of propinquity*. That is, distance may be measured in terms of psychological, emotional, physical, and/or symbolic-cultural space. Although each dimension is independent, they are likely interrelated and have additive effects on each other. Besides pure propinquity, Tarde adds a corollary that may be his greatest contribution: the greater a person's propinquity *and* prestige, the greater his/her influence. In all likelihood, we could extend this to include a collective's propinquity and prestige given the fact that group identity can be treated as a real or generalized other (Summers-Effler 2002).

The Social Psychology of Propinquity. Social psychology teaches us that significant others are more influential than nonsignificant others (Turner 2010)—even publicized celebrities or strangers who are physically and personally distant, but with whom we can form imaginary bonds (Collins 2004:85)—or, what Stack (2000) calls *differential identification*. Simply put, individuals are more likely to adopt behaviors and attitudes when they believe the model is *like them*. Additionally, the degree to which we attribute positive emotional rewards to a person/relationship or a specific group, (1) the more committed we will be to that person/group (Lawler et al. 2009), (2) the more subject we are to the normative and moral order (Collins 2004; Turner 2010), and (3) the more likely we are to act like other group members and adopt new behaviors as modeled by them (Mackie et al. 2009). Research has shown that *intensive* relationships, which may be dyadic, triadic, or small interpersonal groups, are powerful conduits of emotions (Hatfield et al. 1994; Kimura et al. 2008; Larson and Almeida 1999), and behavioral pathologies (Scheff and Retzinger 2001 [1991]). This heightened merger makes individuals even more likely to adopt behaviors or attitudes of others, because the boundary between self and other is blurred. In

extreme cases, self-other confusion can occur in which "elements of cognitive structures of close others overlap with elements of cognitive structures of self" (Aron and Aron 1996:528) such that events or issues that happen to one person may be misconstrued as having happened to the other.

Intimacy and Suicide. Like Tarde's *law of prestige*, his *law of propinquity* has not been systematically examined. That being said, we can surmise it has some explanatory power, as the underlying premise of a massive body of suicide suggestion research examines the relationship between a personal role model's suicidal behavior and the probability of the exposed person's own suicidality. Tarde's law of propinquity, however, could help explain the growing body of copycat studies that show certain identifiable or common traits of publicized suicide victims are more likely to produce temporary increases in suicide such as divorced people (Stack 1990) or those suffering from physical illness (Stack 2000). The logic being that the divorced already suffer from psychache (Shneidman 1993) and anomie (Gibbs 2000), and thus their degree of propinquity grows when the role model—no matter how distant socially—is assumed to share the same socioemotional and psychological dispositions (Clark 1997). A next step in this type of research, arguably, is examining whether propinquity can *generate* new behaviors or attitudes. A recent longitudinal study has paved the way for the argument that in some cases like adolescents with no suicidal history, a friend or family member's suicide attempt can produce suicidal thoughts and, in girls, suicide attempts (Abrutyn and Mueller 2014). To our knowledge, this is the only study elucidating the "causality" of suicide suggestion and, thus, serves as a great departure point for future work making use of Tarde's laws.

Finally, Tarde's law of propinquity—when we consider physical and sociocultural proximity—provides an additional layer of explanation to the types of environments we commonly find suicide epidemics. The actual closeness, general lack of social mobility, and frequency of interaction between members with clearly shared membership and status characteristics acts as conduits for the spread of ideas, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors (Collins 2004; Lawler et al. 2009). Indeed, Durkheim identifies several similar social environments in which epidemics happened: regiments, penitentiaries, small French villages, and other tight-knit groups. Many of these environments have qualities similar to Goffman's (1961) "total institutions"—like prisons (Cox and Skegg 1993) or mental wards (Taiminen et al. 1992)—which "*impose*" sameness and coerces individuals into a "common environment" in which emotions easily spread alongside behavioral/attitudinal dispositions. These types of environments can do tremendous violence to the self, or what Goffman referred to as mortification and tyrannization, which likely creates very negative emotional profiles filled with shame and anger.

