
PSY1102

Introduction to Applied Psychology

Class 1

Introduction and course overview

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Agenda for today

1. Introductions
2. Course “rules” and materials
3. Course overview
4. Summary

1. Who am I?

- Career “path”:
 - Ph. D. in Experimental Psychology
 - Post-doc in Neurophysiology and Animal Behaviour
 - Queen’s faculty 1980-83
 - 10 years in high-tech
 - 19 years running a specialised research consultancy in Ottawa.
- Industry participation:
 - Industry forums: planning, chairing, and speaking;
 - Professional societies (HFES, UPA, RESNA, etc.);
 - Research Ethics Board of hospital in Ottawa;
 - Accessibility Advisory Committee of the City of Ottawa.

1. Your plans? (Show of hands)

- How many people ...
 - ... plan to continue in Psychology?
 - ... may continue in Psychology?
 - ... do not plan to continue in Psychology?
 - ... have no idea what they plan to do?
- For those planning to continue in Psychology, how many ...
 - ... plan to go into clinical?
 - ... plan to go into basic research (experimental)?
 - ... plan to do something else?

2. Rules for the course

“Do” list

- Do be sceptical – challenge what I tell you
- Do be rigorous
- Do be honest

“Don’t” list

- Don’t be reluctant to participate in class
- Don’t be reluctant to e-mail me
- Don’t assume
- Don’t come to class if you don’t want to
- Don’t plagiarise – you will receive a mark of zero.

2. Course materials

- **Required text:**
 - Myers, David G. (2010). *Psychology*, 9th edition. New York, NY: Worth Publishers.

2. Planned course outline

Class	Topic
1	Introduction and overview
2	Nature, nurture, diversity
3	Nature, nurture, diversity
4	Development
5	Development
6	Development
7	Intelligence
8	Intelligence
9	Intelligence and review
10	Mid-term 1 (chap. 4, 5, 10)
11	Stress and health
12	Stress and health

Class	Topic
13	Personality
14	Personality
15	Psychological disorders
16	Psychological disorders
17	Psychological disorders, review
18	Mid-term 2 (chap. 12, 13, 14)
19	Therapy
20	Therapy
21	Therapy
22	Social psychology
23	Social psychology
24	Social psychology

2. Evaluation

- Two mid-term exams, each worth 25.5% (total 51%).
 - One final exam in the exam period at the end of term (45%).
 - Research participation 4%.
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- A valid medical excuse is required for missing an exam.
 - There will be no make-up exams, and exams will not be rescheduled.

3. Course overview

Overview: What is applied psychology?

- a. Nature, nurture, and human diversity
- b. Developing through the life span
- c. Intelligence
- d. Stress and health
- e. Personality
- f. Psychological disorders
- g. Therapy
- h. Social psychology

3. What is applied psychology?

- Broadly, psychology is split into two camps:
 - Basic psychology
 - Applied psychology
- Basic psychology (also known as experimental psychology) is a basic science which deals with different aspects of the study of behaviour. Basic psychology includes:
 - Learning, perception, cognition, memory, development, etc.
- By contrast, applied psychology concerns the applications of experimental psychology to practical issues. Applied psychology includes:
 - Clinical psychology, industrial psychology, and other ways in which the individual fits into a societal context.

3a. Nature, nurture, and human diversity

- Each of us exhibits a behavioural repertoire – that is, a variety of behaviours that are part of socialising, mating, getting food, getting shelter, holding a job, maintaining a relationship, and all the other things that humans do.
- One of the questions that has been central to psychology for decades is the “nature-nurture” question. That is:
 - Are our behaviours defined by our genetic make-up (the DNA that both occupies and defines our cells), or
 - Are our behaviours determined by our experiences (the events that affect us throughout our lives)?
- We’ll consider behaviour genetics and its relation to psychology.

3a. Nature, nurture, and human diversity (cont'd.)

- Diversity: To what extent am I like other people?
- Look around you and you will see people of different genders, different ages, different skin colours, different cultures, and other types of differences – the diversity of humanity.
- To what extent are your behaviours and values “hard-wired” into your genetic make-up as a human, and so are common to other people?
- More specifically, to what extent does your behaviour predict the behavior of a person of another gender / age / culture / etc.?
- Also, how do we study such issues? This topic will make up the first section of the course.

3a. Nature, nurture, and human diversity (cont'd.)

- We will consider aspects of evolutionary psychology:
 - What is human nature, and where did it come from?
 - How do we differ from our closest relatives (other species)? In particular, what makes humans special?
 - What is the nature of human sexuality, and why does it take the form(s) it takes?
- How do parents and peers shape our development?
- What are cultural determinants of our behaviour? What is culture, and how does its influence change across time?
- What is the difference between genders? What are their similarities? And what the heck is gender, anyway?



