

Syllabus for Sociological Approaches to Social Psychology,
Sociology 319
Spring 2003
MW4 (1:10-2:30) Lucy Stone Hall B-105
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Description: This course presents a selective overview of one fundamental topic in social-psychology, namely the shaping of consciousness by interaction (whatever that means). Necessarily excluded are other such topics as attitude formation, authoritarianism, emotions, role-expectations, and structural power. We begin by reviewing the impetus to what became social psychology, namely the amused observation that when seemingly sane people get together in groups, they often act as if they were crazy. We will briefly examine the emergence of the doctrine of emergence, i.e. that social interaction leads to something fundamentally new for psychology. With a few classical works under the belt, we will then examine a set of more contemporary works, arranged in order of the degree to which psychology is made fundamentally social.

Requirements: In addition to regular attendance and reading, there will be a midterm (on March 3) and a final (on May 13th, 12-3 pm). Grades will be 55% final, 35% midterm, and 20% class attendance and participation.

Required Books: There are four required books, available at the Livingston book store.

- Robert J. Lifton, *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*, 1989 UNC Press, \$27.50 (paper)
- Marybeth Ayella, *Insane Therapy: Portrait of a Psychotherapy Cult*, \$21.95
- Arlie Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*, 1985, \$18.95.
- Erving Goffman, *Interaction Ritual*, \$12.75

The other readings are on electronic reserve; most are also in a course packet from University Copy that will also be available at the Livingston bookstore. Note that if you are able to successfully use electronic reserve, you do not need to get the course packet. But you will need the books above.

I. INTERACTIONS AND ROLES

A. Introduction

<<Wednesday Jan 22>>

Intro to the Course; to me; to Rutgers; to whatever.

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: In some ways, Social Psychology started with theories of crowds, but we're going to pass over that. If you're interested, take a look at LeBon, *The Crowd*, p. 23-34 (ch1), 39-49 (ch 2, sec 2) for the classic statement, and then read McPhail, *The Myth of the Maddening Crowd*.

B. Symbolic Interactionism

<<Monday January 27, Wednesday January 29>>

Required Reading: Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*, 42-51, 68-75, 132-144, 152-164, 173-178, 186-192.*

We start with a framework for our initial studies on interaction.

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: Charles Cooley's *Human Nature and the Social Order* gave us the term "looking glass self" and has some fascinating ideas.

C. Primates, Gestures, Meaning:

<<Monday February 3, Wednesday February 5>>

Required Reading: de Waal, *Bonobo: The Forgotten Ape*, selections*; *Chimpanzee Politics*, selections.*

We now examine Mead's ideas using some data on chimpanzees, where it's a bit easier for us to see the gesture as gesture.

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: There are more and more interactional studies of animals: you can look at my syllabus for "Social and Cultural Organization of Non-Human Animals" (Soc. 421) for a start.

D. The Idea of a Role

<<Monday February 10, Wednesday February 12>>

Required Reading: Linton, *Study of Man*, selections;* Merton, "The Role-Set"*, Goffman, *Presentation of Self*, Intro, Chap 1 (Chap 2 optional)*

We look a bit more closely at "roles" and their relationship both to others and to the self.

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: If you wanted to read further in Goffman I would suggest Chap 3, (Chap 4, 5 optional), Chap 6 (only 229-237 required) and Chap 7.

E. A Generalization of Role

<<Monday February 17, Wednesday February 19>>

Required Reading: Goffman, *Interaction Ritual*.

We now consider whether role may simply be the end point on a continuum of more to less scripted action.

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: Randall Collins has in a number of places extended this idea to reach towards a vision of paths in social structure as composed of chains of interaction rituals...

F. Internalization of Roles

<<Monday February 24, Wednesday February 26>>

Required Reading: Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*

Goffman makes it seem like people can maintain role distance if they want to. Perhaps that's not at all true, and that our self is really an internalization of the roles we play....

Additional readings for the fanatic: How does this relate to Mead and Cooley that we looked at above?

Beep beep warning warning dr smith midterm midterm eeeeeeeeeee

<<Monday March 3>>: In-class mid-term on section I.

II. SOCIAL FACTORS IMPINGING ON THE SELF

Following this idea that our self may be an internalization of roles, we begin examining the social shaping of the self.

A. Moral Judgement

<< Wednesday March 5>>

Required Reading: Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, pp. 1-43.*

Morality seems to be the core of our selves. But is it distinct from other social pressures?

B. Perceptual Judgement

<<Monday March 10, Wednesday March 12>>

Required Reading: McPhail, Chapter 3*, Asch, *Social Psychology*, 450-473*; Sherif, *Social Interaction*, 136-148*.

Do we actually perceive the world differently depending on how we think others perceive it?

C. Institutions and the self

<<Monday March 24, Wednesday March 26>>

Required Reading: Robert J. Lifton *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism*.

What social environments are most conducive to reshaping the self?

Additional readings for the fanatic: I draw heavily on Goffman, *Asylums*, first section on total institutions.

D. Total Institutions and Brainwashing;

<<Monday March 31, Wednesday April 2>>

Required Reading: Ayella, *Insane Therapy*, selections.

A further examination of this process....

Additional readings for the fanatic: Previously I used the case of Synanon, using

- Mitchell, Mitchell, and Ofshe, *The Light On Synanon*,
- Louis Yablonski, *The Tunnel Back*,
- Guy Endore, *Synanon*, and
- David Gerstel, *Paradise Incorporated*.

Other recent work on the brainwashing debate may be found in Zablocki and Robbins, *Misunderstanding Cults*.

E. Or Socialization?

<<Monday April 7, Wednesday April 9>>

Required Reading: Long and Hadden, "Brainwashing and Socialization." Additional reading to be announced...maybe.

But then what is the difference between brainwashing and socialization? What is socialization, anyway?

III. WHOLISTIC APPROACHES

A. **More on Socialization:** the process whereby people accept whatever society wants them to.

<<Monday April 14, Wednesday April 16>>

Required Reading: Review Mead, also read Durkheim, *Moral Education*, 33-7, 71-3
That's one view.

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: I'm having trouble finding good sources on early socialization. Piaget knocked out a lot of the earlier ones, but there's no good post-Piagetian source....

B. The Gestalt Tradition—

<<Monday April 21, Wednesday April 23>>

Required Reading: Köhler, *Gestalt Psychology*, selections*; other essays.*

Another view doesn't accept that what's in our heads is dumped their by society; instead, we actively attempt to figure out what's going on...

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: J.J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* is one of my favorites. Also see Koffka.

C. Socialization as the internalization of external structures—

<<Monday April 28, Wednesday April 30>>

Required Reading: Loic Wacquant, "The Structure and Logic of Bourdieu's Sociology," pp. 7-15, espec. 12-15*; Bourdieu, *Distinction*, pp. 128f, 169-172, 300, 324, 349, 383, 468f, 471.*

Can we map cognitive structures to social structures? If so, how?

Additional Readings for the Fanatic: I'd say *Distinction* is worth detailed study....

IV. REVIEW

<<Monday May 5 >>