



Psychology 4590

Evolutionary Psychology

Spring, 2004

Professor: Steve Scher
Office: Physical Sciences 4143
www: ux1.eiu.edu/~cfsjs

Office Ph: 581-7269
Home Ph: 239-4262
Email: cfsjs@eiu.edu

Office Hours: Mondays 2-3; Tuesdays 11:30 – 12:30; Thursdays, 2-3

Class Format: This is a seminar class. As a result, the majority of the class will take the form of discussion of the assigned reading material. As a result, it is imperative that you do the assigned reading for the class before coming to class. If you do not, you will not be able to participate in class discussion. This will mean that your learning will suffer. In addition, your participation grade (see below) will also suffer.

Learning Goals: This class is designed to introduce students to the most common ways in which psychologists are attempting to apply ideas of evolution/natural selection to the study of human thought and behavior. Students will gain experience dealing with applying evolutionary logic to psychological problems, will gain experience reading original evolutionary psychology research and theory, and will learn about conflicts and disagreements in approaches to studying the evolution of human behavior.

Readings: Readings for this class will come mostly from the book *Human Evolutionary Psychology* (2002) by Louise Barrett, Robin Dunbar, & John Lycett. There will also be some reading from *Sense and Nonsense* (2002) by Kevin Laland & Gillian Brown. Finally, there will be readings taken from professional psychology journals and books. Copies of these readings will be available on reserve in the library.

Grades: Grades on this class will be based on class participation, 3 papers, and a group presentation.

Class Participation (15%). Class participation grades will be based on the degree to which you participate in most class discussions and show evidence that you have read and thought about the assigned reading material. ***Although attendance is will not be specifically factored into your grade, your participation grade will suffer if you do not regularly attend class.***

Paper 1 (20%). For Paper 1, you will be required to choose one of 3 approaches (human behavioral ecology; evolutionary psychology; sociobiology) to the study of the evolution of human psychology. You will need to find at least one source from a professional journal or book which supports this position, and at least one source from a professional journal or book which critiques the position. Your task will be to summarize the different positions, and to come up with your own conclusion (supported by logical, coherent arguments). **DUE MARCH 11, 2004**

Paper 2 (20%) For Paper 2, you will be required to develop a hypothesis related to evolutionary approaches to either *altruism* or *mate selection/attractiveness*. You will need to write a literature review that justifies or supports the reasonableness of your hypothesis. **DUE APRIL 1, 2004**

Paper 3 (25%) Paper 3 will be based on your group presentation (see below). You will be required to write a thorough review of evolutionary accounts of a particular topic, emphasizing different theories of how the particular phenomenon evolved. **DUE MAY 3, 2004**

Details will be provided about each paper assignment before the due date. However, as we cover related material in class and reading, you should be thinking about and making notes for, the papers.

Late papers will only be accepted under very exceptional circumstances. You should prepare your paper enough in advance to deal with problems like broken printers, slow internet connections, etc.

I will be happy to review rough drafts of papers. However, you must provide me with drafts *at least 1-1/2 weeks before you want me to give it back to you.*

Group Presentation (20%) For your group presentation, each group will choose one of the following topics: Language; Homosexuality; Culture; Jealousy; Mental Illness; Taste or Food Preferences/Disgust; Landscape Preferences; Child Abuse. The group will be required to develop a class-length presentation on the topic, teaching the rest of the class what evolutionary psychologists think about the evolution of each topic. **PRESENTED ON APRIL 15-29**

Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
January 13	Introduction	This Course Outline
January 15	Introduction	BDL, Ch. 1; LB, Ch. 1
January 20	History of Evolutionary Psychology & Sociobiology	LB, Ch. 2; Scher & Rauscher (2003), pp. 1-9; LB, Ch. 3
January 22	The Basics of Evolutionary Theory	BDL, Ch. 2
January 27	The Basics of Evolutionary Theory	
January 29	NO CLASS	
February 3	Human Behavioral Ecology	LB, Ch. 4
February 5	Human Behavioral Ecology	
February 10	Evolutionary Psychology: Adaptationism	LB, pp. 186 – 194; Sterelny & Griffiths, pp. 324-332; Symons (1992), pp. 140 – 145; Pinker (1997), pp. 165-174; LB, Ch. 5; Cosmides & Tooby (1997)
February 12	Adaptationism	Scher & Rauscher (2003) pp. 9-19; Sterelny & Griffiths (1999), pp. 43-48;
February 17	TBA	TBA
February 19	Critiques of Adaptationism	Sterelny & Griffiths (1999), pp. 224-228; Gould (1997a, 1997b); Dennett/Wright/Gould (1997)
February 24	Environment of Evolutionary Adaptedness	LB, pp. 161-162; 177-182; Foley (1997), pp. 205-212
February 26	Functionalism & Modularity	BDL, Ch. 10; LB, pp. 162-163; 182-186; Cosmides & Tooby (1997), ‘Principle 4. Different neural circuits are specialized for solving different adaptive problems.’
March 2	Modularity	
March 4	TBA	TBA

