



**Boston University** International Programs  
London

**Boston University British Programmes**  
**Psychology Applied To Social Issues**  
**CAS PS 365 (Core Course)**  
**Summer 2009**

**Instructor Information**

A. Name	Prof. Stephen Clift and Claudia Hammond
B. Day and Time	Wednesdays, 1:15-5:15pm, and Thursdays, 9am-1pm. <b>Note arrangements for visit days – see details at the end of the handbook.</b>
C. Location	Prince Consort room, 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
D. BU Telephone	020 7244 6255
E. Email	<a href="mailto:s.clift@btinternet.com">s.clift@btinternet.com</a>
F. Webpage	<a href="http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/ps365">http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/ps365</a>
G. Office hours	By appointment

**Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory for ALL classes and penalties will be imposed for unauthorised absences (i.e. the loss of one grade point). Students must complete all required educational visits, tasks, assignments and activities.

**Course Aims**

Students enrolled on this course may have studied Psychology at a general undergraduate level and / or may have studied Social Psychology and possibly Applied Social Psychology at a more advanced undergraduate level. Such experience is not essential and it is intended that all students, regardless of the type of knowledge they have will be able to engage in critical debate about the nature, characteristics and application of psychological theory in understanding social issues in Great Britain.

The main aims of the course are to:

- Provide awareness of selected current social issues in Great Britain and the policies and strategies currently pursued by government to address them.
- Develop critical appreciation of the contributions and limitations of psychological theory and research in understanding social issues and in informing potential intervention strategies.
- Increase knowledge of the British contribution to the development of psychology as a discipline, and awareness of the work of some leading contemporary British psychologists.

A secondary aim is to raise awareness of the importance of the evolutionary perspective in contemporary psychology, and consider its relevance to understanding and tackling current social issues

Students who have completed several courses in Psychology and are familiar with some of the perspectives and issues covered in this course, should think carefully about their own learning goals and take advantage of the course to apply and extend their existing knowledge in relation to social issues in Britain.

### **Learning Objectives**

Specific learning objectives will be set for each session of the course. In the final session, students will be asked to assess the extent to which the learning objectives were achieved.

### **Course Overview**

The course will offer students a broad overview of the range of current social issues facing Britain today – such as: quality of life, social inequalities, crime, education, substance misuse, immigration and asylum, gender issues and attitudes to sexuality. Students will be introduced to current work of government departments directly concerned with major social issues (e.g. Home Office, Department of Health) and current government policies and strategies for tackling such issues will be highlighted. Attention will be given to the role of arts and cultural strategies in addressing social issues.

The course will introduce current theoretical and methodological approaches in applied psychology drawing on recent British sources. Students will be encouraged to think critically about the extent to which contemporary psychological theory and research can provide us with insights and solutions to pressing social issues.

Visits will be organised to help to inform students' understanding of the theoretical and applied issues addressed during the course.

### **Learning and Teaching Strategies**

The sessions will vary in format according to the topic and presenter. Most sessions will involve some formal input and will then adopt a problem solving (activity/debate) or discussion approach. It is expected that all students will be prepared to participate on the basis of having undertaken prior reading or other designated activities. Some use will also be made of recent television documentary material to provide students with more concrete images of the issues addressed in British society today. Each taught session will last for four hours with breaks as appropriate to the material being covered.

### **Course Reading**

Reading related to each session will be provided for students on CD. A copy of the course CD is available for loan from the Centre library.

**THERE IS NO NEED TO BUY ANY TEXTS FOR THIS COURSE!**

The library has a good collection of social psychology texts as well as valuable sources on current social issues in Britain today.

Tutors will give particular recommendations for reading before sessions, and will suggest additional reading if required.

Additional readings may be posted on the course webpage:

<http://www.bu-london.co.uk/academic/ps365> (you must be logged in to view materials).

