

The Evolution of Mind and Morality: 19th-21st Centuries Fall, 2009

Instructor: Robert J. Richards

HIST 25501/35501, CHSS 35900,
PHIL 24300/34300, PSYC 28200,
HiPSS 25901

This lecture-discussion course will focus on theories of the evolution of mind and moral behavior. We will begin with 19th-conceptions of mental and moral evolution (Darwin, Huxley, James), and then jump to the contemporary period, examining debates about human consciousness. The last part of the course will concentrate on recent developments in sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, and evolutionary ethics.

I. Books for the course:

The following books for the course are in the Seminary Co-operative Bookstore:

Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* (Princeton)

Robert J. Richards, *Darwin and the Emergence of Evolutionary Theories of Mind and Behavior* (Chicago)—this latter is only recommended and relevant parts will be photocopied and included in the packet.

There is a course packet, which will be for sale in the Fishbein Center (Social Sciences, 205): *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.

II. Course Requirements:

A. The texts for discussion must be thoroughly read, and everyone should be prepared to discuss the primary material. The recommended readings should also be examined, especially as aids for papers and discussion.

B. In the first half of the class, the instructor will provide short lectures to introduce topics drawn from the readings. In the second half of each class, discussion will be initiated from one page papers that all students must have produced for that class. These papers—no longer than one page—should state some problem or central aspect of the reading for that class and then take a pro or con position in respect to the material developed. These should not be summaries of the reading, but the articulation of an important thesis contained therein and a critical stance in respect of that thesis. Undergraduate students should send the papers to the “drop box” on the Chalk site for the course; graduate students should send the papers to the instructor via email attachment. These papers should be sent by noon of the Monday before class. On these and all papers, you should make sure your name is on them and that you indicate whether you are an undergraduate or graduate student.

C. Two 8-10 page papers on the material of the course, the first due on November 2nd, and the second on December 4th (the papers should be turned in by noon to the Fishbein Center, Social Sciences Research Building, room 205).

III. Office hours: TT, 1:15-3:00 p.m. (and by appointment), Social Science Research 205. Phone: 702-8348. Fax: 743-8949. Email: r-richards@uchicago.edu; home page: <http://home.uchicago.edu/~rjr6/>.

I. Introduction: Scope of the Considerations (Sept. 29)

II. Darwin, Huxley, and James: Theories of Mind in Nature (Oct.6)

A. Texts for discussion:

1. Darwin's *Descent of Man*, chap 2, pp. 19-21
2. T. H. Huxley, "On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata, and Its History" (1874). In *Selected Readings in Theories of the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
3. William James "The Automaton Theory," *Principles of Psychology*, 2 vols. (New York: Holt, 1890), chap. 5. In *Selected Readings in Theories of the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.

B. Recommended Reading:

1. Robert J. Richards, *Darwin and the Emergence of Evolutionary Theories of Mind and Behavior* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), chap. 9. In *Selected Readings*.

III. James on Consciousness and the Perception of Reality (Oct. 13)

A. Texts for Discussion:

1. William James, "The Stream of Thought," *Principles of Psychology*, chap. 9. In *Selected Readings*.
2. William James, "The Perception of Reality," *Principles of Psychology*, chap. 21. In *Selected Readings*.
3. Daniel Dennett, "The Cartesian Theater and 'Filling in' the Stream of Consciousness," in *The Nature of Consciousness*, ed. N. Block et al. (Cambridge: MIT, 1998), pp. 83-88. In *Selected Readings*.

B. Recommended reading:

1. Owen Flanagan, "Consciousness as a Pragmatist Views It," in *The Cambridge Companion to William James*, ed. R. Putnam (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 25-48. In *Selected Readings*.

IV. Contemporary Debates about Consciousness (Oct. 20)

A. Texts for Discussion:

1. Jerry Fodor, "The Mind-Body Problem," in *Philosophy for the 21st Century*, ed. S. Cahn et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 451-459. In *Selected Readings*.
2. Thomas Nagel, "What Is It Like to be a Bat?" in *The Nature of Consciousness*, pp. 519-28. In *Selected Readings*.
3. Daniel Dennett, "Quinning Qalia," in *The Nature of Consciousness*, 619-642. In *Selected Readings*.
4. Thomas Nagel, "Dennett: Consciousness Dissolved," in *Other Minds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 86-89. In *Selected Readings*.
5. David Chalmers, "Facing Up to the Problem of Consciousness," in *Journal of Consciousness Studies* (1995). In *Selected Readings*.

