

**PSYCHOLOGY OF BEHAVIOUR
AND OPINIONS**

**PSICOLOGIA DEGLI
ATTEGGIAMENTI E DELLE
OPINIONI**

Syllabus

- This course focuses on attitudes and social behaviour. The aim is to provide students with a good understanding of the major theories and research trends on this topic. Specifically, the course will address two main themes. The first concerns the distinction between automatic and controlled components of attitudes and their influence on behaviour. The second concerns the pervasive effects of death awareness on affect, cognition, and behaviour. (Terror Management Theory; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, & Solomon, 1986)

Syllabus – First part

- Automatic and controlled components of attitudes.
- Dual process model (Strack & Deutch, 2004)
- Theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1988)
 - behaviour determined by volition and intention, which are in turn influenced by attitudes and personal beliefs → human beings are rational actors
 - what about akrasia?



Dr Elena Trifiletti

Syllabus - First part

- Automatic and controlled components of attitudes.
- Implicit measures of attitudes (Gawronski, 2010)
 - overview of the most common measures
 - 10 FAQs
 - what are and how they work



Dr Elena Trifiletti

Syllabus - First part

- Automatic and controlled components of attitudes.
- Health attitudes and behaviors (Friese, Hofmann, & Wanke, 2008)
 - when controlled and automatic attitudes predict food choice and food consumption



Dr Elena Trifiletti

Syllabus - First part

- Automatic and controlled components of attitudes.
- Voting decisions (Galdi, Arcuri, & Gawronski, 2008)
 - it is commonly believed that individual decisions are rooted in conscious deliberation, in which we integrate and evaluate all the available information about different choice options
 - automatic associations of undecided participants predict changes in voting decisions expresses after 1 week



Syllabus - First part

- Automatic and controlled components of attitudes.
- Intergroup relations (Dovidio, Kawakami, & Gaertner, 2002)
 - White participants' explicit attitudes predicted their verbal behavior toward a Black confederate; in contrast, the implicit measure predicted White participants' friendliness in nonverbal behavior
 - explicit and implicit racial attitudes can lead to divergent impressions in interracial interactions



Readings - First part

1. Gawronski, B. (2009). Ten Frequently Asked Questions About Implicit Measures and Their Frequently Supposed, But Not Entirely Correct Answers. *Canadian Psychology*, 50 (3), 141-150.
2. Armitage, C. J., & Conner, M. (2001). Efficacy of the Theory of Planned Behaviour: A meta-analytic review. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 40, 471-499.

Readings - First part

3. The third article is one of your choice:

3a. Friese, M., Hofmann, W., & Wanke, M. (2008). When impulses take over: Moderated predictive validity of explicit and implicit attitude measures in predicting food choice and consumption behaviour. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47, 397-419.

3b. Galdi, S., Arcuri, L., & Gawronski, B. (2008). Automatic mental associations predict future choices of undecided decision-makers. *Science*, 321(9), 1100-1102.

3c. Dovidio, J. F., Kawakami, K., & Gaertner, S. (2002). Implicit and explicit prejudice and interracial interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 62-68.

Papers 1, 2, 3a-c will be all explained in class

What you will learn - First part

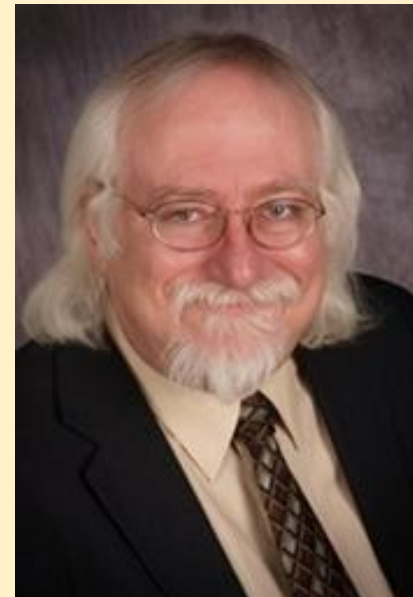
- Acquire knowledge about reflective and impulsive determinants of behavior.
- Critically reflect about the causes of dysfunctional behavior (failure in self-regulation)
- Learn how to read a research paper in English, how to interpret research findings

Syllabus - Second part

- Effects of death awareness on affect, cognition, and behaviour



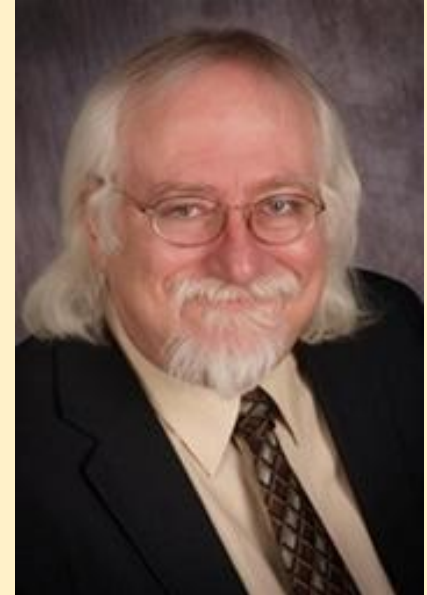
Prof. Monica Pedrazza



Prof. Tom Pyszczynski

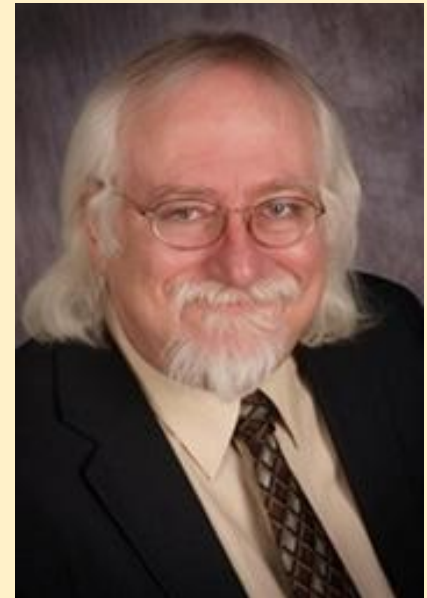
Syllabus - Second part

- Tom Pyszczynski is Distinguished Professor at the University of Colorado (Colorado Springs).
- He and his colleagues have played a major role in the development of Experimental Existential Psychology, an emerging sub-discipline of social psychology that applies rigorous experimental methods to the study of human confrontation with existential problems such as death, freedom, isolation, and nature.



