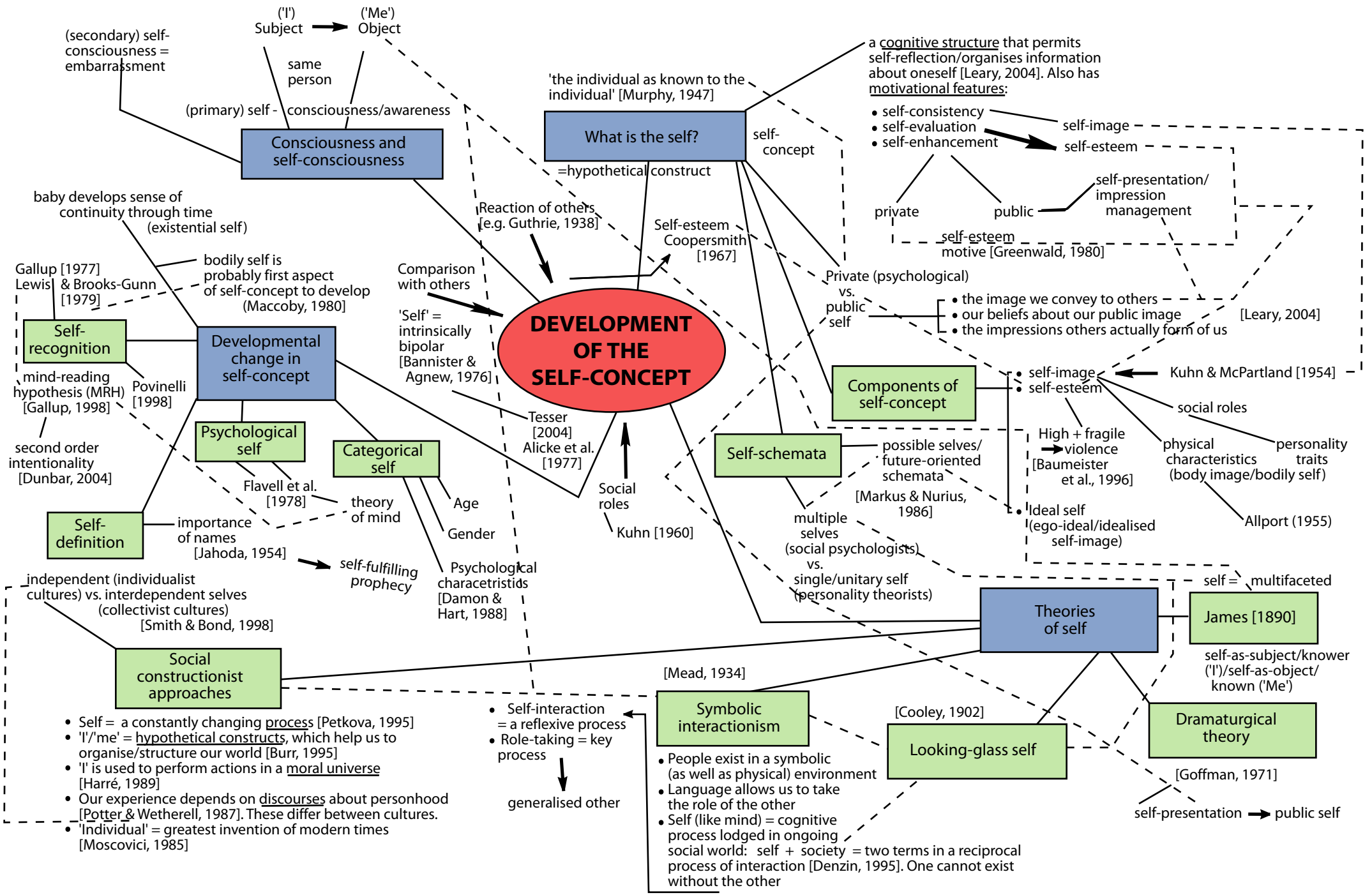
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF-CONCEPT
Consciousness and self-consciousness
('I') Subject
('Me') Object
same person
(secondary) self-consciousness = embarrassment
(primary) self - consciousness/awareness
What is the self?
'the individual as known to the individual' [Murphy, 1947]
=hypothetical construct
self-concept
a cognitive structure that permits self-reflection/organises information about oneself [Leary, 2004]. Also has motivational features:
• self-consistency
• self-evaluation
• self-enhancement
self-image
self-esteem
private
public
self-presentation/ impression management
self-esteem motive [Greenwald, 1980]
Reaction of others [e.g. Guthrie, 1938]
Self-esteem Coopersmith [1967]
Comparison with others
'Self' = intrinsically bipolar [Bannister & Agnew, 1976]
Tesser [2004]
Alicke et al. [1977]
Social roles
Kuhn [1960]
Private (psychological) vs. public self
• the image we convey to others
• our beliefs about our public image
• the impressions others actually form of us
[Leary, 2004]
Components of self-concept
• self-image
• self-esteem
Kuhn & McPartland [1954]
social roles
High + fragile → violence [Baumeister et al., 1996]
physical characteristics (body image/bodily self)
personality traits
Allport (1955)
• Ideal self (ego-ideal/idealised self-image)
Self-schemata
possible selves/ future-oriented schemata
[Markus & Nurius, 1986]
multiple selves (social psychologists) vs. single/unitary self (personality theorists)
baby develops sense of continuity through time (existential self)
Gallup [1977]
Lewis & Brooks-Gunn [1979]
bodily self is probably first aspect of self-concept to develop (Maccoby, 1980)
Self-recognition
Developmental change in self-concept
mind-reading hypothesis (MRH) [Gallup, 1998]
Povinelli [1998]
second order intentionality [Dunbar, 2004]
Psychological self
Flavell et al. [1978]
theory of mind
Categorical self
Age
Gender
Psychological characteristics [Damon & Hart, 1988]
Self-definition
importance of names [Jahoda, 1954]
self-fulfilling prophecy
independent (individualist cultures) vs. interdependent selves (collectivist cultures) [Smith & Bond, 1998]
Social constructionist approaches
• Self = a constantly changing process [Petkova, 1995]
• 'I'/'me' = hypothetical constructs, which help us to organise/structure our world [Burr, 1995]
• 'I' is used to perform actions in a moral universe [Harré, 1989]
• Our experience depends on discourses about personhood [Potter & Wetherell, 1987]. These differ between cultures.
• 'Individual' = greatest invention of modern times [Moscovici, 1985]
Theories of self
self = multifaceted
James [1890]
self-as-subject/knower ('I')/self-as-object/ known ('Me')
[Mead, 1934]
Symbolic interactionism
• Self-interaction = a reflexive process
• Role-taking = key process
generalised other
• People exist in a symbolic (as well as physical) environment
• Language allows us to take the role of the other
• Self (like mind) = cognitive process lodged in ongoing social world: self + society = two terms in a reciprocal process of interaction [Denzin, 1995]. One cannot exist without the other
[Cooley, 1902]
Looking-glass self
Dramaturgical theory
[Goffman, 1971]
self-presentation → public self