

**SOCIAL PERCEPTION  
SOP 6409  
FALL 2015  
TUESDAYS, 3-6PM  
USTLER 105**

**Instructor:** Dr. Kate Ratliff  
**Office:** Psych 222  
**Email:** ratliff@ufl.edu  
**Phone:** 352.273.2155

---

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

We typically think of perception as among the most fundamental forms of lower-level cognition and social cognition as among the most advanced forms of higher-level cognition. In this seminar we will explore how these two aspects of the mind connect. We will explore how social influences do and do not influence what we see, and how perception itself is specialized for social information. Readings will be drawn from several different areas of psychology — including cognitive psychology, vision science, social psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and infant cognition. Specific topics include the perception of animacy, agency, and intentionality, biological motion, face perception, gaze processing, attention, race perception, social color vision social olfaction, and social and cultural influences on perception.

**STRUCTURE, PREPARATION, AND PARTICIPATION**

The success of this course rests with the students and your preparation. We will focus both on critical discussion of the theories and empirical research covered in the readings, as well as generating new directions and creative connections between topics. Each week, one or two students will organize and facilitate the discussion of that week's topics and readings. Everyone should come to each class prepared to actively contribute to the group discussion. The overarching goal for this course is for you to develop your thinking and research ideas, and it is through the process of discussion and debate that one's research acumen becomes defined and sharpened. Science tolerates and critically evaluates all points of view when they are advanced with sensitivity for those who may not share them. Please keep in mind that your fellow students may not share your religious affiliations, political beliefs, cultural backgrounds, economic, ethnic, or sexual orientations.

**REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

Class participation	20%	A = 90-100
Facilitating class discussion	20%	B = 80-89
Thought papers	20%	C = 70-79
Research workshops	20%	D = 60-69
Final paper	20%	F = 59 and below

## **FACILITATING CLASS DISCUSSION**

Each week, one or two student will organize and facilitate discussion. As facilitators, you decide how to best accomplish your goal for the week. It is not your responsibility to explain the readings to others; instead, your role is to provide a sensible and interesting framework for discussing the topic. You could circulate an email before class to pose questions of your colleagues. You could collate the questions from the thought papers and use them to guide the class meeting (see below). You might highlight common themes that run throughout the readings. You are encouraged to come up with a class activity to go along with the discussion. For example, you might set up a debate. You could provide a demonstration. You could show a video. You may use handouts, but do not have to. The goal of facilitation is to provide structure and direction for fellow students in order to have a productive discussion; there is no right or wrong way to do so. You may touch base with me the week before you facilitate discussion to discuss your plans and any questions that you might have. The best facilitators start early in thinking about how to structure the discussion and have backup plans or multiple ideas for fostering active discussions.

## **THOUGHT PAPERS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

Each week you will submit a brief paper in which you describe your thinking about that week's readings. This assignment is open-ended; the idea is that you consider aspects of the strengths, limitations, implications, and interconnections in the week's readings. Based on your thinking, you should also submit a question or two that you think would be particularly interesting to discuss in class. You must submit the paper via email to Kate (ratliff@ufl.edu) and the discussion questions to the appropriate Canvas Discussion Forum by 5pm the day before class. Each assignment should be less than one page (1-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font) and should follow APA format for style and citations. A reference page is not necessary. Your papers will be graded primarily on how well you provide a thoughtful, well-argued analysis of the work, but writing style always counts. Late papers will not be accepted. You do not need to submit a thought paper or discussion questions on the week for which you are discussion leader. Each week's grade will be based 20% on the paper and 80% on the discussion questions. These grades will be averaged and together will comprise 20% of your final grade.

## **RESEARCH WORKSHOPS**

To help encourage the development of new research ideas and to gain practice in presenting and critiquing research, there are three days (October 20<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>) devoted to in-class research workshops. Before coming to class on those days, you will identify an interesting research question, describe it and its importance, briefly outline an appropriate methodology to address it, and present the anticipated results. Your proposal should be no more than one page (single-spaced, one-inch margins). You may include a graph of anticipated results or a figure of your proposed model on a second page.

In class, students will present their ideas for 5-10 minutes followed by 5-10 minutes of discussion. Other students will provide feedback and suggestions. Grading will be based on your own product (5% per workshop) and the quality of your feedback to other students (5% per workshop).

