

The Prehistory Of The Mind A Search For The Origins Of Art Religion And Science

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Evolution and the Human Mind - Professor of Philosophy Peter Carruthers 2000-11-02

This volume of essays offers an interdisciplinary examination of the evolution of the human mind.

Settlement, Society and Cognition in Human Evolution - Fiona Coward 2015-01-26

This volume provides a landscape narrative of early hominin evolution, linking conventional material and geographic aspects of the early archaeological record with wider and more elusive social, cognitive and symbolic landscapes. It seeks to move beyond a limiting notion of early hominin culture and behaviour as dictated solely by the environment to present the early hominin world as the outcome of a dynamic dialogue between the physical environment and its perception and habitation by active agents. This international group of contributors presents theoretically informed yet empirically based perspectives on hominin and human landscapes.

The Descent of Mind - Department of Psychology Michael C Corballis 1999

To most people it seems obvious that there are major mental differences between ourselves and other species, but there is considerable debate

over exactly how special our minds are, in what respects, and which were the critical evolutionary events that have shaped us. Some researchers claim language as a solely human, even defining, attribute, while others claim that only humans are truly conscious. These questions have been explored mainly by archaeologists and anthropologists until recently, but this volume aims to show what psychologists have to say on the evolution of mind. The book begins with a thorough overview of what is known of the non-primate mind and its evolution. Following this, an international range of experts discuss in temporal sequence the human mind at various stages of evolution, beginning with the pre-hominids of 20 million years ago and ending with contemporary human behaviour. Accessible to students and researchers alike in psychology, anthropology, evolution, archaeology, and ethology, *The Descent of Mind* provides a range of provocative answers to the timeless question of what it means to be human.

War, Peace, and Human Nature - Douglas P. Fry 2015-02

"The chapters in this book [posit] that humans clearly have the capacity to make war, but since war is absent in some cultures, it cannot be viewed as a human universal. And counter to frequent presumption, the actual archaeological record reveals the recent emergence of war. It

does not typify the ancestral type of human society, the nomadic forager band, and contrary to widespread assumptions, there is little support for the idea that war is ancient or an evolved adaptation. Views of human nature as inherently warlike stem not from the facts but from cultural views embedded in Western thinking"--Amazon.com.

Land of the Ilich - Steven Mithen 2021-11-04

This is a physical and historical journey round one of Scotland's most historically significant islands by the New York Times bestselling author of *The Singing Neanderthals*, *After the Ice* and *Thirst: Water and Power in the Ancient World*.

The Death of Prehistory - Society for Historical Archaeology. Meeting 2013-11

Since the eighteenth century, the concept of prehistory was exported by colonialism to far parts of the globe and applied to populations lacking written records. Prehistory in these settings came to represent primitive people still living in a state without civilization and its foremost index, literacy. Yet, many societies outside the Western world had developed complex methods of history making and documentation, including epic poetry and the use of physical and mental mnemonic devices. Even so, the deeply engrained concept of prehistory--deeply entrenched in European minds up to the beginning of the twenty-first century--continues to deny history and historical identify to peoples throughout the world. The fourteen essays, by notable archaeologists of the Americas, Africa, Europe, and Asia, provide authoritative examples of how the concept of prehistory has diminished histories of other cultures outside the West and how archaeologists can reclaim more inclusive histories set within the idiom of deep histories--accepting ancient pre-literate histories as an integral part of the flow of human history.

Creativity in Human Evolution and Prehistory - Steven Mithen 2005-08-10

The book examines how our understanding of human creativity can be extended by exploring this phenomenon during human evolution and prehistory.

Prehistory - Colin Renfrew 2009-08-11

In *Prehistory*, the award-winning archaeologist and renowned scholar Colin Renfrew covers human existence before the advent of written records--the overwhelming majority of our time here on earth--and gives an incisive, concise, and lively survey of the past, and of how scholars and scientists labor to bring it to light. Renfrew begins by looking at prehistory as a discipline, detailing how breakthroughs such as radiocarbon dating and DNA analysis have helped us to define humankind's past--how things have changed--much more clearly than was possible just a half century ago. As for why things have changed, Renfrew pinpoints some of the issues and challenges, past and present, that confront the study of prehistory and its investigators. Renfrew then offers a summary of human prehistory from early hominids to the rise of literate civilization that is refreshingly free of conventional wisdom and grand "unified" theories. In this invaluable account, Colin Renfrew delivers a meticulously researched and passionately argued chronicle about our life on earth--and our ongoing quest to understand it.