V. Darwinian Theory of Morality (Oct. 27)

A. Texts for discussion:

1. Darwin, *Descent of Man*, chaps. 3 and 5
2. "The Naturalistic Fallacy," in A. G. N. Flew, *Evolutionary Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 37-51. In *Selected Readings*.

B. Recommended Reading:

1. Robert J. Richards, "Darwin on Mind, Morals, and Emotions," *Cambridge Companion to Darwin*, ed. J. Hodge and G Radick, 2nd. Ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
2. James Moore and Adrian Desmond, "Introduction" to the Penguin edition of the *Descent*. In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*
3. Richards, Review of Moore and Desmond's edition, *British Journal for the History of Science* 39 (2006): 615-17. In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.

VI. Sociobiology (Nov. 3)

A. Texts for Discussion:

1. Edward O. Wilson, *Sociobiology: the New Synthesis* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), chaps. 1 and 27.
2. Sociobiology Study Group of Science for the People, "Sociobiology—Another Biological Determinism" (1976). In *Selected Readings*.
3. Steven Pinker, *The Blank Slate: the Modern Denial of Human Nature* (New York: Viking, 2002), chap. 6 ("Political Scientists").

B. Recommended Reading:

1. Edward O. Wilson, "Academic Vigilantism and the Political Significance of Sociobiology" (1976). In *Selected Readings in Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
2. Robert J. Richards, "The Evolutionary War: a Review of Pinker's *Blank Slate*, in *Sunday New York Times* (Oct. 13, 2002). In *Selected Readings*.

VII. Evolutionary Psychology: Mate Preferences and Attractiveness (Nov. 10)

A. Texts for Discussion:

1. David Buss, "The Strategies of Human Mating," *American Scientist* 82 (1994): 238-49. In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
2. Bruce Ellis, "The Evolution of Sexual Attraction: Evaluative Mechanisms in Women" *The Adapted Mind*, chap. 6. In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
3. Martin Voracek et al., "Shapely Centerfolds? Temporal Change in Body Measures: Trend Analysis," *British Medical Journal* 325 (2002), 1447-1448; and (22 February & 27 May, 2003). In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
4. Jessica Parker and Melissa Burkley, "Who's chasing whom? The impact of gender and relationship status on mate poaching," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* (May, 2009). In *Selected Readings*.
5. Randy Thornhill and Craig Palmer, "Why Men Rape," in *Proceedings of the New York Academy of Sciences* (January/February, 2000). *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.

B. Recommended Reading:

1. David Buller, "Mating," *Adapting Minds* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), chap. 5. In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.

VIII. Evolutionary Psychology: the Foundations (Nov. 17)

A. Text for Discussion:

1. John Tooby and Leda Cosmides, "Conceptual Foundations of Evolutionary Psychology," in David Buss (ed.), *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology* (Hoboken: Wiley, 2005), pp. 5-67. In *Selected Readings*.
2. Leda Cosmides and John Tooby, "Neurocognitive Adaptations Designed for Social Exchange," in David Buss (ed.), *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2005), pp. 584-611. In *Selected Readings*.

IX. General Evaluation of Evolutionary Psychology (Nov. 24)

A. Texts for Discussion:

1. Edward Hagen, "Controversial Issues in Evolutionary Psychology," in David Buss (ed.), *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology*, chap. 3. In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
2. Jerry Fodor, "Against Darwinism," forthcoming. In *Selected Readings*.
3. Anne Fausto-Sterling, "Beyond Difference: Feminism and Evolutionary Psychology," in *Alas, Poor Darwin* (New York: Harmony Books, 2000). In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
4. Anne Campbell, "The Essential Woman: Biophobia and the Study of Sex Differences," in her *A Mind of Her Own: The Evolutionary Psychology of Women* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.

X. Evolutionary Ethics (Dec. 1)

A. Texts for discussion:

1. Robert J. Richards, "A Defense of Evolutionary Ethics," *Darwin and the Emergence*. In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.
 2. Marc Hauser, Liane Young, and Fiery Cushman, "Reviving Rawls' Linguistic Analogy: Operative Principles and the Causal Structure of Moral Actions," in *Moral Psychology and Biology*, ed. W. Sinnott-Armstrong (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).
- B. Recommend Reading:
1. Robert J. Richards, "Review of Marc Hauser's *Moral Minds*, in *Quarterly Review of Biology* 38 (2008): 396-98. In *Selected Readings*.
 2. Tim Lewens, "Ethics," in his *Darwin* (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 159-88. In *Selected Readings*.
 3. Peter Woolcock, "The Case Against Evolutionary Ethics Today," in *Biology and the Foundation of Ethics*, eds. Jane Maienschein and Michael Ruse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). In *Selected Readings in the Evolution of Mind and Morality*.