Evolutionary Psychology, Cognitive Archaeology, and Psychological Pre-History

**Course Description:** This is a course that will contain Honors College undergraduates as well as graduate students. As the title suggests, it will consider Evolutionary Psychology, Cognitive Archaeology, and Psychological Pre-History.

**Texts:** There is no textbook per se, but you will read 7-8 journal articles and such…

**The Basics:** Keep in mind that a syllabus sometimes shifts a little as a course unfolds. I say that by way of noting the importance of class attendance, as you will be held responsible for any change in plans announced in class. The other basic admonition every syllabus must include is that cheating (broadly defined) is not allowed. Or, as the university likes me to say: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (see Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).” And, note that “Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must go through the Academic Support Committee. For more information, please contact the Director of Disability Resources & Services, Gee Library, Room 132, (903) 886-5835.” Last: Only qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, even license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

**Course Format:** In general, I will lecture, but as this is a seminar class I expect to be interrupted often with your thoughtful questions. There are some days indicated on the syllabus where I have put “discuss” – this translates into you making it clear you did the assigned reading.

**Assignments:** There are no Tests. All students need to read TWO additional original sources, and write a “glorified book report” on them both. I am not a word-counter, but these should be roughly “10 pages” in terms of depth/detail. ONE of the two MUST be from the list below, but the other you pick (and I approve). I assume you will select a journal article, but another book would be okay. Last, I would like for you to do a lecture over ONE of your additional readings.

**Readings to Pick From***
- Mithen, S. (2003). *After the ice: A global human history 20000-5000 BC.*

*I will add more options as needed so that everyone does something unique*
Grades: Everybody starts with an A. Do what is asked each week and with respect to the papers/lecture and you’ll surely keep it. That said, consider each paper, your lecture, and class discussions to each be worth 25% of your grade.

The Instructor: Dr. Tracy B. Henley

Office Hours: You are welcome to drop by and speak with me at any time that I am in my office – which should be most of everyday save Tuesdays. Beyond that, you can see me after class to schedule a meeting. Or, you can always reach me at tracy.henley@tamuc.edu

Schedule of Events:
1/17/W
Review of Syllabus

I. Foundations
1/19/F The Big Picture
What is Evolutionary Psychology, Cognitive Archaeology and Psychological Pre-History?
Evolution and Religion
Evolution and Culture

1/22/M History and Theory
Darwin and Wallace

1/24/W History and Theory continued…
Beyond Darwin: Other Key Figures
Core Concepts
Criticisms: Just So Stories and the overuse of animal and “modern” examples

1/26/F Evolutionary Basics
The Basics of Evolution and Genetics

1/29/M Evolutionary Basics continued…
Kinship and Kin Selection
Altruism and Cooperation
Reciprocity
   The Prisoner’s Dilemma

1/31/W Human Adaptation
The Basics of Human Survival

II. Human Evolution and Cognitive Archaeology
2/2/F Hominid Evolution
Ages, Apes, and Hominids
Out of Africa vs Multiregionalism

2/5/M Hominid Evolution continued…
Hands, Brains, and Bi-Pedalism
2/7/W **What makes us, us?**
When did we become Human?
The notion of Modernity

2/9/F **What makes us, us, continued…**
A first look at the Neolithic Revolution
Discuss Mithen Reading

**III. Evolutionary Psychology Basics: Human Nature**

2/12/M **Theory of Mind**
Theory of Mind and Machiavellian Intelligence

2/14/W **The Expression of Emotion**
The Expression of Emotion
**READ FOR FRIDAY**: Humphrey, N. (2017). Humans are the only animals who crave oblivion through suicide. *Aeon* (available online)

2/16/F **Personality and Psychopathology**
Personality and Pathology from an Evolutionary Perspective
Discuss Humphrey Reading

2/19/M **Sociality**
Social Organization and Cooperation basics

2/21/W **Sociality continued…**
Behaving Badly…

2/23/F **Aggression**
Aggression, Warfare, and Homicide

2/26/M **Discuss (both your) Paper Topics and Set Student Lectures**

2/28/W **Sexuality**
The Red Queen…
Primate Sexuality and Society

3/2/F **Sexuality continued…**
Human Mate Selection and Sexuality
**The Male Perspective**

3/5/M **Sexuality continued…**
Human Mate Selection and Sexuality Continued…
**The Female Perspective**
3/7/W Gender
Gender and Society
An aside on Amazons

3/9/F Development
Lifespan Development from an Evolutionary Perspective
   Grandparents and why we live to get old…
   Families from an Evolutionary Perspective

SPRING BREAK

IV. The Essential Element: Human Social Organization

3/19/M Social Behavior
Social Groups: Tajfel and Turner
The Evolutionary Psychology of Friendship

3/21/W Social Behavior continued…
Social Organization
Ritual
Discuss Rossano Reading

3/23/F Hunter-Gatherer Social Behavior
About Hunters and Gatherers

3/26/M Beyond Hunter-Gatherer Social Behavior
Dominance
How Leaders Emerge

3/28/W When, Why, and How our Social Behavior Evolved
Göbekli Tepe and Social Organization
Norenzayan and Big Gods
Discuss Watkins Reading

V. The Evolution of Cognition

3/30/F Learning and Cognition
Rationalist Epistemology
   Gibson and Beyond: What we are born knowing
Embodied and Extended Cognition
Associative Learning

4/2/M The Nature of Human Cognition
The Evolution of Thinking
4/4/W **Language**  
The Evolution of Language  
Discuss Donald Reading

4/6/F **Language continued…**  
Language and Society…  
  The work of Merlin Donald and Robin Dunbar

4/9/M **Symbolic Representations**  
Art and Symbolic Representation  
Burials

4/11/W **Moral Reasoning and The Self**  
The Evolution of Morality  
The Self

**VI. Pre-History: Göbekli Tepe as a Case Study**

4/13/F **The Neolithic Revolution**  
The Neolithic Revolution according to Childe  
Cauvin: The Neolithic Revolution Reconsidered  

4/16/M **Göbekli Tepe**  
Göbekli Tepe in some detail  
Discuss Henley Reading

4/18/W **The Origins of Religion**  
The Evolution of Religion  
  From Shamen to Ghosts  
  Back to Göbekli Tepe  
  Gods

4/20/F **Writing as Symbolic Representation**  
The Evolution of Writing

**VII. Later Cognitive Archaeology and Pre-History**

4/23/M **Human Universals**  
Human Universals  
  Why we have them…

4/25/W **Human Universals continued…**  
Human Universals  
  What they seem to be…

4/27/F **A game of Civilization?**  
Later Pre-History and Psychology: From Göbekli Tepe to Thales
### VIII. Your Turn to Present

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>4/30/M</td>
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