2018-2019
Psychology and Social Issues

Category: **Psychology**
Code: **IS083**
Level**: 5**
Credits: **15**
Session: **2**

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Outline

This 15 credit upper division elective module offers an interdisciplinary exploration of issues of current societal concern. Each session aims to introduce you to a specific societal concern to provide a platform for debate and interactive activities. Areas covered include: bullying and ostracism; prejudice and discrimination; body image and the media; rape and victim blaming; social media and relationships; income inequality and materialism; and critical perspectives of psychiatry and addition. You have the opportunity to explore these contemporary social issues from a psychological and sociological perspective, applying relevant readings to engage in small group discussion and activities with a focus on applying theory to real world situations.

Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an understanding of psychological and sociological approaches to studying social issues.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the major contemporary debates in psychology theory applied to explore social issues and identify areas where the knowledge base is most/least secure.
- Analyse and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of competing theoretical perspectives and/or research evidence
- Interact effectively within a team, giving and receiving information and ideas and modifying responses where appropriate

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Mode of assessment	Learning outcomes assessed	Duration or word length	Day and week of submission	Submission point	Weighting
ESSAY	1,2,3	2000 words	Thursday W4		65
GROUP PRESENTATION	1,4	20 mins	Varied	In class	25
OBSERVATION REPORT	4	n/a	n/a	n/a	10

Teaching Structure and Delivery

Teaching Method	Session length	Frequency
Lectures	1 hour	3 x weekly
Seminar	2 hours	3 x weekly
Independent study	Approx. 114 hours	As required

Seminars

Seminars follow on from each lecture. They offer students the opportunity to work collaboratively in groups to explore some of the contemporary debates identified in the lecture in more detail. Seminar activities are varied in their nature but have a focus on encouraging critical thinking and applications of theory and research within predefined contexts.

Prerequisites

There are no strict prerequisites for this module but it is strongly recommended that students have successfully completed at least one previous module in any area of psychology (preferably applied).

Module Outline

Week	Session	Topic
1	1	Introduction to the module
	2	Income inequality and materialism
	3	Group presentation and essay writing masterclass
2	4	Bullying and ostracism
	5	Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination
	6	Media and body image
3	7	Social media and relationships
	8	Persuasion and health campaigns
	9	Essay workshop
4	10	Social justice and perceptions of rape victims
	11	Critical perspectives on psychiatry
	12	Critical perspectives on addiction and the "War Against Drugs"

Attendance policy, class etiquette, academic integrity

Students are expected to attend and engage fully in all lectures and seminars. In order to do so, they will need to have completed the essential reading before each session. Engagement in the seminars activities is assessed by means of an observation report completed by the tutor at the end of the module. In order to achieve a good observation report grade, students need to arrive on time, regularly make positive contributions in the workshops, and respect the opinions of their classmates.

Consistent with all teaching at the University of Sussex, strict adherence to the principles of academic integrity is expected and suspected plagiarism will be dealt with by our academic misconduct panel.

Reading

Core text

Because we will focus in on some specific social issues and psychological theories, individual research articles are generally preferred to a core text for this module. However the following textbook offers some introductory reading in many of the topics covered:-

Steg, L., Keizer, K., Buunk, A.P., & Rothengatter, T. *Applied Social Psychology: Understanding and Managing Social Problems (2ⁿᵈ Ed)*. Cambridge: University Press.

Other essential and recommended reading by topic

Income inequality and materialism

Essential

Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. (2008). Spending Money on Others Promotes Happiness. *Science, 319*(5870), 1687-1688.

Kahneman, D., Krueger, A. B., Schkade, D., Schwarz, N., & Stone, A. A. (2006). Would You Be Happier If You Were Richer? A Focusing Illusion. *Science, 312*(5782), 1908-1910.

Recommended

Bosma, H., van de Mheen, H., & Mackenbach, J. (1999). Social class in childhood and general health in adulthood: questionnaire study of contribution of psychological attributes. *British Medical Journal*, 318, 18-22.

Bradby, H. (2012). *Medicine, Health and Society*. London: Sage. [Chapter 3 'Health Inequalities']

Denton, M., Prus, S., & Walters, V. (2004). Gender differences in health: a Canadian study of the psychosocial, structural and behavioural determinants of health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 58(12), 2585-2600.

