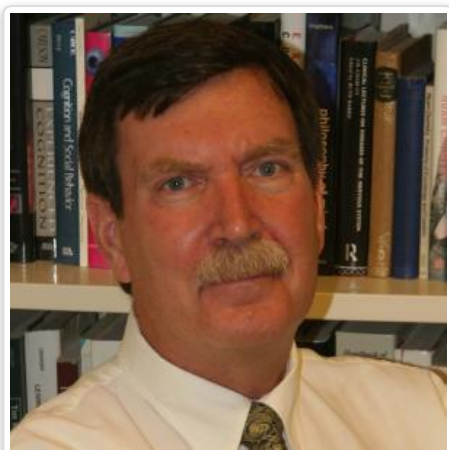


[RESEARCH](#) [PEOPLE](#) [GRADUATE](#)[UNDERGRADUATE](#) [CLINIC](#) [RESOURCES](#)[POST BAC](#)

John F. Kihlstrom



Professor Emeritus

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Office: 3333 Tolman Hall

Education:

Ph.D., University of
Pennsylvania

Research Area: [Cognition](#)

Secondary Research Area:
[Social-Personality](#)

Laboratory:

[The Human Ecology of
Memory](#)

Website:

[Kihlstrom Web site](#)

Research Interests:

Cognition in personal and social contexts; unconscious mental processes; memory; hypnosis; social cognition; personality; experimental psychopathology; health cognition and behavior



Research Description

Institute for the Study of Healthcare Organizations & Transactions

Prof. Kihlstrom's picks for the [Berkeley Book List](#)

My research interests all revolve around the study of cognition in personal and social contexts – how people acquire knowledge about themselves and other people and use this knowledge to guide their social interactions; how the distribution of knowledge across individuals forms a basis for social interaction; the influence of social structures and processes on individual cognition; and the ways that knowledge is acquired, represented, and used by larger social structures and institutions outside the individual.

I am particularly interested in unconscious mental life, as manifested in implicit memory and related phenomena, although my view of the unconscious departs radically from the standard Freudian, psychodynamic view. Since the beginning of my career I have been engaged in the study of hypnosis, which I view as an altered state of consciousness that occurs within a particular interpersonal setting.

In the study of social cognition, I am particularly interested in the self as a social-cognitive knowledge structure representing one's knowledge of oneself, acquired through experience and encoded in memory; and in the application of neuropsychological paradigms to the study of personality and social interaction (though I remain skeptical of much of what passes for "social neuroscience"). Together with Nancy Cantor (Syracuse University), I have promoted a "social intelligence" approach to personality, which argues that the important individual differences in personality lie in the funds of procedural and declarative knowledge that people bring to bear on their interactions with others.

I have initiated a project, the Study of the [Human Ecology of Memory](#), whose aim is to use the theme of memory to link psychology to the other social sciences, and to the arts and humanities. This enterprise is intended as a counterweight to the biological focus characteristic of cognitive neuroscience.

Finally, in collaboration with Dr. Lucy Canter Kihlstrom and the [Institute for the Study of Healthcare Organizations & Transactions](#), I have become interested in issues related to health cognition and behavior, including compliance with medical regimens, the use of hypnosis as an adjunctive treatment for pain and other medical problems, the placebo effect, and psychosomatic interactions. I believe that health psychology errs in focusing so narrowly on stress and disease, and that it should try to understand how people think about health and illness, and how their beliefs affect their interactions with healthcare providers and other components of the healthcare system.



Selected Publications



Teaching

Department of Psychology

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University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-1650
Phone: 510-642-5292
Fax: 510-642-5293
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