

**Trauma Across the Lifespan
Psychology 570.004
Spring 2009**

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Office Hours:

Wednesdays 2-4

Thursdays 4:45-5:45

Other days and times are available upon request. If you intend to come for office hours, please notify me to schedule our meeting in advance, especially around registration time when my office hours get very busy.

Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to provide theoretical understanding of what psychological trauma is and how it impacts individuals across the lifespan. Students will become familiar with the impact and nature of a wide variety of traumas including experiencing: childhood abuse, adult crime and/or assault, domestic violence, motor vehicle accidents, natural disasters, and serious medical illness. The psychological disorders that result from trauma will be discussed. Empirical bases for trauma treatment and current treatment outcome research will be reviewed. Attention will be paid to the disruptive effects of trauma on the development of the individual's view of self, others, and the world and on therapeutic alliance. Issues particularly salient to trauma survivors such as mistrust, shame, and anger will be addressed. To enhance our understanding of the impact of trauma and its treatment, we will have a variety of guest speakers who are specialists in treating trauma as well as trauma survivors.

Course Readings:

Herman, J. (1997). *Trauma and recovery*. New York: Basic Books.

Perry, B. (2006). *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog*. New York: Wiley.

Journal and book articles will also be used to supplement these books.

Course Objectives: The following objectives have been identified as critical to understanding the impact of trauma and its treatment. They are consistent with the learning goals and outcomes of an undergraduate major in psychology, according to the American Psychological Association. The specific learning goals identified by the American Psychological Association's Board of Educational Affairs are noted in parenthesis after each objective.

1. Describe the symptoms, behavioral patterns, and underlying pathology associated with forms of child and adult psychopathology that is associated with trauma as identified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders-IV (APA Learning Goal 1: Theory and Content of Psychology).

2. Explain how the trauma related disorders have been conceptualized and treated over history (APA Learning Goal 1: Theory and Content of Psychology).

3. Review current empirical research on the treatment of trauma disorders and discuss major goals and challenges associated with trauma treatment (Learning Goal 2: Research Methods in Psychology).

4. Encourage students to think critically about how to treat challenging trauma survivors and clients with diverse backgrounds (Learning Goal 3: Thinking Skills in Psychology; Learning Goal 8: Sociocultural and International Awareness).

5. Help students build tolerance and understanding of those with trauma related mental illness through careful, balanced discussion of both the deficits and strengths of those afflicted by illness and the reasons they might display resistance to change. (Learning Goal 5: Values in Psychology).

6. Explain how training in trauma can be beneficial to one's career and inform one's career in a variety of clinical settings (Learning Goal 10: Career Planning and Development)

Grading:

Your grade will be determined by the number of points you earn in the semester out of a total possible of 500 points. Class participation will be a strong factor in determining borderline grades for the class. If you are going to be late or miss a class, I expect that you will notify me ahead of time by calling me or telling me in class the week before.

Exams will be a combination of essays and short answers. Students will need to bring blue examination books, available at the University bookstore, to exams. I adhere to the University's policy on cheating and plagiarism. This course may be repeated only once without the prior permission of the Academic Standards Committee.

- A = 465-500 points
- A - = 448-464 points
- B + = 432-447 points
- B = 415-431 points
- B - = 399-414 points
- C + = 383-398 points
- C = 365-382 points
- D + = 349-364 points
- D = 333-348 points
- D - = 317-332 points
- F = below 316

<u>Components of the Grade:</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
Midterm	100 points
Final exam	100 points
Reflection essays (10, each worth 10 points)	100 points
Trauma project - class presentation	100 points
Trauma project - written paper	<u>100 points</u>
	500 points

Accommodations

If you need accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me, and bring a statement from Disability Support Services (4-2638) authorizing your accommodation.

Assignments:

Reflection Essays: Eleven weeks throughout the semester, I will assign a reflection question for which you are to write a two page, double-spaced response based on your understanding and reactions to the readings. Some weeks the questions will be related to the content of the readings to ensure you adequately understand them. Other weeks I will ask your personal reflections and reactions to the readings. These will be graded on a pass/fail basis. If your reflection is well written without grammar or spelling difficulties, and shows you read and comprehend the readings, you will earn a "pass" which will give you 10 points. If you have difficulties with writing or spelling, do not convey that you have read and understood the material, or do not turn in the reflection, you will earn a "0". I will not accept any late reflections (unless you have written documentation of an unavoidable emergency). You need only do 10 of the 11 reflections; chose wisely the week you will skip doing the reflection. I will not accept extra reflections. These will provide good review for the exams.

