

Psychology 506: Social Psychology Graduate Course
Attitudes and Social Cognition
Fall Semester, 2011
Tuesday 1:10 – 3:50, 605 Tillett Hall

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Course Objectives. The course is designed to integrate two prominent and related areas of social psychology, the psychology of attitudes and social cognition. We will examine both contemporary and classic approaches to attitude theory and research. Topics include attitude theory, assessment (both explicit and implicit), attitude formation, and attitude change processes. Social cognitive topics include priming effects, impression formation theories, and automaticity in social judgment. A common theme for both areas concerns the development of dual-process models, in which judgments and behaviors stem from relatively automatic or deliberative processes.

Required Text:

Chaiken, S., & Trope, Y. (1999). *Dual-process theories in social psychology*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Readings consist of chapters from the text and primary sources. The latter are listed in the syllabus and have been scanned. They will be e-mailed to you at least a week in advance.

Course Evaluation. Course grade will be based on seminar participation (40%), including your written questions and comments each week (see below) and a research proposal that will be presented in class (60%). There are no exams.

Seminar participation. Read the assigned material carefully. Then ask yourself: What was important about the research discussed and what evidence is there that it was important? Did it resolve a theoretical issue? pave the way for some important application? bring a class of phenomena within the scope of research investigation? (Feel free to come up with other criteria for importance.) What are the important issues left unresolved in the research you read about? What kind of research will be needed to resolve that question? Then prepare at least one question or issue to raise during the seminar, and submit it to me via e-mail as soon as you can (but no later than by 9 am the Monday before class). Send your comments to rudman@rci.rutgers.edu.

Research proposals. The final 2 weeks will be devoted to presentations of a research idea that is relevant to the course. The objective is to give you hands-on experience designing research. The format is flexible (e.g., experimental, correlational, content analysis, etc). Because the research is hypothetical (i.e., no data will be analyzed) you are not constrained to time, personnel, or equipment limitations. The proposal can address any theoretical or applied attitude issue that you find interesting.

Attitudes

Note. References to “Eagly & Chaiken” refer to the following text:

Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes*. Ft. Worth, TX: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

The portions we will be reading have been scanned and are set up at Sakai. As a bible for attitude researchers, I strongly suggest you buy it eventually if you plan to pursue attitudes in your work.

Assignment for 9/6: Read Greenwald (1989) **and view The Lunch Date** online (important! see link below). **Do NOT e-mail me any comments for this week.**

9/6 WEEK 1. Course Introduction

Greenwald, A.G. (1989). Why are attitudes important? In A.R. Pratkanis, S.J. Breckler, & A.G. Greenwald (Eds.), *Attitude structure and function* (pp. 1-10). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Watch The Lunch Date, a ten-minute film at <http://www.understandingprejudice.org/multimedia/> Click on Section 1, “Wired for Trouble” and then view the first clip (The Lunch Date).

Assignment for 9/13: **Do NOT email me any comments on the readings for this week.**

Instead, find a brief self-report attitude measure in the literature and bring it to class. Be prepared to discuss what types of validity it has shown (e.g., known groups, convergent, criterion – aka predictive utility) in small groups. Your group will then select the “best validated measure” to present to the class as a whole.

9/13 WEEK 2. Attitude Definitions and Assessment

Download, print, and bring to class the following 3 handouts posted at Sakai: Attitude definitions.doc, attitude scales.pdf, and Moderators vs. Mediators.doc -- which you should read before class as a supplement to Baron and Kenny (1986).

Eagly & Chaiken, pp. 31-34 (Thurstone); 51-57 (Likert/Osgood); 60-62 (physiological affect measures); 68-74 (types of validity; bogus pipeline): there are 3 sets of scanned readings posted at Sakai

For an excellent overview of construct validity, visit <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/constval.php>

Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 1173-1182.

Assignment for 9/20: Log on to Project Implicit, the Implicit Association Test Web site (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>) – click on Demonstrations and complete some of the IATs you find there. This will provide first-hand experience with the most popular implicit method. Notice that you can use either pictures or words for IAT stimuli, and that you can measure

attitudes or stereotypes, among other types of beliefs. **Think about how you might use the IAT in your own research and bring your idea to class.** Feel free to tell me about it in the comments/questions you send me about the readings.

9/20 WEEK 3. Implicit Attitude Assessment

Download, print and bring to class the handout posted at Sakai: IAT predictive utility.doc

Nisbett, R. E., & Wilson, T. D. (1977). Telling more than we can know: Verbal reports on mental processes. *Psychological Review*, 84, 231-259.

Greenwald, A. G. (1990). What cognitive representations underlie social attitudes? *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society*, 28, 254-260.

Rudman, L. A., Greenwald, A. G., Mellott, D. S., & Schwartz, J. L. K. (1999). Measuring the automatic components of prejudice: Flexibility and generality of the Implicit Association Test. *Social Cognition*, 17(4), 1-29.

9/27 WEEK 4. Attitude Formation

Zajonc, R. B. (1980). Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences. *American Psychologist*, 35, 151-171.

Olsson, A., Ebert, J. P., Banaji, M. R., & Phelps, E. A. (2005). The role of social groups in the persistence of learned fear. *Science*, 309, 785-787.

Ohman, A. (2005). Conditioned fear of a face: A prelude to ethnic enmity? *Science*, 309, 711.

Krosnick, J. A., Betz, A., Jussim, L. J., & Lynn, A. R. (1992). Subliminal conditioning of attitudes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18, 152-162.

