

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**PS451 (Half Unit)**

**COGNITION AND CULTURE**

**Session: 2001-2002**

**TEACHER RESPONSIBLE:**

**Dr Bradley Franks**

**Room S313**

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**Secretary: Anjum Klair ([a.klair@lse.ac.uk](mailto:a.klair@lse.ac.uk))/Anne Miles  
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**TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS**

**AVAILABILITY:**

**Half-unit option for:**

- MSc Social Psychology
- MSc Organisational and Social Psychology
- MSc Media and Communications
- Other MSc programmes, subject to programme regulations and with the permission of the teacher responsible

**TEACHING:**

**Lent Term 2002:**

- **Lectures:** Wednesday 4.00—5.00, Room S314
- **Seminars:** Wednesday 5.00—6.00, Room S314

In the seminars we will discuss key conceptual and empirical papers. Normally two students will prepare the discussion: one will report on a key paper, and the other will comment on its ideas. The papers to be discussed are to be selected from those marked \* for each Lecture + Seminar session. A copy of each such article is available for students to borrow from Bradley Franks.

## COURSEWORK AND ASSESSMENT

### COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS

- 1 essay (maximum 3,000 words) which addresses one of the questions below.
- Seminar presentations/reading.

### ASSESSMENT

- 1 essay as above (maximum 3,000 words) – submission date **22 March 2002**. [50%]  
Two copies (with two cover sheets) should be handed in to Tom Chivers in room S302.
- Formal two-hour examination in the Summer Term – 2 questions from a choice of 5 [50%]

### ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Evaluate the claim that cultural variation can be based on cognitive universals.
2. An understanding of the connection between cognition and culture requires a key role for evolution. Discuss.
3. Culture and cognition are autonomous, so understanding one does not require understanding the other. Discuss.

## COURSE AIM AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

### COURSE AIM

- To familiarise students with key concepts, theoretical developments, empirical research and methodological issues relating to the study of cognition and culture

### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completing the course and the relevant reading, students should be able to:

- Outline key theoretical approaches concerning the relations between cognition and culture.
- Discuss the methodological and explanatory commitments of the key theoretical approaches.
- Discuss the relative balance between cultural and cognitive determination in contributing to cognitive and social psychological phenomena.
- Assess the role of evolutionary constraints in relating cognition and culture.
- Evaluate the claims for universality and cultural relativity in key domains of cognitive and social psychological phenomena.

## ORIENTING REFERENCES

These are books that take the general orientation adopted in this course, though they develop that orientation in different ways. References for each week's lecture + seminar should be supplemented by appropriate sections or chapters of these books. Students are also encouraged to undertake their own critical reading from sources outside of those provided.

Barkow, J. H., Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (Eds.) (1992). *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*. Oxford University Press. BF711 A19

Bloch, M. E. (1999). *How We Think They Think*. Westview Press. GN502 B65

Boyer, P. (1992). *Tradition as Truth and Communication*. Cambridge University Press. GN345.6 B79

Brown, D. (1991). *Human Universals*. McGraw-Hill. GN357 B87

Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural Psychology: a Once and Future Discipline*. Harvard University Press. GN273 C96

Cumins, D. E., & Allen, C. (Eds.) (1998). *The Evolution of Mind*. Oxford University Press. BF311 E91

Doise, Willem (1986) *Levels of Explanation in Social Psychology*. Cambridge University Press. Translated by Elizabeth Mapstone. HM251 D65

Hirschfeld, L.A., & Gelman, S. A. (Eds.) (1994). *Mapping the Mind: Domain-Specificity in Cognition and Culture*. Cambridge University Press. BF444 M29

Hirschfeld, L.A. (1996). *Race in the making: Cognition, Culture, and the Child's Construction of Human Kinds*. MIT Press. BF311 H66

Medin, D. L., & Atran, S. (Eds.) (1999). *Folkbiology*. Cambridge University Press. GN476.7 F66

Shore, B. (1996). *Culture in Mind: Cognition, Culture and the Problem of Meaning*. Oxford University Press. GN502 S55

Smith, P. B., & Bond, M. H. (1998). *Social Psychology Across Cultures*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Prentice Hall. HM251 S65

Sperber, D. (1996). *Explaining Culture: a Naturalistic Approach*. Blackwell. GN357 S74

Strauss, C., & Quinn, N. (1998). *A Cognitive Theory of Cultural Meaning*. Cambridge University Press. GN502 S91

Tomasello, M. (1999). *The Cultural Origins of Human Cognition*. Harvard University Press. BF311 T65

