

## **Sociology 770: Individual in Society\***

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*How can the individual be both a cause and a consequence of society?*

Allport, Gordon. 1968. "The Historical Background of Modern Social Psychology." Pp. 1-80 in *The Handbook of Social Psychology*, edited by G. Lindzey and E. Aronson. New York: Random House, p. 9.

### **Course description**

This course focuses on the relationship between a location of individuals in the social structure and their psychological functioning. The main topics include:

- (1) Relationship between social structure and personality traits as a core of social psychology
- (2) Orientations toward self and society: Introduction to the learning-generalization hypothesis
- (3) Extensions of the learning-generalization hypothesis
- (4) IQ: The "Bell Curve" controversy and its sociological relevance
- (5) Social structure and belief systems: Popular views of just distributions
- (6) Social structure and values: Modernism and postmodernism.  
The generational change hypothesis
- (7) Group prejudice versus group tolerance
- (8) Social structure and mental health/illness

### **Course objectives**

This course provides information on theories, research strategies, and empirical findings pertaining to selected topics of *social psychology* viewed from a sociological perspective. Students will learn various aspects of theory construction, hypothesis posing, and testing deducible propositions. The course aims at facilitating critical reading, logical thinking, and clear writing. Students will be encouraged to pursue their own interests in social psychology by selecting a portion of their assigned readings and their own exploration of the relevant sociological literature.

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\* This material is available in alternative formats to students with disabilities. Please contact the Department of Sociology, 302 Bricker Hall, phone: 292-1175. Students with disabilities are responsible for seeking available assistance, and making their needs known to the instructor, in timely manner.

## **Texts**

(P) Packet

(T) Ann Branaman, *Self and Society*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2001.  
(ISBS 0-631-21540-9)

(B) Three additional books, each from a different set.

*Set one:*

1. Kohn, Melvin, *Class and Conformity: A Study in Values*. Dorsey Press. 1969. Second edition, with reassessment: Chicago University Press. 1977.
2. Kohn, Melvin and K. M. Slomczynski. *Social Structure and Self-Direction: A Comparative Analysis of the United States and Poland*. Cambridge: Blackwell. 1990. Paperback edition: 1993.
3. Parcel, Toby L. and Elizabeth G. Menaghan. 1994. *Parents' Jobs and Children's Lives*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

*Set two:*

4. Fisher, Claude S., M. Hot, M. S. Jankowski, S. R. Lucas, A. Swidler, and K. Voss, *Inequality by Design: Cracking the Bell Curve Myth*. Princeton University Press. 1996.
5. Kluegel, James R. and E. R. Smith, *Beliefs About Inequality: Americans' View of What Is and What Ought to Be*. De Gruyter. 1986.
6. Huber, Joan and W. Form, *Income and Ideology: An Analysis of American Political Formula*. Free Pres. 1973
7. Inkeles, Alex and D. H. Smith, *Becoming Modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Countries*. Harvard University Press. 1974.

*Set three:*

8. Tylor, Verta, *Rock-a-by Baby: Feminism, Self-help and Postpartum Depression*. Routledge. 1996
9. Mirowsky, John and C. Ross, *Social Causes of Psychological Distress*. De Gruyter. 1989

*(You need to secure your own copy of the three chosen books).*

## **Requirements**

- \* Class participation. Students are expected to be prepared to discuss all of the assigned readings on the due date.
- \* Three reviews of individually chosen books from the list (see texts). Two reviews, each from three to five pages, should be written in a format of a journal book review. One review, for one page, should be written in a format of a journal book note.
- \* Final examination requiring written responses to two of three questions. The questions will cover the main issues raised in the lectures, assigned readings, and individually chosen books. You will have 5 hours to answer the two chosen questions.
- \* Term paper (from 10 to 15 pages plus bibliography) on the topic approved by the instructor.

## Grades

Class participation 10%, reviews 30%, final examination 30%, and term paper 30%.