Mackenbach, J. (2002). Socio-economic inequalities in health in developed countries: the facts and the options. In R. Detels et al. (eds) *Oxford Textbook of Public Health*, 4ᵗʰ Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nazroo, J. (2003). The Structuring of Ethnic Inequalities in Health: Economic position, racial discrimination, and racism. *American Journal of Public Health*, 93(2), 277-284.

Wilkinson, R. (1994). The epidemiological transition: from material scarcity to social disadvantage? *Daedalus*, 123(4), 61-77.

Wilkinson, R., & Pickett, K. (2010). *The Spirit Level: Why equality is better for everyone*. London: Penguin.

Young, F. (2004). Socioeconomic status and health: the problems of explanation and a sociological solution. *Social Theory and Health*, 2(2), 123-141.

Media and body image

Essential

Perloff, R. M. (2014). Social media effects on young women's body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research. *Sex Roles,* 1–15.

Recommended

Ashikali, E.-M. & Dittmar, H. (2012). The effect of priming materialism on women's responses to thin-ideal media. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 51*, 514-533. doi: 10.1111/j.2044-8309.2011.02020.x.

Becker, A. E., Burwell, R. A., Herzog, D. B., Hamburg, P., & Gilman, S. E. (2002). Eating behaviours and attitudes following prolonged exposure to television among ethnic Fijian adolescent girls. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 180*, 509-514

Diedrichs, P. C. & Lee, C. (2011). Waif goodbye! Average-size female models promote positive body image and appeal to consumers. *Psychology & Health, 26*, 1273-1291

Grabe, S., Ward, L. M., & Hyde, J. S. (2008). The role of the media in body image concerns among women: A meta-analysis of experimental and correlational studies. *Psychological Bulletin, 134,* 460-475. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.134.3.460.

Levine, M. P. & Murnen, S. K. (2009). "Everybody knows that mass media are/are not [pick one] a cause of eating disorders": A critical review of evidence for a causal link between media, negative body image, and disordered eating in females. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 28*, 9-42. doi: 10.1521/jscp.2009.28.1.9.

Levine, M. P. & Smolak, L. (2008). "What exactly are we waiting for?" The case for universal-selective eating disorders prevention programs. International Journal of *Child & Adolescent Health, 1*, 295-304.

Bullying and ostracism

Essential

Hong, J. S., Cho, H., Allen-Meares, P., & Espelage, D. L. (2011). The social ecology of the Columbine High School shootings. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33(6),* 861-868.

Recommended

Gifford-Smith, M. E., & Brownell, C. A. (2003). Childhood peer relationships: Social acceptance, friendships, and peer networks. *Journal of School Psychology, 41*(4), 235-284.

Glew, G. M., Fan, M., Katon, W., & Rivara, F. P. (2008). Bullying and school safety. *The Journal of Pediatrics, 152*(1), 123-128.

Rubin-Vaughan, A., Pepler, D., Brown, S., & Craig, W. (2011). Quest for the Golden Rule: An effective social skills promotion and bullying prevention program. *Computers and Education, 56,* 166-175.

Smith, P.K., Mahdavi, J., Carvalho, M., Fisher, S., Russell, S., & Tippett, N. (2008). Cyberbullying: its nature and impact in secondary school pupils. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 49(4),* 376–385.

Thompson, F., & Smith, P.K. (2012). Anti-bullying strategies in schools: what is done and what works. *British Journal of Educational Psychology,* 154-173.

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

Essential

Devine, P.G., Forscher, P.S., Austin, A.J., & Cox, W.T.L. (2012). Long-term reduction in implicit race bias: A prejudice habit-breaking intervention. *Jounral of Experimental Social Psychology 48*, p.1267–1278.

Recommended

Brown, R. (1995). *Prejudice: Its Social Psychology*. Oxford: Blackwell Pub.

   Brown, R. (2000). *Group Processes.* Oxford: Blackwell Pub.

Johnson, J.D., Bushman, B.J., & Dovidio, J.F., (2008) Support for harmful treatment and reduction of empathy toward blacks: ''Remnants" of stereotype activation involving Hurricane Katrina and ''Lil' Kim". *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44,* p.1506–1513.

Johnson, J. D., Trawalter, S., & Dovidio, J. F. (2000). Converging interracial consequences of exposure to violent rap music on stereotypical attributions of blacks. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology,36*, 233-251.

Sinclair, L., & Kunda, Z. (1999). Reactions to a Black Professional: Motivated inhibition and activation of conflicting stereotypes. *JPSP, 77,* 885-904.

