Aims and Objectives

➢ To introduce students to a range of research and theories which have been and are relevant to contemporary work in social and developmental psychology.

➢ To develop:
  o an understanding of central debates within the disciplines.
  o the capacity for critical analysis of those theories and the evaluation of the evidence used to test them.
  o oral and written communication skills through discussion in supervision and essay writing.
  o skills in the use of on-line resources e.g. bibliographies & data bases.

Course overview

This paper builds on the foundation established in the first year and prepares students for advanced work in psychology in Part II. Along with PBS4 it provides the breadth required of any Psychology degree which is recognised by the British Psychological Society. The course content is divided into a number of discrete topics, but students should pay attention to the points of connection both within and between the social and developmental parts of the paper with respect to both theoretical and methodological issues.

The Michaelmas lectures on Developmental Psychology begin with an introduction to models of development. The focus then turns to social and emotional development covering topics related to emotion, self-regulation, family, siblings, and peer-relationships. The term concludes with a more cognitive focus examining the child’s executive functioning and number concepts, and executive functioning.

The Lent lectures begin with an introduction to the main concerns of Social Psychology and the methodological challenges it faces. A constant challenge has been how to balance the analysis of the individual with the analysis of the social world that an individual inhabits. In particular, understanding the role of the individual in creating that social world while at the same time being shaped by it.

Workload

The paper is taught by means of lectures and supervisions. There are no practicals.

It should occupy one quarter of a student’s time across the course of the academic year. In practice, this means that a diligent student who attends the lectures and takes the recommended 6-8 supervisions will spend 170-180 hours in private study across the eighteen weeks of the Michaelmas and Lent Full Terms preparing for those lectures and supervisions and consolidating learning afterwards. How this time is spread across the year is a matter of personal learning style. Students should seek the advice of their Directors of Studies if they run into difficulties planning their time. Given the organisation of the lectures, students should focus on developmental topics in the Michaelmas and social ones in the Lent.
### Lectures – all at 12.00-13.00 (Location to be confirmed)

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<td>Models of development</td>
<td>Prof Mark Johnson</td>
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<td>Language development</td>
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<td>M3</td>
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<td>Piaget and constructivism I</td>
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<td>M7</td>
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<td>Sibling and peer relationships</td>
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<td>Developmental Neuroscience II</td>
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<td>M16</td>
<td>Dec 04</td>
<td>Developmental Neuroscience III</td>
<td>Dr Sarah Lloyd Fox</td>
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**Christmas Vacation**

| L1  | Jan 20 | Introduction to Social Psychology         | Dr David Good           |
| L2  | Jan 22 | Attitudes I                               | Dr David Good           |
| L3  | Jan 27 | Attitudes II                              | Dr David Good           |
| L4  | Jan 29 | Attitudes III                             | Dr David Good           |
| L5  | Feb 03 | Social norms & influence I                | Dr Sander van der Linden|
| L6  | Feb 05 | Social norms & influence II               | Dr Sander van der Linden|
| L7  | Feb 10 | Social norms & influence III              | Dr Sander van der Linden|
| L8  | Feb 12 | Persons & Situations I                    | Dr Maria Bada           |
| L9  | Feb 17 | Persons & Situations II                   | Dr Maria Bada           |
| L10 | Feb 19 | Persons & Situations III                  | Dr Maria Bada           |
| L11 | Feb 24 | Morality, culture, & evolution I          | Dr Lee de Wit           |
| L12 | Feb 26 | Morality, culture, & evolution II         | Dr Lee de Wit           |
| L13 | Mar 02 | Morality, culture, & evolution III        | Dr Lee de Wit           |
| L14 | Mar 04 | Interaction & Identity I                  | Dr David Good           |
| L15 | Mar 09 | Interaction & Identity II                 | Dr David Good           |
| L16 | Mar 11 | Interaction & Identity III                | Dr David Good           |

### Contact details

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**Lent:** David Good dg25@cam.ac.uk Sander van der Linden sv395@cam.ac.uk Lee de Wit lhd26@cam.ac.uk Maria Bada maria.bada@cl.cam.ac.uk
Supervisions

Students should cover 6-8 topics from across the paper bearing in mind the need to answers questions on both social and developmental psychology in the examination. They should discuss with their Directors of Studies and their Supervisors which topics will provide a balance between broad coverage and a focus on their personal interests. Students should attend all lectures and not just those related to their chosen supervision topics as there are numerous points of connection between the different areas covered. It is also important to remember that the lectures as a set provide background material for many topics in Part IIB.