## Important dates

- (.) - Introductory class
- (.) - Individual meetings with instructor
- (.) - Review from set one due
- (.) - Review from set two due
- (.) - Individual meetings with instructor
- (.) - Review from set three due
- (.) - Term paper due
- (.) - Final exam

## Schedule

### **Week 1: Relationship between Social Structure and Personality Traits as a Core of Social Psychology, Part I (Lecture)**

- (P1) Inkeles, Alex, "Personality and Social Structure" (1959)  
From: Robert K. Merton, L. Broom, and L. S. Cottrell, Jr. (Eds), *Sociology Today: Problems and Prospects*. Pp. 249-276. Basic Books. 1959.
- (P2) House, James, "Social Structure and Personality" (1981)  
From: Morris Rosenberg and R. H. Turner (Eds), *Social Psychology: Sociological Perspective*. Pp. 525-561. Basic Books. 1981.
- (P3) Pettigrew, Thomas F., "Personality and Social Structure: Social Psychological Contributions" (1997).  
From: Robert Hogan, J. Johnston and S. Briggs (Eds.), *Handbook of Personality Psychology*. Pp. 417-438. Academic Press. 1997.

### **Week 2: Relationship between Social Structure and Personality Traits as a Core of Social Psychology, Part II**

- (T) Ann Branaman, *Self and Society*. Editor's Introduction (pp. 1-5) & selected chapters from Part I (2 & 5, pp. 30-35 and 42-53) and Part II (9, pp. 121-137). Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2001.

### **Week 3: Orientations Toward Self and Society: Introduction to the Learning-Generalization Hypothesis**

(First review due)

- (P4) Kohn, Melvin L. and C. Schooler, "Stratification, Occupation, and Orientation" (1969)

From: Melvin Kohn and C. Schooler, *Work and Personality: An Inquiry Into the Impact of Social Stratification*. Pp. 5-33. Ablex. 1983. Originally published in *American Sociological Review* 34: 659-678.

(P5) Kohn, Melvin L. and C. Schoenbach, "Class Stratification, and Psychological Functioning" (1983)

From: Melvin Kohn and C. Schooler, *Work and Personality: An Inquiry Into the Impact of Social Stratification*. Pp. 154-189. Ablex. 1983.

(T) Ann Branaman, *Self and Society*. Selected chapters from Part III (15 & 17, pp. 210-217 and 242-264). Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2001.

Additional:

(B1) Kohn, Melvin, *Class and Conformity: A Study in Values*. Dorsey Press. 1969. Second edition, with Reassessment: Chicago University Press. 1977.

#### **Week 4: Extensions of the Learning-Generalization Hypothesis**

(P6) Schooler, Carmi, "Cognitive Effects of Complex Environments During the Life Span: A Review and Theory (1987)

From: Schooler, Carmi and K. Warner Schaie (Eds), *Cognitive Functioning and Social Structure Over the Life Course*. Pp. 24-49. Ablex. 1987.

Suggested:

Kohn, Melvin L., A. Naoi, C. Schoenbach, C. Schooler and K. M. Slomczynski, "Position in the Class Structure and Psychological Functioning in the United States, Japan, and Poland" (1990)

From: *American Journal of Sociology* 95: 964-1008.

Additional:

(B2) Kohn, Melvin and K. M. Slomczynski. *Social Structure and Self-Direction: A Comparative Analysis of the United States and Poland*. Cambridge: Blackwell. 1990 Paperback edition: 1993.

(B3) Parcel, Toby L. and Elizabeth G. Menaghan. 1994. *Parents' Jobs and Children's Lives*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.

#### **Week 5: The "Bell Curve" Controversy and its Sociological Relevance**

(Second review due)

(P7) Herrnstein, Richard J. and Ch. Murray, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*. Fragments (1994)

From: Herrnstein, Richard J. and Ch. Murray, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*. Pp. 1-24, 29-89, 117-155. Free Press. 1994.

(P8) Kohn, Melvin L., "The 'Bell Curve' from the Perspective of Research on Social Structure and Personality" (1996)

From: *Sociological Forum* 11: 395-411.

Suggested:

Slomczynski, Kazimierz M. and B. W. Mach, "The Impact of Psychological Resources on Status Attainment: Poland, 1978-1980 and 1992-1993" (1996)  
From: Polish Sociological Review 4 (116): 337-352. Distributed by the instructor.