How Things Shape the Mind - Lambros Malafouris 2013-07-12

An account of the different ways in which things have become cognitive extensions of the human body, from prehistory to the present.

Handbook of Cognitive Archaeology - Tracy B. Henley 2019-07-24

The remains that archaeologists uncover reveal ancient minds at work as much as ancient hands, and for decades many have sought a better way of understanding those minds. This understanding is at the forefront of cognitive archaeology, a discipline that believes that a greater application of psychological theory to archaeology will further our understanding of the evolution of the human mind. Bringing together a diverse range of experts including archaeologists, psychologists, anthropologists, biologists, psychiatrists, neuroscientists, historians, and philosophers, in one comprehensive volume, this accessible and illuminating book is an important resource for students and researchers exploring how the application of cognitive archaeology can significantly and meaningfully deepen their knowledge of early and ancient humans. This seminal volume opens the field of cognitive archaeology to scholars across the behavioral sciences.

Imagination and the Meaningful Brain - Arnold H. Modell 2003

An exploration of the biology of meaning that integrates the role of subjective processes with current knowledge of brain/mind function.

Understanding the Human Mind - John Edward Terrell 2020-07-24

Drawing on current research in anthropology, cognitive psychology, neuroscience, and the humanities, *Understanding the Human Mind* explores how and why we, as humans, find it so easy to believe we are right—even when we are outright wrong. Humans live out their own lives effectively trapped in their own mind and, despite being exceptional survivors and a highly social species, our inner mental world is often misaligned with reality. In order to understand why, John Edward Terrell and Gabriel Stowe Terrell suggest current dual-process models of the mind overlook our mind's most decisive and unpredictable mode: creativity. Using a three-dimensional model of the mind, the authors examine the human struggle to stay in touch with reality—how we succeed, how we fail, and how winning this struggle is key to our survival in an age of mounting social problems of our own making. Using news stories of logic-defying behavior, analogies to famous fictitious characters, and analysis of evolutionary and cognitive psychology theory, this fascinating account of how the mind works is a must-read for all interested in anthropology and cognitive psychology.

The Prehistory Of Scotland - V. Gordon Childe 2014-10-24

This volume, originally published in 1935, sought to reveal the significance of Scottish prehistory for the development of understanding of European prehistory. Written at a time of rapid accumulation of new relics and monuments and the insights from them, Professor Childe presented some important new data and made tentative conclusions for the future results from these finds. After an introduction to the geography of Scotland the book looks at evidence from cairns, tombs and stone circles and then addresses chronologically the evidence from Early Bronze Age to Late and onto the Iron Age, with a chapter devoted to forts, towns and castles. It ends with a discussion of what happened in the Dark Ages and addresses questions about the Celts and the Picts and the diversity of the peoples in Scotland.

The Singing Neanderthals - Steven J. Mithen 2006

An examination of our language instinct. Steven Mithen draws on a huge range of sources, from neurological case studies, through child psychology and the communication systems of non-human primates to the latest paleoarchaeological evidence.

Origins as a Paradigm in the Sciences and in the Humanities - Paola Spinozzi 2010

In this volume, the assumption that origins can be defined as a hermeneutic paradigm in the humanities and in the sciences is explored in relation to specific theoretical frameworks and research methodologies. By investigating how origins have been conceptualised in different domains of knowledge - biology, primatology, psychology, linguistics, history of science, critical theory, classical studies, philology, literary criticism, strategy and accounting - a double movement has been generated: towards the very core of each discipline and beyond disciplinary boundaries. Which are the most productive theories and methods each discipline has elaborated for investigating origins? Can they become trans-disciplinary? Which synergic enquiries can be devised in order to expand and share knowledge? Explaining how and why various disciplines have responded to such questions involves delving into their histories and cultural ideologies in order to verify whether the topic of origins can function as a powerful connector between scientific and humanistic territories.

