

Professor Donald Green
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Office hours: Thursdays 10-12, 815 IAB
Fall 2016

Political Psychology: POLSGR8221
IAB 711 4:10p-6:00p

This course focuses on ideas in psychology and their applications to politics. It has three dominant themes. The first is social influence and intrinsic predispositions: obedience, conformity, social pressure, authoritarianism, and personality traits. The second theme concerns the manner in which people interpret new information about politics and use it to update their beliefs. This section invites discussion of topics such as, To what extent and in what ways do media and politicians change voters' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors? Can and do voters use "information shortcuts" to compensate for their lack of direct information about policies? The third theme is the meaning, measurement, and expression of ideology and prejudice.

Political psychology is a vast field, and one semester is too brief to cover every important topic or every significant piece of research on the topics below. The classic readings tend to come from American politics, but the most interesting recent work tends to come from outside the United States.

Grades

You will be asked to (1) lead (or co-lead) the class discussion of one week's material, (2) participate actively in discussions every week, and (3) compose a 25 page literature review paper on a topic of your choosing, to be turned in on the date of the final exam. Please clear your paper topics with me as soon as possible. A preliminary draft of this paper should be discussed with me in office hours at least four weeks before the final draft is submitted. The format of this paper should follow the *APSR* style guide. These three graded components of the course will be weighted 25%, 25%, and 50%, respectively.

Prerequisites

I assume that students have taken graduate level coursework in either comparative politics or American politics. Prior coursework on public opinion is helpful but not required. One semester of graduate-level statistics is required; two or more semesters are recommended.

Readings

Each week, one or more students will lead discussion of the assigned readings. Class will begin with the discussion leader's critical overview of each work's key concepts, claims, flaws, etc. After the presenters make initial observations about each reading, the floor will be open

to the entire class. Every student should come to class prepared to discuss each of the readings and the connections among them.

There is no printed packet of course readings. PDFs of articles and book chapters are available at the Courseworks site. In a few cases, you will need to get ahold of a book manuscript, in which case I suggest purchasing used or electronic copies on-line.

For those who are encountering this subject matter for the first time, two groups of (optional) background readings may be helpful. The first group comprises background readings in psychology authored by political science faculty:

Kinder, Donald R. 1998. "Opinion and Action in the Realm of Politics." In *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Daniel T. Gilbert and Susan T. Fiske. 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill. A somewhat dated but still useful survey of political psychology.

Sears, David O., Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis, eds. 2003. *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press. A compendium of literature reviews on assorted topics.

The second group (again optional) includes collected readings in psychology authored by psychology faculty:

Kunda, Ziva. 1999. *Social Cognition: Making Sense of People*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Hamilton, David L., ed. 2005. *Social Cognition*. New York: Psychology Press.

The one required book is

Milgram, Stanley. 1974. *Obedience to Authority*. New York: Harper & Row.

Week 1: Overview and Preliminaries

McGuire, William J. 1993. "The Poly-Psy Relationship: Three Phases of a Long Affair." In *Explorations in Political Psychology*, eds. Shanto Iyengar and William J. McGuire. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Jahoda, Marie, and Neil Warren (eds.). 1966. *Attitudes: Selected Readings*. New York: Penguin. Read pp.15-24, the brief essays by Allport and by Newcomb.

John, O.P. & Benet-Martínez, V. 2000. "Measurement, scale construction, and reliability." In H.T. Reis and C.M. Judd (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods in social and personality psychology* (pp. 339-369). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Week 2: Social Psychological Forces: Obedience

Milgram, Stanley. 1974. *Obedience to Authority*. New York: Harper & Row.

Burger, Jerry M. 2009. "Replicating Milgram: Would People Still Obey Today?" *American Psychologist* 64 (January).

Week 3: Social Psychological Forces: Conformity, Social Norms, and Social Pressure

Asch, Solomon E. 1951. "Effects of Group Pressure upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgments." In *Groups, Leadership, and Men*, ed. Harold Guetzkow. Pittsburgh: Carnegie Press.

Bond, Rod, and Peter B. Smith. 1996. "Culture and Conformity: A Meta-Analysis of Studies Using Asch's (1952b, 1956) Line Judgment Task." *Psychological Bulletin* 119(1): 111-137.

