

Political Psychology
Political Science 398-303

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Fall 2003
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Class Meets: Tuesday & Thursday, 3:00 p.m. – 4:20 p.m.

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

My Mission as a Teacher:

“To enable my students to learn joyfully, think clearly, read carefully, and write well.”

Abstract

Beliefs about how people think about politics have been at the core of theories of politics since the ancients. In this course, we will begin with a survey of important theories of political psychology from the past century. We will focus mainly on hypotheses about how people develop their political attitudes and on the methods used to test those hypotheses. Twentieth century researchers were constrained to observing behavior and relied on surveys, interviews, and simple experiments to make inferences about the political mind. The second half of the course will look at the future of political psychology. We will learn about cutting edge insights from neuroscience, including brain imaging, and ask how those insights should inform our understanding of political cognition, affect, and behavior. Students will also study recently collected data from the first functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) experiments in political psychology.

Books

- The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion (1991) (\$25.00)
John R. Zaller
- Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment (2000) (\$15.00)
George E. Marcus, W. Russell Neuman, Michael Mackuen
- Images of Mind (1994) (\$19.97)
Michael I. Posner, Marcus E. Raichle
- A General Theory of Love (2000) (\$13.00)
Thomas Lewis, Fari Amini, Richard Lannon

Also, a course reader will be available at Campus Copies.

Topics & Readings

Meeting 1 (Thursday, September 4th) – Introduction

Meeting 2 (Tuesday, September 9th) – Psychoanalytic Approaches

Vamik D. Volkan. “Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ancient Fuel of a Modern Inferno.” *Mind and Human Interaction* (1996) 7, p. 110-127 (17 pages)

Lewis et al. “A General Theory of Love.” Chapter 1 (15 pages)

Meeting 3 (Thursday, September 11th) – Rational Choice Theory

Anthony Downs (1957) *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Chapters 1 & 3 (31 pages)

Lewis et al. “A General Theory of Love.” Chapter 2 (18 pages)

Meeting 4 & 5 (Tuesday, September 16th & and Thursday, September 18th) – Philip Converse’s and His Legacy

Philip E. Converse. “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics.” (1964) (55 pages)

Lewis et al. “A General Theory of Love.” Chapter 3 (31 pages)

Meeting 6 (Tuesday, September 23rd) – Schema Theory

Robert Axelrod (1973) “Schema Theory: An Information Processing Model of Perception and Cognition” (19 pages)

“Where is the Schema? Going Beyond the “S” Word in Political Psychology.” James H. Kuklinski; Robert C. Luskin; John Bolland. (1991) (16 pages).

Meeting 7 (Thursday, September 25th) – Jennifer Hochschild

Jennifer Hochschild, “What’s Fair?” Chapters 1,2,9 (68 pages)

Meeting 8 (Tuesday, September 30th) – The Online Model

“An Impression-Driven Model of Candidate Evaluation.” Milton Lodge; Kathleen M.

McGraw; Patrick Stroh. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 83, No. 2. (Jun., 1989), pp. 399-419 (21 pages)

Lewis et al. “A General Theory of Love.” Chapter 4 (34 pages)

Meeting 9-10 (Thursday, October 2nd & Tuesday, October 7th)– Zaller’s Theory

John Zaller. “The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion.” Chapters 1-4 (75 pages)

Lewis et al. “A General Theory of Love.” Chapter 5 (21 pages)

Meeting 11 (Thursday, October 9th) – Zaller’s Theory (continued)

Chapters 5-6 (41 pages)

Meeting 12 (Thursday, October 16th) – Review

Meeting 13 (Tuesday, October 21st) – Midterm

Topics & Readings (continued)

Meeting 14 (Thursday, October 23rd) – An Introduction to Functional Brain Imaging
Images of Mind (First Half) (120 pages)

Meeting 15 (Tuesday, October 28th) – An Introduction to Functional Brain Imaging
Images of Mind (Second Half) (125 pages)

Meeting 16 (Thursday, October 30th) – Functional Neuroanatomy: X System & C System
Lieberman et al. “Is Thinking About Politics Like Learning to Ride a Bicycle?” (2003) (43
pages)

Meeting 17 (Tuesday, November 4th)
Affective Intelligence And Political Judgment (Chapters 1-5) (95 pages)

Meeting 18 (Thursday, November 6th)
Affective Intelligence And Political Judgment (Chapter 6-Appendix C) (80 pages)

Meeting 19 (Tuesday, November 11th) – Default Mental State
Raichle et al. “A Default Mode of Brain Function.” Proceedings of National Academy of
Science (2001) (7 pages)
Gusnard & Raichle. “Searching for a Baseline: Functional Imaging and the Resting Human
Brain.” Nature Reviews: Neuroscience (2001) (10 pages)
Greicius et al. “Functional Connectivity in the Resting Brain: A Network Analysis of the
Default Mode Hypothesis.” Proceedings of National Academy of Science (2003) (6
pages)

*** Additional Short Readings Will Be Assigned in the Following Weeks ***

Meeting 20 (Thursday, November 13th) – Social Cognition
Adolphs et al. “The Human Amygdala in Social Judgment.” Nature (1998) (5 pages)
Frith & Frith. “Interacting Minds – A Biological Basis.” Science (1999) (4 pages).

Meeting 21 (Tuesday, November 18th) – Race Perception
Phelps et al. “Performance on Indirect Measures of Race Evaluation Predicts Amygdala
Activation.” Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience (2000) (10 pages)
Golby et al. “Differential Responses in the Fusiform Region to Same-Race and Other-Race
Faces.” Nature Neuroscience (2001) (6 pages)

Meeting 22 (Thursday, November 21st) – To Be Announced

Meeting 23 (Tuesday, November 25th) – Poster Presentations

Meeting 24 (Tuesday, December 2nd) – **Papers Due**, Poster Presentations Continued

Meeting 25 (Thursday, December 4th) – “Positive” Political Psychology

Assignments & Grading

- 10% -- Class participation
- 30% -- Midterm Exam
- 30% -- Research Paper and Poster
- 20% -- Final Exam
- 10% -- Twelve Reading Quizzes (you can drop two)

- D Regurgitation -- Like an infant, you are good at spitting it back out.
- C Basic -- Applying the facts and skills "as is."
- B Intermediate -- Applying the facts and skills to new problems or situations.
- A Advanced -- Asking counter-factual questions, modifying or changing operative principles to illustrate command of the meta-principles in challenging contexts.

Late Policy

2% bonus if an assignment is turned in one or more days early. 5% penalty for each day an assignment is turned in late.

Plagiarism

Fidelity to ones' own ideas and the ideas of others dictates that proper citation be made for any work or idea of another. If I believe that you have violated this principle, I will change from being your advocate to being your prosecutor and I will seek the strongest penalty consistent with university policy.

An electronic version of all papers must be submitted via email within twenty-four hours of the original paper deadline. Papers will be screened electronically for plagiarism at random and with probable cause.

Outings

In addition to the traditional class meetings, we will have a few "field trips." Noted researcher Steven Pinker ("Language Instinct", "Blank Slate") will be speaking in Philly soon. I will try to arrange a tour of the fMRI lab on campus. We will organize a few "philosophy walks" and visit some important political sites in the city. Attendance is, of course optional, but strongly encouraged.