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

Each student will submit a paper proposing one or two empirical studies that would test an important and novel research question related to social perception. Although students will not be required to carry out the research they propose, you are encouraged to pick a topic that connects to your own interests. Writing the proposal should be helpful to those who wish to develop new lines of research and also to those who want to explore ideas relevant to theses, secondary projects, and dissertations. Please do not propose research that you are already working on. This paper must take the form of a research proposal; it cannot be a literature review. Papers should be approximately 8-12 pages in length (double-spaced) and written in APA style. Your paper should include a reference section.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Week #</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion Leader</b>	<b>Thought Paper #</b>
1	August 25	Organizational meeting	N/A	
2	September 1	Can social factors change how we see?	John, Gaby	1
3	September 8	Can culture change how we see?	Nikolette, Joy	2
4	September 15	Looking at and attending to others	Charis, Joshua	3
5	September 22	No class – Kate Away	N/A	
6	September 29	Social color vision	Elle, Deborah	4
7	October 6	Animacy and intentionality	Alexandra	5
8	October 13	No class – Kate Away	N/A	
9	October 20	Research Workshop #1, Part 1	N/A	
10	October 27	Research Workshop #1, Part 2	N/A	
11	November 3	Perceiving social information in faces	Earnest	6
12	November 10	Perceptual stereotyping	Jack, Earlesha	7
13	November 17	Social vision in action	Lynsey	8
14	November 24	No class – Thanksgiving	N/A	
15	December 1	Research Workshop #2 Part 1	N/A	
16	December 8	Research Workshop #2 Part 2	N/A	

## COURSE READING LIST

*Please note: The reading list is subject to change. Please see the course website for the most up-to-date information.*

### SEPTEMBER 1: CAN SOCIAL FACTORS CHANGE HOW WE SEE?

- Levin, D., & Banaji, M. (2006). Distortions in the perceived lightness of faces: The role of race categories. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 135, 501–512.
- Schnall, S., Harber, K., Stefanucci, J., & Proffitt, D. (2008). Social support and the perception of geographical slant. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 1246-1255.
- Xiao, Y., & Van Bavel, J. (2012). See your friends close and your enemies closer: Social identity and identity threat shape the representation of physical distance. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38, 959-972.
- Firestone, C., & Scholl, B. J. (2014). ‘Top-down’ effects where none should be found: The El Greco fallacy in perception research. *Psychological Science*, 25, 38-46.

### SEPTEMBER 8: CAN CULTURE CHANGE HOW WE SEE?

- Nisbett, R., & Masuda, T. (2003). Culture and point of view. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 100, 11163- 11170.
- Boduroglu, A., Shah, P., & Nisbett, R. (2009). Cultural differences in allocation of attention in visual information processing. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 40, 349-360.
- McKone, E., Davies, A., Fernando, D., Aalders, R., Leung, H., Wickramariyaratne, T., & Platow, M. (2010). Asia has the global advantage: Race and visual attention. *Vision Research*, 50, 1540-1549.
- Jandt, F.E. (2012). Culture’s influence on perception. In F.E. Jandt (Ed.), *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication* (pp. 58-)76. Sage, New York, NY.

### SEPTEMBER 15: LOOKING AT AND ATTENDING TO OTHERS

- Bateson, M., Nettle, D., & Roberts, G. (2006). Cues of being watched enhance cooperation in a real-world setting. *Biology Letters*, 2, 412-414.
- Frischen, A., Bayliss, A., & Tipper, S. (2007). Gaze cueing of attention: Visual attention, social cognition, and individual differences. *Psychological Bulletin*, 333, 694-724.
- Ekström, M. (2012). Do watching eyes affect charitable giving? Evidence from a field experiment. *Experimental Economics*, 15, 530-546.
- Capozzi, F., Bayliss, A. P., Elena, M. R., & Becchio, C. (2015). One is not enough: Group size modulates social gaze-induced object desirability effects. *Psychonomic bulletin & review*, 22(3), 850-855.

