This volume brings together a collection of seven articles previously published by the author, with a new introduction reframing the articles in the context of past and present questions in anthropology, psychology and human evolution. It promotes the perspective of 'integrated' social science, in which social science questions are addressed in a deliberately eclectic manner, combining results and models from evolutionary biology, experimental psychology, economics, anthropology and history. It thus constitutes a welcome contribution to a gradually emerging approach to social science based on E. O. Wilson's concept of 'consilience'.

Human Cultures through the Scientific Lens spans a wide range of topics, from an examination of ritual behaviour, integrating neuro-science, ethology and anthropology to explain why humans engage in ritual actions (both cultural and individual), to the motivation of conflicts between groups. As such, the collection gives readers a comprehensive and accessible introduction to the applications of an evolutionary paradigm in the social sciences.

This volume will be a useful resource for scholars and students in the social sciences (particularly psychology, anthropology, evolutionary biology and the political sciences), as well as a general readership interested in the social sciences.

This is the author-approved edition of this Open Access title. As with all Open Book publications, this entire book is available to read for free on the publisher's website. Printed and digital editions, together with supplementary digital material, can also be found at http://www.openbookpublishers.com.
Modes of Scholarship in the Study of Culture

Why is it that the majority of cultural anthropology is no longer relevant? The debates within this specific field are generally absent from wider academic conversations, its scholars no longer rank amongst the most renowned and significant intellectuals of their day, and its contribution to non-academic discourse is basically nonexistent. This third aspect is even more alarming, given that the actual subject matter of cultural anthropology situates it at the core of pressing social issues.

Although I will qualify this stern appraisal, the aim of the present chapter is to investigate the causes and to propose a possible solution for (rather than to lament) the current status of cultural anthropology. My suggestion is that this condition is in large part self-inflected. Cultural anthropology lacks any function in wider discourse, since many cultural anthropologists have spoken and written themselves out of popular debates. This situation is on the verge of changing, although this change is occurring at the margins (rather than the mainstream) of the discipline.

I will begin by emphasizing that there is a considerable amount of reputable, and indeed, brilliant research in cultural anthropology—this is hardly in question. What is, however, of concern is a particular academic style (which entered the field of cultural anthropology relatively recently, but has dominated other fields for much longer) that has curtailed the creative vitality and social relevance of the discipline. It is also evident that by no means all anthropology scholarship is

---

1 Some of the contents of this chapter have been expressed earlier in Boyer, P. (2003). Science, Erudition and Relevant Connections, Journal of Cognition and Culture, 3(4): 344–358.
irrelevant: biological anthropology and archaeology are both alive and well. It is also worth noting that evolutionary biologists and economists are currently rejuvenating the established concerns of cultural anthropology in the public consciousness, which indicates the potential for a ‘science of culture’ field, or some emergent shift towards an integrated discipline of this sort.

1. Public Decline

Let us consider questions of public debate, such as the organization of marriage, gender and familial relations, the formation of social trust and cooperative norms, the outcomes of mass immigration, the impact of global cultural contact, the functions of religious persuasion, the links between civil society and religious institutions, or processes of ethical dispute. A whole range of disciplines—from history to evolutionary biology, and from neuroscience to economics—have much to contribute on all of these topics, but cultural anthropology is, for the most part, too readily introspective and concerned with obscure academic fads.

This is not merely an opinion. A brief scan of references to cultural anthropologists and anthropological themes within popular debates corroborates the field’s declining relevance. For example, Richard Posner’s painstaking study, Public Intellectuals, which lists prominent contributors to public debates (in books, magazines, newspapers, and journals) over the last twenty years in the United States, is instructive (Posner, 2001). Somewhat remarkably, in a list of 416 public intellectuals, only five are anthropologists, and four of these five (Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Ernest Gellner) are no longer alive. One could be forgiven for assuming that Posner prefers pundits to specialists, and politics to broader social debates, but this would be wrong. The study lists educational psychologists Jerome Bruner and Howard, psychologist and linguist Steven Pinker, literary critic and moral philosopher Tzvetan Todorov, philosopher Robert Nozick, and economist Thomas Sowell. It is worth observing that, save for Mead, the five renowned anthropologists listed are quite detached from the relativist, ‘textual’ trends of contemporary cultural anthropology.

