

Social Psychology

Fall 2007

Undergraduate level, Sociology 150
TuTh 11-12:30P, 105 Northgate Hall
John Levi Martin (email jlmartin@berkeley.edu)

Description: This course focuses on the most fundamental ways in which social interactions shape subjective phenomena such as beliefs, values and emotions. As is traditional, special emphasis will be placed on specifically social beliefs such as identity and status of self and others, and how such beliefs in turn shape interaction. This class both reviews some of the more prominent and less objectionable theoretical approaches and also examines substantive work that need not fit comfortably within any particular approach. Particular attention will be placed on relatively small group settings (2-50 people) in which we can find reasonably good observations of phenomena related to belief transmission, identity formation and change, socialization and the emergence of social structure.

Requirements: You will need to come to class; there is no textbook and the lecturers will tie together the readings and other material that you are not being required to read (at least, they'd better...). You will need to write two brief tests—these start out as in class papers and then you get to flesh them out afterwards (this is a brilliant idea I just had as I was writing this—we'll see how it works). Then there will be a pretty standard final during finals week. And most important you will need to do the reading. All will be in a reader available at _____.

Grading: I think we'll do 10% attendance, 25% each in-/out-of-class test, and 40% final. Note that "attendance" can include sneaky in-class assignments. I reserve the right to make minor changes for reasons like realizing that my ideas add up to 105% or something like that.

Policies: No alcohol, tobacco or firearms in class; no tacks on chair or spitballs; no pigtales in inkwells; be nice to each other and most importantly **no violations of UC's code of academic conduct**. I believe that many violations are partially-inadvertent. But it is your responsibility to understand what this code entails (you can read about it at: <http://students.berkeley.edu/uga/conduct.asp>). If you have any questions please feel free to come in and talk to me or someone else. Seriously—because UC's policy is on the vague side I can help explain what is and what isn't okay. (The key thing is that there should never be any confusion about "who's work I have in front of me"—if you keep that in mind you **should** be okay.) My class is like Idaville—anyone who breaks the law goes to jail. For more information you can go to the FAQ section of my website (<http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/~jlmartin/classes.htm>).

Contact: My office is 430 Barrows Hall. My phone number is 642-7609. My email is jlmartin@berkeley.edu. Email is a fine way to reach me but the turn-around is approximately a day or two. You **can** use the phone for something you want a faster answer to.

Outline:

I. Introductory

We begin with an overview of what social psychology is and, more importantly, what it could be.

A. Social Psychology wherefrom

Week 1: Tuesday, August 28 and Thursday, August 30

We briefly trace the founding of social psychology and its relation to psychology and sociology more specifically.

Required Reading: LeBon, *The Crowd*, p. 23-34 (ch1), 39-49 (ch 2, sec 2); McKay, *Madness of Crowds*, xvii-xx, 89-97, 480-485, 619-621, 630; McPhail, *The Myth of the Maddening Crowd*, 13-20.

1. Historical Roots and Evolution
2. Relationship to Psychology
3. Current Status

B. What we are

Week 2: Tuesday, September 4 and Thursday, September 6

We then try to figure out what are the most fundamental things we know about human beings that would allow us to design a science.

Required Reading: de Waal *Chimpanzee Politics*, 18-39, 98-100, 128, 180-187, 192-194, 200-203; *Bonobo: The Forgotten Ape*, 1-5, 23-47, 153-160.

1. Monkeys and Other Models.
2. Where we come from: Neurology, Creation, Evolution
3. Competences

C. How to study us (cognition in the wild wild world)

Week 3: Tuesday, September 11 and Thursday, September 13

Finally, we work through the different ways in which social psychology might properly be studied.

Required Reading: Spinoza, *Ethics*, 131-137; Harriet Whitehead, *Renunciation and Reformulation*, 59-65, 72-73, 247-255; Swanson, "A Preliminary Laboratory Study of the Acting Crowd"; Altemeyer, *Enemies of Freedom*, 19-24, 186-190.

1. Statics vs. Dynamics
2. Looking In vs. Looking Out
3. Ask vs. Task

II. How We Work

Building on our understanding of what humans are, we want to see what are the most

basic things we need to know about their operation and cooperation in social groups.

A. How We process.

Week 4: Tuesday, September 18 and Thursday, September 20

We start with a little bit about how the folks around us seem to process information coming from their environment.

Required Reading: Asch, *Social Psychology*, 43-55, 450-473; Sherif, *Social Interaction*, 136-148; Köhler, *Gestalt Psychology*, 136-172; also look at Köhler, *Selected Papers*, 40-61, 142-167.

1. Perception
2. Judgment
3. *Gestalt* Theory

B. How We Communicate

Week 5: Tuesday, September 25 and Thursday, September 27

We then examine how two of the sorts of minds we have seen might communicate to one another in order to have a useful vocabulary for later investigations.

Required Reading: Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*, 42-51, 68-75, 132-144, 152-164, 173-178, 186-192. Note: You should be able to start in on next week's reading now.

1. Gestures
2. Meaning
3. Language and Thought

C. How We Interact

Week 6: Tuesday, October 2 and Thursday, October 4

Using this vocabulary, we go on to learn a little bit about how people interact and how we might describe such interactions.

