

PSY 305
Semester 2 2009

**Unconscious processes & defence mechanisms:
Theory & evidence.**

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Consultation time: Email for an appointment.

Seminar times & locations: TBA

Wednesday 10-12pm

Wednesday 1-3pm

Course aims & learning objectives:

The aim of this course is to examine contemporary research in the field of defence mechanisms and unconscious processes. Both theoretical issues and empirical findings will be discussed, to allow students to assess and evaluate both current conceptualisations and evidence within this area of research. The course further aims to link research of defence mechanisms and unconscious processes with other areas of psychology, including developmental, social, and cognitive psychology.

The seminars will incorporate both small group work and general class discussion, with the aim of developing generic skills involving critical scientific thinking and team work. The course is also designed to provide you with some ideas for potential areas of research and methods for either Honours or postgraduate research.

List of seminar topics & readings:

Seminar 1 (Week 2):

Introduction to the study of unconscious processes and defense mechanisms.

Reading:

Cramer, P. (2000). Defense mechanisms in psychology today: Further processes for adaptation. *American Psychologist*, 55, 637-646.

Seminar 2 (Week 3):

Can behaviour be influenced subliminally?

Reading:

Silverman, L. H. & Weinberger, J. (1985). Mommy and I are one: Implications for psychotherapy. *American Psychologist*, 40, 1296-1308.

Seminar 3 (Week 4):

Consciousness, unconscious thought, and complex decision making.

Reading:

Dijksterhuis, A. (2004). Think different: The merits of unconscious thought in preference development and decision making. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87, 586-598.

Seminar 4 (Week 5):

Repressive defensiveness and somatic symptoms.

Reading:

Eagle, M. N. (1998). Freud's legacy: Defenses, somatic symptoms and neurophysiology. In G. Guttman & I. Scholz-Strasser (Eds.), *Freud and the Neurosciences: From Brain Research to the Unconscious* (pp. 87-101). Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Seminar 5 (Week 6):

Defensive projection and stereotypes.

Reading:

Govorun, O., Fuegen, K. & Payne, B. K. (2006). Stereotypes focus defensive projection. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32, 781-793.

Seminar 6 (Week 7):

Do anti-homosexual attitudes mask unconscious homosexual desires?

Reading:

Adams, H. E., Wright Jr., L. W. & Lohr, B. A. (1996). Is homophobia associated with sexual arousal? *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 105, 440-445.