

MODULE 15: EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY: UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NATURE

EXPLAINING BEHAVIOR TENDENCIES THROUGH EVOLUTIONISTS APPROACH

- **EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY** the study of the evolution of behavior and the mind, using principles of natural selection (Charles Darwin).
- **NATURAL SELECTION** is the principle that, among the range of inherited trait variations, those contributing to reproduction and survival will most likely be passed on to succeeding generations.

NATURAL SELECTION AND ADAPTATION

- **MUTATIONS** are a random error in gene replication that leads to a change.
- Our adaptive flexibility in responding to different environments contributes to our fitness – our ability to survive and reproduce.

EVOLUTIONARY SUCCESS HELPS EXPLAIN SIMILARITIES

- Our shared human traits “were shaped by natural selection acting over the course of human evolution.
- Have a universal shared moral instincts survive from a distant past. We are predisposed to behave in ways that promoted our ancestors’ surviving and reproducing. With famine now rare in Western cultures, obesity is a grouping problem due to our innate need to store for survival.
- Today, evolutionists try to understand the cross between innate instincts to the modern day implications.

AN EVOLUTIONARY EXPLANATION OF HUMAN SEXUALITY

- Men, obviously, cross culturally think about sex and initiate sex more often than females. Men also have a lower threshold for perceiving warm responses as a sexual come-on. Men also perceive a woman’s friendliness to sexual interest. **MEN THINK TOO MUCH INTO FEMALES THAT ALWAYS LEAD DOWN THE ROAD OF SEX.**
- Reasons as to why females are more selective: Women pair wisely for gene purposes while Men pair widely.
- Men view women in a fashion of those at the peak of their fertility. Example would be a teenager attracted to an older female. Older males are usually attracted to younger females.
- Females are more likely to mate with a male who is inclined to stick around to help with survival purposes during the pregnancy and after.
- Nature selects behaviors that increase the likelihood of sending one’s genes into the future.

- Evolutionary psychologists acknowledge struggling to explain some traits and behaviors such as same-sex attraction and suicide.

REFLECTIONS ON NATURE AND NURTURE

- If genes and hormones predispose males to be more physically aggressive than females, culture may magnify this gender difference through norms that encourage males to be macho and females to be the kinder, gentler sex.
- Today, both women and men are now seen as “fully capable of effectively carrying out organizational roles at all levels”
- Nature vis Nurture is better explained through the **BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH**.
- Roger Sperry denotes the idea of the mind and brain known as the **HOLISTIC SYSTEM**. This is where the brain creates and controls the emergent mind, also known as consciousness.

BE ABLE TO ANSWER: What are the three main criticisms of evolutionary psychology’s explanations?

How does the biopsychosocial approach explain our individual development?

PRACTICE FRQ: Explain four of the important ideas behind natural selection.