Wertsch, J. (Ed.) (1985). *Culture, Communication and Cognition: Vygotskian Perspectives*. Harvard University Press. BF311 C96

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### (A) LECTURES

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC
<b>PART I THEORETICAL ISSUES I: INTRODUCTION:</b>		
1	17/1/02	Assumptions, Foundations, and Direction
<b>PART II EMPIRICAL DOMAINS:</b>		
2	24/1/02	Domain 1: Natural Kinds
3	31/1/02	Domain 2: Social Kinds: Race
4	7/2/02	Domain 3: Self and Identity
5	14/2/02	Domain 4: Theory of Mind
6	21/2/02	Domain 5: Religion
7	28/2/02	Domain 6: Language and Thought
<b>PART III THEORETICAL ISSUES II: EXTENSIONS AND EXPLANATIONS:</b>		
8	7/3/02	Issue 1: Culture, Psychology and Special Purposeness
9	14/3/02	Issue 2: Culture, Learning and Transmission
10	21/3/02	Issue 3: Relativity and Universality: Types and Limits

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### (B) SEMINARS

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC
<b>PART I THEORETICAL ISSUES I: INTRODUCTION:</b>		
1	17/1/02	<i>Do we need an account of individual mental processes to be able to give an account of cultural phenomena? Do we need an account of cultural phenomena to be able to give an account of individual mental processes?</i>
<b>PART II EMPIRICAL DOMAINS:</b>		
2	24/1/02	<i>What is essentialism? What is the role of essentialism in categorising biological kinds?</i>
3	31/1/02	<i>Are racial categories represented in the same way as biological categories? Can an essentialist approach help in understanding prejudice?</i>
4	7/2/02	<i>Does the concept of the person vary across cultures? Does the experience of self show similar variation?</i>
5	14/2/02	<i>What are the connections between metarepresentation and theory of mind capacities? How does culture impact on mindreading?</i>
6	21/2/02	<i>What is the connection between essentialism and religious representations? How far can cognition and culture succeed in explaining the sense of awe associated with religious beliefs?</i>
7	28/2/02	<i>Do “forms of thought” vary across cultures and languages? How might an evolutionary approach address this?</i>
<b>PART III THEORETICAL ISSUES II: EXTENSIONS AND EXPLANATIONS:</b>		
8	7/3/02	<i>Does an evolutionary approach to cognition and culture entail modularity of mind? Can a modular cognition provide sufficient flexibility to allow for cultural variation?</i>
9	14/3/02	<i>Can ideas from evolutionary and cognitive psychology provide insight into cultural transmission? How plausible is the theory of memes as an account of cultural transmission?</i>
10	21/3/02	<i>At what level of explanation do cognition and culture explanations have purchase? How precise can its predictions be? Does it need augmentation by other approaches to provide a full account of culture and cognition?</i>

## LECTURES AND SEMINARS

## THEORETICAL ISSUES I: INTRODUCTION

### WEEK 1      ASSUMPTIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND DIRECTION

#### Aim of Lecture + Seminar:

- To provide an introduction to the key differences between the cognition and culture approach to cultural psychology, and other orientations in social psychology.

#### Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe the major components of the cognition and culture approach
- Compare, contrast and evaluate the major components of the principal theoretical alternatives to the culture and cognition approach (“psychological” and “sociological” forms of social psychology, and non-naturalistic approaches to culture and cognition)
- Discuss the extent to which an account of culture requires an account of individual cognition
- Discuss the extent to which an account of individual cognition requires an account of culture

#### References:

- Cole, M. (1996). *Cultural Psychology: a Once and Future Discipline*. Harvard University Press. Chapter 1. GN273 C96
- DiMaggio, Paul (1997). Culture and cognition. *Annual Review of Sociology*, **23**, 263—288. HM1  
Also at: [http://cogweb.ucla.edu/Abstract/DiMaggio\\_97.html](http://cogweb.ucla.edu/Abstract/DiMaggio_97.html)
- \* Fiske, A. P., Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., & Nisbett, R. E. (1998). The cultural matrix of social psychology. Chapter 35 in D.T. Gilbert, S.T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds), *The Handbook of Social Psychology*. Volume II. McGraw Hill. Course Collection: HM251 H23
- McCauley, R. N., & Lawson, E.T. (1996). Who owns “culture”? *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*, **8**, 171-190.
- Sperber, D., & Hirschfeld, L. R. (1999). Culture, cognition and evolution. In R. Wilson & F. Keil (Eds.), *MIT Encyclopaedia of the Cognitive Sciences*. MIT Press. BF311 M67.  
Also at: <http://www.dan.sperber.com/mitecs.htm>
- Sperber, D. (1996). *Explaining Culture: a Naturalistic Approach*. Blackwell. Chapters 1, 2, 6. GN357 S74
- Tomasello, M., Kruger, A.C., & Ratner, H.H. (1993). Cultural learning. *Behavioral & Brain Sciences*, **16**, 495—552. BF199
- \* Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (1992). The psychological foundations of culture. In J. H. Barkow, L. Cosmides, & Tooby, J. (Eds.), *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*. Oxford University Press. BF711 A19  
See also: <http://www.psych.ucsb.edu/research/cep/primer.html>

