

Discussion Board Questions  
SOC 360 S20

**Week 1: What is sociological social psychology?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, or 3).

1. Describe the concept of intersectionality and explain how your multiple status characteristics have affected your own life experiences, giving a specific example.
2. Explain what a social norm is, and give an example of a social norm in your friend group. How do you know it is a social norm? Why do you think your friend group has made it a norm? What would happen if a friend were to break this norm?
3. Explain the difference between a micro-level analysis and a macro-level analysis. Consider a study of education at Cal State San Bernardino. What would a micro-level analysis focus on? And what would a macro-level analysis focus on?

**Week 2: How do social psychologists do research?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, 3, or 4).

1. Come up with an original, social research question (not in the textbook or the VoiceThread) using the model of “Is X related to Y?” (Pick two variables you think might be related to one another, then just slot them in for X and Y.) Identify which variable is the independent variable and which is the dependent variable. Give a hypothesis and explain why you expect that hypothesis to be true.
2. Explain the difference between deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning. Give a hypothetical example of research that uses deductive reasoning and a hypothetical example of research that uses inductive reasoning.
3. Explain the difference between quantitative and qualitative research. Imagine you are researching whether being a first generation college student or not is related to students’ use of resources (e.g., tutoring, advising, library services) at CSUSB. You hypothesize that first gen students are less likely to use campus resources. Give an example of how you could use

quantitative methods to answer this question, and an example of how you could use qualitative methods to answer this question.

4. Read about Milgram's Obedience Studies on p. 63 of your textbook. Evaluate Milgram's studies based on the principles of beneficence, justice, and informed consent. What should Milgram have done differently to fulfill these three principles?

### **Week 3: What is symbolic interactionism?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, or 3).

1. Define the "I" and the "me" according to Mead. In what types of situations is the "I" given more freedom, and in what types of situations is the "me" more in charge? Give an example of a time when you felt like your "I" and "me" were at odds (fighting) with one another.

2. Define self-concept. Take the Twenty Statements Test on p. 89 of your textbook. What do the results show you about your self-concept? (In other words, based on this, how do you think of yourself?) Based on the results, are any roles particularly important to your self-concept? How about any relationships?

3. Define the back region and front region according to Goffman's dramaturgical model. How do people act differently in them? For many people, stay-at-home orders during the pandemic and increased hours spent at home with family and household members meant that the privacy of the back region was limited. Describe your or a friend's experience with this. How did not having a back region affect you/them?

### **Week 4: What is the social structure and personality perspective?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, or 3).

1. Define status and role. Give an example of a status you occupy and a role or role set that goes with that status. Define role strain and give an example of a time you experienced role strain in relation to the role you've described. Is this an example of intrarole or interrole conflict?

2. Summarize the video from this week's VoiceThread on why Black Americans are more likely to contract and die from COVID-19 than white Americans. Put the research described in the video in terms of the three principles of Social Structure and Personality. What components of

the larger social system are these researchers looking at? What are the personal outcomes (or effects) for Black Americans? What proximate causes/mediating variables have researchers identified?

3. List the reasons why the achievement gap between Black and white students closed as the result of busing programs that racially integrated schools, as described by the host (Ira Glass) and interviewee (Nikole Hannah Jones) on the The Problem We All Live With podcast. Put this in terms of the three principles of Social Structure and Personality. What components of the larger social system is the topic of the podcast? What are the personal outcomes/effects for Black students? What proximate causes/mediating variables does the podcast identify?

### **Week 5: What is the group processes and structures perspective?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, or 3).

1. Explain what status characteristics theory says about who will be most influential in a small group. Think of the last time you worked in a small group. While you may not have been aware of it at the time, these dynamics affected your small group. Explain how and which specific and diffuse status characteristics might have affected who was most and least influential member in your group. Now that you know about status characteristics theory, what might you do differently the next time you work in a small group?

2. Define power and negotiated exchange. Give an example of a negotiated exchange from your own life. Describe how the exchange played out. What did you want? What did the other person want? Who had more power in the exchange, and how did that affect the outcome of the exchange?

3. Summarize the “An Ace Up the Poker Player’s Sleeve: The Surprising Upside of Stereotypes” podcast. Define stereotypes and status beliefs. Explain how stereotypes and status beliefs about women both hurt and helped Annie Duke at the World Series of Poker.

### **Week 6: What is socialization?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, or 3).

1. What is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis? Give your own example of it. (This is a great question to answer if you are bilingual and have personal knowledge of how language shapes perception!)

2. Describe Lareau's findings about social class, parenting styles, and children's socialization. Based on Lareau's work, explain how childhood socialization impacts adults' class (income, occupation, education, etc) later in life.

3. Reflect on your own socialization in regard to gender. Give an example of how you were socialized in regard to gender as a child *and* as an adult. Describe what impact these examples might have had on your attitudes, behaviors, or preferences.

### **Week 7: What is identity?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, or 3).

1. Define impression management. Explain why people use impression management. Consider how you present yourself across different social media platforms. Do you present yourself differently on each platform? Why? What impression management strategies do you use to present different versions of yourself online?

2. Define "identity standard," "commitment," and "salience." Explain how all three impact behavior, giving an example. You may use an example from your own experience.