3a. Nature, nurture, and human diversity (cont'd.)

- Again, to what extent are we like other people?



Source: www.hells-angels.com/PICTURES.html



Source: www.punknews.org/bands/sham69



Source: www.dambisamoyo.com/

3b. Developing through the life span

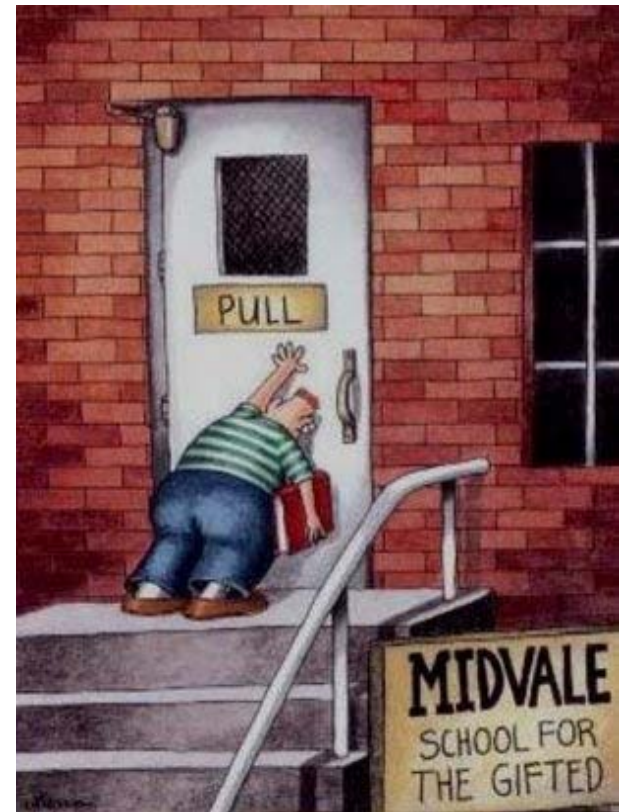
- Although there are factors that can affect the viability of human eggs and sperm, in general human development begins once an egg is fertilised and starts moving through the stages of embryo, fetus, neonate, infant, toddler, child, adolescent, adulthood, and older adulthood.
- Historically, most developmental studies have focused on the early years of human life, but more recently more attention has been paid to the later years of life.
- There are several reasons for this; what are they?

3b. Developing through the life span (continued)

- Development takes many forms, including:
 - Physical development: change in size, sexual development, loss of capacity.
 - Cognitive development: acquisition of new abilities, development of mental skills, loss of capacity.
 - Social development: from the individual to the group; trust and intimacy.
- Adolescence and adulthood
 - Growing into adulthood.
 - The role of adults in society, including parenthood.

3c. Intelligence

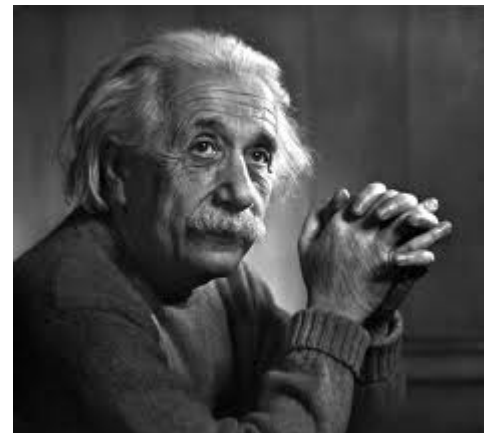
- What the heck is intelligence, how do we define it ... and can we bottle it and sell it?
- What is the relationship between intelligence and creativity? Does one predict the other?
- What is the nature of intelligence?
 - one general ability, or
 - several specific abilities – for example, spatial, math, verbal?
- What is emotional intelligence?
- Is intelligence determined genetically (e.g., parents) or environmentally (e.g., diet) or both?



The Far Side (c) Gary Larson

3c. Intelligence (continued)

- Is intelligence constant through life, or does it change?
- How do we measure intelligence?
 - Historical perspective.
 - Historical challenges in intelligence testing.
 - Modern tests.
 - Constructing valid tests of intelligence.
- What are the extremes of intelligence in humans, and what does this mean?



