

PT 171 Systematic Investigations and Ethics
D. Gilhooley **Spring 2010**

Mon. 3:40-5:30
30 Clock Hours

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a theoretical and practical knowledge of research and methodology. The course is oriented toward teaching concept formation and research design. The course examines what is basic to scientific inquiry and reviews important tools, methods, and techniques that are available for the implementation of sound and ethical research.

The design of this course is based on current empirical research of unconscious mental processes. Most week's readings focus on a particular concept (e.g., implicit memory) and then a piece of empirical research testing the concept. Examining research from contemporary cognitive science and neuroscience will help students understand how unconscious mental life is currently being researched in disciplines related to psychoanalysis.

In addition to reading about research, students will actively participate in research processes: by scoring dreams using a Dream Threat Rating Scale, studying two systems for coding affective states, and participating in a brief training in Ekman's system for identifying the facial expression of different emotions. Throughout the term students will participate in a research project by qualitatively evaluating segments of patient speech. During this process students will be exposed to two computerized text analysis systems.

Objectives

By the end of the course the student will be able to:

- define scientific research
- describe several research tools (e.g., rating scales)
- discuss various research methodologies employed in the natural and social sciences
- apply current scientific research on unconscious processes to psychoanalytic theory and practice
- critically discuss opposing viewpoints on ethical issues confronting research and clinical practice

Methods of Evaluation

Logs: Each week students write logs describing their emotional and intellectual experience of the previous class session. Logs can be submitted to me electronically at dangilhooley@yahoo.com.

Readings: Each week students will be selected to present either the assigned concept or research reading. When explaining the assigned concept paper students should summarize the major idea and (if possible) place it in the context of psychoanalytic theory. When presenting the assigned research paper students will try to explain the logic of the research design employed by the researchers, identify confusing bits, and discuss how the findings might impact psychoanalytic theory or clinical practice.

Paper: Students will write an 8-10 page paper examining one or several of the reading topics in terms of a theoretical and/or clinical aspect of psychoanalysis. This assignment can be tailored to students' levels of experience and areas of interest. For example, a possible topic for beginning students could be "Placebo effect and the role of suggestion in psychotherapy." Advanced students might want to consider a topic like "Mirror neurons and the modern psychoanalytic technique of mirroring." Students will research their topic using a number of electronic databases available via the library. The paper should follow APA style (e.g., see *Modern Psychoanalysis*) and incorporate five different references.

Reference Texts

- Gladwell, M. (2005), *Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking*, New York: Little, Brown.
- Mayer, E. L. (2007), *Extraordinary Knowing: Science, Skepticism, and the Inexplicable Powers of the Human Mind*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Moore, B. and B. Fine, eds. (1990), *Psychoanalytic Terms and Concepts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Westen, D. (1998), Unconscious thought, feeling, and motivation: end of a century-long debate. *Empirical Perspectives on the Psychoanalytic Unconscious*. R. Bornstein and J. Masling, eds. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Westen, D. (1999), The scientific status of unconscious processes: Is Freud really dead? *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 47:1061-1106.
- Wilson, T. (2002), *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Syllabus

Class 1: “Thin Slices” as a Model for Research

(Research tool briefly examined: Ekman’s Facial Action Coding System)

Concept

Gladwell, M. (2005), The theory of thin slices: how a little bit of knowledge goes a long way. *Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking*. New York: Little, Brown. pp. 18-47.

Research

Carrere, S. & J. Gottman (1999), Predicting divorce among newlyweds from the first three minutes of a marital conflict discussion. *Family Process*, 38:293-301.

Class 2: Unconscious Knowing and Learning

Concept

Wilson, T. (2002), Freud’s genius, Freud’s myopia, and the adaptive unconscious. *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. pp. 1-41.

Research

Lewicki, P., T. Hill & E. Bizot (1988), Acquisition of procedural knowledge about a pattern of stimuli that cannot be articulated. *Cognitive Psychology*, 20:24-37.