3. Name and define the three bases for self-esteem. Give a hypothetical example (or an example from your own life) of each. Explain how each example would or did affect your self-esteem.

### **Week 8: What are emotions?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, 3, or 4).

1. Define emotional labor. Give an example of emotional labor from your own work experience. What did you have to do? Why did your workplace see it as important? Was it difficult or easy to do? What was the effect on you?

2. Explain how emotions like embarrassment, shame, and guilt can cause us to regulate our own behaviors. Give a specific example from your own experience.

3. What is identity control theory? Give an example of how identity control works that was not included in the reading or the PowerPoint.

4. Explain how status characteristics influence socioemotive behaviors in groups. Give an example from your own experience of a time when your status characteristics influenced how you were treated in a group.

### **Week 9: What is deviance?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, 3, or 4).

1. Explain what it means for deviance to be socially constructed. Provide an example (not from the VoiceThread or the textbook) that shows deviance is socially constructed.

2. Define formal control, informal control, and internal control. Consider cheating on an exam. Describe how formal control, informal control, and internal control might dissuade someone from cheating.

3. How does the idea of “affluenza” (in the VoiceThread) fit with differential associations theory? Do you agree or disagree with the idea of “affluenza”? Was Ethan Couch’s sentencing fair?

4. Summarize the findings of the research in the “How Labels Can Affect People’s Personalities and Potential” podcast. This podcast explains how labels can have positive consequences, but explain how labels might influence people to be deviant and give an example (not in the VoiceThread).

### **Week 11: What is stress?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5).

1. Define stress proliferation. Use a hypothetical (or real) example that was not included in the reading or the VoiceThread to explain how stress proliferates.

2. Define the differential exposure model and the differential vulnerability model and explain the difference between the two. Given an example of each.

3. Summarize Kathryn Edin’s findings (in the VoiceThread) about having children in poverty. How did parenthood give poor young adults a feeling that they matter? How does this fit with the research on socially-based identities and stress?
4. Discuss the pros and cons of the medicalization of psychological disorders. Do you think the pros outweigh the cons, or not?
5. Apply this week’s material to describe the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your experience of stress. Define and use at least three key terms (listed in the VoiceThread as key terms).

### **Week 12: What are love and friendship?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, 3, or 4).

1. Describe the difference between mythic/Hollywood love and prosaic realist love according to Ann Swidler. Which version of love best describes your experience? Explain.
2. Summarize the “Confronting Race on the First Date” podcast. Explain how the podcast shows how propinquity and status characteristics affect the likelihood of initiating a relationship with someone. Give an example of how this has played out in your own life.
3. Pick one topic on how technology shapes our relationships today from your textbook (“The Internet and Personal Relationships” p. 395, “Cell Phones and Personal Relationships” p. 400, “Research on Sexting” p. 401, “Relationships and Communication via Twitter” p. 404). Summarize the section, then comment on it. Has technology improved our relationships, made them worse, or simply changed them?
4. Explain what the maintenance stage of relationships entails. How are you maintaining some of your relationships during social isolation/the COVID-19 pandemic?

### **Week 13: What are prejudice and discrimination?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5).

1. Summarize Devah Pager’s research on how being Black and having a criminal record affect being hired. How does this research show the interaction between micro-level discrimination (a

Black man being denied a job) and macro-level discrimination (the way the criminal justice system/job applications operate)?

2. Explain when prejudice is most likely to lead to discrimination. Based on this research, what would you recommend to a company that is trying to reduce racial and gender discrimination in promotion and hiring?

3. Define implicit associations. Take an implicit association test (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>) and describe your results. What was it like taking the test? And what did your results show you about your own implicit associations?

4. Pick one of the frameworks for understanding racism today (symbolic racism, color-blind racism, laissez-faire racism, or the white racial frame). Define it. Describe a common narrative about race (you experienced it, someone you know said it, you read it in the news, you saw it on TV, etc) and explain how it fits with your chosen framework.

5. Summarize the anecdote from “What Does Modern Prejudice Look Like?” podcast. What does this anecdote tell us about how prejudice operates today? Give a similar example from your own (or a friend’s) experience.

#### **Week 14: What are social influence and collective behavior?**

Respond to **ONE** of the following questions. Please note which discussion question you are responding to by giving the number (1, 2, 3, or 4).

1. Describe either the Milgram or Asch experiment (the research question, the method, the findings). How does this experiment show constraint on human agency? Give one example of how your own agency is constrained.

2. Describe an urban legend you know (that was not discussed in the VoiceThread or textbook). Why do you think that urban legend exists? What cultural fear(s) about living in a modern or urban environment does it reflect?

3. Summarize the “In 2020, Protests Spread Across the Globe with a Similar Message: Black Lives Matter” podcast. Why do you think the “Black Lives Matter” message was so popular outside of the US? Draw on at least one of the frameworks (frame alignment, social networks, collective identity) social psychologists use to understand why people participate in social movements.

4. Consider the protests against shelter-in-place/mask orders due to COVID-19. Why do you think protestors are participating in that social movement? Draw on the frameworks (frame alignment, social networks, collective identity) social psychologists use to understand why people participate in social movements.