Theology, Evolution and the Mind - Neil Spurway 2009-05-05

In pre-scientific thought mind itself, and its religious perceptions particularly, were considered gifts from God, injected into a previously created world of matter. By contrast, all the contributors to this book accept an evolutionary account of life, mind and its religious dispositions. However they hold more divergent views on the relation of mind to body and brain, on the validity of those religious dispositions, and on how far even Christ, and his predicted Second Coming, may be seen as aspect of the evolutionary process. The seventeen contributions are rewritten and extended versions of papers first delivered at the annual conference of the UK's Science and Religion Forum, held at Canterbury Christ Church

College in Sept 2007. Though most speakers were British, representatives from The Netherlands, Jordan, Zimbabwe and USA also contributed. Invited individual chapters consider the general pattern of evolutionary thought, arguing that it can make a major contribution to the maturation of theology; archeological evidence for the emergence of religion, and the proposal that it was an inevitable phase in human evolution; the contribution of religious concepts to the development of our species, and the question whether that provides any ground for accepting them as true; the unresolved debate whether mind is a separate entity from brain, or a consequence of its activity; and the melding of paleo-anthropology with theology to provide an integrated account of humanity and its culmination in Christ. Each of these papers is the subject of an individual expert response, and they are all drawn together in an overview essay which concludes the first part of the book. The second, shorter part contains a selection from the papers contributed by registrants for the meeting. Their topics are whether mathematics consists of truths discovered, or thought-forms developed, by human minds; ecological awareness as an evolutionary development; the neurobiology of freewill and sin; an evolutionary perspective on holistic medicine; and the impressive fruitfulness of juxtaposing neurophysiological and biblical concepts of the human body-mind.

New Perspectives on Prehistoric Art - Günter Berghaus 2004

Presents some current approaches to prehistoric art and offers new insights into the meanings and functions of the era's paintings and sculptures.

Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory - Linda M. Hurcombe 2014-04-24

Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory provides new approaches and integrates a broad range of data to address a neglected topic, organic material in the prehistoric record. Providing news ideas and connections and suggesting revisionist ways of thinking about broad themes in the past, this book demonstrates the efficacy of an holistic approach by using examples and cases studies. No other book covers such a broad range of organic materials from a social and object biography perspective, or

concentrates so fully on approaches to the missing components of prehistoric material culture. This book will be an essential addition for those people wishing to understand better the nature and importance of organic materials as the 'missing majority' of prehistoric material culture.

Prehistoric Japan - Keiji Imamura 2016-09-17

First published in 1996. Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company.

The Inner Voice in Gadamer's Hermeneutics - Andrew Fuyarchuk 2017-07-15

This book addresses the alleged divide between the humanities and sciences. Rather than bridging the divide from the side of the sciences and phenomenology, Andrew Fuyarchuk proposes to close the distance with Gadamer's hermeneutics, liberating the inner word from the theological paradigms and rethinking it in terms of a phenomenology of the senses and cognitive and evolutionary sciences.

The Mating Mind - Geoffrey Miller 2011-12-21

At once a pioneering study of evolution and an accessible and lively reading experience, *The Mating Mind* marks the arrival of a prescient and provocative new science writer. Psychologist Geoffrey Miller offers the most convincing—and radical—explanation for how and why the human mind evolved. Consciousness, morality, creativity, language, and art: these are the traits that make us human. Scientists have traditionally explained these qualities as merely a side effect of surplus brain size, but Miller argues that they were sexual attractors, not side effects. He bases his argument on Darwin's theory of sexual selection, which until now has played second fiddle to Darwin's theory of natural selection, and draws on ideas and research from a wide range of fields, including psychology, economics, history, and pop culture. Witty, powerfully argued, and continually thought-provoking, *The Mating Mind* is a landmark in our understanding of our own species.

