

# The Social Psychology Of Groups

SYP 3000-01

## Professor Info

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## Class Info

Place: 23 Bellamy  
Time: T/R 12:330-1:45  
Office Hrs: Tue 9:30-11:30  
& Thurs 9:30-11:30

## OVERVIEW

Social psychology is the subfield in sociology that investigates the paradox that people create society as they are created by it. How does your social environment continually influence the way you think and feel about yourself, others, the larger social world, and your interactional choices? On the other hand, how do your interpretations, emotions, identities, and actions influence your social relationships and larger social environment? *Sociological* social psychology views the self and society as two sides of the same coin.

In this class we will focus on a version of social psychology called symbolic interactionism. This perspective helped develop a uniquely American sociology and assumes that we all have agency, but our actions are constrained by social conditions. Symbolic interactionism also assumes that our collective actions can challenge or reproduce larger social inequalities.

I'm excited to have the opportunity to teach this class because the material has helped me make sense of my self, everyday life, and connections to others in a compelling and coherent way. I hope that you all will similarly find ways to make symbolic interactionism relevant to your own lives and your social worlds. I have designed the course to facilitate this possibility not only through my choice of reading materials, but through a number of participation activities and analyses of films that we will watch in class. I encourage each of you to talk with me not only to clarify course material and assignments, but about ideas that the course may evoke and how the class is going for you more generally.

## OBJECTIVES

By the conclusion of the course, students who are successful will be able to:

1. Discuss the central assumptions and insights of symbolic interactionism
2. Apply concepts and theories in social psychology to their everyday lives.
3. Understand how identities, emotions, and interactional processes are socially created.
4. Evaluate the benefits and limitations of qualitative research in social psychology.

## REQUIRED READINGS

- *Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality*, Second Edition, by Kent Sandstrom, Daniel Martin, and Gary Alan Fine.
- Research articles that can be accessed online in the "course library" area of the course website.

## GRADING

Grades will be posted on Blackboard. Final grades will not be rounded up.	Participation	10%	A	92-100	C	72-77
	Exam 1	27%	A-	90-91	C-	70-71
	Exam 2	30%	B+	88-89	D+	68-69
	Exam 3	33%	B	82-87	D	62-67
	Total	100%	B-	80-81	D-	60-61
			C+	78-79	F	0-59

## EXAMS (90%)

**Format:** Exams consist of 35 multiple choice questions. Exams will cover reading material (including extended examples of concepts in the readings), mini-lectures, group activities, and film clips. The questions will be of variable difficulty. Some questions will evaluate whether you are familiar with the main ideas of the course material, some will evaluate your understanding of specific concepts, theories, research methods, findings, and implications, and others will test your ability to apply the readings' main concepts and theories to real or fictional social situations (including the films we watch). There will be 4-8 questions on each day's readings, activities, and film clips.

## PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES (10%)

**Groups:** On September 2nd, I will assign you to groups of about 5 students. You will be a member of this group for the entire semester. Because group members will engage in participation activities for many classes, you are required to sit near your group members at the start of each class meeting.

**Participation Activities:** Participation activities include various group assignments, mostly answering short-answer or multiple-choice questions as well as individual quizzes. All activities will be based on that day's required reading assignment, will be worth 10 points, and will be timed. Groups cannot use their notes or books for these participation activities and cannot talk with members of other groups (you will receive a zero if you violate the rules). We have about 13 graded participation activities. I will drop your three lowest participation activity scores, which may include any zeros that you receive as a result of excused or unexcused absences.

**Missing or Being Late for Activities:** If you miss a regular participation activity, you cannot make it up unless you have *four* or more officially documented excuses for days that we did participation activities. If you have a documented excused absence for a day that we did a participation activity, you must talk to me about it and give me a copy of the documentation *within one week* of returning to class. If you are late and we have started an activity or you leave early, you can only receive at most ½ credit.

