

Advanced Special Topics in Psychology: Early Social Cognition
Psychology 489C, Fall 2015

Time: Tuesdays
3:25 to 5:55 pm
Location: KEY 0117
Website: <http://elms.umd.edu>

Instructor: Dr. Jonathan Beier
Email: jsbeier@umd.edu
Office hours: By appointment,
BPS 2147E (please email to set a time)

Course description

This advanced undergraduate seminar explores the foundations of social cognition, focusing primarily on developments from birth through the first few years of life. In this course, we will first review infants' and toddlers' conceptual development in the social domain. Topics will include the detection of social partners in one's environment, representations of intentional agents and their actions, and understanding of others' perceptual and belief states. We will then consider the ways that this early knowledge guides young children's own social behaviors and their evaluations of others. On what grounds do children form preferences for some individuals over others, and how are these preferences revealed in their actions? How do children learn to be members of the society in which they are raised? Throughout, drawing upon both evolutionary theory and empirical studies with non-human animals, we will consider how our species came to be such ultra-social creatures.

Success in this class is simple. Do the readings. Come to class. Participate in discussions. Participate in discussions (really). Submit your assignments on time; make them thoughtful. And ask for help if you need it.

Grading

- Class participation (20%)
- Online discussion posts (20%)
- Discussion leading (15%)
- Written QALMRI analysis (5%)
- Critique of popular media article (5%)
- Final paper presentation (10%)
- Final paper (25%)

Policy on late assignments

If they are late, written assignments will rapidly lose their value to you.

If your online discussion post does not appear before **6 pm** the night it is due, you will not receive credit for it.

If one of the remaining assignments arrives within 24 hours after the due date, the grade will be reduced by 10%; deductions of 20% and 30% will occur if it arrives on the second or third day, respectively. After that, late assignments will not be accepted.

- QALMRI papers are due at the **start of class** one week following your in-class presentation.
- Popular media critiques are due at the **start of class** on Tuesday, November 3rd.
- Final papers are due by **midnight** on the evening of Tuesday, December 15th.

More on assignments

Class participation (20%):

- Be prepared and be engaged!
- I will take notes each day on each student's attendance and participation in the discussion. You should contribute something each day, but keep in mind that quality is more important than quantity.

Online discussion posts (20%):

- You will be responsible for two short responses to each week's readings, to be posted on the ELMS discussion board for the class.
- The first post will be due at 6 pm on Fridays.
 - For this post, you should respond to the reading designated "Friday post" on the syllabus.
- The second post will be due at 6 pm on Mondays.
 - For this post, you should incorporate ideas from the additional readings into your post, beyond the reading specified for the previous Friday. However, you are welcome to refer to ideas in the Friday reading as well.
- Read through other students' posts! You'll learn a lot from each other's reactions. In your post, you are welcome (even encouraged) to refer to posts made by your peers, but be advised that if the discussion has gone far afield you might not want to follow it there.
- Posts should be about a thoughtful paragraph at *minimum* (~200 words). Although only one post is required per due-day, you should feel free to make multiple posts; but if you do, make sure that at least one of them meets this length.

- You don't need to summarize the readings beyond providing enough detail for us to know what you're referring to. We've all read the papers, so get to the point. If you have only offered a summary, you won't get any credit for the post.
- In order to receive full credit, you will have to go beyond statements such as "I thought X was interesting" or "I didn't understand Y." Of course, these are reasonable starting points for your comments, but you shouldn't stop here! For instance, "I thought X's finding was interesting because it contradicted Y's theory that..."; or, "I didn't understand Y's conclusion because the data really seemed to suggest that..."; or, "I think X experiment is related to an article I read in a previous class because Y..."; or, "In future work, it would be important to know X because otherwise Y..."