Why this stark lack of influence? It is possible that cultural anthropology’s recent propensity for academic fads is responsible for
its declining relevance. Treatises on culture as text, postcolonialism, or more arcane and reflexive topics likely are not of much use to those concerned with matters of serious public debate, such as how non-traditional family units will raise children, how mass immigration might result in harmonious co-existence, or how we might overcome religious hatred.

‘Mission creep’ is the process by which a finite strategic goal snowballs into an excessively ambitious project, and is greatly feared by members of the military and certain politicians. Over the last fifty years, cultural anthropology has encountered the inverse issue, which we might term a dramatic ‘mission shrink’. In contrast to its original scope and what is often referred to in textbooks as its ‘mission’, the focus of cultural anthropology has gradually waned to a few minor problems.

Anthropology’s official mission over the last century, as emphasized in most textbooks on the subject, has been to understand human nature through the lens of the most challenging and typical features of the species, specifically, the production of vastly different norms, concepts, and social structures. Interestingly, however, nobody working in cultural anthropology pays much attention to these questions, and the majority of cultural anthropologists in fact consider such an approach to be either outdated or audacious. They have for the most part renounced the ‘nature’ aspect of human nature and cultural diversity. Instead of confronting so-called ‘big’ questions, the majority of cultural anthropologists gladly confine themselves to geographically specific, narrowly defined analyses.

What it worse is that this shift took place at exactly the moment when other fields began to produce many methods and results that could, when paired with cultural anthropological scholarship, revive our understanding of human cultures. Cultural anthropology has, far from embracing such advances, seemingly severed ties with other fields that could aid this progress (even the related fields of biological anthropology and archaeology). It has also doggedly ignored dramatic breakthroughs in the fields of psychology, economics, linguistics, and cognitive science.
2. Modes of Scholarship—Scientific and Erudite

What prompted this shift? I have a provisional diagnosis for this state of affairs that demands us to consider what I term *modes of scholarship*. These are the means by which we distinguish scholarly works from one another and acknowledge them as legitimate contributions to a given field, or recognize their authors as genuine members of the academy. In the present inquiry, the question is: how do scholars of cultural anthropology reach a decision on whether an individual may be awarded a position as a cultural anthropologist, or on whether their publications constitute valid contributions to the field?

The humanities-science binary is far too general and simplistic for a comprehension of the present situation. Instead, there are three different modes of scholarship: science, erudition, and salient connections.

2.1 The Science Mode

The science mode should not take too long to describe. This is not because scientific authority and authoritativeness are simple matters—far from it. Philosophy of science is difficult precisely because it is not easy to explain what this particular mode of scholarship consists of and what really makes it different from (and vastly more successful than) all other ways of gathering knowledge (Klee, 1999). This does not matter for present purposes, however, because the scientific mode, if difficult to explain, is very easy to recognize. You know it when you see it. Here is a short list of the common ‘symptoms’ by which we recognize a field that employs the science mode of scholarship:

a. There is an agreed corpus of knowledge. What has been achieved so far is taken as given by most practitioners. The common corpus also includes a set of recognized methods, and a list of outstanding questions and puzzles to solve. People also tend to agree on which of these questions are important and which only require some puzzle solving and some tidying up of the theoretical landscape.

b. The fundamentals of the discipline and its results are explained in textbooks and manuals that are all extraordinarily similar, as the essential points and the way to get there are agreed in the discipline.

c. It does not really matter who said what or when. Indeed, many practitioners have a rather hazy picture of the history of their disciplines.
Many young biologists would have a hard time explaining what the New Synthesis was, who was involved, and why a synthesis was needed in the first place. Revered figures from the past may be a source of inspiration, demonstrating how to make great discoveries, but they are not a source of truth. Darwin believed in continuous rather than particulate heredity and in some transmission of acquired traits—on both counts we think he was simply wrong, great man though he was (Mayr, 1991).