Readings

Each lecturer on the course provides readings relevant to the particular topics that he or she covers. These are presented below. Individual lecturers and supervisors may well provide additional more specialised references in the light of specific matters raised in their lectures. The lists provided are intended as a resource for you and your supervisor. There is absolutely no expectation that you will read everything. With the help of your supervisor, the substance of the lectures and your own interests you should focus on a subset that is relevant to you.

Mode of assessment

The paper is examined by one three-hour unseen examination. Section A of the exam will cover social psychology and section B will cover developmental psychology. Students will be required to answer three questions including at least one question from each section.
Developmental Psychology

Models of development (M1)

At first glance, babies seem to have very limited capacities to take in information, evaluate it, and respond effectively, and their understanding of the world in which they live appears primitive at best. With incredible rapidity, however, unique personalities, powerful social relationships, and fascinating cognitive and communicative skills become apparent, as children undergo the fastest and most dramatic changes to occur at any stage in the lifespan. Exactly how developmental change can be explained has fascinated developmental psychologists and neuroscientists for more than a century, and we assess our current understanding this term, beginning with an examination of the basic developmental processes that appear to underlie development.

Readings


Questions

1) What exactly develops in developmental psychology?
2) Compare nativist, empiricist and constructivist theories of development.
3) In 1958, Anastasi wrote a paper called ‘Heredity, environment, and the question ‘how’’. How much better is our understanding of development in 2018 than it was in 1958?

Language development (M2)

Infants typically say their first words at about 10 months, and put together their first two-word sentence at about 18 months. By their fifth birthday, they have a vocabulary of over 5,000 words and can convey remarkably complex information. How do they do it?
Questions

1. Infants employ powerful statistical and social learning mechanisms in the service of language acquisition. Discuss the evidence for these mechanisms.

2. What role does the language environment play in early language development?

Piaget and constructivism (M3 & M4)

The nature-nurture debate constitutes one of the enduring controversies shaping developmental psychology. Another involves the ways in which people are characterized – either as passive recipients of external influence or as active participants in their own development and transformation and the extent to which behaviour and behavioural development are context dependent. These lectures will examine Piaget’s theory of cognitive development, and his influence on conceptions of development.

Readings


Questions
1. What makes Piaget’s theory of cognitive development distinct?
2. Discuss the validity of Piaget’s claim to be a genetic epistemologist.
3. In what ways did Piaget’s view of cognitive development transform theoretical conceptions of development?

Family influences on development (M5 & M6)

Two lectures will explore family influences on development. The first lecture will examine family influences on development in ‘traditional’ families focusing on four interrelated components; the quality of parent-child relationships with particular attention to attachment theory and parenting styles; the psychological wellbeing of parents; the psychological characteristics of the child; and the wider social environment of the family. The second lecture will examine family influences on development in ‘non-traditional’ families focusing on families with single parents, cohabiting parents, and stepparents, as well as new family forms such as families with same-sex parents and families created by assisted reproductive technologies. The relative contribution of family structure and family processes for development will be explored.

Readings


Questions

1. Do psychologists place too much emphasis on the importance of children’s attachment relationships with their parents?
2. Do children benefit from growing up in a traditional family?

Sibling Relationships (M7)

Most of us grow up with brothers and sisters, and there are striking individual differences in the quality of sibling relationships. Yet it is only in the last 20 years that this topic has received systematic investigation. The first of this pair of lectures provides an overview of the different theoretical approaches to investigating sibling relationships
before exploring the various factors that help explain contrasts in the nature of children’s sibling relationships: from child factors (e.g., age, gender-composition, temperament) to family factors (e.g., differential parenting, marital conflict) and wider societal factors (e.g., socio-economic status, ethnic background). The second lecture is focused on the consequences of variation in sibling relationship quality. This relationship is often emotionally charged, and parents frequently compare siblings with each other. Siblings may therefore directly foster both aggression and low self-esteem. Indirect paths via negative parent-child relationships have also been documented. In general, however, sibling relationships are very supportive, and may foster children’s imaginative play, co-operative skills, emotion and theory of mind understanding.

Readings


Questions

1. Compare and contrast at least two different theoretical approaches to understanding sibling relationships.
2. Explain how siblings can help or hinder children’s social or cognitive development.
3. From peas in a pod to chalk and cheese: Why do sibling relationships show such striking variability?

**Risk and Resilience (M8)**

The goals of this lecture are to outline how and why theoretical models of risk and resilience have been refined over time and to give some concrete examples of how these theoretical shifts have informed our understanding of child development. In particular, this lecture aims to highlight the complex and dynamic interplay between different domains and levels of risk and protective factors. As a link with the previous lectures on sibling relationships, this lecture uses variability in children’s reactions to becoming a sibling to explore the processes that underpin resilience in the face of this early major life event.
Readings


Questions

1. How have ideas about risk and resilience changed since Bowlby’s work and why?
2. Why should resilience in childhood be characterized as ‘ordinary magic’ (Masten, 2001)?
3. What can research on the transition to siblinghood teach us about the factors that underpin children’s early resilience?