Discussion leading (15%):

- You will be responsible for leading the day's discussion at various points during the semester. There are several parts to this role:
 - If your discussion includes an empirical research article, you should present a SHORT summary. I'll review what that means in class.
 - Prior to class, you will compile a list of the thoughtful comments made by your peers online, to be used as starting points for discussion during class. Look for both themes across multiple students' posts and particularly insightful comments by individual students.
 - During class, I will give the discussion leaders an opportunity to comment on the day's readings as a whole. In addition to offering their own thoughts, they will guide the discussion by asking other students to restate their points made online.
- The final assignment of students to days for discussion leading depends upon final enrollment in the class. Tentatively, I anticipate 3 days of discussion leading per person, with two discussion leaders working together each day.

Written QALMRI analysis (5%):

- Each student will write one QALMRI analysis of an empirical paper they described while leading their first discussion.
- QALMRI papers are due at the start of class, in hardcopy, one week after the class in which you presented that empirical paper. You should also submit a copy via ELMS.

Popular media critique (5%):

- Social cognitive development is a hot topic in the media. Sometimes journalists do an excellent job of portraying the scientific process and findings; other times, they fail miserably.
- Each student will find newspaper- or magazine-length article on some aspect of social cognitive development and provide a critical evaluation of what the author does or does not do well.
- The aspect of development covered may be one we have touched upon in class, but it does not have to be – but it has to be related to the broad course theme. To make sure the topic works, please email me once you choose your article.

- The critique will have two parts:
 1. A one-page, double-spaced summary of the article and the student's evaluation of it.
 2. A QALMRI summary of the original research article on which the popular article is based. If the popular article is based on multiple scientific articles, then you should select one that is of central importance to the popular article's discussion.
- This assignment is due in hardcopy at the start of class on Tuesday, November 3rd. You should also submit a copy via ELMS.

Final paper presentation (10%):

- On November 17th, we will have a class day devoted to short presentations that preview your final paper topics.
- By this point in the semester, you should have a general sense of what the topic of your paper will be. The presentation is your chance to get feedback on these plans, from your peers and from me.
- Because there will be many of them, paper presentations should be brief. Exact timings will be determined by the number of students in the class. Expect about 15 minutes for presentation and class discussion.
- More details will come as the presentation day approaches.

Final paper (25%):

- At the end of the semester, you will turn in a proposal for a new study in the domain of social cognitive development. It must be 12 - 13 pages, double spaced, APA format, and without tortured margins.
- The study you propose should make contact with at least one of the topics that we discussed in class
 - I **STRONGLY** recommend you take notes each week on paper topic ideas that relate to the readings, as they occur to you. If you are doing the readings properly, you will have dozens of good ideas to select from by the time it comes to choose a topic.
- The paper will be roughly in the format of a journal article, though of course without data: you'll have an introduction, methods section, planned analyses, and a thorough discussion of possible results and their implications. More details will be provided as the deadline approaches.
- Final papers are due at **midnight** on the night of Tuesday, December 15th, by upload to ELMS.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a serious matter, and the Department of Psychology has a zero-tolerance policy towards academic dishonesty. Please review our statement on the ethics of scholarship, appended to this syllabus.

Excused Absences

For religious observances, please email me any anticipated absences within the first week of class. This is important so that we can arrange a plan in advance for you to cover that material independently.

University of Maryland policy dictates that a single absence during the semester due to illness or injury will be excused with a signed letter attesting to the date of the illness and acknowledging that the information is true and correct. You are required to contact me by email prior to the class meeting if you expect to be absent for any reason, especially due to illness or injury, and to provide this form by the next class meeting that you are present for:

<http://www.health.umd.edu/sites/default/files/ClassExcuse1011.pdf>

Multiple absences, and those occurring on a major scheduled grading event (<http://president.umd.edu/policies/docs/V-100G.pdf>), require written documentation of the illness or injury from the Health Center or an outside health care provider. The letter must verify the dates of treatment and the time period during which you were unable to meet academic responsibilities. Accommodations will be arranged on a case-by-case basis.

A grade of zero will be assigned for any assessment missed with an unexcused or undocumented absence.

