

Psychology 229: Social Cognition, Spring 2008

Monday, Wednesday 3.00-4.20 in RKC 102

Instructor: Kristin Lane

Office Hours: Monday, 4.30-6.00; Tuesday 2.00-3.00

104 Preston

lane@bard.edu

Office Phone: 7224

Course Overview

How do we think about people? In this course, we will explore how people reason about and understand both other people and themselves. Topics to be covered include memory about people, impression formation, attitudes and stereotypes, development of the social self, the development of social thought, and automatic social behavior. Throughout the course, we will consider whether thinking about people is an extension of more general modes of thought that are simply applied to people, or whether thinking and reasoning about people comprise a unique set of psychological processes. Readings will include classic and current readings in social cognition, including original empirical papers and work from the emergent field of social cognitive neuroscience. **Prerequisite:** Students must have completed PSY 103 (Introduction to Psychology), or receive permission of the instructor. PSY 203 or 204 are recommended but not required.

In addition to generating interest in and knowledge about the material, the broader aims of this course are to help you to 1. become a critical consumer of psychological research; 2. increase your effectiveness in oral and written communications; 3. improve your ability to defend an argument using empirical data; and 4. prepare for 300-level coursework and independent research.

Materials (Available at the Bookstore)

Moskowitz, G. B. (2005). *Social cognition*. New York: Guilford Press. (SC below)

Additional readings will be available on ReserveWeb. I suggest you buy a three-ring binder to keep these readings organized.

Policies

Attendance. Attendance will be noted and excessive absences will have a negative influence on your grade. Late arrivals are disruptive to the class as they come in, look for a seat, and make their way to it. Your first late arrival will be ignored – we all have a bad day. After that, consistent patterns of lateness will be addressed. Please be on time.

Plagiarism. Quizzes, exams and other written assignments are to be completed independently.

Cell Phones and Laptops. Please turn off all cell phones before class. Furious typing is loud and can be distracting. No laptop computers will be allowed.

Late Assignments will immediately lose 15% of their grade, and another 10% for every additional day late.

Pass/ Fail. You must notify me within three days of the return of the first exam if you'd like to take the class pass/ fail.

ASSIGNMENTS

If you need accommodation for the exams or quizzes, please speak with me after the first class.

Midterm Exams. There will be three non-cumulative in-class examinations in this course. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions, and will be closed-book. Make-up exams will be 1 hour and 20 minute oral exams covering the material, and only offered with a written excuse from the Dean of Students. **45 points each (135 points total).**

Quizzes. There will be at least 10 unannounced quizzes throughout the semester. Your best six scores will count toward your grade. Each quiz will cover material directly from the reading for the day, and will begin promptly at the start of class. There will be no make-up quizzes. **9 points each (54 points total).**

Class Participation. We will be a small class, and participation from everyone is crucial. The most participation need not be the best participation. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings and topics. Class participation consists both of thoughtful speaking and careful listening - as a member of our group, you should also respond with thought to your classmates' comments. The nature of this course lends itself to discussions; I hope that you will feel free to disagree with one another (and with me!) while treating all ideas and people with respect. If you tend to be uncomfortable speaking up in classes, please talk to me early in the semester to discuss ways to help you succeed. Occasionally I will ask you to complete a small (less than 15 minute) activity outside of class in preparation for class, and consistent completion of these will count toward your participation grade as well. **40 points**

Article Presentation. There is much more material in social cognition than we could possibly read in one semester. Each of you will present an additional article to your classmates. The goal of this assignment is to increase our collective knowledge while keeping the reading list manageable. Additionally, it provides an opportunity for you to practice clearly communicating research results. Each presentation should be between 10 and 12 minutes. You may (and are encouraged) to use any handouts or activities that will aid communication, and to be creative. **20 points.**

Response paper to Professor Mitchell's Colloquium. We are lucky to have Professor Jason Mitchell delivering a colloquium this semester on February 19 at 4.30 pm. You should attend Professor Mitchell's talk and write a response paper to it (additional guidelines will be covered in class). If you cannot attend Professor Mitchell's talk due to a class conflict, you will complete a similar alternate assignment. You must let me know of the conflict by February 5. **20 points.**

Final paper (131 points total).

The final paper is an experimental proposal based on a topic of your choice. The graded components are summarized below.

Initial proposal (16 points) In this 2-page (double-spaced) proposal, you should present your paper topic to the reader in a condensed way.

Draft (20 points). This will be a preliminary draft of at least 6 pages of your final paper. It will be read by me and by your peers.

Comments on peer draft (20 points). An important part of the writing process is editing, and important parts of being a psychologist are collaboration and reviewing articles. In this assignment, you will provide (and receive) feedback from your classmates on the final paper.

