

**Seminar in Political Psychology**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**New York University**  
(PSYCH-GA.3404.3353–Fall Semester)

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**Classes will meet on Tuesdays from 10:00 -11:50 AM in Meyer Room 307.**

**PRE-REQUISITES**

To participate in this class, you should be enrolled in a master's or doctoral program in psychology or political science or have received permission from the instructors. The goal of this course is to develop creative and critical skills in order to conduct and evaluate high quality research on political psychology.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Required readings should be completed prior to each class meeting. Useful discussions follow only when everyone has completed all the readings thoroughly and thoughtfully. I recommend that you read the articles in the order in which they are listed in this syllabus, but that, of course, is your decision.

Students will be responsible for writing 5 critical reaction papers (1 page, single-spaced) throughout the semester. These papers will be read aloud (time permitting), and they will serve as the basis for class discussion. Students will choose at the beginning of the term which of the 5 sessions and topics they will address in their critical reaction papers. Please bring enough hard copies of your critical reaction paper for everyone in the class (or we will arrange to circulate them electronically).

In addition, a final paper (approximately 10-15 pages, double-spaced, plus references) inspired (but not constrained) by the class and its readings will be due on Wednesday, December 19 at 11:59 PM. Please submit your final papers by email.

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Jost, J.T., & Sidanius, J. (Eds.) (2004). *Political Psychology: Key Readings*.\* New York: Psychology Press.

[Key Readings in Social Psychology series]. ISBN 1-84169-069-4

\*This book (hereafter referred to as J & S) can be ordered electronically from the publisher or from amazon.com. [Access to additional required readings listed below will be provided, including most on NYU Classes via [home.nyu.edu](http://home.nyu.edu)].

**Session 1: Introduction to the Course**

*(Tuesday, September 4)*

This will be a short, largely organizational meeting. No readings are required prior to today's class session, but it is recommended that students read the article by Jordan & Zanna entitled "How to Read a Journal Article in Social Psychology" (Appendix, J & S).

## **Session 2: History and Discipline of Political Psychology**

(Tuesday, September 11)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Jost, J.T., & Sidanius, J. (2004). Political psychology: An introduction. In J.T. Jost, & J. Sidanius (Eds.), *Political psychology: Key readings* (pp. 1-17). New York: Psychology Press/Taylor & Francis.
- (2) McGuire, W.J. (1993/2004). The poly-psy relationship: Three phases of a long affair. [Reading 1 in J & S]
- (3) Mills, C.W. (1959/1968). On politics. In C.W. Mills (Ed.), *The sociological imagination* (pp. 177-194). London: Oxford.
- (4) Tetlock, P.E. (1994). Political psychology or politicized psychology: Is the road to scientific hell paved with good moral intentions? *Political Psychology*, 15, 509-529.
- (5) Sears, D.O. (1994). Ideological bias in political psychology: The view from scientific hell. *Political Psychology*, 15, 547-556.

## **Session 3: Authoritarianism and Mass Politics**

(Tuesday, September 18)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Brown, R. (1965/2004). The authoritarian personality and the organization of attitudes. [Reading 2 in J & S]
- (2) Altemeyer, B. (1998/2004). The other "authoritarian personality." [Reading 4 in J & S]
- (3) Taub, A. (2016). The rise of American authoritarianism. *Vox*. Archived here: <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/1/11127424/trump-authoritarianism>
- (4) Womick, J., Rothmund, T., Azevedo, F., King, L.A., & Jost, J.T. (2018). Group-based dominance and authoritarian aggression predict support for Donald Trump in the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 1-10.
- (5) Jost, J.T., & Hunyady, O. (2018). The liberal conundrum: Mass psychology in the age of Trump. *Democracy: A Journal of Ideas*, Spring issue (No. 48). <https://democracyjournal.org/magazine/48/mass-psychology-in-the-age-of-trump/>

## **Session 4: Personality and Political Leadership**

(Tuesday, September 25)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Greenstein, F. (1992/2004). Can personality and politics be studied systematically? [Reading 5 in J & S]
- (2) Carney, D.R., Jost, J.T., Gosling, S.D., & Potter, J. (2008). The secret lives of liberals and conservatives: Personality profiles, interaction styles, and the things they leave behind. *Political Psychology*, 29, 807-840.
- (3) Gerber, A.S., Huber, G.A., Doherty, D., Dowling, C.M., & Ha, S.E. (2010). Personality and political attitudes:

Relationships across issue domains and political contexts. *American Political Science Review*, 104, 111-133.