Schultz, P. Wesley, Jessica M. Nolan, Robert B. Cialdini, Noah J. Goldstein, and Vidas Griskevicius. 2007. "The Constructive, Destructive, and Reconstructive Power of Social Norms." *Psychological Science* 18(5): 429-434.

Gerber, Alan S., Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. "Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 102 (February): 33-48.

Week 4: Attitudes and Belief Systems

LaPiere, Richard T. 1934. "Attitudes vs. Actions." *Social Forces* 13:230-237.

Fishbein, Martin, and Icek Ajzen. 1972. "Attitudes and Opinions." *Annual Review of Psychology* 23:487-544.

Converse, Philip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics." In *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. D. E. Apter. New York: Free Press.

Kinder, Donald R. 2006. "Belief Systems Today." *Critical Review* 18 (Winter): 197-216.

Optional but recommended: Lane, Robert E. 1962. *Political Ideology: Why the American Common Man Believes What He Does*. New York: Free Press.

Optional but recommended: Ansolabehere, Stephen, Jonathan Rodden, and James M. Snyder, Jr. 2008. "The Strength of Issues: Using Multiple Measures to Gauge Preference Stability, Ideological Constraint, and Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 102(2): 215-232.

Week 5: Personality and Individual Differences

Gerber, Alan S., Gregory A. Huber, David Doherty, and Conor M. Dowling. 2011. "The Big Five Personality Traits in the Political Arena." *Annual Review of Political Science* 14: 265-87.

Nisbett, Richard E. 1980. "The Trait Construct in Professional and Lay Psychology." In Leon Festinger (ed.), *Retrospections on Social Psychology*. NY: Oxford University Press, 109-130.

Carney, Dana R., John T. Jost, Samuel Gosling, and Jeff Potter. 2008. "The Secret Lives of Liberals and Conservatives: Personality Profiles, Interaction Styles, and the Things They Leave Behind." *Political Psychology* 29 (December): 807-40.

Feldman, Stanley. 2003. "Enforcing Social Conformity: A Theory of Authoritarianism." *Political Psychology* 24 (March): 41-74.

Week 6: Group Identification

Tajfel, Henri. 1982. "Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations." *Annual Review of Psychology* 33: 1-39.

Greene, Steven. 1999. "Understanding Party Identification: A Social Identity Approach." *Political Psychology* 20 (June): 393-403.

Optional but recommended: Kinder, Donald R., and Cindy D. Kam. 2010. *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Opinion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Optional but recommended: Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Week 7: Racial Attitudes, Explicit and Implicit

Sears, David O. 1988. "Symbolic Racism." Pp. 53-84 in *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy*, edited by P. A. Katz and D. A. Taylor. New York: Plenum.

Sniderman, Paul M., and Philip E. Tetlock. 1986. "Reflections on American Racism." *Journal of Social Issues* 42(2): 173-187.

Bobo, Lawrence. 1988. "Group conflict, prejudice, and the paradox of contemporary racial attitudes." In P. A. Katz & D. A. Taylor (Eds.), *Eliminating racism* (pp. 85-114). New York: Plenum.

Fazio, Russell H., Joni R. Jackson, Bridget C. Dunton, and Carol J. Williams. 1995. "Variability in Automatic Activation as an Unobtrusive Measure of Racial Attitudes: A Bona Fide Pipeline?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 69(6):1013-1027.

Week 8: Persuasion and Prejudice Reduction

Paluck, Elizabeth Levy, and Donald P. Green. 2009. "Prejudice Reduction: What Works? A Review and Assessment of Research and Practice." *Annual Review of Psychology* 60: 339-67.

Lord, Charles G., Mark R. Lepper, and Elizabeth Preston. 1984. "Considering the Opposite: A Corrective Strategy for Social Judgment." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 47 (June): 1231-43.

Scacco, Alexandra, and Shana. S. Warren. 2016. Youth Vocational Training and Conflict Mitigation: An Experimental Test of Social Contact Theory in Nigeria. Unpublished manuscript, Department of Politics, New York University.