d. People typically publish short contributions. They do not need to establish why the specific problem addressed is a problem or why the methods are appropriate, since that is all part of the agreed background.

e. The typical biographical pattern is that the aspiring member of the guild is intensively trained from an early age in the specialized field and makes important contributions after only a few years of training.

f. There is a large degree of agreement (because of the various features already mentioned) on whether a given person meets the requirements for being a practitioner of the particular field, and there is also a large agreement on how important each individual’s contribution is. Again, let me emphasize that this is by no means a description of science, but only of the scientific mode of scholarship, identified here on the basis of fairly superficial but sufficient criteria. By the same token, I am not claiming that all ‘scientists’ work in that way (more on that later) or that ‘science’ only occurs when these features apply. The point of all this is to draw a contrast with other modes of scholarship, where legitimacy and standards are established quite differently.

2.2 The Erudition Mode

Another mode of scholarship is erudition, understood as the requirement that specialists of the discipline should have detailed knowledge of a particular domain of facts. Consider, for instance, Byzantine numismatics or the history of Late Renaissance painting. We expect specialists of these fields to have knowledge of the corpus of coins or paintings. We turn to them to identify new findings. The erudition mode was essential to (and still plays a great part in) the development of many scientific fields. For instance biology started as natural history and still includes a large part of it.

The features of erudition are partly similar and partly different from those of science, as we can see by listing some of erudition’s key features:
a. There is an agreed corpus of knowledge. There is also a large agreement on what remains to be done. For instance, only a small part of the extant corpus of Mesopotamian tablets has been deciphered. A great number of languages remain to describe. So the remaining tablets or languages are offered to the aspiring specialist as a possible domain of study.

b. A great deal of knowledge is not made explicit in manuals. One picks it up by working under the tutelage of more experienced practitioners and immersing oneself in the material for many years.

c. The history of the field matters and practitioners generally know it. There are some great masters, whose intuitions matter a lot, although they may have been wrong. For instance, to this day classical scholars know their Bachofen or Straus, religious scholars cite Otto or Eliade. But these are not considered infallible sources.

d. People often publish short descriptive contributions, e.g., the first description of a new insect genus or the phonology of a specific language. They also compile monographs that incorporate vast amounts of information about a particular domain (e.g., the comparative morphology of ant species, an encyclopedia of New-Guinean languages, a concordance of Ben Jonson’s plays, a catalogue raisonne of Guido Reni).

e. Age is a necessary component of competence. Older experts are generally better, because expertise consists in the accumulation of vast amounts of specific facts, also because an expert needs the kind of intuition that is only shaped by long-lasting familiarity with the material. Only a seasoned Renaissance scholar can tell you that this particular painting is from the Venetian not the Milanese school. A younger scholar may be misled by superficial features.

f. Within a narrow field, people agree on whether a given individual is competent or not, generally based on that person’s knowledge of a monograph-sized subfield.

Now, as I said earlier, there is nothing essential about these distinct modes—indeed, as we shall see, they are often found in combination, and this may be an index of ‘healthy’ disciplines. Also, whether a given field uses more or less of one of these modes can change with time. Technical change can have dramatic effects on the mix of modes. Classics used to be strongly based on erudition in the corpus. Knowing obscure (but
relevant) textual sources was a *sine qua non*, and the outcome of many years of sustained training, the way it still is for, say scholars of Indian philosophy. Now that the entire Greek and Latin canon is available (and searchable) on CD-ROM, this particular form of knowledge cannot be used as a criterion for admission.

### 3. How Science and Erudition Combine

In healthy empirical disciplines, the science and erudition modes very often co-exist harmoniously. Two illustrative examples are biology and linguistics.