#### Seminar Discussion Topic:

*Do we need an account of individual mental processes to be able to give an account of cultural phenomena? Do we need an account of cultural phenomena to be able to give an account of individual mental processes?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

## Part II Empirical Domains

### WEEK 2      DOMAIN 1: NATURAL KINDS AND ESSENTIALISM

#### Aim of Lecture + Seminar:

- To discuss key findings and explanations concerning the connections between culture, cognition and categorisation in natural domains

#### Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe some key constancies and differences in the content and structure of representations of natural categories across cultures
- Evaluate the different aspects of an essentialist thesis about representation
- Assess the role of essentialism in everyday categorisation and representation
- Discuss the connections between essentialism and evolutionary approaches to cognition and culture

#### References:

- Atran, S. (1998). Folk biology and the anthropology of science. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, **21**, 547—611. BF199
- Barrett, H. C. (forthcoming). On the functional origins of essentialism. To appear in *Mind and Society*.  
Also at: <http://www-abc.mpib-berlin.mpg.de/users/barrett/essentialism.pdf>
- Braisby, N., Franks, B., & Hampton, J. (1996). Essentialism, word use, and concepts. *Cognition*, **59**, 247—274. BF309
- \* Choi, I., Nisbett, R. E., & Smith, E.E. (1997). Culture, category salience and inductive reasoning. *Cognition*, **65**, 15—32. BF309
- Coley, J.D., Medin, D.L., Proffitt, J.B., Lynch, E., & Atran, S. (1999). Inductive reasoning in folkbiological categories. In D.L. Medin & S.Atran (Eds.), *Folkbiology*. MIT Press. GN476.7 F66
- \* Gelman, S.A., & Hirschfeld, L.A. (1999). How biological is essentialism? In D.L. Medin & S.Atran (Eds.), *Folkbiology*. MIT Press. GN476.7 F66
- Hatano, G., & Inagaki, K. (1999). A developmental perspective on informal biology. In D.L. Medin & S.Atran (Eds.), *Folkbiology*. MIT Press. GN476.7 F66
- Keil, F.C. (1994). The birth and nurturance of concepts by domains: The origins of living things. In Hirschfeld, L.A., & Gelman, S. A. (Eds.) (1994). *Mapping the Mind: Domain-Specificity in Cognition and Culture*. Cambridge University Press. BF444 M29
- \* Sperber, D. (1996). *Explaining Culture: a Naturalistic Approach*. Blackwell. Chapter 6. GN357 S74
- Walker, S. (1992). Developmental changes in the representation of word-meaning: cross-cultural findings. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, **10**, 285-299. BF713

#### Seminar Discussion Topic:

*What is essentialism? What is the role of essentialism in categorising biological kinds?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

## WEEK 3      DOMAIN 2: SOCIAL KINDS: RACE

### Aim of Lecture + Seminar:

- To discuss key findings and explanations concerning the connections between culture, cognition and categorisation in the social domain of race

### Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe some key constancies and differences in the content and structure of representations of social categories across cultures
- Assess the role of essentialism in everyday categorisation and representation
- Discuss the connections between representations of social kinds and natural kinds
- Discuss the connections between essentialism in social domains and evolutionary approaches to cognition and culture

### References:

Aboud, F.E. (1988). *Children and Prejudice*. Blackwell. BF723.R3 A15

Astuti, R. (2001). Are we all natural dualists? A cognitive developmental approach. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, **7(3)**, 429—447. GN1

\* Gil-White, F. J. (2001) Sorting is not categorization: A critique of the claim that Brazilians have fuzzy racial categories. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, **1(3)**.  
Also at: <http://www.psych.upenn.edu/~fgil/Emic.pdf>

Gil-White, F. J. (2001). Are ethnic groups “species” to the human brain? Essentialism in our cognition of some social categories. *Current Anthropology*, **42(4)**, 515-554 GN1.  
Also at: <http://www.psych.upenn.edu/~fgil/Species.pdf>