Final paper (60 points). This will be your final 10-12 page paper.

Oral presentation (20 points) Finally, at the end of the semester you will share your research proposals with your classmates.

GRADING

Grading is on a 400-point scale. The total number of points earned determines your grade, as follows. I reserve the right to change the grading scale, but any changes will only help your grade.

At or above...	Grade	At or above...	Grade
374	A	304	C+
360	A-	290	C
346	B+	276	C-
332	B	262	D
318	B-	Lower than 248	F

SUMMARY OF DUE DATES

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE
Exam 1	Monday, February 25
Exam 2	Monday, March 24
Exam 3	Monday, April 28
Attend Professor Mitchell's Presentation	Tuesday, February 19
Hand in Response to Professor Mitchell's Presentation	Friday, February 22 (by 5pm to WebCT)
Quizzes	Unannounced
Long Paper	
Initial Proposal	Friday, March 28 (by 5pm to WebCT)
Draft to Kristin and Peers	Friday, May 9 by email to your peer group (<i>Note: Your peers may request that you distribute the paper as early as May 7 in order to provide feedback.</i>)
Peer Feedback	Tuesday, April 29 by 11:59 pm distributed to Kristin and your peers.
Final Paper	Monday, May 19

READING LIST

Readings from Moskowitz indicated as "SC"

Articles marked with ** are for presentations that you will sign up for and are optional reading for all but the presenter.

Introduction and Overview

Wednesday, January 30

Fiske, S. T. (1995). From the still small voice of discontent to the Supreme Court: How I learned to stop worrying and love social cognition. In G. G. Branigan & M. R. Merrens (Eds.), *The social psychologists: Research adventures* (pp. 19-34). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Gilbert, D. T. (1999). What the mind's not. In S. Chaiken & Y. Trope (Eds.), *Dual process theories in social psychology* (pp. 3-11). New York: Guilford.

Key Questions, History and Methods

Monday, February 4

SC Chapter 1

Wednesday, February 6

SC pp. 153-158, 173-191, 193-196

Mitchell, J. P., Macrae, C. N., & Banaji, M. R. (2005). Forming impressions of people versus inanimate objects: Social-cognitive processing in the medial prefrontal cortex. *Neuroimage*, 251-257.

Thinking About Others

Monday, February 11 (GUEST: Professor Sarah Lopez-Duran)

SC pp. 339-343

Saxe, R. (2004). Reading your mind: How our brains help us understand other people. *Boston Review*

Sacks, O. (1995). *An anthropologist on Mars*. Knopf: New York, NY. [Chapter 8: An anthropologist on Mars.]

Wednesday, February 13

Dobbs, D. (2007). The gregarious brain. *New York Times*, July 8.

de Waal, F. B. (2007). Do animals feel empathy? *Scientific American Mind*.

Galinsky, A. D., Maddux, W. W., Gilin, D., & White, J. B. (in press). Why it pays to get inside the head of your opponent: The differential effects of perspective-taking and empathy in strategic interactions. *Psychological Science*.

Monday, February 18

SC pp. 233-252; 267-280

Nisbett, R. E. (2003). The geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently (and why). New York, NY: Free Press. [Chapter 5: “The bad seed’ or ‘The other boys made him do it?’ Causal attribution and causal modeling east and west.]

Groopman, J. (2007). How doctors think. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. [Chapter 2: Lessons from the Heart.]

Wednesday, February 20

SC pp. 294-305; 70-79; 125-132

Gladwell, M. (2000). The new-boy network: What do job interviews really tell us? *New Yorker*, May 29, 68-86.

Todorov, A., Mandisodza, A. N., Goren, A., & Hall, C. C. (2005). Inferences of competence from faces predict election outcomes. *Science*, 308, 1623-1626.

Ambady, N., Krabbenhoft, M. A., & Hogan, D. (2006). The 30-sec sale: Using thin slice judgments to evaluate sales effectiveness. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 16, 4-13. **ELVIA

EXAM 1 – MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Categorization and Automaticity

Wednesday, February 27

SC 110-125

Gilbert, D. T., & Hixon, J. G. (1991). The trouble with thinking: Activation and application of stereotypic beliefs. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 509-517. **JOSE

Monday, March 3

Higgins, E. T., Rholes, W. S., & Jones, C. R. (1977). Category accessibility and impression formation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 13, 141-154.

Mason, M. F., & Macrae, C. N. (2004). Categorizing and individuating others: The neural substrates of person perception. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 16, 1785-1795.

