

**Psychology 400**  
**Topics in Social and Personality Psychology:**  
**Social Psychology and Social Change**

<b>Course Instructor</b>	Professor Betsy Levy Paluck Green Hall 2N5 <a href="mailto:epaluck@princeton.edu">epaluck@princeton.edu</a> Office hours TBA
<b>Course Time and Location</b>	Wednesdays 1:30-4:20 111 East Pyne

### **Course Description**

This course explores how social psychological theory and research have been used in the interest of social change, and how social change has inspired theoretical or methodological developments in social psychology. To do so, it explores major ideas, theories, and findings of social psychology and their applied status. The course is organized around social psychological topics that have been applied to the study of social stasis and change, such as social norms, stigma, belief systems, identity, and situational cues. Research explored within each topic bears on issues including conflict, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, authority and legitimacy, the environment, health, and economic scarcity and inequality.

### **Course Goals**

This class is for students interested in the *social science* of social change—students are expected to engage with social psychological methods, statistics, and theories as well as substantive issues. By the end of the course, students will be able to: *analyze* historical and current trends in the application of social psychology to social change, *identify* the major social psychological ideas that have and have not been developed in the interest of social change, *differentiate* among different methodologies for investigating psychological insights into social change, and *generate ideas* for new interventions or evaluations based on social psychological insights into social change. (Use these skills in your final paper to ensure a successful finish to the course!)

### **Course Structure**

This course is reading and writing intensive. Meetings will include presentations by the professor, by students, and class discussion. Students will sign up to be responsible for one week in the course when they will present to the class that week's nonrequired reading. Presentation should include a 5 minute summary of the piece, a discussion of the paper's strengths and weaknesses, and ways in which the reading relates or does not relate to other readings for that session or thus far in the course. Students are expected to read all of the required readings and to send in their (two page) reading response by 3pm the day before class. Weekly responses ensure students keep current, help the professor to anticipate confusions or questions for seminar discussion, and foster class community and discussion. (See below for a note on writing your reading response.) Students have one grace week of their choice, i.e. they are allowed to skip one week of posting a reading response without grade penalty.

Final grades are made of weekly responses (40%), a final paper (40%), and class presentation and participation (20%).

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**Reading responses**

**Reasoning:**

Although the reading responses may seem like a draconian way to check whether you've done the reading, their main purpose is to help you improve your concise critical writing skills. The ability to synthesize and critique large amounts of complex material in one to two pages is one of the most important skills you can learn in college. You will use these skills in your professional life more often than you think: writing policy or business memos, e-mails, blogs, talks.

The purpose of these essays is also to help you absorb the material, to get you to think critically about the principal readings before class, and to set the stage for a thoughtful discussion during seminar time.

**Logistics:**

Each reading response should be two pages in length or less (double spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font in Times New Roman) and posted to our class website (Blackboard) by 3pm the day before class. At 3pm, my assistant will print them and give them to me for marking; I won't check the website after 3pm. Late responses are not accepted.

You will write nine reading responses. That is, three out of the 12 class weeks you will *not* write one: not the first week, nor the week of your midterm, and not on a "grace week" of your choice.

**Writing Guidance:**

Your response should only spend one or two sentences summarizing a take-away from the reading or set of readings. (I will allow you to write only about one paper, but I prefer that you bring more than one paper into play in your response.) Then you should immediately turn to discussing and analyzing the paper or papers' points. "Discussion" can mean comparing or critiquing or exploring implications. You should avoid simply repeating material from the readings, and avoid obvious criticisms if possible. Your critiques may be original or you may include and reference outside critiques (including past readings we covered; it would be good, though it is not a requirement, to bring them into conversation with each other). Comments should be written in concise prose—that is, sentences rather than phrases or bullets.

To receive a strong grade, responses should display knowledge from the majority of the week's readings, or should say something interesting or thoughtful about one in particular. How you organize your response is up to you, but the best strategy is probably to have two to three clear, persuasive points or critiques, backed up with convincing argument or evidence. You will be evaluated on your ability to think and write clearly, creatively, and originally.

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**Grading:**

Reading responses are a big part (40%) of your grade—other than the reading responses you will only have class participation and a final paper. I will use a number grade: (4+) inspired, (4/4-) thoughtful and interesting, (3) meets expectations, (2) below expectations, and (1) needs serious improvement. Missing reading responses will receive a zero.

