

Fall 2015

Tu, Th 5:35-6:55

122 Davison Hall

Sociological Approaches to Social Psychology

01-920-319-01

Professor Eviatar Zerubavel

E-mail: zerubave@rci.rutgers.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 2:45-3:45
131 Davison Hall

Welcome to our class on “Sociological Approaches to Social Psychology”! This semester we’ll explore sociology’s contributions to our understanding of the way we think. By focusing on families, organizations, professions, ethnic groups, religious groups, and other “thought communities” rather than on individuals, this course sheds light on the impersonal, conventional, and normative aspects of the way we perceive, remember, reckon time, make distinctions, notice and ignore things, assign meaning, as well as construct our identity.

There are four required books for this course: *Social Mindscales* by Eviatar Zerubavel (ISBN 0-674-81390-1), *The Social Construction of Reality* by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (ISBN 0-385-05898-5), *The Fine Line* by Eviatar Zerubavel (ISBN 0-226-98159-2), and *Peacocks, Chameleons, Centaurs* by Wayne Brekhus (ISBN 0-226-07292-4). They have all been ordered through the University’s bookstores (the Douglass one as well as the Barnes & Noble by the train station). All the other required course readings are posted on the course website on sakai.rutgers.edu. Students are expected to read all the required material **prior** to the class for which it is assigned.

The course’s learning goals are to help you gain (a) an understanding of the way our social environment impacts the way we think, which we often wrongly assume to be strictly psychologically and/or biologically based; (b) an ability to use sociological concepts to think about a wide variety of topics (from the social construction of similarity and difference to the social foundations of both rigidity and curiosity); (c) an improved understanding of major intellectual debates over relativism, ethnocentricity, essentialism, and constructionism; and (d) an ability to communicate complex ideas effectively to a general audience. By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to articulate sociological theories, review disciplinary literature, synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights, produce a well-written paper, and present their work orally. In addition, they will also be able to demonstrate multicultural sensitivity as well as global awareness.

The course assignments include (a) a **midterm exam** on October 8, (b) a **5-page term paper** (due on November 19), and (c) a **final exam** (on December 18). Each of these assignments will count for one third of your final course grade, and no extra credit will be permitted. Late assignments will be penalized, so make sure that your work is submitted on time. No late papers or make-up exams will be permitted without a valid written excuse such as documentation from your doctor or dean.

Class attendance (including arriving on time and staying until the end of the class period) is required. **Students are expected to attend all classes.** If you expect to miss a class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. **Poor class attendance will affect the grade.**

It is acceptable to use other people's ideas in your written work as long as you give credit to the original author. You act professionally and ethically when you do this, and it is considered dishonest to pass others' ideas or words as your own. Such behavior constitutes plagiarism and can result in failure in the class and potentially dismissal from Rutgers. Students are required to follow current Rutgers' Academic Integrity Policy as indicated in the website http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf. For further information on how to avoid plagiarism in your work, see http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/lib_instruct/instruct_document.shtml. To give credit to the original author of ideas you present and protect yourself from charges of dishonesty, always cite in your text the sources you used and list all of them in a bibliography at the end of your written assignment.

The Department of Sociology encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe, supportive, and productive classroom environment. To facilitate such an environment, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and common courtesy. Behavior that distracts students and faculty during class is therefore not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, and leaving early without informing your instructor beforehand. If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period.

The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, disability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives and seek to create an atmosphere of respect and mutual dialogue. We have zero tolerance for violations of these principles.

The best way to reach me is by email. **Please write "Soc 319" in the subject line** so I can recognize your email quickly. Please remember to also sign your name in the email.

1. Introduction

September 1

General Introduction

2. Sociology and Cognition

September 3

Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Free Press, 1995 [1912]), pp. 12-18, 433-40.

Eviatar Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes: An Invitation to Cognitive Sociology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 1-6.

September 10

Emile Durkheim, "The Dualism of Human Nature and Its Social Conditions," in Robert N. Bellah (ed.), *Emile Durkheim: On Morality and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973 [1914]), pp. 151-53, 161-62.

Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor, 1967 [1966]), pp. 19-28, 34-46, 59-82, 89-92.

Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 6-13, 100-110.

September 15

Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, pp. 129-63.

Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 13-22.

3. Classification

September 17

Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960 [1909]), pp. 15-25, 74-83, 88-104.

Zerubavel, *The Fine Line: Making Distinctions in Everyday Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993 [1991]), pp. 1-10, 13-32.

September 22

Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 1-6, 35-40, 121-28.

Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 33-60.

September 24

Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 81-108, 112-14.

September 29

Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 61-80.

October 1

Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 115-22.

4. Memory

October 6

Michael Frisch, "American History and the Structures of Collective Memory: A Modest Exercise in Empirical Iconography," *Journal of American History* 75 (1989): 1133-43.
Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 81-99.

October 8

Midterm Exam

5. Perception

October 13

Murray S. Davis, *Smut: Erotic Reality / Obscene Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), pp. 230-34, 238-46.
Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 4-6, 8-11, 81-82, 87-90, 149-50.
Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 23-34.

6. Framing

October 15

Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (New York: Harper Colophon, 1974), pp. 40-48, 58-74, 251-69.
Joan P. Emerson, "Behavior in Private Places: Sustaining Definitions of Reality in Gynecological Examinations," in Hans-Peter Dreitzel (ed.), *Recent Sociology No.2: Patterns of Communicative Behavior* (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 74-93.
Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 10-12.

7. Attention

October 20

Erving Goffman, *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings* (New York: Free Press, 1963), pp. 88-104.
Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, pp. 202-15.
Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, p. 13.
Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 35-44.

October 22

Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City: Doubleday Anchor, 1959), pp. 229-37.
Goffman, *Behavior in Public Places*, pp. 43-59, 83-88.
Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Elephant in the Room: Silence and Denial in Everyday Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 29-32, 35-38, 47-56, 62-68.

October 27

Ludwik Fleck, *Genesis and Development of A Scientific Fact* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981 [1935]), pp. 38-51, 89-105, 110-11.
Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 44-52.
Takahiko Masuda and Richard E. Nisbett. "Attending Holistically versus Analytically: Comparing the Context Sensitivity of Japanese and Americans," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 81 (2001): 922-34.

October 29

Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, pp. 311-15.
Zerubavel, *The Fine Line*, pp. 108-12.

8. Symbols and Meaning

November 3

Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959 [1915]), pp. 15-17, 65-69.

Eviatar Zerubavel, "The Language of Time: Toward A Semiotics of Temporality," *Sociological Quarterly* 28 (1987): 343-47, 353-54.
Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 68-72, 76-80.

November 5

Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, pp. 114-24.
Raymond Firth, "Hair as Private Asset and Public Symbol," in *Symbols: Public and Private* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp. 271-74.
Zerubavel, *Social Mindscapes*, pp. 72-76.

9. Markedness and Unmarkedness

November 10

Eviatar Zerubavel, *The Seven-Day Circle: The History and Meaning of the Week* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989 [1985]), pp. 107-08, 113-20, 133-38.
Wayne H. Brekhus, "Social Marking and the Mental Coloring of Identity: Sexual Identity Construction and Maintenance in the United States," *Sociological Forum* 11 (1996): 497-520.

November 12

Wayne H. Brekhus, "A Sociology of the Unmarked: Redirecting Our Focus," *Sociological Theory* 16 (1998): 34-49.

November 17

Horace Miner, "Body Ritual among the Nacirema," *American Anthropologist* 58 (1956): 503-07.
Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967), pp. 36-49, 53-55.

10. Social Identity

November 19

Term Paper Due

Jamie Mullaney, "Making It 'Count': Mental Weighing and Identity Attribution," *Symbolic Interaction* 22 (1999): 269-82.
Wayne H. Brekhus, *Peacocks, Chameleons, Centaurs: Gay Suburbia and the Grammar of Social Identity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp. 12-16, 24-31, 35-58.

November 24

Brekhus, *Peacocks, Chameleons, Centaurs*, pp. 74-89, 93-98, 137-64, 179-214.

December 1

Eviatar Zerubavel, *Ancestors and Relatives: Genealogy, Identity, and Community* (Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 53-75.

11. Conclusion

December 3

Student Presentations

December 8

Student Presentations

December 10

Conclusion