Psychology 3630: Seminar in Social Cognition
Fall 2010
Tuesday 12:10-2:00pm
405 Schermerhorn Hall

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OVERVIEW

Human beings are a unique animal when taking into consideration the complex nature of our social interactions. How do we understand the minds of others? For that matter, how do we infer the beliefs and desires that underlie the bases for our own behavior? How does the way we think about ourselves inform the way we think about others, and vice versa? How do we navigate our social world? In this course we will attempt to answer these questions through an examination of a range of topics, including research on the self, how we understand others, the process of judgment and decision making, the role of emotion in cognition, moral reasoning, the social brain, and the development of social cognition.

REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation. This seminar is a discussion during which we engage each other in an attempt to puzzle through the complexities involved in social cognition. You are expected to contribute to the discourse at every class meeting. Your discussion, questions, and comments in class will account for 40% of your course grade. Late arrival and/or absence from class are considered lapses in participation.

Thought Postings. Each week there will be main readings for the class. Your assignment is to do the reading and then turn in comments on the reading on our courseworks discussion board. They need not be longer than a well-developed paragraph. Your comments can be in several forms. First, you can post a critique of one of the papers, or even one of the ideas contained in one of the papers. Part of your critique should include alternative ways to think about the problem. Second, you can integrate the ideas of several of the papers and discuss how they relate to each other (this can be either other papers from this week, or from other weeks). Third, you can develop a research idea to further explore an idea raised by the topic for the week. You should also post any questions you had about aspects of any part of the readings you did not understand. These postings should be done by Monday, 5pm. Part of this requirement is taking the time before class to read the postings of your classmates. Postings count for 25% of your course grade.

Term paper. Consider one of the controversies or ambiguities we discussed or about which you read, and propose an experiment that would help serve to clarify the issue. The paper should begin by describing existing research and the specific controversy and then detail a proposed experiment that would help resolve it. Project proposals, 2 pages in length, are due in class on Oct 26th. We will discuss the ideas for research as a group, so you will have some feedback before the end result is due. The final paper length should be approximately 10-12 pages, written in APA style. Papers are due the last day of class and a brief oral presentation (5 minutes or so) of your paper will be given that day. This requirement accounts for 35% of your course grade.

READINGS AND OUTLINE

Week 1. September 7th Organizational Meeting

Week 2: Sept. 14th
Introduction

Wegner, D. M. & Gilbert, D. T. (2000). Social psychology: The science of human experience. In H.
    Bless and J. P. Forgas (Eds.), *Subjective experience in social cognition and social behavior*. Philadelphia, PA:
    Psychology Press. pp. 1-8.
Gilovich, T. (1991). Seeing what we expect to see: The biased evaluation of ambiguous and inconsistent data.
    How we know what isn't so: The fallibility of human reason in everyday life. New York: Free Press. pp. 49-72.
Smith, E. R., & DeCoster, J. (2000). Dual-process models in social and cognitive psychology: Conceptual
    integration and links to underlying memory systems. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *4*, 108-131.
Cleland, C. E. (2001). Methodological and epistemic differences between historical science and experimental
    science. Philosophy of Science, 69, 474-496.
Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world? Behavioral and Brain
    Sciences, 33, 61-83.

Week 3: Sept. 21st
Automaticity and Control

Wegner, D. M., & Bargh, J. A. (1998). Control and automaticity in social life. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T.
    Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Ed.), *The handbook of social psychology* (4th edition). 446-496. New York: Oxford
    University Press.
Sparrow, B., & Wegner, D.M. (2006). Unpriming: The deactivation of thoughts through expression. *Journal of
    Personality and Social Psychology,* 91: 1009-1019.
Custers, R. & Aarts, H. (2010). The unconscious will: How the pursuit of goals operates outside conscious
    awareness. Science, 329 , 47-50.
Vohs, K. D., Mead, N. L., & Goode, M. R. (2006). The psychological consequences of money. Science, 314,
    1154-1156.

Week 4: Sept. 28th
Thinking about the Self

Ross, L., Greene, D., & House, P. (1977). The "false consensus effect": An egocentric bias in social
    perception and attribution processes. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 13, 279-301.
Wakslak, C., et al., (2008). Representations of the Self in the Near and Distant Future. *Journal of Personality &
    Social Psychology*, 95:757-773.
Pronin, E. & Ross, L. (2006). Temporal differences in trait self-ascription: When the self is seen as an other.
    Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 90: 197-209.
Gilovich, T., Medvec, V. H. & Savitsky, K. (2000). The spotlight effect in social judgment: An
    egocentric bias in estimates of the salience of one's own actions and appearance. *Journal of Personality
    and Social Psychology*, 78, 211-222.
Gillihan, S. J., & Farah, M. J. (2005). Is self special? A critical review of evidence from experimental
    psychology and cognitive neuroscience. *Psychological Bulletin*, 131(1), 76-97.

Week 5: October 5th
Understanding Others

Winter, L. & Uleman, J.S. When are social judgments made? Evidence for the spontaneousness of trait
    inferences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. Vol 47(2) Aug 1984, 237-252.

Ross, L. (1977). The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings. In L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol 10: 173-220. New York: Academic Press.