The Prehistory of the Mind - Steven J. Mithen 1999

Uses prehistoric artifacts to develop a theory about how human intelligence has evolved

[The Mind in the Cave: Consciousness and the Origins of Art](#) - David Lewis-Williams 2004-04-17

The breathtakingly beautiful art created deep inside the caves of western Europe has the power to dazzle even the most jaded observers. Emerging from the narrow underground passages into the chambers of caves such as Lascaux, Chauvet, and Altamira, visitors are confronted with symbols, patterns, and depictions of bison, woolly mammoths, ibexes, and other animals. Since its discovery, cave art has provoked great curiosity about why it appeared when and where it did, how it was made, and what it meant to the communities that created it. David Lewis-Williams proposes that the explanation for this lies in the evolution of the human mind. Cro-Magnons, unlike the Neanderthals, possessed a more advanced neurological makeup that enabled them to experience shamanistic trances and vivid mental imagery. It became important for people to "fix," or paint, these images on cave walls, which they perceived as the membrane between their world and the spirit world from which the visions came. Over time, new social distinctions developed as individuals exploited their hallucinations for personal advancement, and the first truly modern society emerged. Illuminating glimpses into the ancient mind are skillfully interwoven here with the still-evolving story of modern-day cave discoveries and research. *The Mind in the Cave* is a superb piece of detective work, casting light on the darkest mysteries of our earliest ancestors while strengthening our wonder at their aesthetic achievements.

The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences (MITECS) - Robert A. Wilson 2001-09-04

Since the 1970s the cognitive sciences have offered multidisciplinary ways of understanding the mind and cognition. The MIT Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences (MITECS) is a landmark, comprehensive reference work that represents the methodological and theoretical diversity of this changing field. At the core of the encyclopedia are 471 concise entries, from Acquisition and Adaptationism to Wundt and X-bar Theory. Each article, written by a leading researcher in the field, provides an accessible introduction to an important concept in the

cognitive sciences, as well as references or further readings. Six extended essays, which collectively serve as a roadmap to the articles, provide overviews of each of six major areas of cognitive science: Philosophy; Psychology; Neurosciences; Computational Intelligence; Linguistics and Language; and Culture, Cognition, and Evolution. For both students and researchers, MITECS will be an indispensable guide to the current state of the cognitive sciences.

[The Prehistory of Music](#) - Iain Morley 2013-10

This volume investigates the evolutionary origins of our musical abilities, the nature of music, and the earliest archaeological evidence for musical activities amongst our ancestors. It seeks to understand the relationship between our musical capabilities and the development of our social, emotional, and communicative abilities as a species.

Climate Change in Prehistory - William James Burroughs 2005-06-13
How did humankind deal with the extreme challenges of the last Ice Age? How have the relatively benign post-Ice Age conditions affected the evolution and spread of humanity across the globe? By setting our genetic history in the context of climate change during prehistory, the origin of many features of our modern world are identified and presented in this illuminating book. It reviews the aspects of our physiology and intellectual development that have been influenced by climatic factors, and how features of our lives - diet, language and the domestication of animals - are also the product of the climate in which we evolved. In short: climate change in prehistory has in many ways made us what we are today. *Climate Change in Prehistory* weaves together studies of the climate with anthropological, archaeological and historical studies, and will fascinate all those interested in the effects of climate on human development and history.

[Prehistoric Rock Art](#) - Paul G. Bahn 2010-06-21

Prehistoric rock art is the markings - paintings, engravings, or pecked images - left on rocks or cave walls by ancient peoples. In this book, Paul G. Bahn provides a richly illustrated overview of prehistoric rock art and cave art from around the world. Summarizing the recent advances in our understanding of this extraordinary visual record, he discusses new

discoveries, new approaches to recording and interpretation, and current problems in conservation. Bahn focuses in particular on current issues in the interpretation of rock art, notably the "shamanic" interpretation that has been influential in recent years and that he refutes. This book is based on the Rhind Lectures that the author delivered for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland in 2006.

