

CULTURAL EVOLUTION: MIND-CULTURE CO-EVOLUTION

This is a course in the evolution of human culture from its origins up to the present. The emphasis will be on what happens in the mind, because that is the locus of culture. The course presupposes a general knowledge of human history and culture and a relatively high level of sophistication in thinking about such topics.

Lecture material will consist of various articles and book chapters written either individually or jointly by me and the late David G. Hays. Most of these materials can be found at this website:

Mind-Culture Coevolution:
<http://asweknowit.ca/evcult/>

The introduction to that website can serve as a general description of the kinds of issues we will investigate in this course:

Introduction: Mind-Culture Co-Evolution
<http://asweknowit.ca/evcult/Intro.shtml>

For preliminary reading, I suggest that everyone read:

Laland, K. M. and G. R. Brown (2002). *Sense and Nonsense: Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Behavior*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

This consists of eight chapters introducing and comparing evolutionary approaches to human behavior. The chapters on memetics and gene-culture coevolution are most germane to this course, but all chapters should be perused.

You should also read at least one each from the following two groups:

History:

Harris, M. (1977). *Cannibals and Kings*. New York, Random House.

Toffler, A. (1973). *The Third Wave*. New York, William Morrow and Company, Inc.

Wright, R. (2000). *Nonzero*. New York, Pantheon Books.

Mind:

Barnes, M. H. (2000). *Stages of Thought: The Co-Evolution of Religious Thought and Science*. New York, Oxford University Press.

Donald, M. (1991). *Origins of the Modern Mind: Three Stages in the Evolution of Culture and Cognition*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

Piaget, J. (1970). *Genetic Epistemology*. New York, Columbia University Press.

Amazon List

Here's an Amazon list that I prepared on basic books in cultural evolution:

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/listmania/list-browse/-/XCHXVP13VN3V/ref=cm_aya_av_lm_more/002-9437394-9474431