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 69, 797-811.

Stone, J., Perry, Z. W., & Darley, J. M. (1997). "White men can't jump": Evidence for the perceptual confirmation of racial stereotypes following a basketball game. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 77*, 1213-1227.

Social media and relationships

Essential

Alloway, T., Runac, R., Qureshi, M., & Kemp, G. (2014). Is Facebook linked to selfishness? Investigating the relationships among social media use, empathy, and narcissism. *Social Networking, 3(3)*, 150-158.

Recommended

Buffardi, L.E., & Campbell, W.K. (2008). Narcissism and social networking web sites. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 34,* 1303-1314.

Baron, N.S. (2008). *Always on: Language in an online and mobile world.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Kanai R, Bahrami, B., Roylance, R., & Rees, G. (2012). Online social network size is reflected in human brain structure. *Proc Biol Sci*, 279, 1327 - 1334.

Meshi, D., Morawetz, C., & Heekeren, H.R. (2013). Nucleus accumbens response to gains in reputation for the self relative to gains for others predicts social media use. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience, 7,* Article 439

Victim blaming and perceptions of rape victims

Essential

Abrams, D., Viki, G. T., Masser, B., & Bohner, G. (2003). Perceptions of stranger and acquitance rape: the role of benevolent and hostile sexism in victim blame and rape proclivity. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 84(1)*, 111-125.

Recommended

Frith, H. & Kitzinger, C. (1997). Talk about sexual miscommunication. *Women's Studies International Forum, 20*, 517-528.

Hayes, R. M., Lorenz, K., & Bell, K. A. (2013). Victim blaming others: Rape myth acceptance and the just world belief. *Feminist Criminology, 8(3),* 202-220

Horvath, M. A. H., Hegarty, P., Tyler, S. and Mansfield, S. (2012). "Lights on at the end of the party": Are lads' mags mainstreaming dangerous sexism? *British Journal of Psychology, 103,* 454–471

Kahlor, L., & Eastin, M. S. (2011). Television's role in the culture of violence toward women: A study of television viewing and the cultivation of rape myth acceptance in the United States. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media,55(2)*, 215-231.

Lea & Auburn (2001). The social construction of rape in the talk of a convicted rapist. *Feminism and Psychology, 11,* 11-13.

Ward, C. A. (1995). *Attitudes towards rape: Feminist and Social Psychological Perspectives*. Sage Publishing.

Persuasion and Health Campaigns

Essential

Martin, I. M. and Kamins, M. A. (2010). An application of terror management theory in the design of social and health-related anti-smoking appeals. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 9,* 172–190.

Recommended

Dickerson, P. (2012). *Social Psychology: Traditional and critical perspectives*. New York: Pearson Education. Pp. 186-223.

Douglas, K.M., Sutton, R.M. & Stathi, S. (2010). Why I am less persuaded than you: People's intuitive understanding of the psychology of persuasion, *Social Influence*, 5(2), 133-148.

Gartua, J. and Barrios, I. (2012). Changing Real-World Beliefs With Controversial Movies: Processes and Mechanisms of Narrative Persuasion. *Journal of Communication*, 62, 514–531.

Goldenberg, J. L., & Arndt, J. (2008). The implications of death for health: A terror management health model for behavioral health promotion. *Psychological Review, 115*, 1032–1053.

Critical perspectives on psychiatry

Essential

Rosenhan, L. (1973). On being sane in insane places. *Science, 179(4070)*, 250-258.

Recommended

Helman, C. (2007). *Culture, Health and Illness (5th Ed.)*. London: Hodder Arnold

Critical perspectives on addiction

Essential

Zinberg, N. E. (1984). *Drug, Set and Setting: The Basis for Controlled Intoxicant Use*.

Recommended

Beck, A.T. (1993). *Cognitive Therapy of Substance Abuse*. London; New York: Guilford Press.

Blame, J. D., and Julius, D. A. (1977). Introduction: Psychodynamics of Drug Dependence. In *NIDA Research Monograph 12: Psychodynamics of Drug Dependence*, edited by J. Blaine and A. J. Demetrios. Washington: Government Printing Office.

Khantzian, E. J. (1985). The self-medication hypothesis of addictive disorders: focus on heroin and cocaine dependence. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 142*, 1259 - 1264.

Orford, J. (2002). *Excessive Appetites: A Psychological View of Addictions.* (2nd Ed.). Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

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