Darwin's Pious Idea - Conor Cunningham 2010-12-03

According to British scholar Conor Cunningham, the debate today between religion and evolution has been hijacked by extremists: on one side stand fundamentalist believers who reject evolution outright; on the opposing side are fundamentalist atheists who claim that Darwin's theory rules out the possibility of God. Both sides are dead wrong, argues Cunningham, who is at once a Christian and a firm believer in the theory of evolution. In *Darwin's Pious Idea* Cunningham puts forth a trenchant, compelling case for both creation and evolution, drawing skillfully on an array of philosophical, theological, historical, and scientific sources to buttress his arguments.

Maps of Time - David Christian 2004-02-23

An introduction to a new way of looking at history, from a perspective that stretches from the beginning of time to the present day, *Maps of Time* is world history on an unprecedented scale. Beginning with the Big Bang, David Christian views the interaction of the natural world with the more recent arrivals in flora and fauna, including human beings. Cosmology, geology, archeology, and population and environmental studies—all figure in David Christian's account, which is an ambitious overview of the emerging field of "Big History." *Maps of Time* opens with the origins of the universe, the stars and the galaxies, the sun and the solar system, including the earth, and conducts readers through the evolution of the planet before human habitation. It surveys the development of human society from the Paleolithic era through the transition to agriculture, the emergence of cities and states, and the birth of the modern, industrial period right up to intimations of possible futures. Sweeping in scope, finely focused in its minute detail, this riveting account of the known world, from the inception of space-time to

the prospects of global warming, lays the groundwork for world history—and Big History—true as never before to its name.

Cognitive Technology: Instruments of Mind - Meurig Beynon 2003-05-15
Cognitive Technology: Instruments of Mind Cognitive Technology is the study of the impact of technology on human cognition, the externalization of technology from the human mind, and the pragmatics of tools. It promotes the view that human beings should develop methods to predict, analyse, and optimize aspects of human-tool relationship in a manner that respects human wholeness. In particular the development of new tools such as virtual environments, new computer devices, and software tools has been too little concerned with the impacts these technologies will have on human cognitive and social capacities. Our tools change what we are and how we relate to the world around us. They need to be developed in a manner that both extends human capabilities while ensuring an appropriate fit between organism and instrument. The principal theme of the CT 2001 conference and volume is declared in its title: *Instruments of Mind*. Cognitive Technology is concerned with the interaction between two worlds: that of the mind and that of the machine. In science and engineering, this interaction is often explored by posing the question: how can technology be best tailored to human cognition? But as the history of technological developments has consistently shown, cognition is also fashioned by technology. Technologies as diverse as writing, electricity generation, and the silicon chip all illustrate the profound and dynamic impact of technology upon ourselves and our conceptions of the world.

The Forbidden Universe - Lynn Picknett 2011-04-01

Secret societies, famous scientists, ancient Egyptian mysticism, and a fascinating addition to the god-versus-science debate: the Catholic Church. By the bestselling authors of *The Templar Revelation* and *Mary Magdalene*, *The Forbidden Universe* reveals how the foundations of modern science were based around a desire to destroy the church. The great pioneering scientists of the Renaissance and the early Enlightenment (including Copernicus, Galileo, and Sir Isaac Newton) were fervent devotees of the philosophical/mystical system of

Hermeticism. Many of the most important scientists of this age, including Galileo, belonged to a secret society called the Giordanisti, which had the agenda to overthrow the Church and establish a new age of Hermetic supremacy.

Inside the Neolithic Mind: Consciousness, Cosmos, and the Realm of the Gods - David Lewis-Williams 2005-10-01