- (4) Alford, J.R., Funk, C.L., & Hibbing, J.R. (2005). Are political orientations genetically transmitted? *American Political Science Review*, 99, 153-167.
- (5) Caprara, G.V., & Vecchione, M. (2018). On the left and right ideological divide: Historical accounts and contemporary perspectives. *Advances in Political Psychology*. Archived here: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/pops.12476>

### **Session 5: Mass Media, Candidate Perceptions, and the Spread of “Fake News”**

(Tuesday, October 2)

#### **Readings:**

- (1) Krosnick, J. A., & Kinder, D. R. (1990/2004). Altering the foundations of support for the president through priming. [Reading 8 in J & S]
- (2) Zaller, J.R. (1992). The mainstream and polarization effects. In J.R. Zaller (Ed.), *The nature and origins of mass opinion* (pp. 97-117). Cambridge University Press.
- (3) Todorov, A., Mandisodza, A.N., Goren, A., & Hall, C.C. (2005). Inferences of competence from faces predict election outcomes. *Science*, 308, 1623-1626. Available here w/methodological appendix: [https://psych.princeton.edu/psychology/research/todorov/pdf/Todorov\\_Science2005.pdf](https://psych.princeton.edu/psychology/research/todorov/pdf/Todorov_Science2005.pdf)
- (4) Marwick, A., & Lewis, R. (2017). Media manipulation and disinformation online. *Data & Society Research Institute*. Archived here: [https://datasociety.net/pubs/oh/DataAndSociety\\_MediaManipulationAndDisinformationOnline.pdf](https://datasociety.net/pubs/oh/DataAndSociety_MediaManipulationAndDisinformationOnline.pdf)
- (5) Benkler, Y., Faris, R., Roberts, H., & Zuckerman, E. (2017). Study: Breitbart-led right-wing media ecosystem altered broader media agenda. *Columbia Journalism Review*, 1(4.1), 7. <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/breitbart-media-trump-harvard-study.php>

### **Session 6: Does Ideology Exist? Is Polarization Real?**

(Tuesday, October 9)

#### **Readings:**

- (1) Converse, P.E. (1964). The nature of belief systems in mass publics. [Reading 10 in J & S]
- (2) Jost, J. T. (2006). The end of the end of ideology. *American Psychologist*, 61, 1-20.
- (3) Kinder, D.R., & Kalmoe, N.P. (2017). Findings and implications. Chapter 7 in *Neither liberal nor conservative: Ideological innocence in the American public* (pp. 123-138). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- (4) Fiorina, M.P., Abrams, S.A., & Pope, J.C. (2008). Polarization in the American public: Misconceptions and misreadings. *The Journal of Politics*, 70, 556-560.
- (5) Hare, C., & Poole, K.T. (2014). The polarization of contemporary American politics. *Polity*, 46, 411-429. Archived here: <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdfplus/10.1057/pol.2014.10>

## **Session 7: Political Ideology as Motivated Social Cognition**

(Tuesday, October 16)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Lane, R. E. (1959/2004). The fear of equality. [Reading 12 in J & S]
- (2) Tetlock, P. E. (1984/2004). Cognitive style and political belief systems in the British House of Commons. [Reading 13 in J & S]
- (3) Jost, J.T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A.W., & Sulloway, F. (2003). Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 339-375.
- (4) Greenberg, J., & Jonas, E. (2003). Psychological motives and political orientation—The left, the right, and the rigid: Comment on Jost et al. (2003). *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 376-382.
- (5) Jost, J.T. (2017). Ideological asymmetries and the essence of political psychology. *Political Psychology*, 38, 167-208.

