

## Introduction to Psychology, spring 2021

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The goal of this course is to experience and understand one's internal world as well as the external world more creatively. We will study the development and functioning of a human mind and walk through the basic social psychology theories.

### **1. The conscious and unconscious mind**

- a. The truth and the capacity to be honest
- b. Reaching the unconsciousness – hypnosis, surrealism, fairytales, dreams, imagination, free association
- c. Active listening

*Reading:*

- *Movies: A dangerous method, Life of Pi*
- *Aaron H. Esman: Psychoanalysis and surrealism: Andre Breton and Sigmund Freud*
- *C. Jung: The Concept of the Collective Unconscious*

### **2. Development of the mind**

- a. Separation – individuation process
- b. Attachment style
- c. Mental Health

*Reading:*

- *Movie: Groundhog Day*
- *M. Mahler: The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant*
- *O. Kernberg: Love relations in heterosexual couples*
- *Bowlby: Attachment style (tbd)*

### **3. Social psychology introduction**

- a. Social cognition
- b. Self-justification
- c. Conformity
- d. Social influence
- e. Groups

*Reading:*

- *The Social Animal (2018, 12th edition). Elliot Aronson. Worth Publishers.*
- *Social Psychology (5th Edition). Authors: Gilovich, Keltner, Chen & Nisbett*

## Requirements

1. Classroom work – mostly discussion, self-experience
2. Final paper – Essay on a chosen politician from the psychology perspective, using the concepts we have learnt (brief biography + use at least 3 different theoretical points to describe the person, his/her actions, behavior, and relationships). Use a combination of their personal history and the environment. Instead of pathologizing them, focus on understanding of their thinking process and WHY they behave the way they do.

The paper should be between 5 to 10 pages.

You will have 20 minutes for the presentation + 10 min discussion.

3. Group presentation – choose one of the social psychology topics and explain it, using latest findings.

Presentation for 45 min + 45 min discussion

- a. Social Cognition – how people think about each other
  - Biases, Prejudices and Stereotypes
  - Social Motives
  - Attribution theory
  - Social judgement theory
- b. Self-justification – how people protect their self-esteem
  - Cognitive dissonance theory
  - Foot-in-the-door and door-in-the-face technique
  - External versus internal justification
- c. Conformity – how people change their behavior or opinion to be a part of a group
  - Learning theories
  - Social norms theories
  - By-stander effect
  - Pluralistic ignorance
  - Milgram experiment
- d. Social Influence - a way in which people affect or change the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of others
  - Theories of Persuasion
  - Propaganda
  - Communication
  - Violence and the mass media

## You might find this interesting

- S. Freud - The Psychopathology of Everyday Life
- S. Freud - The Interpretation of Dreams
- Netflix: A document about Freud
- Marie-Louise von Franz – The interpretation of Fairy Tales
- The history of hypnosis (in slovak)

<https://patarak.blog.sme.sk/c/337496/historia-hypnozy-i-zivocisne-magnetizovanie-a-sila-sugescie.html>

<https://patarak.blog.sme.sk/c/339798/historia-hypnozy-ii-hysteria-anna-o-a-zrod-psychotherapie.html>

- Website yourpersonality.net - nicely described attachment style with the test
- I. Yalom books, especially The Schopenhauer Cure; The Spinoza Problem, When Nietzsche Wept
- Podcasts on ipaoffthecouch.org
- The Sigmund Freud Museum London podcast - thefreudmuseum.podbean.com