Required Reading: Some of the following will be used (not yet clear which): Linton, *Study of Man*, 113-119; Merton, 'The Role-Set', Goffman, *Presentation of Self*, Intro, Chap 1; Clayman and Gill, 'Conversation Analysis.'

1. Roles and Statuses
2. The Situation
3. Talk in Action

III. How We Think

Given processing humans in interaction, we now go on to learn a little bit about how people **think**—that is, how they move stuff around in their heads after it is there.

A. Cognitive Economy

Week 7: Tuesday, October 9 and Thursday, October 11

We begin with the crucial finding that how we think is usually as little as possible. This generally involves allowing the world to do a lot of the thinking for us.

Required Reading: Gigenrenzer et al, *Simple Heuristics that Make us Smart*, 3-5, 10-15, 37-49, 287-30; Bruno Latour, 'Visualization and Cognition.'

1. Pregnanz
2. Environmental Rationality
3. Offloading

B. Our theories of each other

Week 8: Tuesday, October 16 and Thursday, October 18

Yet we do need to think about things, especially what others and ourselves are doing. How do we do that given what we have seen last week?

Required Reading: Heider, *Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*, 79-96, 100-109, 112-114, 146-158; Warner, *Yankee City*, 35-46, 71-87.

1. Attribution Theory
2. Stereotyping
3. Social Distance and Social Morphology (political psychology I)

C. Our Theories of Ourselves

Week 9: Tuesday, October 23 and Thursday, October 25

How do we think about ourselves? How do we think about our selves?

Required Reading: Goffman, *Presentation of Self*, Chap 6 (only 229-237 required) and Chap 7; Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order*, 179-185, 202-210; Brekhus, *Peacocks, Chameleons, Centaurs*, 9-31, 95-107.

1. What is a Self?
2. Self Concept
3. Identities

IV. Social Orders and Individual Selves

We now turn to the relation between individual subjectivity and the social organization in which people find themselves.

A. The Social And the Individual

Week 10: Tuesday, October 30 and Thursday, November 1

We begin with the key question of the relation between the individual and the social. Poor phrasing of this question easily leads to misleading answers and other confusions.

Required Reading: Durkheim, *Moral Education*, 33-7, 71-3; Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, pp. 1-43.

1. Which is which?
2. Socialization
3. Strong Wills?

B. How we form orders

Week 11: Tuesday, November 6 and Thursday, November 8

Because social organization is formed by people (at least some of them), we begin by examining the sorts of organizations that people do form.

Required Reading: Adler and Adler, *Peer Power*, 1-5, 56-97.

1. Dominance Hierarchies and Status
2. Attractiveness and Likability
3. Leadership, Influence and Power

C. How Orders Form Us

Week 12: Tuesday, November 13 and Thursday, November 15

At the same time, we are also formed by social organization, not only as indicated in IV(A)2 above but, at least occasionally, through experience with other organizational forms.

Required Reading: Goffman, *Asylums*, 1-74; Interwoven selections from: Mitchell, Mitchell, and Ofshe, *The Light On Synanon*, Louis Yablonski, *The Tunnel Back*, Guy Endore, *Synanon*, and David Gerstel, *Paradise Incorporated*.

1. Position and Stress
2. Beliefs
3. Total Institutions

V. What it's Like to be Me

We close by using what we have learned to describe the subjective experience of being a person in three concentric circles—the first, a body that is at times flushed with emotion; the second, a body that stores experiences with and responds to changes in its social environment; the third, the member of a culture with a set of shared understandings and ways of reasoning.

A. Emotion

Week 13: Tuesday, November 20

We begin by considering emotion and its relation to social interaction. We find that emotions can be understood as social actions and in some cases, very reasonable ones.

Further, we find that different forms of social organization can piggy-back off of emotions. Note that Thanksgiving disrupts our class most cruelly and we may get behind....

Required Reading: Jack Katz, *How Emotions Work*, 191-198; 211-222, 274-308; Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*, 3-9, 132-147.

1. What are emotions?
2. Hot cognition
3. Emotions and Organizations

B. Habitus and Position

Week 14: Tuesday, November 27 and Thursday, November 29

We then see if with our understanding of emotional cognition we can see not just what it's like to be 'me,' but what it's like to be a person like me, and how people like me like people like me.

Required Reading: Loic Wacquant, 'The Structure and Logic of Bourdieu's Sociology,' (from Bourdieu and Wacquant, *Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*) pp. 7-15, espec. 12-15; Bourdieu, *Distinction*, pp. 128f, 169-172, 298-301, 324-5, 347-349, 383, 468-469.

1. Taste and Judgment
2. Habits and Habitus
3. The Non-randomness of likes.

C. Culture

Week 15: Tuesday, December 4 and Thursday, December 6

We conclude by puzzling over the relation between the social and the psychological on the grandest level, namely the apparent fact that different groups of people believe widely different things, even when they are not in 'crowds.'

Required Reading: Durkheim and Mauss, *Primitive Classification*, 3-14, 17-20; Evans Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic*, 1-7, 10-13, 18-32; Peter Worsley, *Knowledges*, 110-124; Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Seven Day Circle*, 1-11, 27-43.

1. Cultural Difference
2. Cultural Definitions
3. Cultural Logics