Class 3: Introspection and Self-Narratives; Emotional Knowledge and Deciding

Concept

Wilson, T. (2002), Introspection and self-narratives. *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp.159-181.

Research

Bechara, A., H. Damasio, D. Tranel & A. Damasio (1997), Deciding advantageously before knowing the advantageous strategy. *Science*, 275:1293-1295.

Class 4: Unconscious Memory

Concept

Schacter, D. (1996), The hidden world of implicit memory. *Searching for Memory: The Brain, the Mind, the Past*. New York: Basic Books. pp. 161-191.

Research

Bennett, H., H. Davis & J. Giannini (1985), Non-verbal response to intraoperative conversation. *British Journal of Anaesthesia*, 57:174-179.

Class 5: Intuition: The Accuracy of First Impressions

Research

Ambady, N. & R. Rosenthal (1993), Half a minute: predicting teacher evaluations from thin slices of nonverbal behavior and physical attractiveness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64:431-441.

Class 6: Emotion: Reading Emotions in Other People's Faces

(Research tool examined again: Ekman's Facial Action Coding System)

Concept

Gladwell, M. (2002), The naked face: can you read people's thoughts just by looking at them? *The New Yorker*, August 5, 2002, pp. 38-49.

Research

In-class training session with Ekman's Micro Expression Training Tool.

Class 7: Unconscious Expectation: Placebo Effect

Concept

Moerman, D. (2002), Psychotherapy: placebo effect or meaning response? *Meaning, Medicine and the 'Placebo Effect.'* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.89-99.

Research

Moerman, D. (2003), Doctors and patients: the role of clinicians in the placebo effect. *Advances in Mind-Body Medicine*, 19:14-22.

Class 8: Unconscious Decision Making: A Dramatic Revision

Research

Libet, B. (2004), The delay in our conscious sensory awareness. *Mind Time: The Temporal Factor in Consciousness.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. pp. 33-60.

Psychoanalytic Implications

Gilhooley, D. (2008), Psychoanalysis and the "cognitive unconscious": implications for clinical technique. *Modern Psychoanalysis*, 33:91-127.

Class 9: Dreaming

(Research tool employed: Revonsuo and Valli's Dream Threat Rating Scale)

Concept and Research

Valli, K., et al. (2005), The threat simulation theory of the evolutionary function of dreaming: evidence from dreams of traumatized children. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 14:188-218.

A Case of Telepathic Dreams

Mayer, E. (2001), On "Telepathic dreams?": An unpublished paper by Robert J. Stoller. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 49:629-657.

Class 10: Mind Reading

Concept

Blakeslee, S. (2006), Cells that read minds. *The New York Times*, January 10, 2006.

Research

Iacoboni, M., et al. (2005), Grasping the intentions of others with one's own mirror neuron system. *Public Library of Science*, 3:529-535.

Psychoanalytic Implications

Marshall, R. (2006), Suppose there were no mirrors: converging concepts of mirroring. *Modern Psychoanalysis*, 31:289-312.

Class 11: Therapeutic Expression

(Research tool employed: Pennebaker's Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count text analysis software)

Research

Pennebaker, J. & J. Seagal (1999), Forming a story: the health benefits of narrative. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 55:1243-1254.

Research

In-class power point presentation, Gilhooley, D., Hempel, R. & Huffman, M. (2009), Giving Voice to New Ideas.

Class 12: Ethical Issues in Research and Clinical Practice

Looking at the Data: Efficacy of Antidepressant Medication

Kirsch, I., et al. (2002), The emperor's new drugs: an analysis of antidepressant medication data submitted to the Food and Drug Administration. *Prevention and Treatment*, volume 5, article 23, posted on July 15, 2002; American Psychological Association.

Looking at the Data: Efficacy of Telepathy

Lazar, S. (2001), Knowing, influencing, and healing: paranormal phenomena and implications for psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 21:113-131.