Today, molecular biologists principally employ the scientific mode. Conversely, evolutionary biologists often have a defined ‘field’ of research (for instance social organization amongst wasps, or lekking in antelopes), therefore necessitating a combination of both scientific and erudition modes. The two are not mutually exclusive, and certain fields, such as ecology, often demand scientific knowledge (such as how to apply optimal foraging models, how to run simulations, or awareness of epidemiological techniques) alongside erudite knowledge (such as the ways in which different species interact, the predators or prey of a certain genus, or the minimal density of resources required). Often, a productive information exchange between these two modes can take place. Natural history and evolutionary theory inform one another. E. O. Wilson is simultaneously one of the most significant evolutionary theorists of the last century and one of the world experts on ant behavior, to give just one example (Hölldobler & Wilson, 1990; Wilson, 1975).

Linguistics nowadays also combines these two modes in multiple ways, according to the particular sub-field. Whilst certain linguists exclusively work in the science mode (for instance, exploring which formal models might account for linguistic regularity), others employ a more field-oriented approach (for instance investigating Amazonian languages), and many others marry the two approaches. Erudite comparisons of creoles and pidgins have for example inspired certain scientific models of linguistic evolution (Bickerton, 1990).

Whilst we may observe these two modes within a single field, or even within the scholarly approach of a single person, their purposes and the manner in which they are applied nonetheless remain distinct. Biologists
and linguists rely on empirical evidence for a proposed theory, as well as generating the relevant evidence, through experimentation or selection from a corpus, for example testing the notion that all languages have a noun-verb distinction by analyzing a large number of separate grammar systems. The erudition mode is driven by description, rather than by hypotheses or explanations. The aspirant scholar must catalogue the many forms of a particular genus of orchid, or the various coins found in a certain Byzantine palace because the given genus or collection has not previously been taxonomized. A ‘pure’ or ‘a-theoretical’ description does not exist, and particular hypotheses about what is or is not deemed to be relevant are usually established in a given discipline’s existing descriptive methods.

It is crucial that the distinction between different modes of scholarship should not be conflated with the other (in my opinion) extremely confusing distinction between academic fields belonging to the humanities, the sciences or the social sciences. This institutional distinction operates on a different axis to the modal distinction. Examples of the erudition mode abound in the sciences, and there are also a fair few instances of the scientific mode found in the humanities.

In Humanities fields, scholars may for instance be working on a catalogue raisonné of a particular painter, a documentation of Greek coins (erudition), while others study how ecology constrains state formation or how visual perception influences aesthetics (science). In the social sciences, we find projects such as a study of comparative forms of nationalism (erudition) and formal models of cooperation and trade (science). In the so-called STEM fields, one could map the geological formations of England (erudition) while others study the physics of plate-tectonics (science). As I mentioned, erudition and science projects overlap. But the distinction between these styles of scholarship clearly cuts across the familiar humanities/sciences division.

4. A Third Mode of Scholarship: Salient Connections

The third mode of scholarship is the most elusive one, as it has not been systematically described, yet it is also most important to our understanding of many modern disciplines, including cultural anthropology. In this mode, people assess new contributions in terms
of the connections they establish between facts or ideas which, by themselves, are not necessarily novel or even interesting. Although this way of judging new work has been around for a long time, it has become characteristic of many academic fields of a recent vintage and of the recent evolution of older disciplines. I call this the ‘salient connections’ mode. Again, I should provide examples before a model, because this is a phenomenon, we all know when we see it, even if we do not always reflect on the mechanism at work. For instance, a recent book reframes the discourse of love in Shakespeare’s plays and sonnets as an expression of the colonial outlook. The lover’s loving gaze transparently expresses the conqueror’s prospect on a recently discovered, clearly gendered, and mythically virginal New World. A student is planning to work on Indian public executions during the Raj as a form of theater, a ritualized performance that constructs colonial power at the same time as it undermines it by exhibiting the gossamer of its dramatic texture. Another colleague has recently finished a study of gay fathers in the Caribbean in the framework of Benjamin’s and Bourdieu’s accounts of culture, technology, and late capitalism. Steel drums and strong rum prop up the local habitus of globalized self-empowerment.