Emotional Regulation (M9)

Research interest in emotion regulation has grown rapidly in a number of different disciplines, as our understanding of the interplay between biology, cognition, behavior and culture has increased. At a cognitive level, this topic overlaps with the topics of theory of mind and executive function. At a behavioural level, emotion regulation is key to successful social interactions. At a functional level, emotional regulation is central to accounts of individual differences in resilience. Thus this lecture, like the previous lecture, illustrates the interplay between different themes in this paper.

Readings


**Questions**

1) How have research ideas about emotion regulation changed over the past three decades and why?
2) How should we explain the variability that is seen in infant reactions to the still face paradigm?

**Social Influences on Theory of Mind (M10 & M11)**

In this lecture we consider the range of social influences on individual differences in children's performance on tests of theory of mind. Alongside cognitive correlates (e.g., executive function and language), accelerated development of false-belief comprehension is reported for securely attached children, children from large families and children from families characterised by high levels of feeling-state talk. Evidence from hearing impaired children and twins also highlight the importance of conversations for theory-of-mind development. Finally, cultural contrasts in the ages at which children acquire a theory of mind point to significant social influences on this key cognitive skill.

**Readings**


Questions

1. How do families help and hinder the development of young children’s theory of mind?
2. To what extent are social influences on theory of mind similar or contrasting for typical and atypical groups?

Early pathways to developmental disorders (M12)

The behavioural symptoms of two common developmental disorders, autism and ADHD, do not appear to be present at birth. Instead, traits of these conditions emerge over the early years, and they cannot easily be diagnosed until children are at least 2 years old. Reviewing evidence from infants at risk for developing these conditions, we can trace the early predictors of later outcomes, and ask questions such as whether there are common pathways to different outcomes, and/or different routes to the same outcome (equifinality). We can also address questions of domain-specificity, such as whether the social difficulties common in diagnosed autism are also observed in young infants who go on to a diagnosis in later life. This lecture will address these issues, referring back to the basic models of development introduced in M1.

Readings


To follow (M13)

Developmental Social Neuroscience (M14 M15 & M16)

In these lectures we consider how our understanding of infant brain function and social cognition has increased over the last two decades, driven largely by the availability of new methods to study development. The first of this pair of lectures overviews the tools that researchers now use to understand the developing brain in infancy: from increasingly accurate looking time measures using eye-tracking technology to structural and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), functional near infrared
spectroscopy (fNIRS) and electroencephalography (EEG). The second lecture focuses on typical trajectories of social brain development in infancy as well as the consequences of atypical pathways in infants at risk for compromised development. In particular, there will be a focus on the use of prospective longitudinal research to further our understanding of the development of autism.

Readings


Questions

1. How do neuroimaging methods compare in terms of spatial resolution, temporal resolution and ease of use with infants?

2. How have our views changed on how infants are able to respond to their social world? Why do we use prospective longitudinal models to study infants at risk for compromised development?
Social Psychology

Introduction (L1)

Social Psychology might be thought of as a very tractable subject. We are all social agents, and to navigate our social world we need to have at least some understanding of it. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. Allport’s proposal that it is the study of “how the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others” requires only a brief reflection to reveal what a can of worms must lie within. This lecture will offer a broad overview of the subject and the diversity of theories and methods to be found therein. There are many important connections to other parts of psychology and other disciplines, but also many disputes over the “right way” to do enquiry in this area. The readings contain both an overview of the field and a number of chapters which are relevant to this part of the paper.

Readings


Attitudes (L2, L3 & L4)

Attitudes have often been described as the cornerstone of psychology, and with good reason. In one way or another they reflect the fundamentals of an individual’s perspective on the world. They constitute a key element in how they explain that world to themselves, and their own behaviour to other people. However, moving beyond their manifestation in everyday discourse, and their impoverished presence in a questionnaire, to either an understanding of underlying psychological processes or a prediction of intention and action has always been difficult. The Theory of Planned Behaviour offers an important attempt to draw these different threads together, and allow an understanding of how an individual’s attitudes play a role in their social life. Within a very different tradition which has tried to focus on the social rather than the individual, the Theory of Social Representations has sought to begin with characterisations of the shared beliefs which underpin our understanding of and competence in our social life. This brings with it a different approach to research and a focus on how individuals and social groups organise themselves, but also the problems which can arise between groups.
Readings