Electronic devices

There is no reason to have your phone out during class. Any student who uses their phone for a non-emergency will receive a zero for that day's participation grade.

I will take a wait-and-see approach to the use of laptops and tablets during class. If you are clearly using them for note-taking or to view digital copies of the assigned reading, all will be fine. If I suspect that some of you are using your electronic devices for other purposes, such as email, messaging, web browsing, or Facebook, I may decide to ban these devices for everyone (except when required for DSS accommodations).

Class Outline

Date	Topic
9/1/15	Intro and organization
9/8/15	SCD in perspective; Nature/nurture: the case of faces
9/15/15	Agents and goals
9/22/15	Agents and beliefs
9/29/15	Communication
10/6/15	Non-human social cognition
10/13/15	Good and bad: Social evaluation
10/20/15	Empathy and prosocial behavior
10/27/15	Right and wrong: Notions of fairness
11/3/15	Social Groups
11/10/15	Social Identity
11/17/15	<i>Paper presentations</i>
11/24/15	Parenting and early social experiences
12/1/15	Social learning
12/8/15	Human culture; wrap-up discussion

Note: I recommend that you engage the readings in the order that they are listed here. Also, readings are subject to revision as the course proceeds!

September 1: Introduction and organization

September 8: SCD in perspective; Nature/Nurture and the case of faces

Friday post:

- Bloom, P. (2004). "Mindreaders." *Descartes' baby: How the science of child development explains what makes us human* (pp. 3 – 34). New York: Basic Books.

Monday post:

- Kosslyn, S.M. & Rosenberg, R.S. (2001). QALMRI Instructions.
- Johnson, M. H. (2005). Subcortical face processing. *Nature Reviews: Neuroscience*, 6(10), 766-74.
- Farroni, T., Johnson, M. H., Menon, E., Zulian, L., Faraguna, D., & Csibra, G. (2005). Newborns' preference for face-relevant stimuli: Effects of contrast polarity. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 102(47), 17245-50.
- Sugita, Y. (2008). Face perception in monkeys reared with no exposure to faces. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 105(1), 394-8.
- Quinn, P. C., Yahr, J., Kuhn, A., Slater, A. M., & Pascalis, O. (2002). Representation of the gender of human faces by infants: A preference for female. *Perception*, 31(9), 1109-1122.

September 15: Agents and goals

Friday post:

- Newman, G. E., Keil, F. C., Kuhlmeier, V. A., & Wynn, K. (2010). Early understandings of the link between agents and order. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 107(40), 17140-5.

Monday post:

- Woodward, A. L. (2009). Infants learning about intentional action. In A. L. Woodward & A. Needham (Eds.), *Learning and the infant mind* (pp. 227-49). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sommerville, J. A., Woodward, A. L., & Needham, A. (2005). Action experience alters 3-month-old infants' perception of others' actions. *Cognition*, 96(1), B1-11.
- Luo, Y., & Baillargeon, R. (2007). Do 12.5-month-old infants consider what objects others can see when interpreting their actions? *Cognition*, 105(3), 489-512.

September 22: Agents and beliefs

Friday post:

- Flavell, J.H. (2004). Theory-of-mind development: Retrospect and prospect. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 50, 274-290.

Monday post:

- Onishi, K.H., & Baillargeon, R. (2005). Do 15-month-old infants understand false beliefs? *Science*, 308, 255-258.
- Senju, A., Southgate, V., Snape, C., Leonard, M., & Csibra, G. (2011). Do 18-month-olds really attribute mental states to others? A critical test. *Psychological Science*, 22(7), 878-80.
- One more paper TBD.