What is the common thread in these disparate examples? They all seem to offer a new connection between elements that were previously known to everyone in the field and indeed, in many cases, to any educated reader. For instance, all literary scholars presumably know their Shakespeare and educated folk know a little about the conquest of America. But they (supposedly) had never considered Ophelia as American. In the same way, most historians know about the political organization of the Raj and its fondness for state pageantry. They are also cognizant of the ‘comedian’s paradox’ from Diderot or some other source. The author’s hope is in the fact that the connection between the two—between state ceremonial and precarious theatrical mimesis—is new. In the same way, most cultural anthropologists have some notion of the Caribbean as a place of contrasting influences and original cultural mixes. They also know a little about the various ways in which homosexuality is construed in different places, as well as cultural variation in fathers’ duties or roles. The innovative point is to put all these together, creating salient associations, especially by throwing in Bourdieu and Benjamin—two rather dour, bookish, and strait-laced
dead Europeans who would seem far removed from your typical Trinidadian gay dad.

One could multiply the examples, but it may be of more help to compare the features of this with the other two modes:

a. In salient-connections fields, there is no agreed corpus of knowledge. Indeed, there is no ‘knowledge’ in the sense of accumulated and organized information, but rather a juxtaposition of different views on different topics.

b. There are no manuals, no agreed techniques or methods. Indeed, each contribution constitutes (ideally) a new paradigm or method, each author is an island.

c. The history of the field, its self-definition, as well as the reframing of past theories, are crucial. A lot of scholarly activity in salient connections-based fields consists in citing various masters, commenting on their texts, finding some connection between what they said and the issue at hand. In cultural anthropological studies, authors like Walter Benjamin or Pierre Bourdieu or the entire Frankfurt school are part of this Pantheon (a very ephemeral one, with a high turnover rate). The masters are generally invoked as validating authority. That is, the particular fact that one is describing (the gay Caribbean father, etc.) is presented as illustrating the general principle laid down by Benjamin or some other luminary. (Incidentally, these authors are never shown to have been wrong. Indeed, their work is never discussed as having any connection to empirical fact that could make them right or wrong. Benjamin’s or Bourdieu’s conceptions of culture are not judged in terms of how much they explain). Also, there is a great deal of emphasis on the self-definition of the field, the ideas various practitioners have about what they do and what they ought to do, compared to what others do. Indeed, most important works are supposed to be not just contributions to the field, but also reflections on the field itself. For instance, a study of German post-Expressionist 1960s cinema will be praised, not just because it tells us a lot that we want to know about that specific genre, but also because it reframes our views of the connections between cinema or society. A study of recent rock songs is good because it establishes a new approach to popular culture.

d. Books are more important than articles. This, in part, reflects the fact that each contribution should ideally reframe a field as a whole,
introduce a new way of looking at issues, and so on, something that cannot be done in a short article.

e. There is no specific developmental curve. Some authors produce interesting connections in their first piece of work, others are seasoned specialists of the erudition mode who, at some point, decide to let their hair down, as it were, and let salient connections govern their next project.

f. There is no agreement whatsoever on who a competent performer in this mode is, apart from the (generally dead) masters like Bakhtin or Benjamin or Raymond Williams for cultural studies, Derrida or de Man for literary criticism. A consequence is that there are tightly coalitional cliques and exceedingly bitter feuds about who should get what jobs, who is allowed to publish and where, and so on.

In the last three decades or so, some fields have dramatically evolved from almost pure erudition mode to the salient-connections mode. Literary criticism is a case in point. In the past, one could not really expatiate on Shakespeare’s plays without thorough knowledge of the First Folio and Quartos and other such recondite source criticism. This kind of erudition is still practiced, but it is not the major criterion of a relevant contribution to Elizabethan studies (Garber, 2004). Saying something new about the plays is what matters. One could say that the specialists have (perhaps excessively) taken to heart Forster’s dictum. They only connect.