Clearly, propinquity has some effect on the spread of suicide. How much of an effect is beyond our current ability to determine, but is a worthwhile question to pursue along with the impact emotions and emotional quality has on the spread of suicide and the nuances of prestige-biases. Furthermore, how close a person must be to have an effect remains vaguely understood as well. Other questions that could improve our understanding include the following: Does the status of the significant

other matter? Does the role model need to be closer in status to have an effect, or just high in status? Is physical propinquity enough, or are there other more important forms of propinquity like cultural or gender?

Propinquity Plus Prestige. If we are to see propinquity and prestige as intersecting, the power of our explanatory frame grows exponentially. Suddenly, we can theorize that role models that are deemed as "like us" and influential amplify the likelihood of "imitation" or suggestion. Again, the lack of systematic research on this subject does not necessarily preclude considering the research that does exist. For instance, in Stack and Bowman's (2012) look at suicides in the cinema, we find four out of five cinematic suicides being related to *social* and not biological or psychological causes. Life, in this case, may imitate art (Kral 1994), as both the prestige and the propinquity in terms of sociocultural position, relational dynamics, or other easily identifiable traits intersect in ways amplifying those in the audience previously primed for this type of information. One study that can be cited as evidence of life intersecting with art was the famous study by Schmidtke and Hafner (1988) about the German movie *Death of Student* that featured a 19-year-old male throwing himself in front of a train. Consequently, we find a statistically significant increase in young male suicides vis-à-vis older men, and, even more disconcerting, a spike in suicide by train. This argument, of course, carries over to all other types of behaviors, such as smoking, obesity, or any other behavior or attitude that can become normative. We should expect, then, that parents would be most influential and closest to their children, best friends or peers in high school, and spouses in adult life. These actors should be the individuals most likely to spread ideas, emotions, attitudes, or behaviors according to Tarde.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We began by asking whether Tarde was buried by Durkheim and sociology too soon. Suicide suggestion research has evoked his name as a theoretical explanation, but to date it has been largely superficial in that the term *suggestion* was borrowed from Tarde, while the mechanisms by which suicides could spread via role models, be they celebrities, network ties, or significant others, have remained only vaguely considered. We noted this was problematic because Durkheim proclaimed a general theory of suicide, which has not been useful in explaining a large set of suicides in contemporary suicide. That is, Durkheim's frame helps understand isolation, destabilized moral anchorages, and the like, but not so much the spread of suicide from person to person. It was argued that Tarde's social psychological "laws" (see Table I) when elaborated and modified by modern social psychological insights, could help bridge the gap between Durkheim's macrolevel analysis that cannot possibly explain the spread of suicides through networks or personal relationships as it is currently framed.

In particular, the underlying force behind the spread of any behaviors and attitudes, in this particular case suicide, is likely driven by the emotional underpinnings of social relationships (or Tarde's law of *emotional entrainment*). Thus, homophily

Table I. Trade's Five "Laws" of Imitation

Laws	Underlying Mechanism
(1) *Law of Logical Imitation*	Rational-Choice
(2) *Law of Customary*	Habit/Tradition
(3) *Law of Emotional Entrainment*	Emotions/Ritual
(4) *Law of Prestige*	Status Beliefs/Expectations
(5) *Law of Propinquity*	Homophily/Reference Groups/Solidarity

may explain why suicidal people often find each other, but in many others (and even those where "birds" do flock together) it is the emotional energy that shape the contours of that social relationship and provide the motivation for adopting, choosing, or employing one action over others. It is the emotional bond, furthermore, that likely accelerates and intensifies symbolic communication. Second, we noted that the prestige of the role model seems to make a difference at least in terms of the celebrity role models, but concluded that little contagion or suggestion research had explored the question of prestige in a systematic fashion; future research questions examining this law were offered. Third, the laws of propinquity and prestige allowed us to bridge the mesolevel nature of closed social networks and the microprocesses that occur within those networks, and more importantly, within dyadic, triadic, and small-group life that could make some persons or groups more vulnerable to suicide.