Additional:

(B4) Fisher, Claude S., M. Hout, M. S. Jankowski, S. R. Lucas, A. Swidler, and K. Voss, Inequality by Design: Cracking the Bell Curve Myth. Princeton University Press. 1996.

### **Week 6: Social Structure and Belief Systems: Popular Views of Just Distributions**

(P09) Tornblom, Kjell, "The Social Psychology of Distributive Justice" (1992)  
From: Scherer, Klaus S (Ed), Justice: Interdisciplinary Perspectives. Pp. 177-236. Cambridge University Press. 1992.

(P10) Adam Swift, G. Marshall, C. Burgoyne, and D. Routh, "Distributive Justice: Does It Matter What the People Think?" (1995)  
From: James R. Kluegel, D. S. Mason and B. Wegener (Eds), Social Justice and Political Change: Public Opinion in Capitalist and Post-Communist States. Pp. 15-47. De Gruyter. 1995.

Suggested:

Alwin, Duane, "Distributive Justice and Satisfaction with Material Well-Being" (1987)  
From: American Sociological Review 52: 83-95.

Additional:

(B5) Kluegel, James R. and E. R. Smith, Beliefs About Inequality: Americans' View of What Is and What Ought to Be. De Gruyter. 1986.  
(B6) Huber, Joan and W. Form, Income and Ideology: An Analysis of American Political Formula. Free Press. 1973

### **Week 7: Social Structure and Values: Modernism and Postmodernism. The Generational Change Hypothesis**

(Third review due)

(P11) Inglehart, Ronald, The Silent Revolution (1977)  
From: Inglehart, Ronald, The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics. Pp. 3-98. Princeton University Press. 1997.

Additional:

(B7) Inkeles, Alex and D. H. Smith, Becoming Modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Countries. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1974.

## **Week 8: Group Prejudice and Group Tolerance**

- (P12) Sears, David O., "Symbolic Racism" (1988)  
From: Katz, Phyllis A. and D. A. Taylor (Eds), *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy*. Pp. 53-84. Plenum Press. 1988.
- (P13) Bobo, Lawrence, "Group Conflict, Prejudice, and the Paradox of Contemporary Racial Attitudes" (1988)  
From: Katz, Phyllis A. and D. A. Taylor (Eds), *Eliminating Racism: Profiles in Controversy*. Pp. 85-114. Plenum Press. 1988.
- (P14) Massey, Garth, R. Hodson, and D. Sekulic, "Ethnic Enclaves and Intolerance: The Case of Yugoslavia" (1999)  
From: *Social Forces* 78: 669-694
- (T) Ann Branaman, *Self and Society*. Selected chapters from Part II (8, pp. 97-120) and Part IV (22, pp. 333-358). Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2001.

### Suggested:

- Lawrence Bobo and V. L. Hutchings, "Perceptions of Racial Group Competition: Extending Blumer's Theory of Group Position to a Multiracial Social Context" (1996)  
From: *American Sociological Review* 61 (December): 951-972.

## **Week 9: Social Structure and Mental Health/Illness**

- (P15) Parsons, Talcott, "Definitions of Health and Illness in the Light of American Values and Social Structure" (1958)  
From: Parsons, Talcott, *Social Structure and Personality*. New York: Free Press. 1964. Chapter 10. Reprinted from E. Gartly Jaco (Ed.), *Patients, Physicians and Illness*. New York: Free Press. 1958.
- (P16) Tausig, Mark and R. Fenwick, "Macroeconomic and Social Class Influences on the Relationship Between Work and Stress" (1993).  
From: *Research on Social Stratification and Mobility* 12: 361-389.
- (T) Ann Branaman, *Self and Society*. Selected chapters from Part I (1 and 7, pp. 62-86) and Part IV (22, pp. 333-358). Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2001.

### Additional:

- (B8) Taylor, Verta, *Rock-a-by Baby: Feminism, Self-help and Postpartum Depression*. Routledge. 1996
- (B9) Mirowsky, John and C. Ross, *Social Causes of Psychological Distress*. De Gruyter. 1989.

## **Week 10: Individual in Society (Lecture & Class Discussion)**

- (T) Ann Branaman, *Self and Society*. Selected chapters from Part IV (19, 20 and 21, pp. 288-297, 298-320, and 321-332). Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 2001.