## Course Summary – May-June 2008

<b>Wednesday 1.15pm-5.15pm</b>	<b>Thursday 9.00am-1.00pm</b>
<p><b>27 May 2009</b> Stephen Clift Social issues in Britain – an introduction</p> <p>Psychology in Britain – some history and the current picture</p> <p>Visit to Science Museum ‘Psychology Trail’</p>	<p><b>28 May 2009</b> Stephen Clift The British contribution to Psychology – Discussion of selected chapters from ‘Psychology in Britain’</p> <p>The contribution of Darwin to Psychology Visit to the Darwin Exhibition, Natural History Museum</p>
<p><b>3 June 2009</b> Claudia Hammond Quality of Life in the UK and the Psychology of Emotions</p> <p>Visit to the ‘Who Am I? Exhibition at the Science Museum</p>	<p><b>4 June 2009</b> Stephen Clift Gender and sexuality</p> <p>UK evolutionary psychologists in focus: Robin Dunbar</p> <p>Film: ‘How Gay Sex Changed the World’ – Discussion of issues raised by the Channel 4 documentary marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legalization of homosexuality in Britain.</p>
<p><b>10 June 2009</b> Stephen Clift Visit to the Freud Museum</p> <p>Talk by Ivan Ward and viewing of films about Freud’s life</p> <p>See back of handbook for directions</p>	<p><b>11 June 2009</b> Stephen Clift Crime in the UK</p> <p>Film: ‘Children, Knives and Guns’ - Discussion of the current knife crime panic in the UK</p> <p>UK criminal psychologist in focus: David Canter and criminal profiling</p>
<p><b>17 June 2009</b> Claudia Hammond Visit to British Refugee Council See handbook for directions</p> <p>UK social psychologists in focus: Miles Hewstone’s research group – inter-group relations in Northern Ireland</p> <p>See back of handbook for directions</p>	<p><b>18 June 2009</b> Stephen Clift The Social psychology of consumption</p> <p>UK environmental psychologist in focus: Tim Jackson</p> <p>Film: ‘An Inconvenient Truth’ – Discussion of issues raised by Al Gore’s film</p>
<p><b>24 June 2009</b> Stephen Clift Arts and social issues – group presentations</p>	<p><b>25 June 2009</b> <b>Exam</b> Exam times and locations will be posted on the BU London website and in the Student Newsletter two weeks before exam dates.</p>

\* **Make-up Class Date: Friday 12 June.** Should any class dates need to be rescheduled, students are obligated to keep this date free to attend classes.

\*\* **Please note: students will have their first Internship Tutorial meeting either after their Elective exam on Tuesday 23 June or after their final Core lecture on Wednesday 24 June.**

**Wednesday 27 May**

**Stephen Clift**

## **Social issues in Britain and the British contribution to Psychology**

### **Learning objectives**

1. To identify the key social and political issues facing Britain today using a range of sources – research, opinion polls, government policy
2. To learn about the history of Psychology in Britain from following the Psychology Trail in the Science Museum.

An outline will be given of the course: aims, course content, working methods, study visits and course assessment. Insights into current social problems in Britain today will be gained through references to the Labour Party document - *A Future Fair for All* (2003), government policies, opinion polls and newspaper reports.

We will then visit the Science Museum to follow the ‘Psychology Trail’ and learn something about the history of psychology in Britain since 1901.

For information on the Science Museum visit: <http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/>

**Thursday 28 May**

**Stephen Clift**

## **The British Contribution to Psychology / Darwin’s Contribution to Psychology**

### **Learning objectives**

1. To discuss selected contributions on social psychology in ‘Psychology in Britain’
2. To explore the significance of Darwin for Psychology and the relevance of an evolutionary perspective to an understanding of social behaviour
3. To learn more about human evolution from a visit to at the Natural History Museum

The first part of this session will consider the historical development of social psychology in Britain, focusing on key contributions to the development of social psychology made by Michael Argyle, Rom Harré and John and Elizabeth Newsom.

Reference will be made to the current structures of academic and professional psychology in Britain, with a particular focus on the work of the British Psychological Society (for details see: <http://www.bps.org.uk/> )

The second half of the session will consider the contribution of Darwin within psychology, and the recent growth of evolutionary psychology.

A visit to the Natural History Museum will take place to look the permanent exhibit on human evolution.