In sum, the theory above offers some points of departure for a project far beyond the scope of this article: a more robust and general sociological theory of suicide suggestion. Tarde offers some important points to consider, which when combined with social psychology and emotions, can create some scaffolding for a more comprehensive theory. Moreover, what this article could not do was test or offer new data for such a project, though future research should consider purposive quantitative and qualitative efforts toward designing instruments that could test these hypotheses and many others culled from psychology, epidemiology, and the like. The model, thus, is not definitive but meant to move the sociology of suicide toward a more general theory that is capable of explaining a wider range of suicide processes than Durkheim's conventional approach is capable of today.

REFERENCES

Abrutyn, Seth. 2013a. "Reconceptualizing Religious Evolution: Toward a General Theory of Macro-Institutional Change." *Social Evolution and History* 12: 2: 5–36.

Abrutyn, Seth. 2013b. *Revisiting Institutionalism in Sociology: Putting the "Institution" Back in Institutional Analysis*. New York: Routledge.

Abrutyn, Seth. 2013c. "Teaching Sociological Theory for a New Century: Contending With the *Time Crunch*." *The American Sociologist* 44: 2: 132–154.

Abrutyn, Seth and Anna S. Mueller. 2014. "Are Suicidal Behaviors Contagious? Using Longitudinal Data to Examine Suicide Suggestion." *American Sociological Review* 79: 2: 211–227.

Akers, Ronald L. and Gary F. Jensen. 2006. "The Empirical Status of Social Learning Theory of Crime and Deviance: The Past, Present, and Future." In Francis Cullen, John Paul Wright and Kristie R. Blevins (eds.), *Taking Stock: The Status of Criminological Theory*: pp. 37–76. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Albertz, Rainer. 1992. *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period: From the Beginnings to the End of the Exile*. London: SCM Press.

Alexander, Jeffrey C. 1988. *Durkheimian Sociology: Cultural Studies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ali, Mir M., Aliaksandr Amialchuk, and Debra S. Dwyer. 2011. "The Social Contagion Effect of Marijuana Use Among Adolescents." *PLoS ONE* 6: 1: 1–6.

Aral, Sinan, Lev Muchnik, and Arun Sundararajan. 2009. "Distinguishing Influence-Based Contagion From Homophily-Driven Diffusion in Dynamic Networks." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 106: 51: 21544–21549.

Aron, Arthur and Elaine N. Aron. 1996. "Self and Self-Expansion in Relationships." In Garth J. O. Fletcher and Julie Fitness (eds.), *Knowledge Structures in Close Relationships: A Social Psychological Approach*: pp. 325–344. New York: Psychology Press.

Aron, Arthur and Tracy McLaughlin-Volpe. 2001. "Including Others in the Self." In Constantine Sedikides and Marilynn B. Brewer (eds.), *Individual Self, Relational Self, Collective Self*: pp. 89–108. Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

Baechler, Jean. 1979. *Suicides*. New York: Basic Books.

Baller, Robert D. and Kelly K. Richardson. 2002. "Social Integration, Imitation, and the Geographic Patterning of Suicide." *American Sociological Review* 67: 6: 873–888.

Baller, Robert D. and Kelly K. Richardson. 2009. "The 'Dark Side' of the Strength of Weak Ties: The Diffusion of Suicidal Thoughts." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 50: 3: 261–276.

Bartholomew, Robert E. and Erich Goode. 2000. "Mass Delusions and Hysterias: Highlights From the Past Millennium." *Skeptical Inquirer* 24: May/June: 20–28.

Bearman, Peter S. 1991. "The Social Structure of Suicide." *Sociological Forum* 6: 3: 501–524.

Bearman, Peter S., and James Moody. 2004. "Suicide and Friendships Among American Adolescents." *American Journal of Public Health* 94: 1: 89–95.