Week 9: Motivated Reasoning and Selective Exposure

Lord, Charles. G., Lee Ross, and Mark R. Lepper. 1979. "Biased Assimilation and Attitude Polarization: The Effects of Prior Theories on Subsequently Considered Evidence." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37 (November): 2098-2109.

Kunda, Ziva. 1990. "The Case for Motivated Reasoning." *Psychological Bulletin* 108 (November): 480-98.

Taber, Charles S., and Milton Lodge. 2006. "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (July): 755-69.

Iyengar, Shanto, Kyu S. Hahn, Jon A. Krosnick, and John Walker. 2008. "Selective Exposure to Campaign Communication." *Journal of Politics* 70 (January): 186-200.

Gentzkow, Matthew, and Jesse M. Shapiro. 2010. "What Drives Media Slant? Evidence from U.S. Daily Newspapers." *Econometrica* 78(1): 35-71.

Week 10: Bayesian Updating and Perceptual Screens

Stokes, Donald E. 1962. "Party Loyalty and the Likelihood of Deviating Elections." *Journal of Politics* 24(4): 689-702.

Gerber, Alan, and Donald P. Green. 1998. "Rational Learning and Partisan Attitudes." *American Journal of Political Science* 42 (July): 794-818.

Bartels, Larry M. 2002. "Beyond the Running Tally: Partisan Bias in Political Perceptions." *Political Behavior* 24 (June): 117-50.

Bullock, John G, Alan S. Gerber, Seth J. Hill, and Gregory A. Huber. 2015. Partisan Bias in Factual Beliefs about Politics. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 10 (December): 519-78.

Week 11: Heuristics, Cues, and Bounded Rationality

Tversky, Amos, and Daniel T. Kahneman. 1974. "Heuristics and Biases: Judgment under Uncertainty." *Science* 185 (September): 1124-31.

Lupia, Arthur. 1994. "Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in California Insurance Reform Elections." *American Political Science Review* 88 (March): 63-76.

Somin, Ilya. 1998. "Voter Ignorance and the Democratic Ideal." *Critical Review* 12 (4): 413-58.

Bullock, John G. 2011. "Elite Influence on Public Opinion in an Informed Electorate." *American Political Science Review* 105 (September): 496-515.

Simon, Herbert A. 1990. "Invariants of Human Behavior." *Annual Review of Psychology* 41: 1-20.

Week 12: Issue Framing

Note: "Framing" has two very different meanings. Psychologists chiefly study "equivalence framing." Political scientists chiefly study "issue framing."

Nelson, Thomas E., Rosalee A. Clawson, and Zoe M. Oxley. 1997. "Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance." *American Political Science Review* 91 (September): 567-94.

Chong, Dennis, and James N. Druckman. 2007a. "Framing Public Opinion in Competitive Democracies." *American Political Science Review* 101 (November): 637-55.

Druckman, James N., and Kjersten R. Nelson. 2003. "Framing and Deliberation: How Citizens' Conversations Limit Elite Influence." *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (October): 729-45.

Week 13: Critiques of the Enterprise

Cialdini, Robert B. 2009. "We Have to Break Up." *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 4 (January): 5-6.

Baumeister, Roy F., Kathleen D. Vohs, and David C. Funder. 2007. "Psychology as the Science of Self-Reports and Finger Movements: Whatever Happened to Actual Behavior?" *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 2 (December): 396-403.

Dreber, A., Pfeiffer, T., Almenberg, J., Isaksson, S., Wilson, B., Chen, Y., Nosek, B. A., & Johannesson, M. (2016). Using prediction markets to estimate the reproducibility of scientific research. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 112, 15343-15347.

Meehl, Paul E. 1990. "Why Summaries of Research on Psychological Theories Are Often Uninterpretable." *Psychological Reports* 66: 195-244.

Levitt, Steven D., and John A. List. 2009. "Was There Really a Hawthorne Effect at the Hawthorne Plant? An Analysis of the Original Illumination Experiments." *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 3 (January 2011): 224–238

Sears, David O. 1986. "College Sophomores in the Laboratory: Influences of a Narrow Data Base on Social Psychology's View of Human Nature." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 51 (September): 515-530.

To be scheduled at the end of the semester: Student Presentations of Research Papers