

Anthropology 50: Fall 2011

Course Description:

This class is organized around three fundamental questions:

What commonalities run through our diversity as a species that we can identify as “human nature”? How did such commonalities come about, and what role does evolutionary theory have to play in understanding them?

Among the subjects we will take up are: non-human primate precursors, incest, polygamy, sexual selection, parental investment, life history traits (e.g. menopause), honesty and deception, Machiavellian intelligence, language origins, religion, sexual behavior, gender and mate choice, parent-offspring conflict, competition and altruism, jealousy, altruism, violence and warfare, and human ecology.

These subjects have been as controversial as they are fascinating. “Biological” accounts of humanity are said by some to be reductionist and to seriously understate the role of nurture, socialization and learning in the formation of human societies. We will grapple with this critique. What we believe about our nature also helps to shape it by establishing a sense of our possibilities and limitations. Such ideas are public and intensely personal.

Course Structure:

This course is being co-taught and will be divided into two halves each day. We will begin with a Lecture period for the first 40 minutes of the class, and then the second 40 minutes will be a seminar style with discussions and activities. You are required to attend both. The assigned reading that corresponds with each class should be finished before attending Lecture/Seminar so that you may get the most out of class.

Instructors:

Lecture: Bret Beheim

Email: babeheim@ucdavis.edu

Office: Wickson 3138

Office hours: Tues. 11am-12pm

Seminar: Katie Demps

Email: kedemps@ucdavis.edu

Office: Young 218

Office hours: Wed. 2-4pm

Reading Materials:

Cartwright, John. 2008. *Evolution and Human Behaviour: Darwinian Perspectives on Human Nature*. 2nd edition. Cambridge, MIT Press.

de Waal, Franz. 2005. *Our Inner Ape: Power, Sex, Violence, Kindness, and the Evolution of Human Nature*. New York: Penguin Group.

Daly and Wilson. 1988. *Homicide*. Aldine Transaction.

Clickers: Interwrite PRS RF Clicker 11-00682-01-R

Evaluation of Student Learning

Course grades will be based on (1) participation in lecture and seminar (200 points), (2) a field trip project (200 points), (3) online quizzes (280 points); and (4) the final paper (320 points).

Each student is expected to come to class prepared to participate and discuss the week's readings. In lecture, participation will involve personal response clickers, both to collect data and to pose problems. The clickers are available for purchase at the bookstore. The brand and model is: Interwrite PRS RF Clicker 11-00682-01-R. This should be the only clicker used on campus, so if you already have one, it's probably the correct kind. We do not recommend sharing a clicker with a friend, since you need to have your student ID entered into the clicker correctly to receive credit for your participation (students who share invariably end up losing credit by answering under their friend's ID).

The field trip project will ask you to explore a course topic in an interactive manner by designing and participating in an observation of human nature. You will be expected to meet with one of the instructors in office hours to discuss the field trip, and will then hand in a written report of your experience.

The four quizzes will be available on Smartsite, each over a 72-hour period (Friday morning to Sunday night) and spread throughout the quarter. Each quiz will have three short-answer questions drawing from the lectures and the three books.

The final paper will be a 4-6 page paper based on an evolutionary problem outline in Daly and Wilson's *Homicide*. You will outline the theoretical basis for the problem and discuss evidence for and against it as presented in *Homicide* and other sources. It must be submitted by Friday, Dec. 9th by 5:00 pm, though you may turn it in early if you wish.

Policies and Expectations:

Attendance in lecture and seminar is necessary to receive participation credit.

Unexcused, habitual lateness in either will factor into participation credit.

Plagiarism, which means passing off someone else's words or ideas as your own, is a serious form of cheating and will be punished as much as humanly possible, including a zero on the assignment and disciplinary action by Student Judicial Affairs.

Finally, a deadline is a deadline; if you know you are not going to meet it, contact Katie or Bret in advance (i.e. more than one day) and we can discuss the situation. The sooner you talk to us, the better we can help you.

Course Schedule:

Date	Lecture	Seminar	Reading	Events
Sep 22	What is human nature?	Class Intro	de Waal Ch. 1	
Sep 27	The World Before Darwin	Scientific processes	Cartwright Ch. 1-2	Bring clicker to class
Sep 29	Darwin and Victorian Thought	Evaluating data	de Waal Ch. 2	
Oct 4	Adaptive Thinking and the Naturalistic Fallacy	Natural selection	Cartwright Ch. 3	
Oct 6	Primate societies	The New Chimpanzees	Cartwright Ch. 4, de Waal Ch. 4	Quiz 1
Oct 11	Human origins and the EEA	Katie's choice	de Waal Ch. 5	
Oct 13	Evolutionary Psychology	Sensation and Perception	Cartwright Ch. 11-13	
Oct 18	Sexual Psychology	Mate choice	Daly and Wilson <i>Preface</i> , Ch. 1	Last day for field trip meetings
Oct 20	Rationality and Altruism	Economic games 1	de Waal Ch. 5	
Oct 25	Cooperation and Trust	Economic games 2	Daly and Wilson Ch. 2 (to page 24 and pp. 30-35)	
Oct 27	Language	Infanticide	Daly and Wilson Ch. 4	Quiz 2
Nov 1	HBE - Marriage and Families	Life of Birds	Cartwright Ch. 9	
Nov 3	HBE - Alloparenting	Life of Birds (cont.)	Cartwright Ch. 10	Field trip report due
Nov 8	Spirituality and Religion	Death rituals	Daly and Wilson Ch. 5	
Nov 10	War and Violence	Culture of Honor	Daly and Wilson Ch. 6	Quiz 3

Date	Lecture	Seminar	Reading	Events
Nov 15	Darwinian medicine	Mental health cross culturally	Daly and Wilson Ch. 7 (to pp. 149)	
Nov 17	Bret's choice	Conflict and homicide	Daly and Wilson Ch. 8 (simulation and pp. 179-end)	
Nov 22	Human Ecology 1	Human Ecology 2	Daly and Wilson Ch. 9	
Nov 24	Holiday!			
Nov 29	Cultural evolution	Microsocieties	Cartwright Ch. 16	
Dec 1	The future of Human Diversity	Review	Daly and Wilson Ch. 12	Quiz 4

The final paper will be due on Dec. 9th no later than 5pm.