There are various accounts of why this happened to literary studies, whether this is a Good Thing or not, and if not, whether it is all the fault of that awful Leavis or of the dreaded French structuralists (Kermode, 1983). I am not enough of an erudite to adjudicate between these normative interpretations of history. I can only comment that polemical narratives generally get in the way of a proper explanation. Neither jeremiad (‘No-one knows the Canon anymore!’) nor triumphalist epic (‘We have overcome! The Canon is dead’) is of great help here.

5. Effects of Salient Connections

The particular mode of scholarship I have described above could be explained by some as merely the outcome of a specific framework of ideas. For example, readers of earlier drafts of this essay highlighted
similarities to postmodernist thought. This comparison is flawed, since the mode of scholarship I outline extends well beyond a certain intellectual trend (Gellner, 1992). Furthermore, and perhaps more significantly, assuming that an individual’s actions (in this instance, the means by which academics validate scholarly contributions or acknowledge new academics) may be adequately accounted for by their own explanation of their rationale (in this instance, a certain intellectual trend). Such trends are no more intelligible than other social tendencies, and consequently we should also seek to explain them.

The results of the salient connections mode of scholarship are of greater concern than its sources, and are quite easily observed. For people with the correct grounding, the connections are salient, but they do not translate easily. Imagine explaining to a biochemist that the essays of Walter Benjamin provide an excellent context for a description of gay fathers in Trinidad. There is, understandably, a somewhat limited audience for salient connections, and these often pose a challenge even for scholars of a given field. Ernest Gellner mocked the pitiful Wittgensteinian philosophers propagating the idea that linguistic issues lay at the heart of any epistemological or metaphysical philosophy problems. They generally ended up teaching pupils who had never been particularly interested in philosophical problems per se, whether epistemological or not, and who consequently took on this idea with calm impassivity (Gellner, 1959). David Lodge has also drawn on the ample comic material in such a setup, through fictional professors forced to teach poorly-read students unfamiliar with the concept of the Canon that the margin is text, or the Canon is dead (Lodge, 1988).

An arguably more pressing concern is that writing like this does not solve any issues. It does not seek to generate a more accurate explanation of the world, nor even to highlight the boundaries of our knowledge. Salient connections ultimately are not sturdy or flexible knowledge. So what can we do about it?

6. Integrated Study of Cultures—An Incipient Program

Integrated scholarship is the basis of the most promising breakthroughs in comprehending human behavior. By ‘integrated’, I mean explanatory models that move beyond established oppositions between ‘levels’ or
‘domains’ of reality (Bechtel, 1993), so in this instance I have in mind ‘culture’ rather than human psychology, genetics, or economics. I also have in mind models that are steadfastly adaptable in using any available explanatory tools, irrespective of the specific disciplinary context from which those tools have originated.

There is now much greater potential for an integrated study of human culture, thanks to rapid progress on the three fundamental fronts of human cognition, economic models of behavior, and evolutionary biology. Contemporary findings in all three of these arenas are already changing perspectives on the study of culture:

One may regard the spread of cultural representations, concepts, and norms as forms whose limits are dictated by human cognitive abilities (Sperber & Hirschfeld, 2004). As evolutionary anthropologists and cognitive scientists have shown, cognitive principles that are developed early on form a framework of expectations that enable the acquisition of specific cultural concepts and norms (Boyer & Barrett, 2005) in a diverse array of domains, from folk-biology (Atran, 1990, 1998), to kinship and ethnic categories (Hirschfeld, 1994, 1996), to racial categories (Kurzban, Tooby, & Cosmides, 2001), to religious beliefs (Atran, 2002), and social interaction (Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992; Fiske, 1992; Tooby & Cosmides, 1996).

Economic theory gives us the most accurate tools for describing opportunities and predicting options, and these tools are undoubtedly applicable beyond the bounds of exclusively economic issues (Gintis, 2000a). In particular, experimental and behavioral economics have demonstrated how we might move past strict rationality assumptions (Smith, 2003), and how we might incorporate factors such as reputation (Sperber & Baumard, 2012) punitive feelings (Fehr, Schmidt, Kolm, & Ythier, 2006; Price, Cosmides, & Tooby, 2002) and intuitive standards of fairness (McCabe & Smith, 2001) into economic models. These models are responsible for the dissemination modes of cooperation specific to a given culture (Gintis, 2000b).