**Class Schedule and Readings**

*\*Required readings are starred; nonstarred readings are recommended, and will be presented by students who have chosen to present in that week.*

**Part I: Overview and background**

**1. An introduction to the course**

\*Ross, L., & Nisbett, R. E. The person and the situation, 1991. *Chapter 8*. (\*Read to page 222.)

Orwell, G. (1946). *The Politics of the English Language*.

**2. A brief history of the application of social psychology, or “applied behavioral science”**

\*Lewin, K. (1958). Group decision and social change.

\*Wilson, T. D. The power of social psychological interventions. *Science*, 313, 2006, 1251-1252.

\*Campbell, D.T. (1969). Reforms as experiments. (Read carefully pages 1-5 and 26-29; skim pages on research design in the middle, which I will cover in class.)

\*RB Cialdini (2009). We have to break up. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

\*Thaler (2013). *Public policies, made to fit people*

\*Kahneman, D. (2013). *Forward to The Behavioral Foundations of Public Policy*, Ed. Eldar Shafir. Princeton Press.

**3. Current theory in the application of social psychology**

\*Wilson, T.D. **Selections** from *Redirect*.

\*Sunstein, C., & Thaler, R. **Selection** from *Nudge*.

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\*Miller, D.T., & Prentice, D. (2013). Psychological levers of behavior change. In E. Shafir (Ed.), *The Behavioral Foundations of Policy*. Princeton University Press.

\*Mortensen, C. R., & Cialdini, R. B. (2010). Full-cycle social psychology for theory and application. *Social and Personality Compass*, 4, 53-63.

Stoudt, B., Fox, M., & Fine, M. (2012). Contesting Privilege with Participatory Action Research. *Journal of Social Issues*, 68, p. 178—193.

**Part II: Topics in Social Psychology:**

**4. Stereotypes and stigma**

\*Dovidio, J. F., Penner, L. A., Albrecht, T. L., Norton, W. E., Gaertner, S. L., & Shelton, J. N. (2008). Disparities and distrust: The implications of psychological processes for understanding racial disparities in health and health care. *Social Science & Medicine*, 67, 478–486.

\*Herek, G. (2007). Confronting Sexual Stigma and Prejudice: Theory and Practice. *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 63, No. 4, 2007, pp. 905—925.

\* Rattan, A., & Ambady, N. (under review). How “It Gets Better”: Effectively Communicating Support to Targets of Prejudice

\*INT Cohen, Garcia, Purdie-Vaughns, Apfel, & Brzustowski (2009). Recursive processes in self-affirmation: Intervening to close the minority achievement gap. *Science*

Diekmann, A. B., & Eagly, A. H. (2000). Stereotypes as dynamic constructs: Women and men of the past, present, and future. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26(10), 1171-1188.

**5. Belief systems**

\*Morton, T. A., Postmes, T., Haslam, S. A., & Hornsey, M. J. (2009). Theorizing gender in the face of social change: Is there anything essential about essentialism?. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96(3), 653.

\*Kay, A. C., Gaucher, D., Peach, J. M., Laurin, K., Friesen, J., Zanna, M. P., & Spencer, S. J. (2009). Inequality, discrimination, and the power of the status quo: Direct evidence for a motivation to see the way things are as the way they should be. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 97(3), 421.

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\*INT: Blackwell, L. S., Trzesniewski, K. H., & Dweck, C. S. (2007). Implicit theories of intelligence predict achievement across an adolescent transition: A longitudinal study and an intervention. *Child development, 78*(1), 246-263.

Becker, J. C., & Wright, S. C. (2011). Yet another dark side of chivalry: Benevolent sexism undermines and hostile sexism motivates collective action for social change. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 101*(1), 62.

## **6. Affect**

\*Slovic, P. (2007). If I look at the mass I will never act”: Psychic numbing and genocide. *Judgment and Decision Making, 2*(2), 79-95.

\*INT Jamieson, J. P., Mendes, W. B., Blackstock, E., & Schmader, T. (2010). Turning the knots in your stomach into bows: Reappraising arousal improves performance on the GRE. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 46*(1), 208-212.

\*INT Fredrickson, B. L., Cohn, M. A., Coffey, K. A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S. M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of personality and social psychology, 95*(5), 1045.