An exploration of how brain structure and cultural content interacted in the Neolithic period 10,000 years ago to produce unique life patterns and belief systems. What do the headless figures found in the famous paintings at Catalhoyuk in Turkey have in common with the monumental tombs at Newgrange and Knowth in Ireland? How can the concepts of "birth," "death," and "wild" cast light on the archaeological enigma of the domestication of cattle? What generated the revolutionary social change that ended the Upper Palaeolithic? David Lewis-Williams's previous book, *The Mind in the Cave*, dealt with the remarkable Upper Palaeolithic paintings, carvings, and engravings of western Europe. Here Dr. Lewis-Williams and David Pearce examine the intricate web of belief, myth, and society in the succeeding Neolithic period, arguably the most significant turning point in all human history, when agriculture became a way of life and the fractious society that we know today was born. The authors focus on two contrasting times and places: the beginnings in the Near East, with its mud-brick and stone houses each piled on top of the ruins of another, and western Europe, with its massive stone monuments more ancient than the Egyptian pyramids. They argue that neurological patterns hardwired into the brain help explain the art and society that Neolithic people produced. Drawing on the latest research, the authors skillfully link material on human consciousness, imagery, and religious concepts to propose provocative new theories about the causes of an ancient revolution in cosmology and the origins of social complexity. In doing so they create a fascinating neurological bridge to the mysterious thought-lives of the past and reveal the essence of a momentous period in human history. 100 illustrations, 20 in color.

Evolution of Mind, Brain, and Culture - Gary Hatfield 2013-05-28

Descartes boldly claimed: "I think, therefore I am." But one might well

ask: Why do we think? How? When and why did our human ancestors develop language and culture? In other words, what makes the human mind human? *Evolution of Mind, Brain, and Culture* offers a comprehensive and scientific investigation of these perennial questions. Fourteen essays bring together the work of archaeologists, cultural and physical anthropologists, psychologists, philosophers, geneticists, a neuroscientist, and an environmental scientist to explore the evolution of the human mind, the brain, and the human capacity for culture. The volume represents and critically engages major theoretical approaches, including Donald's stage theory, Mithen's cathedral model, Tomasello's joint intentionality, and Boyd and Richerson's modeling of the evolution of culture in relation to climate change. No recent publication combines this breadth of evidential and theoretical perspective. The essays range in topic from the macroscopic (the evolution of social cooperation) to the microscopic (examining genetic data to infer evolutions in brain structure and function), and from the ancient (paleoanthropological reconstructions of hominin cognitive abilities) to the modern (including modern hominin's similarities to our primate cousins). Considered together, these essays constitute a fascinating, detailed look at what makes us human. PMIRC, volume 5

Origins of the Modern Mind - Merlin Donald 1991

This bold and brilliant book asks the ultimate question of the life sciences: How did the human mind acquire its incomparable power? In seeking the answer, Merlin Donald traces the evolution of human culture and cognition from primitive apes to artificial intelligence, presenting an enterprising and original theory of how the human mind evolved from its presymbolic form.

[Social Zooarchaeology](#) - Nerissa Russell 2011-11-14

This is the first book to provide a systematic overview of social zooarchaeology, which takes a holistic view of human-animal relations in the past. Until recently, archaeological analysis of faunal evidence has primarily focused on the role of animals in the human diet and subsistence economy. This book, however, argues that animals have always played many more roles in human societies: as wealth,

companions, spirit helpers, sacrificial victims, totems, centerpieces of feasts, objects of taboos, and more. These social factors are as significant as taphonomic processes in shaping animal bone assemblages. Nerissa Russell uses evidence derived from not only zooarchaeology, but also ethnography, history and classical studies, to suggest the range of human-animal relationships and to examine their importance in human society. Through exploring the significance of animals to ancient humans, this book provides a richer picture of past societies.

Landscape of the Mind - John F. Hoffecker 2011-05-31

In *Landscape of the Mind*, John F. Hoffecker explores the origin and growth of the human mind, drawing on archaeology, history, and the fossil record. He suggests that, as an indirect result of bipedal locomotion, early humans developed a feedback relationship among their hands, brains, and tools that evolved into the capacity to externalize thoughts in the form of shaped stone objects. When anatomically modern humans evolved a parallel capacity to externalize thoughts as symbolic language, individual brains within social groups became integrated into a "neocortical Internet," or super-brain, giving birth to the mind. Noting that archaeological traces of symbolism coincide with evidence of the ability to generate novel technology, Hoffecker contends that human creativity, as well as higher order consciousness, is a product of the superbrain. He equates the subsequent growth of the mind with human history, which began in Africa more than 50,000 years ago. As anatomically modern humans spread across the globe, adapting to a variety of climates and habitats, they redesigned themselves technologically and created alternative realities through tools, language, and art. Hoffecker connects the rise of civilization to a hierarchical reorganization of the super-brain, triggered by explosive population growth. Subsequent human history reflects to varying degrees the suppression of the mind's creative powers by the rigid hierarchies of nationstates and empires, constraining the further accumulation of knowledge. The modern world emerged after 1200 from the fragments of the Roman Empire, whose collapse had eliminated a central authority that could thwart innovation. Hoffecker concludes with speculation about