Martin, D. & Macrae, C. B. (2007). A face with a cue: Exploring the inevitability of person categorization. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 806-817. **EDWARD

Wednesday, March 5

SC 66-70; 84-97

Bargh, J. A., Chen, M., & Burrows, L. (1996). Automaticity of social behavior: Direct effects of trait construct and stereotype priming on action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 230-244.

**Dijsterhuis, A. & van Knippenberg, A. (1998). The relation between perception and behavior or how to win a game of trivial pursuit, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 865-877.

NICOLE

Monday, March 10

388-396

Bargh, J. A., & Chartrand, T. L. (1999). The unbearable automaticity of being. *American Psychologist*, 54, 462-479.

Wegner, D. M., & Wheatley, T. P. (1999). Apparent mental causation: Sources of the experience of will. *American Psychologist*, 54, 480-492.

** Chartrand, T.L., & Bargh, J.A. (1999). The chameleon effect: The perception-behavior link and social interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76, 893-910. **DINKO**

Preferences for Things, Preferences for People

Wednesday, March 12

Zajonc, R. B. (1980). Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences. *American Psychologist*, 35, 151-175.

Fazio, R. H., Jackson, J. R., Dunton, B. C., & Williams, C. J. (1995). Variability in automatic activation as an unobtrusive measure of racial attitudes: A bona fide pipeline? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69, 1013-1027.

Cunningham, W. A., Raye, C. L., & Johnson, M. K. (2004). Implicit and explicit evaluation: fMRI correlates of valence, emotional intensity, and control in the processing of attitudes. *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience*, 16, 1717-1729. **SCOTT

Monday, March 17

SC: 335-339; 438-442; 455-478

Wednesday, March 19 (Implicit Prejudice and Stereotyping)

SC: 442-454; 492-512

Gladwell, M. (2005). *Blink: The power of thinking without thinking*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company. [Chapter 3: The Warren Harding Error.]

** Correll, J., Park, B., Judd, C. M., & Wittenbrink, B. (2002). The police officer's dilemma: Using ethnicity to disambiguate potentially threatening individuals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 1314-1329. **ALEX**

EXAM 2 – MONDAY, MARCH 24

Mental Shortcuts: Heuristics and Biases

Wednesday, March 26

SC: 141-151; 430-435

Groopman, J. (2007). *How doctors think*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company. [Chapter 3: Spinning Plates.]

Schwarz, N., Bless, H., Strack, F., Klumpp, G., Rittenauer-Schatka, H., & Simons, A. (1991). Ease of retrieval as information: Another look at the availability heuristic. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 61, 195-202. **YUGAI

SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS ON Monday, March 31 and Wednesday, April 2

Monday, April 7

SC: 312-317; 321-324

Alicke, M. O. & Govorun, O. (2005). The better-than-average effect. In M. O. Alicke, D. A. Dunning, & J. I. Krueger (Eds.), *Studies in self and identity* (pp. 85-106). New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Epley, N., & Dunning, D. (2000). Feeling “Holier than thou”: Are self-serving assessments produced by errors in self or social prediction? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 861-875. **LENA

Affect and Motivation in Social Cognition

Wednesday, April 9

SC: 343-348

Schwarz, N. (1998). Warmer and more social: Recent developments in cognitive social psychology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24, 239-264.

Gilbert, D. T. (2006) *Stumbling on happiness*. New York, NY: Knopf. [Chapter 4: The Blindspot of the Mind's Eye]

***[Devine and Amodio article](#)

Monday, April 14

- Hastorf, A. H., & Cantril, H. (1954). They saw a game. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 49, 129-134.
- Ditto, P. H., & Lopez, D. F. (1992). Motivated skepticism: Use of differential decision criteria for preferred and nonpreferred conclusions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63, 568-584.
- **Glaser, J., & Knowles, E.D. (2008). Implicit motivation to control prejudice. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 164-172. **MORGAN**

The Self

Wednesday, April 16

- Nisbett, R. E. and Wilson, T. D. (1977). Telling more than we can know: Verbal reports on mental processes. *Psychological Review*, 84, 231-259.
- Klein, S.B., Loftus, J., & Kihlstrom, J.F. (1996). Self-knowledge of an amnesic patient: Toward a neuropsychology of personality and social psychology. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 125, 250-260.
- ** Eibach, R.P., Libby, L.K., & Gilovich, T.D. (2003). When change in the self is mistaken for change in the world. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 917-931. **ARIELLE**