March 9	Kin Altruism	BDL, Ch. 3; Burnstein, Crandall, & Kitayama (1994).
March 11	Kin Altruism	
March 16	Spring Break – NO CLASS	
March 18	Spring Break – NO CLASS	
March 23	Reciprocal Altruism	BDL, Ch. 4
March 25	Is there such a thing as pure altruism?	TBA
March 30	Mate Choice & Attractiveness: Introduction	BDL, Ch. 5
April 1	More on Mate Choice	Kenrick et al. (1994); Simpson & Gangsted (1992).
April 6	Group Project Work	
April 8	The Parental Investment Model	BDL, Ch. 7
April 13	Group Project Work	
April 15-29	Group Presentations	

Readings listed in *bold face* are recommended, but not required.

BDL stands for Barrett, Dunbar, & Lycett (2002).

LB stands for Laland & Brown (2002).

Notice that Cosmides & Tooby (1997) is a webpage on the internet.

READING LIST: BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barrett, L., Dunbar, R., & Lycett, J. (2002). *Human Evolutionary Psychology*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Burnstein, E., Crandall, C., & Kitayama, S. (1994). Some neo-Darwinian decision rules for altruism: Weighing cues for inclusive fitness as a function of the biological importance of the decision. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 481-494.
- Cosmides, L. & Tooby, J. (1997). *Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer*. Available at: <http://www.psych.ucsb.edu/research/cep/primer.html>
- Gould, S.J. (1997a, June 12). Darwinian Fundamentalism. *The New York Review of Books*, XLIV(10), 34-37.
- Gould, S.J. (1997a, June 26). Evolution: The Pleasures of Pluralism. *The New York Review of Books*, XLIV(11), 47-52.
- Dennett, D.C./Wright, R./Gould, S.J. (1997, Aug. 14). Darwinian Fundamentalism: An Exchange. *The New York Review of Books*, XLIV(13), 64-65
- Foley, R. (1997). *Humans before Humanity: An Evolutionary Perspective*. Malden, Ma.: Blackwell Publishers.
- Kenrick, D.T., Neuberg, S.L., Zierk, K.L., & Krones, J.M. (1994). Evolution and social cognition: Contrast effects as a function of sex, dominance, and physical attractiveness. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 210-217. (Reprinted in DT Kenrick & CL Luce (eds.) (2004). *The Functional Mind: Readings in Evolutionary Psychology*. Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, pp. 289-300)
- Laland, K.N. & Brown, G.R. (2002). *Sense & Nonsense: Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Behaviour*. Oxford, Eng.: Oxford University Press.
- Pinker, S. (1997). *How the Mind Works*. NY: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Scher, S.J. & Rauscher, F. (2003). Nature read in truth or flaw: Locating alternatives in evolutionary psychology. In SJ Scher & F. Rauscher (eds.). *Evolutionary Psychology: Alternative Approaches*. Boston, Ma.: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Simpson, J.A. & Gangsted, S.W. (1992). Sociosexuality and romantic partner choice. *Journal of Personality*, 60, 31-51. (Reprinted in DT Kenrick & CL Luce (eds.) (2004). *The Functional Mind: Readings in Evolutionary Psychology*. Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon, pp. 265-279).
- Sterelny, K. & Griffiths, P.E. (1999). *Sex and Death: An Introduction to Philosophy of Biology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Symons, D. (1992). On the use and misuse of Darwinism in the study of human behavior. In JH Barkow, L. Cosmides, & J. Tooby (eds.). *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*. Oxford, Eng.: Oxford University Press.