For information on Darwin and the theory of evolution see: <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/evolution/index.html>

**Wednesday 3 June**

**Claudia Hammond**

## **Quality of Life in the UK and Psychology of the Emotions**

### **Learning objectives**

1. To explore the range of theoretical perspectives developed to understand emotion and to reflect critically on recent examples of research on the psychology of emotions
2. To visit the 'Who Am I?' exhibition at the Science Museum and participate in a variety of exercises on emotions and quality of life which help to illustrate different perspectives

This session will provide an overview of recent developments in the psychology of emotions, including the contribution of evolutionary psychology. Emotions – generally of a negative kind, have been a common thread running through all the issues addressed so far in the course. It is appropriate, therefore, to reflect on the contribution made by psychologists in understanding our emotional lives, and in particular to redress the focus on negative feelings with an examination of the circumstances which lead us to feel good about ourselves, and our social circumstances. What do we mean by a 'good quality of life'? Are people generally satisfied with their lives and happy? These are some of the questions this session will seek to answer.

Details of the Radio series Claudia has produced on the emotions can be found at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/science/rollercoaster1.shtml> Visit these pages before the session and listen to the programmes.

During the second half of the afternoon we will visit the 'Who Am I?' exhibition at the Science Museum. See: [http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/visitmuseum/galleries/who\\_am\\_i.aspx](http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/visitmuseum/galleries/who_am_i.aspx)

**Thursday 4 June**

**Stephen Clift**

## **Gender and Sexuality in the UK**

### **Learning objectives**

1. To consider issues of gender and sexuality in British society today and the continuing need to address inequalities
2. To watch and discuss a recent Channel 4 documentary marking the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legalisation of homosexuality in Britain.
3. To consider the relevance of evolutionary psychology in understanding gender relations and sexual behaviour, focusing on the work of the UK evolutionary psychologist, Robin Dunbar

Addressing social inequalities and discrimination is high on the political agenda in Britain today – and commitment to promoting equality of opportunity informs current UK policy in areas of gender, sexuality, race, disability and social disadvantage. This session will consider the circumstances and experiences of women and lesbian and gay men in Britain today.

National statistics on gender see: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/focuson/gender/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission see: <http://www.eoc.org.uk/>

For Stonewall see: <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

## **Robin Dunbar**

The second half the session will consider the relevance of evolutionary psychology in understanding contemporary experiences of gender and sexuality, with a focus on the work of Robin Dunbar, a leading UK exponent of the evolutionary perspective.

For Robin Dunbar's see: <http://www.icea.ox.ac.uk/about/staff/dunbar/>

To hear a recent lecture by Robin Dunbar given at the British Academy, visit: <http://britac.studyserve.com/home/Lecture.asp?ContentContainerID=129>

## **Wednesday 10 June**

**Stephen Clift**

### **Visit to the Freud Museum**

#### **Learning objectives**

1. To consider the place of Psychoanalysis in British Psychology both historically and today
2. To introduce the work of Mark Solms - one of the leading exponents of continued relevance of Psychoanalysis in Britain today
3. To learn about the life and work of Freud from a visit to the Freud Museum

To listen to a recent radio series on five major works published by Freud in 1905 visit: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/science/freudianslips.shtml>

Visit the website of the Freud Museum to learn something about the house and the work of the museum: <http://www.freud.org.uk/>

You may also find the Anna Freud Centre website of interest: <http://www.annafreudcentre.org/>

## **Thursday 11 June**

**Stephen Clift**

### **Crime in the UK**

#### **Learning objectives**

1. To explore recent development in research on the nature of altruism, and perspectives on aggression developed by evolutionary psychologists
2. To consider current issues related to crime and the criminal justice system in Britain today
3. To examine the concept of psychological profiling and the work of David Canter, one of the foremost criminal psychologists in the UK

The first part of the session will focus on examples of recent research on altruism and evolutionary psychological perspectives on aggression.

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The second part of the morning will consider the state of crime in Britain today, the response of government in tackling it, and the value of psychological perspectives on criminal activity. Attention will be given to theoretical interpretations of the case of Dr Harold Shipman, the GP who is believed to have murdered over 150 of his elderly patients, and to the work of David Canter, one of the foremost authorities on psychological profiling

The principal government department responsible for addressing crime is the Home Office. For details visit: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

For David Canter see: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/psychology/staff/dcanter.html>

**Wednesday 17 June**

**Claudia Hammond**

### **Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Britain**

#### **Learning objectives**

1. To consider the experiences of asylum seekers and refugees in Britain today, as well as attitudes of the general population towards these groups.
2. To explore theories of inter-group relations, prejudice and discrimination, focusing in particular on the work of Miles Hewstone and his group
3. To learn about the work of the Refugee Council from a visit to this organisation