Trauma Project & Paper

Through this self-directed project, I want to provide you with an opportunity to further delve into some aspect of the course that interests you. The paper will be the foundation of your 15 minute class presentation in which you will share what you explored and learned. Many students will chose to use PowerPoint slides for their presentations. Most papers will be in the range of 9 – 10 pages, double spaced including references. You must use APA format (see the library's website for a brief handout on APA style). I will provide class time to meet with each of you to hear about the topic you would like to pursue and to determine if your topic is acceptable. I will provide approval for topics that are feasible in scope and that have educational merit to the individual student as well as the class. The following topics are some ideas:

- investigate the long-term impact of a well known trauma such as Hurricane Katrina, the Branch Davidians, Patty Hearst and Stockholm Syndrome, children raised in eastern European countries' orphanages, the different impact of the Holocaust on different generations of survivors;
- do a service project with trauma survivors and write a paper that synthesizes what you experienced first-hand with the material from class;
- research a controversy related to trauma: the reality of false memories, the debate about whether dissociative identity disorder is a genuine disorder; whether PTSD is being over-diagnosed
- explore the professional literature and/or case material about different forms of treatment for trauma survivors such as play therapy, music or movement therapy, EMDR
- audiotape and transcribe an interview with a trauma survivor; in your paper, apply the concepts learned in class to your interviewee's experience with trauma and its aftermath
- explore attachment theory as it relates to traumatized children
- explore the damaging impact of trauma on health, or the neurobiological findings related to trauma
- the prevalence of, and attempts to control, human trafficking around the globe
- cultural, gender or age variations in response to trauma

Extra Credit: You may earn up to 10 points extra credit in this class. Extra credit is earned by bringing in and leading a 2-3 minute discussion of some news article related to trauma. The article can be from newspapers, magazines, or professional journals. I prefer that they relate to significant news events rather than stories that are sensational or similar to reality TV shows.

Class Schedule

Please read assignments prior to each class meeting.

Date	Topic	Reading
1/29	Introduction to the Course and Overview of Trauma & Its Impact	
2/5	What Early Trauma and Neglect Does to Kids' Brains and Behavior: The Cases of Tina and Sandy	Perry pp 1 – 56. <u>Reaction paper:</u> Perry refers frequently to “use dependence”. Explain what he means.
2/12	The Importance of Attachment and The Impact of Neglect	Perry pp. 57 – 124 <u>Reaction paper:</u> Using what Perry discusses, make an argument for whether and why you think the Branch Davidian children will grow up to be sociopaths.
2/19	Severe Deprivation and Early Chronic Terror: The Cases of The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog and Raven	Perry pp. 125- 202 <u>Reaction paper:</u> Imagine that you are the director of a trauma clinic. You are asked to provide treatment to a girl who is 7 yet can't talk or walk and is terrified of people due to extreme neglect. Describe the main aspects of the treatment you'd provide to her and your rationale for using these methods.
2/26	The Impact of Stress on the Brain	Perry pp. 203-246 <u>Reaction paper:</u> Perry describes some of the effects of stress on the brain. Review them briefly.
3/5	Joyanna Silberg, Ph. D. presenting “Treatment of Dissociative Children and Adolescents” Executive Vice-President Leadership Council on Child Abuse & Interpersonal Violence	Silberg, J. (1999). Parenting dissociative the dissociative child. <i>Many Voices</i> . Pp. 6-7. Silberg, J. (2004). The treatment of dissociation in sexually abused children from a family/attachment perspective. <i>Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training</i> , 41, 487-495. <u>Reaction Paper:</u> Why do some severely abused people develop different personality states?
3/12	Exam 1	
3/19	No class – Spring Break	
3/26	Mark Vidor – Child Protection Services and Their Role in Protecting Children	Herman pp. 1- 73 <u>Reaction paper:</u> A young woman was verbally abused and molested by her dad as a child; she currently dates men who treat her just as poorly as did her father. Using Herman's text, explain why this dynamic is so common among abused people.
4/2	Terror and Disconnection	Herman pp. 74-129 <u>Reaction paper:</u> Why does Herman think we need to create a new diagnosis “complex PTSD” to adequately describe the impact of chronic childhood trauma?
4/9	Treatment of Trauma: The Stages of Safety and Remembrance and Mourning	Herman pp. 133-195 <u>Reaction Paper:</u> Given how painful it is to recall trauma, why do therapists think that traumatized people need to talk at length about their traumas? What good does that do?
4/16	Stage 3: Reconnection;	Herman pp. 196 – 236

	Patty Prugh, Art Therapy as a Treatment for Trauma	<u>Reaction paper</u> : Imagine that you have a friend who is demoralized by how many years it is taking to “get over” his history of childhood sexual and physical abuse. Using what you’ve learned in class, explain why this treatment can take so long.
4/23	Dissociative Identity Disorder: Is it real?	Catch up on missed readings from past weeks <u>Reaction Paper</u> : Explain why art therapy can be particularly helpful as a form of treatment for trauma survivors.
4/30	The Treatment of Dissociative Identity Disorder: Treatment Outcome Research Diane Champe: A Survivor's Story	<u>Reaction Paper</u> : What has been most upsetting to learn about this semester? How does it change you, the way you relate to others, and the way you view the world?
5/7	Student Presentations	
5/14	Student Presentations	
5/29	Final	7 – 9:30 PM