## **Session 8: Challenges of Individual and Group Decision-Making**

(Tuesday, October 23)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Quattrone, G. A. & Tversky, A. (1988/2004). Contrasting rational and psychological analyses of political choice. [Reading 14 in J & S]
- (2) Jervis, R. (1993/2004). The drunkard's search. [Reading 15 in J & S]
- (3) Dunning, D. (2016). The psychological quirk that explains why you love Donald Trump. *Politico Magazine*. Archived here: <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2016/05/donald-trump-supporters-dunning-kruger-effect-213904>
- (4) Sunstein, C. (2009). Selections from *Going to extremes: How like minds unite and divide* (pp. 79-98). New York: Oxford University Press.
- (5) Lerner, J.S., Li, Y., Valdesolo, P., & Kassam, K.S. (2015). Emotion and decision making. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 66, 799-823. Archived here: <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/full/10.1146/annurev-psych-010213-115043>

## **Session 9: Problems of Motivated Reasoning**

(Tuesday, October 30)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Taber, C.S., & Lodge, M. (2006). Motivated skepticism in the evaluation of political beliefs. *American Journal of Political Science*, 50, 755-769. Archived here: <https://www.unc.edu/~fbaum/teaching/articles/AJPS-2006-Taber.pdf>
- (2) Redlawsk, D. P., Civettini, A. J., & Emmerson, K. M. (2010). The affective tipping point: Do motivated reasoners ever “get it”? *Political Psychology*, 31, 563-593. Archived here: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bbf5/50cd15b147d74e2b729dd8e2d03b561c8f29.pdf>
- (3) Flynn, D. J., Nyhan, B., & Reifler, J. (2017). The nature and origins of misperceptions: Understanding false and unsupported beliefs about politics. *Advances in Political Psychology*, 127-150.
- (4) Ditto, P.H., Liu, B.S., Clark, C.J., Wojcik, S.P., Chen, E.E., Grady, R.H., Celniker, J.B., & Zinger, J.F. (2018). At least bias is bipartisan: A meta-analytic comparison of partisan bias in liberals and conservatives. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.
- (5) Baron, J., & Jost, J.T. (2018). False equivalence: Are liberals and conservatives in the U.S. equally “biased”? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*.

Election Day is Tuesday, November 6, 2018. Don't forget to vote!
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## **Session 10: Theories of Social Identification, Social Dominance, and System Justification**

(Tuesday, November 6)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1986/2004). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. [Reading 16 in J & S]
- (2) Huddy, L. (2001). From social to political identity: A critical examination of social identity theory. *Political psychology*, 22(1), 127-156. Archived here: <https://bit.ly/2PuXsbe>
- (3) Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (2004). Social dominance theory: A new synthesis. [Reading 18 in J & S]
- (4) Jost, J.T., Sapolsky, R., & Nam, H.H. (2018). Speculations on the evolutionary origins of system justification. *Evolutionary Psychology*, April-June 2018, 1–21.
- (5) Shayo, M. (2009). A model of social identity with an application to political economy: Nation, class, and redistribution. *American Political Science Review*, 103, 147-174.

## **Session 11: Racial Prejudice and Opposition to Immigration**

(Tuesday, November 13)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Sears, D.O., van Laar, C., Carrillo, M., & Kosterman, R. (2004). Is it really racism? The origins of white Americans' opposition to race-targeted policies. [Reading 20 in J & S]
- (2) Sniderman, P.M., Crosby, G.C., & Howell, W.G. (2000). The politics of race. In D.O. Sears, J. Sidanius, & L. Bobo (Eds.), *Racialized politics: The debate about racism in America* (pp. 236-279). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- (3) Brader, T., Valentino, N.A., & Suhay, E. (2008). What triggers public opposition to immigration? Anxiety, group cues, and immigration threat. *American Journal of Political Science*, 52, 959-978.
- (4) Enos, R. D. (2014). Causal effect of intergroup contact on exclusionary attitudes. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 201317670. Archived here: <http://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/early/2014/02/19/1317670111.full.pdf>
- (5) Selections from I. Haney-López (2014). *Dog whistle politics: How coded racial appeals have reinvented racism and wrecked the middle class*. New York: Oxford.