Chandler, J., & Schwartz, N. (2009). How extending your middle finger affects your perception of others: Learned movements influence concept accessibility. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 45, 123-128.

Saxe, R. (2005). Against simulation: The argument from error. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 9, 174-179.

Mitchell, J. P. (2005). The false dichotomy between simulation and theory-theory: The argument's error. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 9, 363-364.

Week 6: Oct. 12th
Stereotyping and Implicit Attitudes

Take an IAT at Project Implicit (implicit.harvard.edu)

Devine, P. G. (1989). Stereotypes and prejudice: Their automatic and controlled components. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 56: 5-18.

Vaes, J. (2010). "We are people": Ingroup humanization as an existential defense. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 98, 750-760.

Willis, J., & Todorov, A. (2006). First impressions: Making up your mind after a 100-ms exposure to a face. Psychological Science, 17, 592-598.

Olsson, A., Ebert, J. P., Banaji, M. R., & Phelps, E. A. (2006). The role of social groups in the persistence of learned fear. *Science*, 309, 785-787.

Kawakami et al (2009). Mispredicting affective and behavioral responses to racism. *Science*, 323: 276-278.

Week 7: Oct. 19th
Attitude Change

Cooper, J. & Fazio, R. H. (1984). A new look at dissonance theory.(In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* , 17: 229-266. New York: Academic Press.

Wilson, T. D., Lindsey, S., & Schooler, T. Y. (2000). A model of dual attitudes. *Psychological Review*, 107, 101-126.

Gilbert, D. T. (1991). How mental systems believe. *American Psychologist*, 46, 107-119.

Cialdini, R. (2003). Crafting Normative Messages to Protect the Environment. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12, 105-109.

Conway, M. & Dubé, L. (2002). "Humor in persuasion on threatening topics: Effectiveness is a function of audience sex role orientation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 863-873.

Week 8: Oct. 26th
Project Discussion

Week 9: November 2nd
NO CLASS – Election Holiday

Week 10: Nov. 9th
Judgment and Decision Making

Kahneman, D. & Tversky, A. (1984). Choices, values, and frames. *American Psychologist*, 39, 341-350.

Hawkins, S. A. & Hastie, R. (1990). Hindsight: Biased judgments of past events after the outcomes are known. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107, 311-327.

Liberman, N. & Trope, Y. (1998). The role of feasibility and desirability considerations in near and distant future decisions: A test of temporal construal theory. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 75, 5-18.

Gilbert, D. T. & Wilson, T. D. (2000). Miswanting: Some problems in the forecasting of future affective states. In J. P. Forgas (Ed.), *Feeling and thinking: The role of affect in social cognition*. New York: Cambridge University Press pp. 178-197

Week 11: Nov. 16th
Emotions

Schwarz, N., & Clore, G. L. (1996). Feelings and phenomenal experiences. In E. T. Higgins & A. W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles* (pp. 433-465).New York: Guilford.
Ochsner, K. N. & Gross, J. J. (2005). The cognitive control of emotion. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 9(5), 242-249.
Northoff, G. (2005). Is emotion regulation self regulation? *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 9, 408-409.
Barsalou, L.W., Niedenthal, P.M., Barbey, A., & Ruppert, J. (2003). Social embodiment. In B. Ross (Ed.),*The Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, Vol. 43 (pp. 43-92). San Diego: Academic Press.
Rozin, P., Millman, L., & Nemeroff, C. (1986). Operation of the laws of sympathetic magic in disgust and other domains. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50, 703-712.

Week 12: Nov. 23rd
Moral Reasoning

Janoff-Bulman, R., Sheikh, S., & Hepp, S. (2009). Proscriptive versus prescriptive morality: Two faces of moral regulation. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96, 521-537.
Zhong, C., & Liljenquist, K. (2006). Washing away your sins: Threatened morality and physical cleansing. Science, 313, 1451-1452.
Greene, J.D., Sommerville, R.B., Nystrom, L.E., Darley, J.M., & Cohen, J.D. (2001). An fMRI investigation of emotional engagement in moral judgment. *Science*, Vol. 293, Sept. 14, 2001, 2105-2108.
Haidt, J. (2001) The emotional dog and its rational tail: a social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review*, 108, 814–834.

Week 13: November 30th
The Development of Social Cognition

Leslie, A. M. (1992). Pretense, autism, and the theory-of-mind module. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 1(1), 18-21.
Flavell, J. H., Green, F. L., & Flavell, E. R. (1995). The development of children's knowledge about attentional focus. *Developmental Psychology*, 31, 706-712.
Royzman, E. B., Cassidy, K. W., & Baron, J. (2003). "I know, you know": Epistemic egocentrism in children and adults. *Review of General Psychology*, 7, 38-65.
Woodward, A. (1999). Infants' ability to distinguish between purposeful and nonpurposeful behaviors. *Infant Behavior and Development*, 22, 145-160.
Baron, A.S., Banaji, M.R. (2006). The development of implicit attitudes: Evidence of race evaluations from ages 6, 10 & adulthood. *Psychological Science*, 17 (1), 53-58.

Week 14: (Last day of class) Dec. 7th
Paper Presentations