September 29: Communication

Friday post:

- Carpenter, M., & Liebal, K. (in press). Joint attention, communication, and knowing together in infancy. In A. Seemann (Ed.), *Joint attention: New developments*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Monday post:

- Liszkowski, U., Carpenter, M., Henning, A., Striano, T., & Tomasello, M. (2004). Twelve-month-olds point to share attention and interest. *Developmental Science*, 7(3), 297-307.
- Csibra, G., & Gergely, G. (2009). Natural pedagogy. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 13(4), 148-53.
- Senju, A., & Csibra, G. (2008). Gaze following in human infants depends on communicative signals. *Current Biology : CB*, 18(9), 668-71.
- Martin, A., Onishi, K. H., & Vouloumanos, A. (2011). Understanding the abstract role of speech in communication at 12months. *Cognition*, 123(1), 50-60.

October 6: Non-human social cognition

Friday post:

- Keim, B. (2012). Why some wild animals are becoming nicer. *Wired*. Posted online, July 2.
 - <http://www.wired.com/2012/02/self-domestication/>

Monday post:

- Hare, B., Brown, M., Williamson, C. & Tomasello, M. (2002). The domestication of social cognition in dogs. *Science*. 298(5598), 1634 - 1636.
- Call, J., & Tomasello, M. (2008). Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind? 30 years later. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 12(5), 187-192.
- Martcorena, D. C., Ruiz, A. M., Mukerji, C., Goddu, A., & Santos, L. R. (2011). Monkeys represent others' knowledge but not their beliefs. *Developmental Science*, 14(6), 1406-16.

October 13: Good and bad: Social evaluation

Friday post:

- Bloom, P. (2013). Chapter 1: The moral life of babies. In *Just babies : The origins of good and evil*. New York: Crown.

Monday post:

- Hamlin, J. K., Wynn, K., & Bloom, P. (2007). Social evaluation by preverbal infants. *Nature*, 450(7169), 557-9.
- Hamlin, J. K., Wynn, K., Bloom, P., & Mahajan, N. (2011). How infants and toddlers react to antisocial others. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 108(50), 19931-6.

- Hamlin, J. K. (2014). The origins of human morality: Complex socio-moral evaluations by preverbal infants. In J. Decety & Y. Christen (Eds.), *Research and Perspectives in Neurosciences: Vol. 21. New frontiers in social neuroscience* (pp. 165-188).
- Dunfield, K. A., & Kuhlmeier, V. A. (2010). Intention-mediated selective helping in infancy. *Psychological Science, 21*(4), 523-7.

October 20: Empathy and prosocial behavior

Friday post:

- Bloom, P. (2013). Chapter 2: Empathy and compassion. In *Just babies : The origins of good and evil*. New York: Crown.

Monday post:

- Warneken, F., & Tomasello, M. (2006). Altruistic helping in human infants and young chimpanzees. *Science (New York, N.Y.), 311*(5765), 1301-3.
- Warneken, F. (2015). Precocious prosociality: Why do young children help? *Child Development Perspectives, 9*(1), 1-6.
- Davidov, M., Zahn-Waxler, C., Roth-Hanania, R., & Knafo, A. (2013). Concern for others in the first year of life: Theory, evidence, and avenues for research. *Child Development Perspectives, 7*(2), 126-131.
- Vaish, A., Carpenter, M., & Tomasello, M. (2009). Sympathy through affective perspective taking and its relation to prosocial behavior in toddlers. *Developmental Psychology, 45*(2), 534-43.

October 27: Right and wrong: Notions of fairness

Friday post:

- Bloom, P. (2013). Chapter 3: Fairness, status, and punishment. In *Just babies : The origins of good and evil*. New York: Crown.

Monday post:

- Sloane, S., Baillargeon, R., & Premack, D. (2012). Do infants have a sense of fairness? *Psychological Science, 23*(2), 196-204.
- Blake, P. R., McAuliffe, K., & Warneken, F. (2014). The developmental origins of fairness: The knowledge-behavior gap. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 18*(11), 559-61.
- Shaw, A., & Olson, K. R. (2012). Children discard a resource to avoid inequity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology. General, 141*(2), 382-95.
- Hamann, K., Warneken, F., Greenberg, J. R., & Tomasello, M. (2011). Collaboration encourages equal sharing in children but not in chimpanzees. *Nature, 476*(7360), 328-31.