3c. Intelligence and creativity

One begins to read
Between the pages of a book
The shape of sleepy music
And suddenly you're hooked

- Jefferson Airplane, *Comin' Back to Me*, c.1967

You ripple like a river when I
touch you
When I pluck your body like a
string

- Jefferson Starship, *Miracles*, c.1975

We only said goodbye with words
I died a hundred times
You go on back to her
And I go back to black

- Amy Winehouse, *Back to Black*,
c.2006

Julia: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8EAqy1rUv7I

www.youtube.com/watch?v=X05ghawhG7o&feature=fvwrel

3d. Stress and health

- What is stress? Is stress good, bad, or both?
- How does the body react to stress? Stress and susceptibility to disease.
- Are there specific events in life that are stressful?
- How do, and how should, we cope with stressful events?
 - Perceived control
 - Social support
 - Service animals
 - Exercise
 - Meditation, relaxation, etc.
 - Religion

Example of acute stress: www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-16461278

3e. Personality

- What is personality?
- What theories have been proposed to explain personality?
 - Psychoanalytic perspective, including the Unconscious
 - Humanistic perspective, including self-actualization and person-centred perspectives
 - Trait perspective
 - Social-cognitive perspective

3e. Personality (continued)

- Is a person a bad person (that is, a bad type) or just someone with one or more bad traits?
- What is self-esteem? What good does it do? Where does it originate?
- Is personality constant through life, or does it change?
- How do we measure personality?

3f. Psychological disorders

- What is a psychological disorder? Defining a psychological disorder implies that we can define “normal”.
- The medical model.
- Classification scheme for psychological disorders:
 - DSM-IV-TR (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, American Psychiatric Association).

3f. Psychological disorders: Types of disorder

- Anxiety disorders, including generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorder, phobias (fears), obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Somatoform disorders (medically unexplained illnesses).
- Dissociative disorders, including sudden changes in memory or identity.
- Mood disorders, including depressive disorder and bipolar disorder.
- Schizophrenia: historical perspective, symptoms, types.
- Personality disorders, including antisocial personality disorder.
- Rates of psychological disorders.

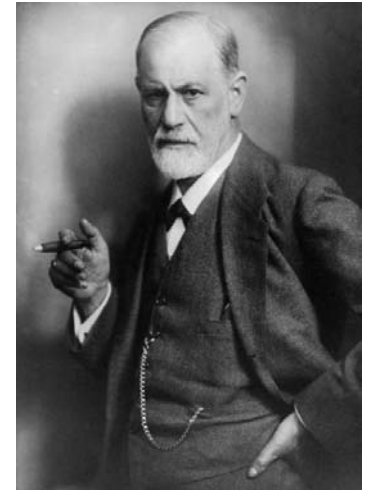
3g. Therapy

- Traditionally, when someone is diagnosed with a medical disorder the treatment is often defined clearly by medical guidelines.
- What happens when someone is diagnosed with a psychological disorder? Should we ...
 - Lock the person in a cage and forget about them?
 - Treat the body, using medical guidelines?
 - Treat the mind (whatever that is)?
 - Treat behaviours?
 - Try to understand the mechanics of the person so we can address the underlying causes?
 - Blame the person's mother?
 - ... or do something else?

“A mother is a boy's best friend.”
- Norman Bates, *Psycho*

3g. Therapy (continued)

- Therapies have evolved over many centuries.
 - About 2500 years ago, brain surgery was used as a treatment.
 - In the 1800s, psychoanalysis came into being.
 - Humanistic therapies emerged in the 1900s.
 - The advent of behaviourism gave rise to behaviour therapies.
 - Cognitive therapies adopted a less behaviouristic approach.
 - Group and family therapies acknowledged the importance of a social context in therapy.
 - As medicine has progressed, biomedical therapies have played a more common role.



3g. Therapy (concluded)

- Two key issues to be addressed in this course:
 - How does one evaluate the effectiveness of different therapies?
 - How do we prevent psychological disorders?

3h. Social psychology

- When you see someone behaving badly, what are you seeing: a bad person, bad behaviour, or behaviour caused by adverse circumstances?
- Do our attitudes cause our actions, or vice versa?
- To what extent, and under what conditions, are we affected by a desire (or need) to conform?
- Do we behave the same way by ourselves as we do in a group?
- How much power does an individual have?



Source: www.hells-angels.com/PICTURES.html

3h. Social psychology (continued)

- To what extent are you prejudiced? Is your prejudice based on gender, ethnicity, religion, age, or some combination of these and/or other attributes? How do you deal with your prejudice? How do you deal with the prejudices of others?
- Under what conditions are you aggressive? What are the causes of aggression, and how do you handle it in yourself or others?
- What are the determinants of attraction?
- Altruism involves helping others with no expectation of a reward. What conditions predict altruistic behaviour, and in whom?

Summary: Class 1

- During this term, we will step through different aspects of applied psychology.
- Keep up with the readings, and don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Good luck!