

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR FALL 2017

LSU HNRS 2030.2 “Evolution and Biology of Morality”

John Protevi

www.protevi.com/john/Morality

Study questions for SJ Gould, “Kropotkin Was No Crackpot”

1. What is the most common complaint against Darwinism?
2. Why is that complaint unfair?
3. What grain of truth is there in that complaint?
4. What is Huxley’s position on nature and morals?
5. What is Gould’s position on nature and morals?
6. What is Kropotkin’s position on nature and morals?
7. What did Gould first think about Kropotkin?
8. What changed Gould’s mind?
9. Explain the relation of these two sets of terms
 - a. Malthus, Darwin, Huxley, England, tropics, competition, struggle
 - b. Kropotkin, Russia, Siberia, cooperation, struggle
10. What are the two reasons Gould thinks that Kropotkin saw cooperation as more common than competition?
11. Why does Gould think Kropotkin is basically correct?
12. What are the two objections Gould makes to Kropotkin?

Study questions for Agustín Fuentes, “A new synthesis”

1. How does Fuentes characterize “basic neo-Darwinian theory”?
2. What are the main elements of each of the three new theories?
 - a. Jablonka / Lamb: multi-system inheritance
 - b. Oyama: Developmental Systems Theory
 - c. Odling-Smee: niche construction
3. In note 4, what is the relation of altruism, kin selection, and “reciprocal altruism”?
4. What are the main elements of the framework Fuentes is proposing?
5. How does his framework avoid a strict dichotomy between neo-Darwinian natural selection on cultural behavior and a non-biological “social constructivism”?
6. What are the main points in the section on human-pet relations?

Study questions on Katherine MacKinnon and Agustín Fuentes 2011, "Primates, Niche Construction, and Social Complexity: The Roles of Social Cognition and Altruism."

1. What is the proposed relation of primate and human sociality?
2. What are the two goals of the chapter?
3. Why does current neo-Darwinian thought make altruism problematic?
4. What did pre-20th C evolutionary thinkers say about altruism?
5. Within 20th C thinkers:
 - a. What is kin selection?
 - b. What is "reciprocal altruism"?
 - c. How did Wilson and Sober propose to rehabilitate the concept of group selection?
 - d. What is "niche construction"? How does it work w/r/t primate sociality?
6. What are the three forms of reciprocity proposed by De Waal and Brosnan?
7. What are "biological markets"? What do MacKinnon and Fuentes think about the concept?
8. What are primate social niches? What is primate "social intelligence"?
9. What is the relation of primate sociality and external environments?
10. How does "true altruism" arise?

SKIP the discussion of macaques and capuchins.

11. Page 135-36:
 - a. What are typical male and female behavior patterns in *Pan troglodytes*?
 - b. What are typical male and female behavior patterns in *Pan paniscus*?
 - c. What is the hunting behavior of *Pan troglodytes*?
 - d. What is a possible expression of intercommunity relations among *Pan troglodytes*?
12. What are some of the exceptional characteristics of *Homo sapiens*?
13. What are the main points of the sketch of early humans (p 137-38)?
14. What is the "cultural intelligence hypothesis"?
15. What have the authors tried to do in their essay?

Study questions on Richard Wrangham, "Evolution of Coalitionary Killing"

1. What is the content of the principal adaptive hypothesis (the "IPH") W argues for?
2. What does it explain?
3. What is its relation to human warfare?
4. What is the difference between the killer ape hypothesis and the chimpanzee violence hypothesis? What do these hypotheses claim to show about human warfare?
5. What are the socio-environmental-behavioral conditions for the CVH?
6. What are the common objections to any attempts to link warfare to evolution?
7. What are the specific objections to the IPH?
8. Why does W distinguish dyadic from coalitionary intra-specific killing?
9. Why is it important for W to discuss wolf coalitionary killing?
10. What is the "lethal-raiding problem"?
11. How does W handle the observation that many modern soldiers do not want to fight?
12. What six components of chimpanzee intergroup aggression are relevant to lethal raiding?
13. What does the IPH say is the function of unprovoked intercommunity aggression?
14. What are the origins of chimpanzee power imbalances?
15. What does the free-rider problem have to do with the IPH?
16. What hypotheses attempt to explain "deep incursions"?
17. Does higher dominance always produce higher fitness? Why or why not?
18. Why does W prefer the dominance drive hypothesis over the proximate competition one?
19. What does male bonding fail to explain?
20. What are the three attempts to explain bonobos not engaging intercommunity aggression?
21. What three hypotheses attempt to explain human lethal raiding?
22. W (and Keeley) treat archeological evidence of coalitionary killing as indicating lethal raiding, which they treat as "warfare." Explain how this overlooks the distinction btw vengeance and war, according to Kelly's definition of war as anonymous intergroup violence.
23. Is "intergroup hostility" really "universal" in "contemporary human populations"?
24. Is "xenophobia" and "ingroup-outgroup bias" really "ubiquitous" nowadays?
25. What would be the key point in showing the LCA performed lethal raiding (homology), as opposed to chimpanzee and humans having evolved it independently after the split (analogy)?
26. What are the major forms of objections?
27. Why do some people claim biology is irrelevant to the history of human warfare?
28. What does the IPH suggest about natural selection on human psychological traits?
29. What are the main implications of the IPH?
30. How does W handle the idea that modern state warfare has its own momentum?
31. What is the relation of lethal raiding and hunting? How does the IPH differ from the killer ape hypothesis w/r/t that relation?
32. What does W say about the implications of the IPH for morality?
33. What does W say that anthropologists should do after reading this article?