the possibility of artificial intelligence and the consequences of a mind liberated from its organic antecedents to exist in an independent, nonbiological form.

Theories of Theories of Mind - Peter Carruthers 1996-02-23

A state of the art survey of debate within philosophy of mind, developmental psychology, the aetiology of autism and primatology. *The Agricultural Revolution in Prehistory* - Graeme Barker 2009 Addressing one of the most debated revolutions in the history of our species, the change from hunting and gathering to farming, this title takes a global view, and integrates an array of information from archaeology and many other disciplines, including anthropology, botany, climatology, genetics, linguistics, and zoology.

Mindshaping - Tadeusz Wieslaw Zawidzki 2013-05-10

A proposal that human social cognition would not have evolved without mechanisms and practices that shape minds in ways that make them easier to interpret. In this novel account of distinctively human social cognition, Tadeusz Zawidzki argues that the key distinction between human and nonhuman social cognition consists in our complex, diverse, and flexible capacities to shape each other's minds in ways that make them easier to interpret. Zawidzki proposes that such "mindshaping"—which takes the form of capacities and practices such as sophisticated imitation, pedagogy, conformity to norms, and narrative self-constitution—is the most important component of human social cognition. Without it, he argues, none of the other components of what he terms the "human sociocognitive syndrome," including sophisticated language, cooperation, and sophisticated "mindreading," would be possible. Challenging the dominant view that sophisticated mindreading—especially propositional attitude attribution—is the key evolutionary innovation behind distinctively human social cognition, Zawidzki contends that the capacity to attribute such mental states depends on the evolution of mindshaping practices. Propositional attitude attribution, he argues, is likely to be unreliable unless most of us are shaped to have similar kinds of propositional attitudes in similar circumstances. Motivations to mindshape, selected to make sophisticated

cooperation possible, combine with low-level mindreading abilities that we share with nonhuman species to make it easier for humans to interpret and anticipate each other's behavior. Eventually, this led, in human prehistory, to the capacity to attribute full-blown propositional attitudes accurately—a capacity that is parasitic, in phylogeny and today, on prior capacities to shape minds. Bringing together findings from developmental psychology, comparative psychology, evolutionary psychology, and philosophy of psychology, Zawidzki offers a strikingly original framework for understanding human social cognition.

A Prehistory of the Cloud - Tung-Hui Hu 2016-09-02

The militarized legacy of the digital cloud: how the cloud grew out of older network technologies and politics. We may imagine the digital cloud as placeless, mute, ethereal, and unmediated. Yet the reality of the cloud is embodied in thousands of massive data centers, any one of which can use as much electricity as a midsized town. Even all these data centers are only one small part of the cloud. Behind that cloud-shaped

icon on our screens is a whole universe of technologies and cultural norms, all working to keep us from noticing their existence. In this book, Tung-Hui Hu examines the gap between the real and the virtual in our understanding of the cloud. Hu shows that the cloud grew out of such older networks as railroad tracks, sewer lines, and television circuits. He describes key moments in the prehistory of the cloud, from the game “Spacewar” as exemplar of time-sharing computers to Cold War bunkers that were later reused as data centers. Countering the popular perception of a new “cloudlike” political power that is dispersed and immaterial, Hu argues that the cloud grafts digital technologies onto older ways of exerting power over a population. But because we invest the cloud with cultural fantasies about security and participation, we fail to recognize its militarized origins and ideology. Moving between the materiality of the technology itself and its cultural rhetoric, Hu's account offers a set of new tools for rethinking the contemporary digital environment.