There has been growing public concern over a number of years about increased numbers of people seeking asylum and refugee status in the UK. This session will provide an introduction to the asylum system in this country, government policy and public perceptions of asylum seekers. It will go on to discuss theories of prejudice (e.g. Authoritarian personality, scape-goating theory, social categorisation etc.) and how prejudice can be challenged. A concrete understanding of the current situation in the UK will be aided through an analysis of newspaper articles about asylum looking for positive or negative images, assumptions made about refugees, use of misleading language, textual techniques used to harness readers' fears, identification of themes relating to theories of prejudice and examples of initiatives to tackle inter-group tensions.

For Miles Hewstone see: [http://psyweb.psy.ox.ac.uk/social\\_psych/bios/miles-bio.htm](http://psyweb.psy.ox.ac.uk/social_psych/bios/miles-bio.htm)

For information on the British Refugee Council visit: <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

**Thursday 18 June**

**Stephen Clift**

### **The Social Psychology of Consumption and the Challenge of Climate Change**

1. To consider the work of Tim Jackson, a UK psychologist concerned with the challenges of the green agenda and the need for greater sustainability in use of natural resources.
2. To watch and discuss 'An Inconvenient Truth' by Al Gore, focusing on the relevance of psychology in addressing the challenges of global climate change

Visit the Resolve website at the University of Surrey, one of the leading academic centres in the UK concerned with the environment and lifestyles: <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/resolve/>

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See also, Sustainable Development Commission:

<http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/redefining-prosperity.html>

For Tim Jackson see:

[http://portal.surrey.ac.uk/portal/page?\\_pageid=822,512810&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://portal.surrey.ac.uk/portal/page?_pageid=822,512810&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)

An Inconvenient Truth – the website: <http://www.climatecrisis.net/takeaction/>

**Wednesday 24 June**

**Stephen Clift**

## **Arts and Social Issues in Britain**

### **Learning objectives**

1. To consider the role of the arts in addressing social issues in British society – including social inequalities, mental health, race relations and criminal justice issues
2. To examine the role of the arts in healthcare and health promotion
3. To explore through experience and reflection the personal significance of the arts for members of the group

This session will take the form of a ‘conference’ in which groups will give presentations on initiatives developed in Britain over the last 10 to 15 years to use the arts to encourage social integration, inclusion and cohesion, and personal and community health and well-being. Guidance will be given to groups early in the course to assist them in preparing for the presentations.

Useful website with many links:

Sidney De Haan Centre for Research in Arts and Health.

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/centres/sidney-de-haan-research/>



## **Assessment**

There are two aspects to the assessment of this course:

1. A paper of 2,000 words (50%)
2. A two-hour exam (50%)

**You should use the following general title for your paper:**

*'Psychological theory can further our understanding of social problems and reveal practical solutions to them. Discuss this statement with reference to one social issue covered on the course.'*

**Suggested topics are:**

mental health, sexual health, gender, sexual diversity, poverty and social inequality, immigration and asylum, stress, community safety and crime, consumption and the environment, substance dependency (drugs, smoking, alcohol) and quality of life.

If you wish to address a topic not in this list, you must agree the topic of your paper with Stephen Clift.

### **The examination**

This will be in two parts. The first part will ask you to reflect on what you have learned from the visits to the Freud Museum and Refugee Council organised as part of this course. The second part will ask you to critically evaluate one of the research papers discussed in sessions during the course. These research papers will be clearly identified for you.