Study questions for Paul Roscoe, "Intelligence, Coalitional Killing, and the Antecedents of War"

1. First page:
 - a. What is the central claim of the article, as stated in the abstract?
 - b. What is the original purpose of the human aversion to killing other humans?
 - c. What ability do we have that allows us to disable that aversion?
2. "The Behavioral Ecology of Fighting"
 - a. What are the factors that are weighed against each other?
 - b. When does "ritualized" fighting occur?
 - c. What is Wrangham's "imbalance-of-power hypothesis" (IPH)?
 - i. What is a fission-fusion pattern and how does it relate to the IPH?
 - ii. Why are chimpanzee "deep incursions" important?
 - iii. How does Wrangham see the relation of human war and chimp raiding?
 - iv. How does Wrangham arrive at his "innate disposition to kill" idea?
3. "Innate Dispositions and Police Battalion 101"
 - a. What are the objections to the IPH from chimp evidence?
 - b. What are the main points Roscoe takes from Browning's case study?
4. "Intelligence and the Origins of Human Conspecific Killing"
 - a. What are the three questions the Aversion Thesis faces?
 - b. Is the aversion learned or innate?
 - c. Once emerged, how did it become stabilized and persistent?
 - d. How does intelligence play a role in the Aversion Thesis?
 - e. What is the difference between affective and instrumental aggression?
 - f. What are some of the ways intelligence has developed of disabling the aversion?
5. "The Psychological and Cultural 'Technologies' of War"
 - a. How are perceptions that trigger de-escalation altered or distorted?
 - b. How is the aversion counterbalanced or overwhelmed?
 - c. How is human psychology altered to allow killing?
6. "Chimpanzees, Intelligence, and Coalitional Conspecific Killing"
 - a. What are the proximate goals of "deep incursions"?
 - b. How do they enable chimp community destruction w/o that being the explicit goal?
 - c. What two tests could distinguish the IPH and the Intelligence Hypothesis?
7. Conclusion
 - a. What is the role of natural selection and genetic control of emotion in the IPH?
 - b. What is the relation of emotion and intelligence in Roscoe's Intelligence Hypothesis?
 - c. How do war and intelligence interact in human evolution?

Study questions on Brian Hare, "Survival of the Friendliest: *Homo sapiens* Evolved via Selection for Prosociality"

1. What is the challenge of studying human cognitive evolution?
2. What are the types of cognition Hare focuses upon? How did they evolve? What is "mentalizing"?
3. What is the relation of cognition and emotion?
4. What is "prosociality"?
5. What is domestication? What are its signs? Which species display it?
6. What is the main difference between *Pan* and *Homo* when it comes to social understanding?
7. What is the "neural crest hypothesis"? What does it imply about the relation of development and evolution?
8. Why did scientists compare dogs to domesticated foxes?
9. How did dogs evolve from wolves? How have humans co-evolved with dogs?
10. What are the main behavioral differences between bonobos and chimpanzees?
11. How do they differ in endocrinology, neurobiology, morphology, cognition, and development?
12. What is the "emotional reactivity hypothesis"?
13. What effects does low reactivity have on "mentalizing"?
14. What are the neurohormones that might have been targeted for selection for low reactivity?
15. What is the Human Self-Domestication (HSD) hypothesis? What does it predict?
16. How are the proposed tolerance-related hormone changes in our ancestors detected in fossils?
17. What is the "temporal paradox" of full-blown human cultural behavior?
18. What is "cultural ratcheting" and how does it relate to social tolerance?
19. Why does Hare spend so much time on human eyes? What is the relation of development and evolution by which white sclera might have evolved?
20. What is "like-me psychology"? How did it drive HSD?
21. Is there a tension between the assumption of out-group hostility and cultural diffusion? How can this tension be resolved?
22. What role does oxytocin play in "like-me psychology"?
23. What is a "reverse dominance hierarchy"?
24. In what ways is cortical self-control a key feature of HSD? What is its relation to reduced sub-cortical reactivity?
25. What is the role of delayed and extended development in HSD?
26. From "future research": what is the relation of the "cooperative breeding hypothesis" and the HSD hypothesis?