Bjarnason, Thoroddur. 1994. "The Influence of Social Support, Suggestion and Depression on Suicidal Behavior Among Icelandic Youth." *Acta Sociologica* 37: 2: 195–206.

Blau, Peter M. 1964. *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Booth, Heather. 2010. "The Evolution of Epidemic Suicide on Guam: Context and Contagion." *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 40: 1: 1–13.

Breault, K.D. 1994. "Was Durkheim Right? A Critical Survey of the Empirical Literature on *Le Suicide*." In David Lester (ed.), *Emile Durkheim: Le Suicide 100 Years Later*: pp. 11–29. Philadelphia, PA: The Charles Press.

Burke, Peter J. 1991. "Identity Processes and Social Stress." *American Sociological Review* 56: 6: 836–849.

Burke, Peter J. (ed.). 2006. *Contemporary Social Psychological Theories*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Camerer, Colin F. 2007. "Neuroeconomics: Using Neuroscience to Make Economic Predictions." *The Economic Journal* 117: 519: C26–C42.

Charlesworth, Annmarie, and Stanton A. Glantz. 2005. "Smoking in the Movies Increases Adolescent Smoking: A Review." *Pediatrics* 116: 6: 1516–1528.

Christakis, Nicholas A., and James H. Fowler. 2007. "The Spread of Obesity in a Large Social Network Over 32 Years." *The New England Journal of Medicine* 357: 4: 370–379.

Christakis, Nicholas A., and James H. Fowler. 2008. "The Collective Dynamics of Smoking in Large Social Networks." *The New England Journal of Medicine* 358: 21: 2249–2258.

Christakis, Nicholas A., and James H. Fowler. 2013. "Social Contagion Theory: Examining Dynamic Social Networks and Human Behavior." *Statistics in Medicine* 32: 4: 556–577.

Clark, Candace. 1997. *Misery and Company: Sympathy in Everyday Life*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Collins, Randall. 1975. *Conflict Sociology: Towards an Explanatory Science*. New York: Academic Press.

Collins, Randall. 2004. *Interaction Ritual Chains*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cook, Karen S. and Richard M. Emerson. 1978. "Power, Equity, and Commitment in Exchange Networks." *American Sociological Review* 43: 5: 721–739.

Cooney, Mark and Scott Phillips. 2013. "With God on One's Side: The Social Geometry of Death Row Apologies." *Sociological Forum* 28: 1: 159–178.

Cox, Brian and Keren Skegg. 1993. "Contagious Suicide in Prisons and Police Cells." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 47: 1: 69–72.

Cummings, E.M. and P. Davies. 1994. *Children and Marital Conflict: The Impact of Family Dispute and Resolution*. New York: Guilford.

Damasio, Antonio. 1994. *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*. New York: Avon Books.

Davidson, Lucy. 1989. "An Epidemiologic Study of Risk Factors in Two Teenage Suicide Clusters." *Journal for the American Medical Association* 262: 19: 2687–2692.

Davis, Mark H. 2006. "Empathy." In Jan E. Stets and Jonathan H. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions*: pp. 443–466. New York: Springer.

DiMaggio, Paul and Filiz Garip. 2012. "Network Effects and Social Inequality." *Annual Review of Sociology* 38: 93–118.

Durkheim, Emile. 1951 [1897]. *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Durkheim, Emile. 1995 [1915]. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press.

Eisenstadt, S.N. 1982. "The Axial Age: The Emergence of Transcendental Visions and the Rise of Clerics." *European Journal of Sociology* 23: 2: 294–314.

Ekman, Peter. 1982. *Emotions in the Human Face*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Fagan, Jeffrey and Garth Davies. 2004. "The Natural History of Neighborhood Violence." *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice* 20: 2: 127–147.

Franks, David D. 2006. "The Neuroscience of Emotions." In Jan E. Stets and Jonathan H. Turner (eds.), *Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions*: pp. 38–62. New York: Springer.