Weinberger, J., & Westen, D. (2008). RATS, we should have used Clinton: Subliminal priming in political campaigns. *Political Psychology*, 29, 631-651.

Herbert, I. (2008). This is your brain on politics. *Observer*, 21(8), 19-22.

As you can tell from Herbert, Drew Westen is a “go-to” researcher for politicians. You can read his opinion about why Obama hasn’t connected well with voters here:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/07/opinion/sunday/what-happened-to-obamas-passion.html>

10/4 WEEK 5. Attitude-Behavior Relations (Process Models)

Download, print, and bring to class the following handout posted at Sakai: Attitude-Behavior handout.doc

Eagly & Chaiken, pp. 168-176; 186-190 (Theory of Reasoned Action, Theory of Planned Behavior)

Chaiken & Trope, Chapter 5 (MODE).

Assignment for 10/11: Include in your comments to me about these readings your assessment of the menu of functions offered so far. Are there any missing functions? This question involves the issue of content validity (i.e., have researchers captured the primary purposes that attitudes serve or can the list be expanded?). Alternatively, can you collapse over some of the functions to simplify the list?

10/11 WEEK 6. The Functional Approach to Attitudes

Download, print, and bring to class the following handout posted at Sakai: Attitude Function Inventory.doc

Eagly & Chaiken, Functions of Attitudes pp. 479-490

DeBono, K.G. (1987). Investigating the social-adjustive and value-expressive functions of attitudes: Implications for persuasion processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 279-287.

Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., & Pyszczynski, T. (2000) Pride and prejudice: Fear of death and social behavior. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 200-204.

Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., & Solomon, S. (2000). Proximal and distal defense: A new perspective on unconscious motivation. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 156-160.

Assignment for 10/18: Include in your comments to me about these readings an idea of your own that pertains to the functions of an attitude you are interested in. For example, is the primary function of attitude X likely to be one you've learned about (e.g., value-expressive, social adjustive, system-justification, etc.) or something else? Is it likely to be different for disparate types (or groups) of people? Why or why not?

10/18 WEEK 7. System Justification Function of Attitudes

Jost, J. T., & Hunyady, O. (2005). Antecedents and consequences of system-justifying ideologies. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 260-265.

Feygina, I., Jost, J. T., & Goldsmith, R. E. (2010) System justification, the denial of global warming, and the possibility of "system-sanctioned change." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36, 326-338.

Rudman, L. A., Moss-Racusin, C. A., Phelan, J. E., & Nauts, S. (2011). *Status incongruity and backlash effects: Defending the gender hierarchy motivates prejudice toward female leaders*. Manuscript revised and resubmitted to *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*.

Recommended (and available on Sakai) but not required:

Jost, J. T., & Banaji, M R. (1994). The role of stereotyping in system-justification and the production of false-consciousness. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 33, 1-27.

10/25 WEEK 8. Dual Process Models of Persuasion – NO CLASS

NB: Do NOT send me comments on this week's readings

Chaiken & Trope, Chapter 3 (ELM; especially pp. 41-67)

Chaiken & Trope, Chapter 4 (HSM; especially pp. 73-82)

Walker (2008) Can a dead brand live again? New York Times

Social Cognition

Assignment for 11/1. Include in your comments to me whether or not you see an inherent contradiction between the Chen & Bargh paper and the other two readings.

11/1 WEEK 9. Priming Effects on Social Judgments and Behaviors

Banaji, M.R., Hardin, C., & Rothman, A. (1993). Implicit stereotyping in person judgment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 65, 272-281.

Chen, M., & Bargh, J. (1997). Nonconscious behavioral confirmation processes: The self-fulfilling consequences of automatic activation of stereotypic traits. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 33, 541-560.

Rudman, L. A., & Lee, M. R. (2002). Implicit and explicit consequences of exposure to violent and misogynous rap music. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 5, 133-150.

Assignment for 11/8 and 11/15: Come to each class prepared to discuss ideas for your final project in small groups.

11/8 WEEK 10. The Controllability of Automatic Biases

Assignment for 11/18: Are people at the mercy of their automatic biases, or are they likely to be under our control? After reading both chapters, declare to me in your comments which chapter was more persuasive for you.

Chaiken & Trope, Chapter 17 (Devine & Monteith)

Chaiken & Trope, Chapter 18 (Bargh)

11/15 WEEK 11. Stereotype Threat & Backlash Effects on Atypical Actors' Behavior

Steele, C. M. (1997) A threat in the air: How stereotypes shape intellectual development and performance. *American Psychologist*, 54, 613-629.

Shih, M., Pittinsky, T. L., Ambady, N. (1999). Stereotype susceptibility: Identity salience and shifts in quantitative performance. *Psychological Science*, 10, 80-83.

Phelan, J. E., & Rudman, L. A. (2010). Reactions to ethnic deviance: The role of backlash in racial stereotype maintenance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99, 265-281.

11/22 WEEK 12. NO CLASS (replace Tuesday with Thursday classes for Thanksgiving)

Final Assignment. Prepare a 15-20 minute Powerpoint presentation of your research idea for your final project. The slides should include the introduction, methods, hypothesized results, and discussion sections. Because feedback from peers is an essential part of the scientific endeavor, you will evaluate your peers' presentations so it is essential that you attend class both weeks. **Download and print out the necessary number of ratings sheets, one for each presentation scheduled that week (except for your own), and bring to each class.**

11/29 WEEK 13- Research Project Presentations I

12/6 WEEK 14. Final class – Research Project Presentations II