If we do not situate human culture within an evolutionary context, we cannot provide a thorough account of it. Evolution in humans (and other species) generates decision-making processes that are extremely context-dependent, meaning that environmental and social aspects may dictate the limits of an individual’s personal preferences. An
evolutionary framework can give a useful explanation of a wide range of cultural phenomena, e.g., reproductive strategies including teenage pregnancies (Ellis et al., 2003; Quinlan, 2003), different responses or uniform objections to cheating in social exchange—in both forager and industrial societies (Sugiyama, Tooby, & Cosmides, 2002); local particularities of ‘race’ categories (Kurzban et al., 2001; Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000); and many others (Barkow et al., 1992; Buss & Kenrick, 1998).

7. Back to What Matters

A vast domain is open to cultural anthropological investigation, provided that the practitioners accept substantive re-tooling and discard old fetishes. If slogans are needed, an integrated study of culture should proclaim the great values of reductionism, the ambition to understand the causal processes underpinning behaviors; opportunism, the use of whatever tools and findings get us closer to that goal; and revisionism, a deliberate indifference to disciplinary creeds and traditions. The integrated view of human culture—what some may call a ‘vertical integration’ in the field—will allow cultural anthropology to return to the highly ambitious set of questions it should have addressed all along.

For the sake of illustration, here is a far from exhaustive list of such questions:

- What are the natural limits to family arrangements? Will they shift with new reproductive techniques and economic change?
- Can we have an intuitive understanding of large societies? Or are our intuitive understandings of the social and political world limited to the small groups in which we evolved?
- Why are despised social categories essentialized? Why is it so easy to construct social stigma?
- What logic drives ethnic violence? Ethnic conflicts are more violent and seem less rational than traditional warfare. They sometimes involve whole populations as victims and perpetrators. What psychological processes fuel this violence?
• Why are there gender differences in politics? What explains women's exclusion from group decision making in most societies, and their reduced participation in other societies?

• How are moral concepts acquired? How do locally significant parameters affect general concepts of right and wrong?

• What drives people's economic intuitions? Does participation in market economies create an understanding of market processes?

• Are there cultural differences in low-level cognition? Or do we find very similar ways of categorizing and assigning causation, with variable explicit cultural theories?

• What explains individual religious attitudes? Why are some individuals more than others committed to the existence of supernatural agents?

• Why is there religious fundamentalism and extremism? Why should people want to oppress or kill others in the name of a supernatural agency?

The list is not exhaustive but it is indicative, at least, of the potential scope and diversity of a vertically integrated approach to cultural anthropology. The list should also suggest why an integrated program is a Good Thing: because it finally allows cultural anthropology to talk about things that matter. Cultural anthropology is simply not heard in the public forum, and the simplest explanation is that it is not talking—or rather, not talking about anything of great importance. This should change soon.

References

Atran, S. A. (1990). Cognitive Foundations of Natural History. Towards an Anthropology of Science. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

——. (1998). Folk biology and the anthropology of science: Cognitive universals and cultural particulars. Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 21, 547–569. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0140525X98001277

——. (2002). In Gods We Trust: The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
Barkow, J., Cosmides, L., & Tooby, J. (1992). *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bechtel, W. (1993). Integrating Sciences by Creating New Disciplines: The Case of Cell Biology. *Biology & Philosophy*, 8, 277–300.

Bickerton, D. (1990). *Language & Species*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Boyer, P., & Barrett, H. C. (2005). Domain Specificity and Intuitive Ontology. In D. M. Buss & D. M. Buss (Eds.), *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology*. (pp. 96–118). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Buss, D. M., & Kenrick, D. T. (1998). Evolutionary social psychology. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, et al. (Eds.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology, Vol. 2*. (pp. 982–1026). Boston, MA: Mcgraw-Hill.