November 3: Social groups

Reminder: Popular media critiques due at start of class.

Friday post:

- Bloom, P. (2013). Chapter 4: Others. In *Just babies : The origins of good and evil*. New York: Crown.

Monday post:

- Kinzler, K. D., Dupoux, E., & Spelke, E. S. (2007). The native language of social cognition. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *104*(30), 12577.
- Kinzler, K. D., & Spelke, E. S. (2011). Do infants show social preferences for people differing in race? *Cognition*, *119*(1), 1-9.
- Dunham, Y., Baron, A. S., & Banaji, M. R. (2008). The development of implicit intergroup cognition. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, *12*(7), 248-53.
- Dunham, Y., Baron, A. S., & Carey, S. (2011). Consequences of "minimal" group affiliations in children. *Child Development*, *82*(3), 793-811.

November 10: Social identity

Friday post:

- Watch:
 - Lecture by Dr. Kristina Olson, "How Does She Know She's a Girl? Understanding Early Transgender Development"
 - https://youtu.be/U_e1d1x_mx8
- Read:
 - Olson, K. R., Key, A. C., & Eaton, N. R. (2015). Gender cognition in transgender children. *Psychological Science*, *26*(4), 467-74.

Monday post:

- Shutts, K., Pemberton, C. K., & Spelke, E. S. (2013). Children's use of social categories in thinking about people and social relationships. *Journal of Cognition and Development*, *14*(1), 35-62.
- Engelmann, J. M., Over, H., Herrmann, E., & Tomasello, M. (2013). Young children care more about their reputation with ingroup members and potential reciprocators. *Developmental Science*, *16*(6), 952-8.
- Dweck, C. S. (2007, October). The perils and promises of praise. *Educational Leadership*, *65*(2), 34-39.
- Ambady, N., Shih, M., Kim, A., & Pittinsky, T. L. (2001). Stereotype susceptibility in children: Effects of identity activation on quantitative performance. *Psychological Science*, *12*(5), 385-390.

November 17: Paper presentations!

November 24: Parenting and early social experiences

Friday post:

- N Boo, K. (2006, February 6). Swamp nurse. *New Yorker*.

Monday post:

- Johnson, S. C., Dweck, C. S., & Chen, F. S. (2007). Evidence for infants' internal working models of attachment. *Psychological Science, 18*(6), 501-502.
- Pollak, S. D., & Sinha, P. (2002). Effects of early experience on children's recognition of facial displays of emotion. *Developmental Psychology, 38*(5), 784-791.
- Burkart, . M., Hrdy, . B., & Van Schaik, . P. (2009). Cooperative breeding and human cognitive evolution. *Evolutionary Anthropology: Issues, News, and Reviews, 18*(5), 175-186.

December 1: Social learning

Friday post:

- Legare, C. H., & Watson-Jones, R. E. (2015). The evolution and ontogeny of ritual. *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology, 829-847*.

Monday post:

- Zmyj, N., Daum, M. M., Prinz, W., Nielsen, M., & Aschersleben, G. (2012). Fourteen-Month-Olds' imitation of differently aged models. *Infant and Child Development, 21*(3), 250-266.
- Harris, P. L., & Corriveau, K. H. (2011). Young children's selective trust in informants. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B, Biological Sciences, 366*(1567), 1179-87.
- Palmquist, C. M., & Jaswal, V. K. (2012). Preschoolers expect pointers (even ignorant ones) to be knowledgeable. *Psychological Science*.

December 8: Human culture; wrap-up discussion

Monday post:

- Tomasello, M. (2011). Human culture in evolutionary perspective. In M. Gelfand (Ed.), *Advances in Culture and Psychology*. Oxford U. Press.

December 15: FINAL PAPERS DUE at midnight on Tuesday night.