Friedkin, Noah and Eugene C. Johnson. 1997. "Social Positions in Influence Networks." *Social Networks* 19: 3: 209–222.

Fu, King-wa and C.H. Chan. 2013. "A Study of the Impact of Thirteen Celebrity Suicides on Subsequent Rates in South Korea from 2005 to 2009." *PLoS ONE* 8: 1: e53870. doi:10.1371/journal.pone. 0053870.

Gane, Mike. 2005. "Durkheim's Scenography of Suicide." *Economy and Society* 34: 2: 223–240.

Gibbs, Jack. 2000. "Status Integration and Suicide: Occupational, Marital, or Both?" *Social Forces* 79: 2: 363–384.

Ginges, Jeremy, Ian Hanse, and Ara Norenzayan. 2009. "Religion and Support for Suicide Attacks." *Psychological Science* 20: 2: 224–230.

Gladwell, Malcolm. 2000. *The Tipping Point*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Goffman, Erving. 1961. *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

Goffman, Erving. 1967. *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Gould, Madelyn S. 2001. "Suicide and the Media." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 932: 1: 200–224.

Granovetter, Mark S. 1985. "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness." *American Journal of Sociology* 91: 3: 481–510.

Hatfield, Elaine, J.T. Cacioppo, and R.L. Rapson. 1994. *Emotional Contagion*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hatfield, Elaine, R.L. Rapson, and Y.L. Le. 2009. "Emotional Contagion and Empathy." In Jean Decety and William Ickes (eds.), *The Social Neuroscience of Empathy*: pp. 19–30. Boston, MA: MIT Press.

Heise, David. 1977. "Social Action as the Control of Affect." *Behavioral Sciences* 22: 3: 163–177.

Henrich, Joseph. 2001. "Cultural Transmission and the Diffusion of Innovations: Adoption Dynamics Indicate That Biased Cultural Transmission Is the Predominate Force of Behavioral Change." *American Anthropologist* 103: 4: 992–1013.

Hochschild, Arlie. 1979. "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure." *American Journal of Sociology* 85: 3: 551–572.

Hochschild, Arlie. 1983. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Johnson, Barclay. 1965. "Durkheim's One Cause of Suicide." *American Sociological Review* 30: 6: 875–886.

Katz, Elihu. 1999. "Theorizing Diffusion: Tarde and Sorokin Revisited." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 566: 1: 144–155.

Kemper, Theodore. 1978. *A Social Interactional Theory of Emotions*. New York: Wiley.

Kimura, Masanori, Ikuo Daibo, and Masao Yogo. 2008. "The Study of Emotional Contagion From the Perspective of Interpersonal Relationships." *Social Behavior and Personality* 36: 1: 27–42.

Kral, Michael. 1994. "Suicide as Social Logic." *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 24: 3: 245–255.

Kushner, Howard I. 1994. "Durkheim and the Immunity of Women in Suicide." In David Lester (ed.), *Emile Durkheim: Le Suicide 100 Years Later*: pp. 205–224. Philadelphia. PA: The Charles Press.

Lanksy, Melvin. 1987. "Shame and Domestic Violence." In Donald L. Nathanson (ed.), *The Many Faces of Shame*: pp. 335–362. New York: Guilford.

Larson, Reed W. and David M. Almeida. 1999. "Emotional Transmission in the Daily Lives of Families: A New Paradigm for Studying Family Process." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 61: 1: 5–20.

Lawler, Edward J., Shane Thye, and Jeongkoo Yoon. 2009. *Social Commitments in a Depersonalized World*. New York: Russell Sage.

Lenski, Gerhard. 2005. *Ecological-Evolutionary Theory*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm.

Lewis, Helen. 1976. *Psychic War in Men and Women*. New York: New York University Press.