## **Session 12: The Psychology of Protest, Populism, and Social Movements**

(Tuesday, November 20)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Gurr, T.R. (1970). Relative deprivation and the impetus to violence. In T.R. Gurr (Ed.), *Why men rebel* (pp. 22-58). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- (2) Kuran, T. (1991). Now out of never: The element of surprise in the East European revolution of 1989. *World Politics*, 44, 7-48. <http://www.uvm.edu/~pdodds/files/papers/others/1991/kuran1991.pdf>
- (3) Klandermans, B., & Van Stekelenburg, J. (2013). Social movements and the dynamics of collective action. In L. Huddy, D.O. Sears, & J. Levy (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, pp. 774-811). New York: Oxford University Press.
- (4) Bakker, B. N., Rooduijn, M., & Schumacher, G. (2016). The psychological roots of populist voting: Evidence from the United States, the Netherlands and Germany. *European Journal of Political Research*, 55(2), 302-320. Archived here: <https://www.tuftsgloballeadership.org/sites/default/files/images/resources/Bharucha%20Reading.pdf>
- (5) Jost, J.T. (in preparation). Why men (and women) do and don't rebel. Chapter 10 in *A theory of system justification*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

**There will be no class session on November 27 following the Thanksgiving Holiday.**

(For a tie-in to some of the themes of the course, read J. Hanson's "Thanksgiving as System Justification": <https://thesituationist.wordpress.com/2014/11/26/thanksgiving-as-system-justification-7/> )

## **Session 13: Evil, Extremism, Terrorism, and Political Violence**

(Tuesday, December 4)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Darley, J.M. (1992/2004). Social organization for the production of evil. [Reading 21 in J & S]
- (2) Saucier, G., Geuy Akers, L., Shen-Miller, S., Knezevic, G., & Stankov, L. (2009). Patterns of thinking in militant extremism. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4, 256-271. Archived here: <http://www.academia.edu/download/24723408/saucier.etal.militant.extremism.2009.pdf>
- (3) Ginges, J., & Atran, S. (2009). What motivates participation in violent political action: Selective incentives or parochial altruism? *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1167, 115-123. Archived here: [https://jeannicod.ccsd.cnrs.fr/file/index/docid/505190/filename/Ginges\\_Atran2009b.pdf](https://jeannicod.ccsd.cnrs.fr/file/index/docid/505190/filename/Ginges_Atran2009b.pdf)
- (4) Gambetta, D., & Hertog, S. (2016). Mind-sets for extremists. Chapter 6 in *Engineers of Jihad: The curious connection between violent extremism and education* (pp. 128-158). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- (5) Webber, D., Chernikova, M., Kruglanski, A.W., Gelfand, M.J., Hettiarachchi, M., Gunaratna, R., Lafreniere, M.-A., & Belanger, J.J. (2018). Deradicalizing detained terrorists. *Political Psychology*, 39, 539-556.

## **Session 14: Political Neuroscience: The Beginning of a Beautiful Friendship?**

(Tuesday, December 11)

### **Readings:**

- (1) Amodio, D. M., Jost, J. T., Master, S. L., & Yee, C. M. (2007). Neurocognitive correlates of liberalism and conservatism. *Nature Neuroscience*, 10, 1246–1247.
- (2) Kanai, R., Feilden, T., Firth, C., & Rees, G. (2011). Political orientations are correlated with brain structure in young adults. *Current Biology*, 21, 1-4. Or something newer?
- (3) Hibbing, J.R., Smith, K.B, & Alford, J.R. (2014). Differences in negativity bias underlie variations in political ideology. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 37, 297–350. <http://www.psych.nyu.edu/vanbavel/lab/documents/Jost.etal.2014.BBS.pdf>
- (4) Pedersen, W.S., Muftuler, L.T., & Larson, C.L. (2018). Conservatism and the neural circuitry of threat: Economic conservatism predicts greater amygdala–BNST connectivity during periods of threat vs safety. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 13, 43–51.
- (5) Jost, J.T., Nam, H., Amodio, D., & Van Bavel, J.J. (2014). Political neuroscience: The beginning of a beautiful friendship. *Advances in Political Psychology* (Vol. 35, Supplement 1, pp. 3-42).

**Final Papers are due on Wednesday, December 19 at 11:59 PM!!!**