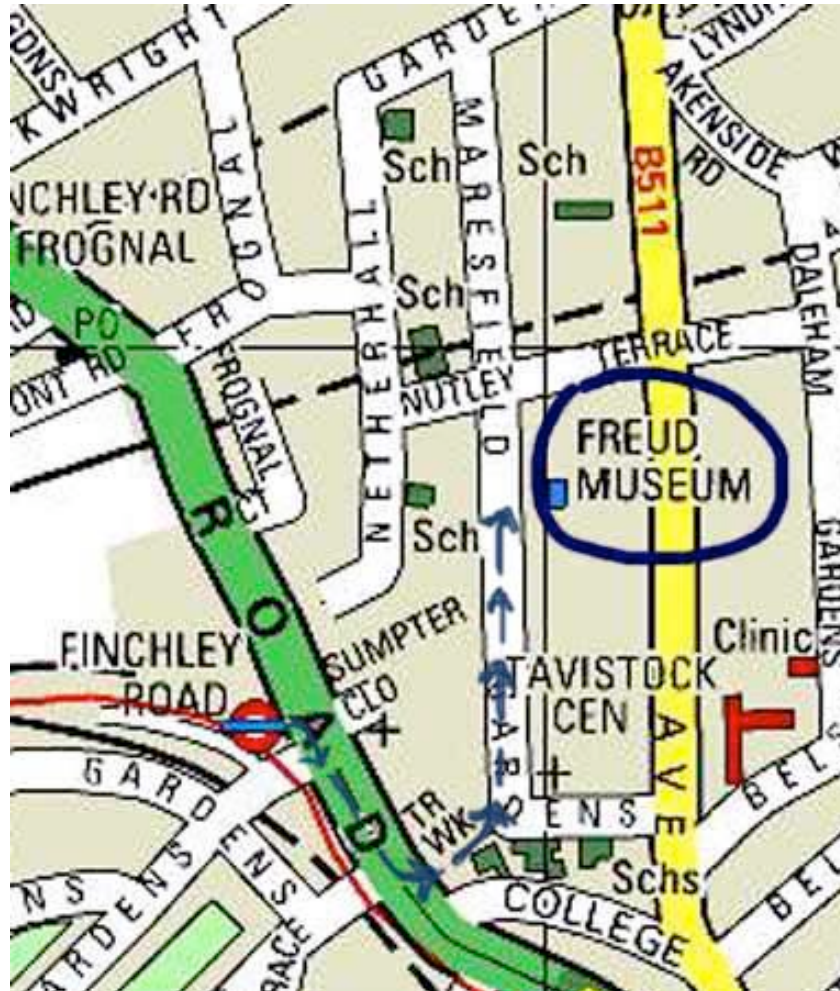
Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism:

<http://www.bu-london.co.uk/files/images/ACADEMICHANDBOOKSU09.pdf>.

## Visit to Freud Museum – 3 June 2009

Meet outside the museum not later than 10.15am. The visit is timed to start at 10.30am. Allow 40 minutes for the journey from Harrington Gardens to the museum.

### How to get there



The **Freud Museum** is located at 20 Maresfield Gardens, NW3, near Finchley Road Underground Station.

Blue signposts mark the way from the station to the museum.

Exit the station, cross Finchley Road and turn to the right. After about 100 metres turn to the left into Trinity Walk (TR WK on above map). At the top of Trinity Walk, turn to the left into Maresfield Gardens, and you will reach the **Freud Museum** after about 150 metres, on the right-hand side.

**Underground:** Take the Jubilee Line or Metropolitan Line to Finchley Road underground station (note that this is in Underground **Zone 2**).

## **British Refugee Council – 17 June 2009**

Before this session please read Schmid et al (2008) The Effects of Living in Segregated vs. Mixed Areas in Northern Ireland (on course CD). This paper will be one of critique options in the exam.

Note down two aspects of the study you like and two criticisms for use in discussion during this session.

### **We are spending the entire session at the British Refugee Council in Brixton.**

\*Meet Claudia Hammond near ticket machines at Brixton Station at 1.15pm, not at Boston\*

### **DIRECTIONS**

Eastbound from Gloucester Road to Victoria. Then Victoria Line southbound to Brixton. Please allow time for your journey (please allow 40 min for this journey).

Arrange to meet to the others in your group and to travel with them. Exchange mobile nos. within your groups so that you can find each other. If you can't come for any reason it's essential that you call or text Claudia on 07956 646010 or give a message to another member of your group. Otherwise the entire group of 27 will have to wait for you at Brixton station.

If you're early do have a wander around Brixton market (just out of the station to the right). While you're waiting at Brixton station see if you can spot something that makes this station unique.

Please try not to be late because at 1.15pm we will all set off together for the British Refugee Council which is just around the corner in Ferndale Road.

### **Brixton (London)**

**240-250 Ferndale Road, London SW9 8BB**