Study questions on Christopher Boehm, "Ancestral Hierarchy and Conflict"

1. What is the "behavioral phylogenetic approach" and how does it rely on parsimony?
2. What are the commonalities of behavior in humans, chimps, and bonobos?
3. What are the differences in social dominance behavior between wild bonobos and chimps?
4. What happens in some captive chimpanzee groups?
5. How does Boehm answer the challenge to his use of contemporary foragers?
6. How does he characterize contemporary forager life in relation to chimp vs bonobo behavior?
7. What difference does human morality make?
8. In what ways do humans resemble chimpanzees? In what ways bonobos?
9. What happens with dyadic conflicts in a strong hierarchy?
10. What role does intra-group coalitions play in creating egalitarian social orders?
11. What happened in early humans w/r/t egalitarianism and conscience?
12. What can happen with dyadic conflict in egalitarian societies?
13. What difference does weaponry and understanding of death make for human conflict vs chimp?
14. What is the relation of revenge to foraging and to farming?
15. Can resource competition (a "materialist theory") fully explain forager inter-group violence ("warfare" in Boehm's terms)?
16. How does morality function in conflict management?
17. When does voluntary spatial avoidance of antagonists become an option?
18. What difference does farming make to conflict management? What social orders arise?
19. What theory of state origin does Boehm sketch?
20. What difference would having a bonobo model for the LCA rather than a chimp model make?
21. What assumptions about scalability must Boehm make to include international war in his story?

Study questions on Ivan Gonzalez-Cabrera, "On social tolerance and the evolution of human normative guidance"

1. Why are philosophers interested in the evolution of moral psychology?
2. What is the picture of evolution of morality given by evolution stories that assume a chimpanzee-like hominin ancestor, or a chimpanzee-like LCA?
3. What changes if we assume bonobos are comparatively better model for the LCA?
4. How does Kitcher's theory rely on a chimp-like LCA?
5. What does Kitcher think happened early in the hominin line?
6. How does Kitcher's theory constitute a vindication of ethical progress? What must he assume about ethics and progress?
7. How does the chimp model determine Kitcher's story about the fear of punishment origin of normative guidance?
8. What are the differences in chimps and bonobos in social behavior and in sexual and play behavior?
9. Why is it important that these behavioral differences might be grounded in neuroanatomical differences?
10. Note 3: what happens with "plasticity-first" evolutionary hypotheses?
11. Explain the way the mosaic hypothesis does not assume the LCA behaved like contemporary bonobos, only that when we compare contemporary chimps and bonobos, you get a better LCA model if you look at bonobo behavior?
12. Why does a bonobo-like model allow a better "access" to "evolutionary trajectories" to imitative learning and collective foraging?
13. What does the genetic evidence of chimp, bonobo, and human show?
14. Why does the author always say distinguish the LCA from early hominin ancestors? Which is the more conservative claim?
15. What are the 8 characteristics the author will examine?
16. What is the comparative relation of neural circuitry for anxiety, empathy, and inhibition of aggression among chimps, bonobos, and humans?
17. What is the comparative relation w/r/t social tolerance?
18. What is the relation of shyness and "mindreading"? Why can mindreading not rest purely on tolerance?
19. What is the relation of tolerance and sharing, and on cooperation?
20. What are the comparative relations of chimp, bonobo, and human sexual behavior?
21. What are the two competing hypotheses for reduced human male aggression to females?
22. How does the author use the fossil record to discuss the relation of *Ardipithecus ramidus* and *Australopithecus afarensis*?
23. How does making *A. afarensis* a "paraphyletic sister lineage" help his bonobo-like LCA argument?
24. Compare Kitcher's "top-down" approach to the author's "bottom-up" approach?
25. What are the main points of the "shared intentionality" approach?
26. What is the relation of joint goals and normativity?
27. What is the relation of cooperative breeding and collaborative foraging?