## EXTRA CREDIT (+ 2% maximum)

**Group Contests:** On certain days members of two groups will engage in a competitive game that tests their understanding of the day's reading material. Present members of the *winning* group will have an extra 1% added to their final grade. Because each group will engage in at least two contests throughout the semester, participating members of undefeated teams can thus have 2% added to their final grade.

**Missed Contests:** Because the contests involve groups competing for extra credit, members of winning groups who are absent on the day of a contest—even if they have official documentation—will not be given an opportunity to make it up.

## CLASSROOM CULTURE

**Organization of Class Time:** During class sessions, I will give lectures on the readings, but my goal is to engage students in discussions about the readings, apply concepts to real life or fictional situations, and use the concepts creatively in group activities. Because my goal is to engage folks in discussions, you will be required to take notes on issues as we discuss them and be responsible for asking clarifying questions when necessary.

**Classroom Courtesy:** Although most students understand courtesy in the classroom, let me spell out some basic rules. Students must *not be late or not leave early*. Make sure you are sitting in your seat at 12:30. If this is a problem, drop this class ASAP. They must *turn off* cell phones, mp3 players, laptops, and other electronic gizmos before class begins. Students must not read newspapers or other material during class, talk or whisper to other students when others are talking, or fall asleep in class. They should also not attack other students for their religious or political beliefs, personal appearance, race/ethnicity, gender, or sexuality. In addition, students should not come up to the front of the room to ask me questions during class time. If you must have a cell phone to receive emergency calls from children or family members, kept it on vibrate. **Consistently violating the rules will affect your participation grade.**

## POLICIES

**Academic Honesty:** Students are expected to abide by the Academic Honor Policy of the Florida State University, including the statement on Values and Moral Standards published in The Florida State University General Bulletin. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or an "F" for the course. Any student who plagiarizes, cheats on exams, or otherwise behaves in a dishonest way may be reported to the university administration for further disciplinary action as specified in the Academic Honor Policy (<http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/forms/honorpolicy.pdf>)

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (a) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (b) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact: Student Disability Resource Center, 108 Student Services Bldg., 644-9566 (voice), 644-8504 (TDD). E-mail: [SDRC@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:SDRC@admin.fsu.edu) Website: <http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

**Religious Holidays:** Students will be allowed to miss class due to observance of religious holidays but they are still responsible for all materials assigned outside and covered in class on the day(s) missed. You must let me know *in advance* of missing a class for religious holiday observance reasons.

**Excused Absences:** The following and only the following absences are eligible to be excused: Religious holidays, as specified in FSU policy; absences due to representing FSU at official functions, verified emergencies and/or medical illness, or attending the funeral of a family member or friend. Medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other treatments. For an absence to be excused, you must turn in a copy of verifiable documentation (a funeral pamphlet, a doctor's note, a subpoena, etc.) within one week of returning to class. Missing class due to work obligations, a dental checkup, to meet a professor, or make up an exam does not count as an excused absence.

**Incomplete grades.** Missing exams, participation activities, or failing to turn in reflection essays are insufficient reasons for a grade of "Incomplete." An Incomplete grade will not be given except under extenuating circumstances. Note that the College of Social Science guidelines require that students seeking an "I" must be passing the course.