Monday, April 21

- Devos, T., & Banaji, M.R. (2003). Implicit self and identity. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1001, 177-211.
- Koole, S. L. & Pelham B. W. (2003). On the nature of implicit self-esteem: The case of the name letter effect. In: S.J. Spencer, S. Fein, M.P. Zanna and J.M. Olson, Eds, *Motivated social perception: The Ontario symposium* Vol. 9, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, NJ, pp. 93-116.
- **Hettis, J. J., Sakuma, M., & Pelham, B. W. (1999). Two-roads to positive regard: Implicit and explicit self-evaluation and culture. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 35, 512-559. **MOLLY**
- **TBA **ALEXANDRA**

Development of Social Cognition

Wednesday, April 23

- Kuhlmeier, V., Wynn, K., & Bloom, P. (2003). Attribution of dispositional states by 12-month-olds. *Psychological Science*, 14, 402-408.
- Shutts, K. & Kinzler, K.D. (2007). An ambiguous-race illusion on children's face memory. *Psychological Science*, 18, 763-767.
- Baron, A.S., Banaji, M.R. (2006). The development of implicit attitudes: Evidence of race evaluations from ages 6, 10 & adulthood. *Psychological Science*, 17, 53-58.
- **Brooks, J. & Lewis, M. (1976). Infants' responses to strangers: Midget, adult, and child. *Child Development*, 47, 323-332. **ESTER**

EXAM 3 – Monday, APRIL 28

Student Work

Wednesday, April 30: Peer Group Writing Workshop

MODERATION WEEK: NO CLASS ON Monday, May 5 and Wednesday, May 7

Monday, May 12: Student Presentations

Wednesday, May 14: Student Presentations

Monday, May 19: Student Presentations

Guidelines – Final Paper

In your final paper you will propose an experiment that is derived from the material we cover in Social Cognition. Your experiment *must* be a true experiment – at least one variable must be manipulated. The study should *not* be a correlational design (i.e., testing whether one variable is associated with another variable).

Your project can cover any topic in social cognition – it may be a focused look at something specific we’ve looked at in class (i.e., attribution), or it may explore a topic not covered in the syllabus. In either case, you will be expected to complete additional research beyond the readings on the syllabus for your project.

Initial proposal. In this 2 page (double-spaced) proposal, you should present your study to the reader in a condensed way. Your proposal should address the following questions:

- What is your research question?
- Why is this an important area of research?
- What previous literature led you to your questions?
- How will you test your hypothesis?
- What are your predicted results?

In this proposal, you should cite at least five sources, at least two of which must be empirical studies not included on the syllabus.

Written paper. This paper will be written just like an empirical journal article, although the “Results” section will consist of “Predicted Results” rather than actual results. The Introduction will provide a clear and logical background: it should review the relevant literature, while leading up to your particular research question. Before you move onto the Method section, you should have clearly stated your study’s aims. The Method section should be detailed enough that a reader would actually be able to conduct your study. Include all materials (in Appendices if needed) that you would use in your study. The Results section should describe how you would analyze the data, and what the predicted results would be. In the Conclusion, restate your aims, and “findings.” How does your study answer your question, and what inferences can be drawn from this research?

Additional guidelines

- Papers should be between 10 and 12 double-spaced pages of text, plus a Title Page, Abstract, References, and Appendices. Page numbers should be included in the top right-hand corner
- References should follow APA style
- All papers should be carefully proofread for spelling and grammar before being turned in
- You must work independently on this paper
- The paper will be graded on the following criteria:

Clear statement of question	Your question should be easily identifiable to the reader. Moreover, it should remain the focal point of your argument. At the end of the paper, if someone asked a casual reader “What was the author’s point?” he or she should be able to answer.
“Thesis-like” quality of question.	The central question should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the basis for your argument and proposed study • Be compelling • Provide evidence of originality of thought, and integration of the material beyond what we’ve discussed in class or covered in the readings
Evidence that there is empirical support for thesis	Your argument should be based on empirical evidence that comes from studies that are clearly described. The evidence to support your assertions should be clear. (If you make assumptions, be explicit that they are assumptions and that your argument rests on their validity.)
Logic of argument	Your argument should be clear and logical. An excellent paper will avoid sweeping generalizations, will be objective in considering evidence, and will carefully address counterarguments to the thesis. Ideas should progress linearly.
Study design	Your proposed study should be a good test of your hypothesis. It should be well-thought-out, and free of any major confounds or artifacts.
Overall writing style	Prose should be straightforward, clear, and easy to follow. Your paper should be well-organized and written for a professional audience. The paper should be carefully proofread before turning it in!
APA style.	The paper should follow APA format. In particular, in-text citations and your reference list should be accurate.

Oral presentation Finally, at the end of the semester you will share your research proposals with your classmates. In these 15-20 minutes presentations, you will describe your research question, and the study you’ve designed to test it. The presentation should be well-organized and engaging, and can use Powerpoint, interactive activities or other aids (but these are not required). More details will be available in class.