Hirschfeld, L. (1995). Do children have a theory of race? *Cognition*, **54**, 209—252. BF309

Hirschfeld, L. (1996). *Race in the Making: Cognition, culture, and the child's construction of human kinds*. MIT Press. BF311 H66

\* Hirschfeld, L. (1998). Natural assumptions: Race, essence, and taxonomies of human kinds. *Social Research*, **65 (2)**, 331-349. OFFPRINTS COLLECTION: P3583

\* Hirschfeld, L.A. (2001). On a folk theory of society: Children, evolution and mental representations of social groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, **5 (2)**, 106—116. ???

Miller, D., and D. Prentice. (1999). Social consequences of a belief in group essence: the category divide hypothesis. In D. Prentice and D. Miller, (Eds.), *Cultural Divides: Understanding and Resolving Group Conflict*. Russell Sage Foundation. GN496 C96

Rothbart, M., & Taylor, M. (1992). Category labels and social reality: Do we view social categories as natural kinds? In G. Semin & K. Fiedler (Eds.), *Language, Interaction and Social Cognition*. Sage. P40 L28

Springer, K. (1996). Young childrens' understanding of a biological basis for parent-offspring relations. *Child Development*, **67**, 2841—2856. HQ750.A1

Warnecke, A., R. Masters, and G. Kempter. (1992). The roots of nationalism: Nonverbal behavior and xenophobia. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, **13**, 267—282. GN365.9

**Seminar Discussion Topic:**

*Are racial categories represented in the same way as biological categories? Can an essentialist approach help in understanding prejudice?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

## WEEK 4      DOMAIN 3: SELF AND IDENTITY

### Aim of Lecture + Seminar:

- To discuss key findings and explanations concerning the connections between culture, cognition and concepts of self and identity

### Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe some key constancies and differences in the content and structure of representations of the self across cultures
- Assess the extent to which the experience of identity, including emotions, displays similar variation
- Discuss the compatibility of evolutionary and social constructionist explanations of self and emotion

### References:

Fiske, A. P., Kitayama, S., Markus, H. R., & Nisbett, R. E. (1998). The cultural matrix of social psychology. Chapter 35 in D.T. Gilbert, S.T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds), *The Handbook of Social Psychology*. Volume II. McGraw Hill. HM251 H23

Mallon, R., & Stich, S. (1999). The Odd Couple: The Compatibility of Social Construction and Evolutionary Psychology. Available at:  
<http://rucss.rutgers.edu/ArchiveFolder/Research%20Group/Publications/Odd/OddCouple.html>

Markus, H., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and Self: Implications for cognition, emotion and motivation. *Psychological Review*, **98**, 224—253. BF1

Markus, H., S. Kitayama, and R. Heiman. (1998). Culture and "basic" psychological principles. In E. T. Higgins and A. W. Kruglanski (Eds.), *Social Psychology: Handbook of Basic Principles*. Guilford. HM251 S67

Markus, H., Mullaly, P.R., & Kitayama, S. (1997). Selfways: Diversity in modes of cultural participation. In Neisser, U., & Jopling, D.A.(Eds.), *The Conceptual Self in Context: Culture, experience, self-understanding*. Cambridge University Press. BF697.5 .S43 C74

Russell, J. (1991). Culture and the categorization of emotion. *Psychological Bulletin*, **110**, 426—450. BF1

Shweder, R. A., & Bourne, L. (1984). Does the concept of the person vary cross-culturally? In Shweder, R.A., & LeVine, R.A. (Eds.), *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self and Emotion*. Cambridge University Press. GN504 C96

Triandis, H. (1989). The self and social behavior in differing cultural contexts. *Psychological Review*, **93**, 506-520. BF1

Triandis, H. (1995). *Individualism and Collectivism*. Westview Press. HM136 T82

### Seminar Discussion Topic:

*Does the concept of the person vary across cultures? Does the experience of selfhood show similar variation?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

## WEEK 5      DOMAIN 4: “THEORY OF MIND”

### Aim of Lecture + Seminar:

- To discuss key findings and explanations concerning the connections between culture, cognition and understanding of mental states

### Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe some key constancies and differences in the content and structure of representations of mental states across cultures
- Discuss the evidence for evolutionary inter-species continuity in “theory of mind” capacities
- Assess the connections between “theory of mind” capacities and metarepresentation

Avis, M., & Harris, P. (1992). Belief-Desire reasoning among Baka children: Evidence for a universal conception of mind. *Child Development*, **62**, 460—467. HQ750.A1