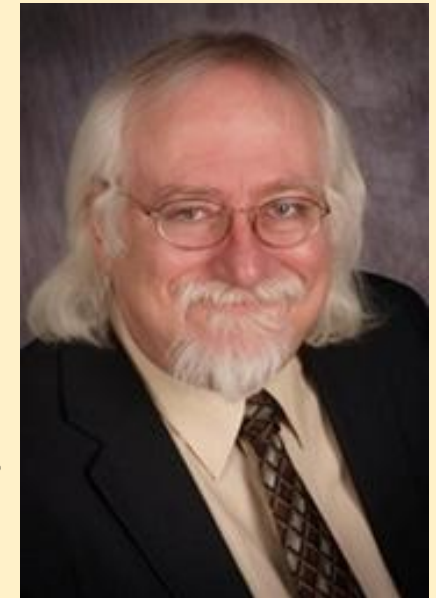
Syllabus - Second part

- Prof. Pyszczynski's research is focused primarily on [Terror Management Theory](#), which he developed with his colleagues Jeff Greenberg and Sheldon Solomon. Terror management theory is concerned with the role of self-esteem and cultural belief systems in providing protection against core human fears, especially the fear of death.



Syllabus - Second part

- Prof. Pyszczynski and colleagues have explored the role of terror management processes in a wide range of topics, including self-esteem, self-deception, prejudice, interpersonal relations, altruism, aggression, sexual ambivalence, disgust, depression, anxiety disorders, trauma, unconscious processes, aging, human development, and terrorism.



Readings - Second part

First option, book for a general audience:

4. Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., & Pyszczynski, T. (2015). The worm at the core: On the role of death in life. New York: Random House.

The book will be on sale from May 12, 2015.

For information about how to order the book, please contact:

Monica Pedrazza, monica.pedrazza@univr.it

Elena Trifiletti, elena.trifiletti@univr.it

Readings - Second part

Second option, two research articles (article 4 + 1 article of your choice between 5a, 5b or 5c)

4. Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., & Solomon, S. (1999). A dual-process model of defense against conscious and unconscious death-related thoughts: An extension of Terror Management Theory. *Psychological Review*, 106(4), 835-845.
- 5a. Goldenberg, J. L., & Arndt, J. (2008). The implications of death for health: A Terror Management Health Model for behavioral health promotion. *Psychological Review*, 115(4), 1032-1053.
- 5b. Landau, M. J., Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., Cohen, F., Pyszczynski, T., ... Cook, A. (2004). Deliver us from evil: The effects of mortality salience and reminders of 9/11 on support for President George W. Bush. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 1136-1150.
- 5c. Castano, E., Yzerbyt, V. Paladino, M. P., Sacchi, S. (2002). I belong therefore I exist: Ingroup identification, ingroup entativity, and ingroup bias. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(2), 135-143.

Readings

The choice of 5a, 5b or 5c must be linked to the choice of 3a, 3b, or 3c, as follows:

A. Attitudes and health behaviours

Goldenberg, J. L., & Arndt, J. (2008). The implications of death for health: A Terror Management Health Model for behavioral health promotion. *Psychological Review*, 115(4), 1032-1053.

Friese, M., Hofmann, W., & Wanke, M. (2008). When impulses take over: Moderated predictive validity of explicit and implicit attitude measures in predicting food choice and consumption behaviour. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47, 397-419.

B. Attitudes and political preferences

Galdi, S., Arcuri, L., & Gawronski, B. (2008). Automatic mental associations predict future choices of undecided decision-makers. *Science*, 321(9), 1100-1102.

Landau, M. J., Solomon, S., Greenberg, J., Cohen, F., Pyszczynski, T., ... Cook, A. (2004). Deliver us from evil: The effects of mortality salience and reminders of 9/11 on support for President George W. Bush. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30, 1136-1150.

C. Attitudes and intergroup relations

Castano, E., Yzerbyt, V., Paladino, M. P., Sacchi, S. (2002). I belong therefore I exist: Ingroup identification, ingroup entativity, and ingroup bias. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(2), 135-143.

Dovidio, J. F., Kawakami, K., & Gaertner, S. (2002). Implicit and explicit prejudice and interracial interaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(1), 62-68.

Readings

The journal articles can be downloaded from <http://universe.univr.it>

NB to download the articles you must use the University of Verona wireless connection or the ssl vpn secure remote access (<http://www.univr.it/main?ent=servizioaol&idDest=1&sServ=264&serv=39&lang=en>)

Exam

Oral exam

NB. The course is research based, namely the contents of the course are mostly derived from empirical research in Social Psychology. Therefore, students will be asked to study not only theories, but also experimental and correlational studies that demonstrate the validity of these theories

Non attending students are invited to contact Monica Pedrazza or Elena Trifiletti to discuss the readings for the exam.