INT Stone, J., Aronson, E., Crain, A. L., Winslow, M. P., & Fried, C. B. (1994). Inducing hypocrisy as a means of encouraging young adults to use condoms. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 20*(1), 116-128.

## **7. Norms**

\*Prentice, D. (in press). The Psychology of Social Norms and the Promotion of Human Rights. Chapter to appear in R. Goodman, D. Jinks, & A. K. Woods (Eds.), *Understanding social action, promoting human rights*. New York: Oxford University Press.

\* Cialdini, R. B. (2003). Crafting normative messages to protect the environment. *Current directions in psychological science, 12*(4), 105-109.

\*INT Paluck, E. L., & Shepherd, H. (2012). The salience of social referents: A field experiment on collective norms and harassment behavior in a school social network. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 103*(6), 899.

INT Schultz, P. W., Nolan, J. M., Cialdini, R. B., Goldstein, N. J., & Griskevicius, V. (2007). The constructive, destructive, and reconstructive power of social norms. *Psychological science, 18*(5), 429-434.

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Allcott, H., & Mullainathan, S. (2010). Behavioral science and energy policy. *Science, 327*(5970), 1204-1205.

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**8. Identity**

\*Huo, Y. J., Smith, H. J., Tyler, T. R., & Lind, E. A. (1996). Superordinate identification, subgroup identification, and justice concerns: Is separatism the problem; is assimilation the answer?. *Psychological Science*, 40-45.

\*Hammack, P. L. (2010). The cultural psychology of Palestinian youth: A narrative approach. *Culture & Psychology*, 16(4), 507-537.

\*INT Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2007). A question of belonging: race, social fit, and achievement. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 92(1), 82.

Morton, T. A., Rabinovich, A., & Postmes, T. (2012). Who we were and who we will be: The temporal context of women's in-group stereotype content. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 51(2), 346-362.

**9. Situational cues and constraints**

\*Cheryan, S., Plaut, V. C., Davies, P. G., & Steele, C. M. (2009). Ambient belonging: how stereotypical cues impact gender participation in computer science. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 97(6), 1045.

\*Shah, A. K., Mullainathan, S., & Shafir, E. (2012). Some consequences of having too little. *Science*, 338(6107), 682-685.

\*Keizer, K., Lindenberg, S., & Steg, L. (2008). The spreading of disorder. *Science*, 322(5908), 1681-1685.

INT Braga, A. A., & Bond, B. J. (2008). Policing crime and disorder hot spots: A randomized controlled trial. *Criminology*, 46(3), 577-607.

**10. Social structure and social change**

*Note: by the end of this session students and Professor Paluck will consult on reading assignments for the following week.*

\*Lee, I., Pratto, F., & Johnson, B. T. (2011). Intergroup consensus/disagreement in support of group-based hierarchy: an examination of socio-structural and psycho-cultural factors. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137(6), 1029.

\*Mani, A., Mullainathan, S., Shafir, E., & Zhao, J. (2013). Poverty Impedes Cognitive Function. *Science*, 341(6149), 976-980.

\*INT Beaman, L., Chattopadhyay, R., Duflo, E., Pande, R., & Topalova, P. (2009). Powerful women: does exposure reduce bias?. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 124(4), 1497-1540.

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Kraus, Michael W., Paul K. Piff, and Dacher Keltner. "Social class, sense of control, and social explanation." *Journal of personality and social psychology* 97.6 (2009): 992.

**11. Methods in applied behavioral science**

*\*Reading assignments will differ depending on the direction of your final paper. We will consult on reading assignments in the prior session (week 10).*

Paluck, E. L., & Green, D. P. (2009). Prejudice reduction: What works? A review and assessment of research and practice. *Annual review of psychology*, 60, 339-367.

Yeager, D. S., & Walton, G. M. (2011). Social-psychological interventions in education They're not magic. *Review of Educational Research*, 81(2), 267-301.

Goff, forthcoming

Paluck., E.L., & Cialdini, R. (in press). Field research methods.

Hulleman, C. S., & Cordray, D. S. (2009). Moving from the lab to the field: The role of fidelity and achieved relative intervention strength. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 2(1), 88-110.

**12. Paper presentations**

(Student presentations on paper topics)