Machinist, Peter. 1986. "On Self-Consciousness in Mesopotamia." In S.N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *The Origins and Diversity of Axial Age Civilizations*: pp. 183–202. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Mackie, Diane M., Angela T. Maitner, and Eliot R. Smith. 2009. "Intergroup Emotions Theory." In Todd D. Nelson (ed.), *Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination*: pp. 285–307. New York: Psychology Press.

Manning, Jason. 2012. "Suicide as Social Control." *Sociological Forum* 27: 1: 207–227.

Marks, Stephen R. 1974. "Durkheim's Theory of Anomie." *American Journal of Sociology* 80: 2: 329–363.

Massey, Douglas. 2001. "A Brief History of Human Society: The Origin and Role of Emotion in Social Life." *American Sociological Review* 67: 1: 1–29.

Molm, Linda D. 2006. "The Social Exchange Framework." In Peter J. Burke (ed.), *Contemporary Social Psychological Theories*: pp. 24–45. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Niederkrotenthaler, Thomas, Brigitta Roderus, Kristina Alexanderson, Finn Rasmussen, and Ellenor Mittendorfer-Rutz. 2012. "Exposure to Parental Mortality and Markers of Morbidity, and the Risks of Attempted and Completed Suicide in Offspring: An Analysis of Sensitive Life Periods." *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 66: 3: 232–239.

Niederkrotenthaler, Thomas, Martin Voracek, Arno Herberth, Benedikt Till, Markus Strauss, Elmar Etzersdorfer, Brigette Eisenwort, and Gernot Sonneck. 2010. "Role of Media Reports in Completed and Prevented Suicide: Werther v. Papageno Effects." *British Journal of Psychiatry* 197: 3: 234–243.

Nolan, Patrick, Jennifer Triplett, and Shannon McDonough. 2010. "Sociology's Suicide: A Forensic Autopsy?" *The American Sociologist* 41: 3: 292–305.

Norton, Michael I., Joel Cooper, Benoit Monin, and Michael A. Hogg. 2003. "Vicarious Dissonance: Attitude Change From the Inconsistency of Others." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 85: 1: 47–62.

Pescosolido, Bernice A. 1990. "The Social Context of Religious Integration and Suicide: Pursuing Network Explanation." *Sociological Quarterly* 31: 3: 337–357.

Phillips, David P. 1974. "The Influence of Suggestion on Suicide: Substantive and Theoretical Implications of the Werther Effect." *American Sociological Review* 39: 3: 340–354.

Pirkis, Jane and R. Warwick Blood. 2001. "Suicide and the Media: Part II: Portrayal in the Fictional Media." *Crisis* 22: 4: 155–162.

Pope, Whitney. 1976. *Durkheim's Suicide: A Classic Analyzed*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Ridgeway, Cecilia L. 2006. "Status Construction Theory." In Peter J. Burke (ed.), *Contemporary Social Psychological Theories*: pp. 301–323. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Riemer, J.W. 1998. "Durkheim's 'Heroic Suicide' in Military Combat." *Armed Forces and Society* 25: 1: 130–120.

Rogers, Everett M. 2010. *Diffusion of Innovation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Romer, Daniel, Patrick E. Jamieson, and Kathleen H. Jamieson. 2006. "Are News Reports of Suicide Contagious? A Stringent Test in Six U.S. Cities." *Journal of Communication* 56: 2: 253–270.

Scheff, Thomas. 1989. "Cognitive and Emotional Components of Anorexia: Re-Analysis of a Classic Case." *Psychiatry* 52: 2: 148–160.

Scheff, Thomas and Suzanne M. Retzinger. 2001 [1991]. *Emotions and Violence: Shame and Rage in Destructive Conflicts*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Schmidtke, Armin and H. Hafner. 1988. "The Werther Effect After Television Films: New Evidence for an Old Hypothesis." *Psychological Medicine* 18: 3: 665–676.

Shalizi, Cosma Rohilla, and Andrew C. Thomas. 2011. "Homophily and Contagion Are Generically Confounded in Observational Social Network Studies." *Sociological Methods and Research* 40: 2: 211–239.