### Schedule

Aug 26	Introduction
Aug 28	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality</i></b> # 1 The Meaning of Symbolic Interactionism (1-14; 19-20 **Not the whole chapter**)
Sept 2	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality (Film clips: Billy Eliot)</i></b> # 3 Socialization: The Creation of Meaning and Identity (57-59; 61¾-67 **Not the whole chapter**)
Sept 4	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality (Film clips: Billy Eliot)</i></b> # 3 Socialization: The Creation of Meaning and Identity (67¾-80¼ [including “epiphanies”])
Sept 9	<i>no required reading</i>
Sept 11	<b>Online Article</b> Cahill, Spencer E. “Children and Civility.” <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 50:312-321.
Sept 16	<b>Online Article</b> Debra Van Ausdale and Joe Feagin. “Using Racial and Ethnic Concepts: The Critical Case of Very Young Children.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> 61:779-793.
Sept 18	<b>Online Article</b> Milkie, Melissa A. Social Comparisons, Reflected Appraisals, and Mass Media: The Impact of Pervasive Beauty Images on Black and White Girls' Self-Concepts. <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> , 62:190-210.
Sept 23	<b>Online Article</b> Adler, Patricia and Peter Adler. “Preadolescent Clique Stratification and the Hierarchy of Identity.” <i>Sociological Inquiry</i> , 66: 111-142. (Must access through “course library” section of website)
Sept 25	<b>EXAM 1</b>
Sept 30	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality (BBC TV: The Office)</i></b> # 5 Role Taking, Role Making, and the Coordination of Action (125-146)
Oct 2	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality (BBC TV: The Office)</i></b> # 5 Role Taking, Role Making, and the Coordination of Action (125-146)
Oct 7	<b>Online Article</b> Smith, Allen and Sherryl Kleinman. “Managing Emotions in Medical School: Students’ Contacts with the Living and the Dead.” <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> , 52:56-69.
Oct 8	<b>Online Article</b> Cahill, Spencer and Robin Eggleston. “Managing Emotions in Public.” <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 57:300-312.
Oct 14	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality</i></b> # 4 The Nature and Significance of the Self (91-110 ** Not the whole chapter**)
Oct 16	<b>Online Article</b> Silva, Eric O. “Public Accounts: Defending Contested Practices.” <i>Symbolic Interaction</i> , 30:245-261.
Oct 21	<b>Online Article</b> Adler, Patricia A. & Peter Adler. “The Gloried Self.” <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> 52:299-310.
Oct 23	<i>no required reading</i>
Oct 28	<b>Online Article</b> Schrock, Douglas, and Irene Padavic. "Negotiating Hegemonic Masculinity in a Batterer Intervention Program." <i>Gender &amp; Society</i> , 21:625-649.
Oct 30	<b>EXAM 2</b>
Nov 4	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality (Film clips: This is What Democracy Looks Like)</i></b> # 7 Collective Behavior and Social Movements (183-193 **start at beginning, end at “Social Movements”)
Nov 6	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality (Film clips: This is What Democracy Looks Like)</i></b> # 7 Collective Behavior and Social Movements (193¾ -202 **start at “Social Movements”)
Nov 11	<b>No Class: Veteran’s Day.</b>
Nov 18	<b>Online Article</b> Schrock, Douglas, Daphne Holden, Lori Reid. “Creating Emotional Resonance.” <i>Social Problems</i> , 51: 61-81
Nov 20	<b>Online Article</b> Schwalbe, Michael, Sandra Godwin, Daphne Holden, Douglas Schrock, Shealy Thompson, and Michele Wolkomir. “Generic Processes in the Reproduction of Inequality: An Interactionist Analysis.” <i>Social Forces</i> 79:419-452.
Nov 25	<i>no required reading</i>
Nov 27	<b>No Class: Thanksgiving Day</b> <b>Online article</b> Berkowitz, Alexandra, and Irene Padavic. “Getting a Man or Getting Ahead: A Comparison of White and Black Sororities. <i>Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</i> , 27: 530-557.
Dec 2	<b>Online Article</b> Feagin, Joe R. “The Continuing Significance of Race: Antiblack Discrimination in Public Places.” <i>American Sociological Review</i> , 56:101-116.
Dec 4	<b>Online Article</b> Holden, Daphne, and Douglas Schrock. “Get Therapy and Work on It.” <i>Symbolic Interaction</i> , 30: 175-198.
	<b><i>Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality</i></b> # 8 The Value and Future of Symbolic Interactionism (209-210¼; 217-225)
Dec 11	EXAM 3 Thursday 3:00 PM