### SEPTEMBER 22: NO CLASS – KATE AWAY

## SEPTEMBER 29: SOCIAL COLOR VISION

- Elliot, A. J., & Maier, M. A. (2014). Color psychology: Effects of perceiving color on psychological functioning in humans. *Annual review of psychology*, 65, 95-120.
- Webster, G. D., Urland, G. R., & Correll, J. (2012). Can uniform color color aggression? Quasi-experimental evidence from professional ice hockey. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(3), 274-281.
- Sherman, G. D., & Clore, G. L. (2009). The color of sin white and black are perceptual symbols of moral purity and pollution. *Psychological Science*, 20(8), 1019-1025.
- Pazda, A. D., Elliot, A. J., & Greitemeyer, T. (2012). Sexy red: Perceived sexual receptivity mediates the red-attraction relation in men viewing woman. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48(3), 787-790.
- Note: Each student should also find one additional empirical article demonstrating the influence of a specific color on some psychological outcome.

## OCTOBER 6: ANIMACY AND INTENTIONALITY

- Barrett, H. C., Todd, P., Miller, G., & Blythe, P. (2005). Accurate judgments of intention from motion cues alone: A cross-cultural study. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 26, 313-331.
- Gao, T., McCarthy, G., & Scholl, B. (2010). The Wolfpack effect: Perception of animacy irresistibly influences interactive behavior. *Psychological Science*, 21, 1845-1853.
- Scholl, B. J., & Gao, T. (2013). Perceiving animacy and intentionality: Visual processing or higher-level judgment? In M. D. Rutherford & V. A. Kuhlmeier (Eds.), *Social perception: Detection and interpretation of animacy, agency, and intention* (pp. 197-230). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Johnson, K. L., McKay, L. S., & Pollick, F. E. (2011). He throws like a girl (but only when he's sad): Emotion affects sex-decoding of biological motion displays. *Cognition*, 119(2), 265-280.

## OCTOBER 13: NO CLASS – KATE AWAY

## OCTOBER 20: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #1, PART 1

## OCTOBER 27: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #1, PART 2

## NOVEMBER 3: PERCEIVING SOCIAL INFORMATION IN FACES

- Russell, R., Duchaine, B., & Nakayama, K. (2009). Super-recognizers: People with extraordinary face recognition ability. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 16, 252-257.
- Willis, J., & Todorov, A. (2006). First impressions: Making up your mind after a 100-ms exposure to a face. *Psychological Science*, 17, 592-598.
- Todorov, A., Olivola, C., Dotsch, R., & Mende-Siedlecki, P. (2015). Social attributions from faces: Determinants, consequences, accuracy, and functional significance. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 66, 519-545.
- White, A., Kenrick, D., & Neuberg, S. (2013). Beauty at the ballot box: Disease threats predict preferences for physically attractive leaders. *Psychological Science*, 24, 2429-2436.

### **NOVEMBER 10: PERCEPTUAL STEREOTYPING**

- Anzures, G., Quinn, P. C., Pascalis, O., Slater, A. M., Tanaka, J. W., & Lee, K. (2013). Developmental origins of the other-race effect. *Current directions in psychological science*, 22(3), 173-178.
- Cosmides, L., Tooby, J., & Kurzban, R. (2003). Perceptions of race. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 7, 173-178.
- Trawalter, S., Todd, A., Baird, A., & Richeson, J. (2008). Attending to threat: Race-based patterns of selective attention. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 1322-1327
- Freeman, J., Penner, A., Saperstein, A., Scheutz, M., & Ambady, N. (2011). Looking the part: Social status cues shape race perception. *PLoS One*, 6, 325107.
- Carpinella, C. M., Chen, J. M., Hamilton, D. L., & Johnson, K. L. (2015). Gendered facial cues influence race categorizations. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.

### **NOVEMBER 17: SOCIAL VISION IN ACTION**

- Neda, Z., Ravasz, E., Brechet, Y., Vicsek, T., & Barabasi, A. (2000). The sound of many hands clapping. *Nature*, 403, 849- 850.
- Knoblich, G., Butterfil, S., & Sebanz, N. (2011). Psychological research on joint action: Theory and data. *Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, 34, 59-101.
- Leander, N., Chartrand, T., & Wood, W. (2011). Mind your mannerisms: Behavioral mimicry elicits stereotype conformity. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47, 195-201.
- Naber, M., Pashkam, M., & Nakayama, K. (2013). Unintended imitation affects success in a competitive game. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, 110, 20046-20050.

### **NOVEMBER 24: NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING**

### **DECEMBER 1: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #2, PART 1**

### **DECEMBER 8: RESEARCH WORKSHOP #2, PART 2**

*Note:* Thanks to Brian Scholl for reading list inspiration.