Study questions on Norenzayan et al, "The cultural evolution of prosocial religions"

1. Abstract:
 - a. What are the two puzzles the article aims to explain and to link together?
 - b. What enables prosocial religions to play a role in cultural evolution?
 - c. How do the authors link by-product and adaptationist theories of evolution of religion?
2. Introduction:
 - a. Why can't kin selection / reciprocal altruism explain large cooperative anonymous societies?
 - b. What are "Big Gods"? How are they different from forager gods / spirits?
 - c. What are some mechanisms to large societies other than prosocial religions?
 - d. How is "cooperation" implicitly defined such that it can include direct or debt slavery?
 - e. What are the psychological traits, norms, and practices that cultural evolution targets?
 - f. What are the key insights of the "cognitive-evolutionary synthesis"?
3. Theoretical foundations
 - a. What are the core cognitive tendencies studied by cognitive science of religion?
 - i. How do they relate to cultural evolution of religion?
 - ii. What is "mentalizing" or "theory of mind," and why is it important?
 - b. How do supernatural watchers build on ordinary social surveillance?
 - c. Cultural learning:
 - i. What is "over-imitation"?
 - ii. What are the three mechanisms usually studied here?
 - iii. Why do the authors want to focus on context-based mechanisms and CREs?
 - d. Cultural group selection relies on inter-group competition.
 - i. What are the mechanisms here?
 - ii. What are the types of evidence used?
 - iii. What are the "complexes" cultural evolution targets?
 - iv. What are the criteria of success for the selected complexes?
 - e. What are the 3 factors in the authors' synthesis?
 - f. What are the specific hypotheses?
 - g. Why are archeology, ethnography, and history important evidence bases for the authors?
4. What was most striking to you in the discussions in sections 3-6 of the article?
5. Implications, etc.
 - a. Which of the counterarguments do they reject and which ones do they leave open?
 - b. How do they account for secularization / disbelief / atheism?
 - i. What are the pathways to atheism they discuss?
 - ii. They don't discuss any positive psychological rewards to atheism. What might they be?
 - iii. What is the relation of Big Gods and effective government?
6. COMMENTS
 - a. Huebner and Sarkissian comment (31-32): as opposed to Big God **and** Big Gov as top-down, what other forms of social order do they examine?
 - b. Johnson and Cohen comment (32): what is the link of intrinsic motivation for altruism and belief in a benevolent God?
 - c. Soler and Lenfesty comment (39): what do the commenters criticize about the article's assumptions about costs and benefits?
7. RESPONSE: what do Norenzayan et al say about each of the three above comments? Do they treat the comments fairly? How satisfied are you with their response?

Study questions on Gerald Gaus, "The Egalitarian Species"

1. From what perspective is morality a "social coordination device"?
2. What is the Functional Desideratum?
3. What is the Moral Sentiments Desideratum?
4. What is Hayek's Worry?
5. What view of relation of social and psychological evolution does it rest upon?
6. What does Hayek think about collectivist desires?
7. What is the relation of micro- and macro-scale selection in cultural evolution? What desideratum is in play here?
8. What is in-group rule selection and how does it relate to the moral sentiments desideratum?
9. How does Gaus assuage Hayek's Worry?
10. What does Gaus think forager reverse-dominance hierarchy or egalitarianism aims at?
11. How does Gaus think conscience evolved?
12. How does Gaus handle behavioral economics evidence that modern people have "a taste for equality"?
13. How do modern corporations figure in to Gaus's story?
14. Gaus thinks we settle for cooperation and sharing as a means of protecting autonomy because we have internalized means of policing a deep desire to dominate.
 - a. What difference would it make to see evidence of bottom-up, early arriving, pleasure-induced motivation toward cooperation and sharing?
 - b. And how might that relate to a critique of the "Chimpanzee Referential Doctrine"?

Study questions for Cor van der Weele, "Darwin's purity, sympathy's complexities; De Waal, Darwin and Adam Smith"

1. Why does the author think it is important to consider De Waal's work?
2. Put into your own words the capsule treatments of De Waal, Darwin, and Smith on p 584.
3. De Waal:
 - a. How is De Waal different from Huxley?
 - b. What is "emotional contagion"?
 - c. What are the two poles of human nature?
 - d. What is the difference between empathy and sympathy?
 - e. Why does De Waal move from sympathy to empathy?
4. Darwin:
 - a. What are the 4 steps in the development of morality for Darwin?
 - b. What is the relation of memory and sympathy?
 - c. What else besides sympathy is needed for moral judgment?
5. Smith:
 - a. What is the "impartial spectator"?
 - b. What is important about the desire to be lovable and praiseworthy?
 - c. What is the target of moral judgment for Smith?
 - d. How does Smith split the difference between Hutcheson and Mandevile?
6. Concluding section: "some thoughts on alignment"
 - a. Explain the role sympathy plays in mixed complexity in moral judgment (Smith and Darwin).
 - b. Explain the role empathy plays in De Waal's simple dualism in human nature.
 - c. Three problems for De Waal
 - i. How is De Waal's work confused?
 - ii. How does the author use the work of Jonathan Haidt in point 2?
 - iii. How does the author think a notion of expanded or enlightened self-interest would help reflection on morality?