Questions

1. What is an attitude? In what way are attitudes fundamental to social psychology?
2. Under what conditions can we make reasonable predictions about what someone will do given a knowledge of their attitudes?
3. How can the Theory of Social Representations help us understand failures in communication between cultures

Social Norms and Influence (L5, L6 & L7)

Humans navigate the social world by paying close attention to the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of others. The goal of these lectures is to critically outline how people perceive and are influenced by social normative processes. In particular, we will discuss how people (mis)perceive and internalize social norms and how norms interact with -but are distinct from- other social-psychological constructs, such as attitudes, identity, and personality. We will explore where social norms come from, how they evolve and spread in populations, and ultimately, under what conditions they can influence human behavior in stable and predictable ways. A special focus is placed on understanding how norms influence prosocial behaviour, altruism, and cooperation in real-world social dilemmas.
Readings


Questions
1. In what ways are social norms related to, yet distinct from, attitudes and personality?
2. Under what conditions are social norms likely to exert a powerful influence on human social behavior? Discuss at least three conditions that can help facilitate social change.
3. Discuss several ways in which normative processes can both undermine and promote human cooperation in real-world social dilemma situations.

Behaviour change (L8, L9 & L10)

This course will present the key theories and principles of behaviour change and demonstrate how they can be applied to a broad range of practical problems. In the context of behaviour change, theories seek to explain why, when and how a behaviour does or does not occur. Additionally, the link between attitudes and behaviour will be discussed along with theories of persuasion (information processing model, cognitive response theory). Expertise will be drawn from different disciplines: Behavioural Science; Epidemiology and Public Health; Computer Science, Cyberpsychology, Advertising and others.

References


Questions
1. Which conditions are necessary in order to change behaviour?
2. How is behaviour and attitudes linked when it comes to changing behaviour?
3. How can theories of persuasion be exploited by those who wish to change our opinion of an idea or a product? Discuss
4. Choose an advertisement or behaviour change campaign (health, online behaviour etc.) and discuss its main message, based on key theories and principles of behaviour change.

**Morality, culture, and evolution (L11, L12, & L13)**

Research over the last half century has revealed a variety of ways in which human behaviour deviates from what might be predicted by naive model of economic self-interest. One of the most interesting of these deviations is the finding that humans engage in ‘altruistic punishment’. In other words, people are willing to use their own money to pay to punish others who are not cooperating, even when this has no immediate benefit to themselves (hence ‘altruistic punishment’). One particularly interesting feature of this finding is that it seems to be relatively universal across human cultures. Findings like this has convinced many that some aspects of our moral psychology must have been shaped by evolution, and that our inclination to punish those violating certain norms may have been central to the development of human cooperation. This set of lectures will explore research that has argued that a) morals are not only a product of cultural evolution, b) our evolutionary past has shaped our development as moral agents and c) that morality plays a significant role in enabling human cooperation. Some of the real-world implications of these perspectives will also be explored.

**Readings**


Questions
1. Does a sensitivity to norm violations facilitate human cooperation?
2. Has evolution shaped the range of moral concerns that humans find intuitive?
3. Is morality innate?
4. Compare and contrast debates regarding how humans learn language with how they learn morality.

Social Norms and Influence (L11, L12 & L13)
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Readings


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2. Under what conditions are social norms likely to exert a powerful influence on human social behavior? Discuss at least three conditions that can help facilitate social change.

3. Discuss several ways in which normative processes can both undermine and promote human cooperation in real-world social dilemma situations.

**Interaction and Social Identity (L14, L15 & L16)**

The sense of being a person both separate from and embedded in a social world has been a topic of interest for social psychologists since the earliest days of the subject. Despite that long interest, and its resonances with other disciplines from philosophy and theology to neuroscience, the phenomena has remained quite inscrutable. The first lecture in this set of three will provide an overview of the range of positions which have been offered so as to place the second and third lectures in context.

The second and third lectures will focus on contemporary accounts of how an individual’s sense of their social identity is built through their understanding of the groups with which they identify, and how in turn those groups are understood by their relationship to other groups. These intergroup facets of social identity are arguably reinforced by the manner in which social experiences are perceived interpreted and remembered, and their meaning felt.

This in turn can lead to important social consequences including ethnic prejudice and violence. There are interesting developmental questions raised by this work and also ways in which the insights it offers can be applied to inhibit the pathway from identity and values to violence.

**Readings**


Questions

1. Why does our conception of others play such an important role in our conception of ourselves?
2. Is hostility to outgroups an inevitable consequence of selfhood?
3. How is our social identity formed?