

Individual and Society
Sociology 190
MWF 11:45-12:35
129 Ignatius Building
Fall 2008

Dr. Cathryn Johnson
226 Tarbutton Hall
Office Hours:
M 3:00-4:00 F 3:00-4:00,
or by appointment
7-7520
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REQUIRED TEXT:

The Social Animal by Elliot Aronson. 2008, Tenth Edition. Available at the Emory Bookstore.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS:

The required packet of readings is available online through Emory reserves.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE:

This course provides an introduction to social psychology which systematically examines how the actual, imagined, or implied presence of other people influences a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. The content of the course is interdisciplinary in that research and theory from both sociology and psychology are covered. The emphasis throughout is on how groups, ranging from friendship circles to ethnic groups, affect the life of an individual and how an individual can affect a group. Thus, the course focuses on the reciprocal relationship between individual-level phenomena and group-level phenomena.

Some questions we will address in this course are: What do we mean by saying that the "self" is a social process? How does our self-conception and identities change over time? How does the perception of self vary cross-culturally? What information do we use to form impressions of one another? How do we process that information and what kind of common errors do we make? How do we try to explain other people's behavior? What are the cognitive processes involved in stereotyping? How do the perceptual and cognitive biases affect everyday interaction between individuals and in groups? What factors affect interpersonal attraction? How do we respond to unfair situations in relationships? How does inequality in the larger society manifest in face-to-face interaction? How do cultural assumptions about gender, race, ethnicity, age, class, and sexual orientation affect what happens in interaction with groups?

We will cover theories and empirical work that address these questions. Most important, we will apply these theories to our everyday experiences in groups and organizations. To facilitate this application, we will have in-class exercises on a regular basis that apply the material to everyday life.

A2. Emotions in Interaction

- September 19, 22 -Smith, Allen and Sheryl Kleinman. 1989. "Managing Emotions in Medical School: Students' Contacts with the Living and the Dead." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 52:59-69.
- September 24 -DeNora, Tia. 2000. "Music in Everyday Life." Chapter 3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- September 26 Exam 1
- September 29 Paper Discussion

II. The Second Theoretical Approach: Focusing on Cognitive Processes

A. Social Cognition–Impression Formation and Attribution Processes

- Oct. 1, 3, 6 -Chapter 4, "Social Cognition" in Aronson, pp. 117-179.

B. Self-Justification Processes–Attitudes/Behavior Relationship

- October 8, 10 -Chapter 5, "Self-Justification" in Aronson, pp. 181-251.

- October 13 Fall Break

- October 15 -Dickerson et al. 1999. "Using Cognitive Dissonance to Encourage Water Conservation." Pp. 275-287 in Readings about The Social Animal, edited by Elliot Aronson. Eighth Edition, New York: Worth Publishers.

- Derksen, Linda and John Gartrell. 1993. "The Social Context of Recycling." *American Sociological Review* 58:434-442.

C. Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination

October 17, 20

-Chapter 7, "Prejudice" in Aronson, pp. 301-355

October 22

D. Reducing Stereotyping, Prejudice and Discrimination

III. The Third Theoretical Approach: Focusing on Group Processes

A. Liking, Loving and Interpersonal Sensitivity

A1. An Introduction

October 24, 27

-Chapter 8, "Liking, Loving, and Interpersonal Sensitivity," in Aronson, pp. 357-387.

Hill, Mark E. 2002. "Skin Color and the Perception of Attractiveness Among African Americans: Does Gender Make a Difference?" *Social Psychology Quarterly* 65:77-91.

October 29, 31

A2. Social Exchange Approach: Its Application to Justice and Power Issues in Relationships

November 3

Exam 2

B. Group Conformity

November 5, 7

-Chapter 2, "Conformity," pp. 14-57.

November 10

-Osherow, Neal. 1999. "Making Sense of the Nonsensical: An Analysis of Jonestown." Pp. 71-88 in *Readings about The Social Animal*, edited by Elliot Aronson. Eighth Edition, New York: Worth Publishers.

C. Status Processes in Groups

Nov. 12, 14, 17

-Michener, Andrew and John DeLamater. 1999. Chapter 14, "Group Structure and Interaction," Pp. 336-348 in *Social Psychology*. Fourth Edition, Harcourt Brace.

- November 19 D. Power Processes in Groups and Organizations
- Kanter, Rosabeth. 1977. Pp. 164-173 in *Men and Women of the Corporation*, NY: Basic Books.
- November 21, 24 -Johnson, Cathryn. 1994. "Gender, Legitimate Authority, and Leader-Subordinate Conversations." *American Sociological Review* 59:122-35.
- November 26 Paper Discussions (elective)
- November 27 Thanksgiving
- E. Methods
- December 1, 3, 5 -Chapter 9, "Social Psychology as a Science," in Aronson, pp.406-429.
- December 8 Papers Due and Discussion of Papers
- December 16 Final Exam: 8:30-11:00