Ellis, B. J., Bates, J. E., Dodge, K. A., Fergusson, D. M., Horwood, L. J., Pettit, G. S., & Woodward, L. (2003). Does father absence place daughters at special risk for early sexual activity and teenage pregnancy? *Child Development*, 74, 801–821. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00569

Fehr, E., Schmidt, K. M., Kolm, S.-C., & Ythier, J. M. (2006). The Economics of Fairness, Reciprocity and Altruism—Experimental Evidence and New Theories. In S.-C. Kolm & J. M. Ythier (Eds.), *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity (Vol 1.) Foundations*. (pp. 615–691). New York: Elsevier Science.

Fiske, A. P. (1992). The four elementary forms of sociality: Framework for a unified theory of social relations. *Psychological Review*, 99, 689–723.

Garber, M. B. (2004). *Shakespeare After All*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Gellner, E. (1959). *Words and Things: A Critical Account of Linguistic Philosophy and a Study in Ideology*. London: Gollancz.

——. (1992). *Postmodernism, Reason and Religion*. London; New York: Routledge.

Gintis, H. (2000a). *Game Theory Evolving: A Problem-Centered Introduction to Modeling Strategic Behavior*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

——. (2000b). Strong reciprocity and human sociality. *Journal of Theoretical Biology*, 206, 169–179. https://doi.org/10.1006/jtbi.2000.2111

Hirschfeld, L. A. (1994). The acquisition of social categories. In L. A. Hirschfeld & S. A. Gelman (Eds.), *Mapping The Mind: Domain-Specificity in Culture and Cognition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

——. (1996). *Race in the Making: Cognition, Culture and the Child’s Construction of Human Kinds*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Hölldobler, B., & Wilson, E. O. (1990). *The Ants*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
Kermode, F. (1983). *The Art of Telling: Essays on Fiction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Klee, R. (1999). *Scientific Inquiry: Readings in the Philosophy of Science*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kurzban, R., Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (2001). Can race be erased? Coalitional computation and social categorization. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 98, 15387–15392. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.251541498

Lodge, D. (1988). *Nice Work: A Novel*. London: Secker & Warburg.

Mayr, E. (1991). *One Long Argument: Charles Darwin and the Genesis of Modern Evolutionary Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

McCabe, K. A., & Smith, V. L. (2001). Goodwill Accounting and the process of exchange. In G. Gigerenzer & R. Selten (Eds.), *Bounded Rationality: The Adaptive Toolbox*. (pp. 319–340). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Posner, R. A. (2001). *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Price, M. E., Cosmides, L., & Tooby, J. (2002). Punitive sentiment as an anti-free rider psychological device. *Evolution & Human Behavior*, 23, 203–231. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1090-5138(01)00093-9

Quinlan, R. J. (2003). Father absence, parental care, and female reproductive development. *Evolution & Human Behavior*, 24, 376–390. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1090-5138(03)00039-4

Sidanius, J., & Veniegas, R. C. (2000). Gender and race discrimination: The interactive nature of disadvantage. In S. Oskamp et al. (Eds.), *Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination*. (pp. 47–69). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Smith, V. L. (2003). Constructivist and Ecological Rationality in Economics. *American Economic Review*, 93, 465–508. https://doi.org/10.1257/000282803322156954

Sperber, D., & Baumard, N. (2012). Moral reputation: An evolutionary and cognitive perspective. *Mind & Language*, 27, 495–518. https://doi.org/10.1111/mila.12000

Sperber, D., & Hirschfeld, L. A. (2004). The cognitive foundations of cultural stability and diversity. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 8, 40–46. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2003.11.002

Sugiyama, L. S., Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (2002). Cross-cultural evidence of cognitive adaptations for social exchange among the Shiwiar of Ecuadorian Amazonia. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 99, 11537–11542. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.122352999
Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (1996). Friendship and the banker’s paradox: Other pathways to the evolution of adaptations for altruism. In W. G. Runciman, J. M. Smith, et al. (Eds.), *Evolution of Social Behaviour Patterns in Primates and Man.* (pp. 119–143). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, E. (1975). *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.