

**Historical & Theoretical Foundations of Contemporary Psychology B**  
Psychology 6030 3.0 (Winter, 2015)



- Seminar Times:** Wednesdays, 8:30am-11:30am
- Location:** BSB 204
- Course Director:** Alexandra Rutherford, Ph.D.  
Room 215 BSB  
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Phone: (416) 736-2100 x33230
- Office Hours:** By appointment
- Objective:** The primary objective of this seminar is to introduce you to a variety of theoretical/conceptual issues that influence the nature, methods, practices, and scientific/cultural status of psychology. An awareness of these issues should help you become more thoughtful in your own work, perhaps leading you to identify and evaluate some of the assumptions that underlie your approach to psychological research and practice.
- Readings:** The readings are a selection of journal articles and book chapters, almost all of which are available on-line through the York library system. It is mandatory that you do your readings in advance of the class meeting to prepare yourself for class discussions. Each week will have themes or topics that you should be prepared to actively discuss in an informed manner.
- Grading:** Your final grade in this course will be weighted as follows:
- |                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Co-leading one seminar: | 25% |
| Comments on articles:   | 25% |
| Final paper:            | 30% |
| Overall participation:  | 20% |

Details on each of these components are provided below the seminar overview.

## Seminar Overview

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>Seminar Topic:</b>	<b>Readings:</b>
1) Jan. 6 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction: What is psychology?	Green (2015) Smith (2005) Yanchar & Hill (2003)
2) Jan. 13 <sup>th</sup>	Methodologies	Danziger (1985) Gigerenzer (1992) Unger (1993)
3) Jan. 20 <sup>th</sup>	Reflexivity	Brinkmann (2005) Morawski (2015) Smith (2005)
4) Jan. 27 <sup>th</sup>	Social constructionism and postmodernism	Danziger (1985) Gergen (2001) Martin & Sugarman (2000) Miller (2000)
5) Feb. 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Critical psychology	Parker (1999) Teo (2015)
6) Feb. 10 <sup>th</sup>	Feminism	Bohan (1993) Riger (1992) Rutherford, Sheese & Ruck (2015)
7) Feb. 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>READING WEEK</b>	
8) Feb. 24 <sup>th</sup>	Gendering psychology	Morawski (1985) Nicholson (2011) Rutherford (2015)
9) March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Culture	Arnett (2008) Gergen et al. (1996) Hermans & Kempen (1998) Moghaddam (1987)
10) March 9 <sup>th</sup>	Indigenization	Danziger (2006) Pickren (2009) Sinha (1998)
11) March 16 <sup>th</sup>	Politics and power	Parker (2015) Prilleltensky (2008) Yoder & Kahn (1992)
12) March 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Values and expertise	Nicholson (1998) Pettit (2011) Rose (1992)
13) March 30 <sup>th</sup>	The neuro-turn and the future of psychology?	Martin (2010) Rose & Abi-Rached (2014) Schultz (2016) Vidal (2009)

## **Full references to readings:**

### **Week 1: What is psychology?**

Green, C. D. (2015). Why psychology isn't unified and probably never will be. *Review of General Psychology, 19*, 207-214.

Smith, R. (2005). The history of psychological categories. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences, 36*, 55-94.

Yanchar, S., & Hill, J. (2003). What is psychology about? Toward an explicit ontology. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 43*(1), 11-32.

### **Week 2: Methodologies**

Danziger, K. (1985). The methodological imperative in psychology. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 15*, 1-13.

Gigerenzer, G. (1992). Discovery in cognitive psychology: New tools inspire new theories. *Science in Context, 5*, 329-350.

Unger, R. K. (1983). Through the looking glass: No wonderland yet (The reciprocal relationship between methodology and models of reality). *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 8*, 9-32.

### **Week 3: Reflexivity**

Brinkmann, S. (2005). Human kinds and looping effects in psychology: Foucauldian and hermeneutic perspectives. *Theory & Psychology, 15*(6), 769-791.

Morawski, J. (2015). Epistemological dizziness in the psychology laboratory: Lively subjects, anxious experimenters, and experimental relations, 1950-1970. *Isis, 106*, 567-597.

Smith, R. (2005). Does reflexivity separate the human sciences from the natural sciences? *History of the Human Sciences, 18*(4), 1-25.

### **Week 4: Social constructionism and postmodernism**

Danziger, K. (1985). Origins of the psychological experiment as a social institution. *American Psychologist, 1985, 40*, 133-140.

Gergen, K. J. (2001). Psychological science in a postmodern context. *American Psychologist, 56*(10), 808-813.

Martin, J. & Sugarman, J. (2000). Between the modern and the postmodern: The possibility of self and progressive understanding in psychology. *American Psychologist, 55*, 397-406.

Miller, L. (2000). The poverty of truth-seeking: Postmodernism, discourse analysis, and critical feminism. *Theory and Psychology, 10*, 313-352.

### **Week 5: Critical psychology**

Parker, I. (1999). Critical psychology: Critical links. *Annual Review of Critical Psychology, 1*, 3-18.

Teo, T. (2015). Critical psychology: A geography of intellectual engagement and resistance. *American Psychologist, 70*, 243-254.

### **Week 6: Feminism**

Bohan, J. S. (1993). Regarding gender: Essentialism, constructionism, and feminist psychology. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 17*, 5-21.

Riger, S. (1992). Epistemological debates, feminist voices: Science, social values, and the study of women. *American Psychologist, 47*, 730-740.