Sharot, Stephen. 2001. *A Comparative Sociology of World Religions: Virtuosos, Priests, and Popular Religion*. New York: New York University Press.

Shneidman, Edwin. 1993. *Suicide as Psychache: A Clinical Approach to Self-Destructive Behavior*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Simmel, Georg. 1904. "Fashion." *American Journal of Sociology* 62: May: 294–323.

Smelser, Neil J. 1963. *Theory of Collective Behavior*. New York: Free Press.

Sorokin, Pitirim. 1928. *Contemporary Sociological Theories: Through the First Quarter of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Harper & Row.

Sorokin, Pitirim. 1957. *Social and Cultural Dynamics: A Study of Change in Major Systems of Art, Truth, Ethics, Law and Social Relationships*. Boston, MA: Porter Sargent.

Stack, Steven. 1987. "Celebrities and Suicide: A Taxonomy and Analysis, 1948–1983." *American Sociological Review* 52: 3: 401–412.

Stack, Steven. 1990. "Divorce, Suicide, and the Mass Media: An Analysis of Differential Identification, 1948–1980." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 52: 2: 553–560.

Stack, Steven. 2000. "Suicide: A 15-Year Review of the Sociological Literature Part 1: Cultural and Economic Factors." *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 30: 2: 145–162.

Stack, Steven. 2005. "Suicide in the Media: A Quantitative Review of Studies Based on Nonfictional Stories." *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 35: 2: 121–133.

Stack, Steven. 2009. "Copycat Effects on Fictional Suicide: A Meta-Analysis." In Steven Stack and David Lester (eds.), *Suicide and the Creative Arts*: pp. 231–244. New York: Nova Science.

Stack, Steven and Barbara Bowman. 2012. *Suicide Movies: Social Patterns 1900–2009*. Cambridge, MA: Hogrefe.

Stark, Rodney, Daniel P. Doyle, and Jesse Lynn Rushing. 1983. "Beyond Durkheim: Religion and Suicide." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 22: 2: 120–131.

Summers-Effler, Erika. 2002. "The Micro Potential for Social Change: Emotion, Consciousness, and Social Movement." *Sociological Theory* 20: 1: 41–60.

Summers-Effler, Erika. 2004. "Defensive Strategies: The Formation and Social Implications of Patterned Self-Destructive Behavior." *Advances in Group Processes* 21: 309–325.

Taiminen, Tero, Tuuli Salmenpera, and Klaus Lehtinen. 1992. "A Suicide Epidemic in a Psychiatric Hospital." *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 22: 3: 350–363.

Tangey, June Price, and Ronda L. Dearing. 2002. *Shame and Guilt*. New York: Guilford.

Tarde, Gabriel. 1903. *The Laws of Imitation*. New York: Henry Holt.

Tarde, Gabriel. 2010. *On Communication and Social Influence*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Tishler, Carl C. 1981. "Adolescent Suicide Attempts." *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior* 11: 2: 86–92.

Turner, Jonathan H. 2007. *Human Emotions: A Sociological Theory*. New York: Routledge.

Turner, Jonathan H. 2010. *Theoretical Principles of Sociology, Volume 2: Microdynamics*. New York: Springer.

Turner, Jonathan H., and Alexandra Maryanski. 2009. *On the Origins of Societies by Natural Selection*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm.

van Ginneken, Jaap. 1992. *Crowds, Psychology, and Politics: 1871–1899*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Walls, Melissa L., Constance L. Chapple, and Kurt D. Johnson. 2007. "Strain, Emotion, and Suicide Among American Indian Youth." *Deviant Behavior* 28: 3: 219–246.

Weber, Max. 1968. *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Wray, Matt, Cynthia Colen, and Bernice A. Pescosolido. 2011. "The Sociology of Suicide." *Annual Review of Sociology* 37: 505–528.