Rutherford, A., Sheese, K. & Ruck, N. (2015). Feminism and theoretical psychology. In J. Martin, K. Slaney, & J. Sugarman (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of theoretical and philosophical psychology* (pp. 374-391). New York: Wiley-Blackwell. (pre-pub copy will be distributed)

### **Week 7: READING WEEK**

### **Week 8: Gendering psychology**

Morawski, J. G. (1985). The measurement of masculinity and femininity: Engendering categorical realities. *Journal of Personality, 53*, 196-223.

Nicholson, I. A. M. (2011). "Shocking" masculinity: Stanley Milgram, "Obedience to Authority," and the "Crisis of Manhood" in Cold War America. *Isis, 102*, 238-268.

Rutherford, A. (2015). Maintaining masculinity in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century American psychology: Edwin Boring, scientific eminence, and the "woman problem." In E. Milam & R. Nye (Eds.) *Osiris: Scientific Masculinities, 30*, 250-271.

### **Week 9: Culture**

Arnett, J. (2008). The neglected 95%: Why American psychology needs to become less American. *American Psychologist, 63*, 602-614.

Hermans, H.J.M., & Kempen, H.J.G. (1998). Moving cultures: The perilous problems of cultural dichotomies in a globalizing society. *American Psychologist, 53*, 1111-1120.

Gergen, K., Gulerce, A., Lock, A. & Misra, G. (1996). Psychological science in cultural context. *American Psychologist, 51*(5), 496-503.

Moghaddam, F. (1987). Psychology in the three worlds. *American Psychologist, 42*, 912-920.

### **Week 10: Indigenization**

Danziger, K. (2006). Universalism and indigenization in the history of modern psychology. In A.C. Brock (Ed.), *Internationalizing the history of psychology*. New York University Press, pp. 208-225.

Pickren, W. E. (2009). Indigenization and the history of psychology. *Psychological Studies*, 54, 87–95.

Sinha, D. (1998). Changing perspectives in social psychology in India: A journey towards indigenization. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 1, 17-31.

### **Week 11: Politics, power**

Parker, I. (2015). Politics and “applied psychology”: Theoretical concepts that question the disciplinary community. *Theory and Psychology*, 25, 719-734.

Prilleltensky, I. (2008). The role of power in wellness, oppression, and liberation: A promise of psychopolitical validity. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 36, 116-136.

Yoder, J. D. & Kahn, A. S. (1992). Toward a feminist understanding of women and power. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 16, 381-388.

### **Week 12: Values and Expertise**

Nicholson, I. A. M. (1998). “The approved bureaucratic torpor”: Goodwin Watson, critical psychology, and the dilemmas of expertise, 1930-1945. *Journal of Social Issues*, 54, 29-52.

Pettit, M. (2011). The SPSSI Task Force on Sexual Orientation, the nature of sex, and the contours of activist science. *Journal of Social Issues*, 67(1), 90-103.

Rose, N. (1992). Engineering the human soul: Analyzing psychological expertise. *Science in Context*, 5, 351-369.

### **Week 13: The neuro-turn and the future of psychology**

Martin, E. (2010). Self-making and the brain. *Subjectivity*, 3, 366-381.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2013/mar/03/brain-not-simple-folk-neuroscience>

Rose, N. & Abi-Rached, J. (2014). Governing through the brain: Neuropolitics, neuroscience and subjectivity. *Cambridge Anthropology*, 2013, 32 (1), 3-23.

Schultz, W. (2016). Neuroessentialism: Theoretical and clinical considerations. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*.

<http://jhp.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/11/25/0022167815617296.abstract>

Vidal, F. (2009). Brainhood: The anthropological figure of modernity. *History of the Human Sciences*, 22, 5-36.

# Assignments

## 1) Co-leading one seminar: 25%

After our first meeting there are 11 seminars with assigned topics and readings. I will ask two people to co-lead the seminar for each of these 11 slots, starting on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Details to follow in class.

## 2) Comments on articles: 25%

You are required to submit 5 comments on 5 assigned articles of your choice in advance of the class meeting in which they are assigned. Comments should consist of 400-500 words in which you identify the most significant issues (2-3) in the text and respond to them. Or, alternatively, respond to the main argument in the article. Your comments should be evaluative, provide arguments, express a viewpoint, and respond to the essential issues presented. Do not simply summarize the material. What provoked you about the article? Why? Submit the comments to me by email, before midnight, on the Monday *before* the class in which they will be discussed.

## 3) Paper: 30% (2500-3000 words, not including references)

Identify a document (likely a journal article) that is considered canonical in your field because it has significantly influenced, revised, or changed the **theoretical** basis of an area of research. Provide a critical analysis of this work. Your critical analysis should include: 1) a summary of the work, including the nature of its impact on and contribution to the field; 2) the historical, intellectual, and possibly cultural context in which the work was produced (situate it); 3) the application of one or more of the concepts we have covered in the course to the work itself, i.e., what would a feminist critique of this work look like, a postmodern critique, a gender analysis, a cultural analysis? How would a critical psychologist read this work? The objective of the assignment is not to “criticize” the article and its importance, but rather to develop your ability to identify and analyze underlying assumptions, understand the influence of context, “see” from multiple perspectives, and imagine alternatives.

## 4) Participation: Worth 20%

You are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings. If you participate in every class (e.g., pose a question, contribute to the discussion), you will get full marks. If you participate in only about half the classes, you will get half marks, etc. If you miss more than one seminar without a valid excuse, you forfeit this mark altogether.