Andrews, P. W. (2001). The psychology of social chess and the evolution of attribution mechanisms: Explaining the fundamental attribution error. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, **22(1)**, 11-29. GN365.9

Baron-Cohen, S. (1995). *Mindblindness*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. Chs. 1-4. BF444 B26

Barton, R. A., and R. I. M. Dunbar. (1997). Evolution of the social brain. In A. Whiten and R. W. Byrne (Eds.), *Machiavellian Intelligence. Vol. 2, Evaluations and Extensions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. QL737.P9 M14

Leslie, A.M. (2000). How to acquire a ‘representational theory of mind’. In Sperber, D. (Ed.), *Metarepresentations: A Multidisciplinary perspective*. Oxford University Press. BF316.6 M58  
Also at: [http://ruccs.rutgers.edu/~aleslie/Leslie\\_chapter\\_in\\_Sperber\\_2000w.pdf](http://ruccs.rutgers.edu/~aleslie/Leslie_chapter_in_Sperber_2000w.pdf)

Sperber, D. (2000). Metarepresentations in an evolutionary perspective. In Sperber, D. (Ed.), *Metarepresentations: A Multidisciplinary Perspective*. Oxford University Press. BF316.6 M58  
Also at: <http://www.dan.sperber.com/metarep.htm>

Tomasello, M. (1999). *The Cultural Origins of Human Cognition*. Harvard University Press. Chapters 1 & 2. BF311 T65

Whiten, A. (1994). Grades of mindreading. In C. Lewis & P. Mitchell (Eds.), *Children’s Early Understanding of Mind: Origins and Development*. LEA. BF723.C5 C53

Wilson, D. S., D. Near, and R. R. Miller. (1996). Machiavellianism: A synthesis of the evolutionary and psychological literatures. *Psychological Bulletin*, **119**, 285-299. BF1

### Seminar Discussion Topic:

*What are the connections between metarepresentation and theory of mind capacities? How does culture impact on mindreading?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

**Aim of Lecture + Seminar:**

- To discuss key findings and explanations concerning the connections between culture, cognition and representation of religious beliefs

**Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:**

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe some key constancies and differences in the content and structure of representations of religious beliefs across cultures
- Discuss the connections between essentialism, religious representations and representations of other domains
- Evaluate the evolutionary underpinnings of religious representations
- Assess the success of a cognition and culture approach in explaining the non-representational aspects of religious beliefs

**References:**

- Barrett, J. L., Richert, R.A., & Driesenga, A. (2001). God's beliefs versus Mom's: The development of natural and non- natural agent concepts. *Child Development*, **72(1)**, 50-65. HQ750.A1
- Barrett, J. L., & Lawson, E. T. (2001). Ritual Intuitions: Cognitive contributions to judgments of ritual efficacy. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, *1(2)*, 183-201.
- Boyer, P. (1994). Cognitive Constraints on Cultural Representations: Natural Ontologies and Religious Ideas. In L. Hirschfeld & S. Gelman (Eds.), *Mapping the Mind: Domain Specificity in Culture and Cognition*. Cambridge University Press. BF444 M29
- Boyer, P., (2000). Functional Origins of Religious Concepts: Conceptual and Strategic Selection in Evolved Minds. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, **6**, 195-214. GN1
- Boyer, P., (2001). *Religion Explained, or Uncovering the Mental Instincts that Fashion Gods, Ghosts and Ancestors*. Random House
- Boyer, P. and Ramble, C. (2001). Cognitive Templates for Religious Concepts: Cross-Cultural Evidence for Recall of Counter-Intuitive Representations. *Cognitive Science*, *25 (4)*, ??? BF311
- Franks, B. (2001). The Nature of Unnaturalness in Religious Representations: Negation and Concept Combination. Manuscript, Department of Social Psychology, LSE.
- Guthrie, S. (1993). *Faces in the Clouds: A new theory of religion*. Oxford University Press.
- Lawson, E. T. & McCauley, R. (1990). *Rethinking Religion: Connecting Culture and Cognition*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Sperber, D. (1996). *Explaining Culture: A Naturalistic Approach*. Chapter 3. Blackwell.
- Whitehouse, H. (1996). Rites of Terror: emotion, metaphor, and memory in Melanesian initiation cults. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, **2**, 703-715.

**Seminar Discussion Topic:**

*What is the connection between essentialism and religious representations? How far can cognition and culture succeed in explaining the sense of awe associated with religious beliefs?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

## WEEK 7      DOMAIN 6: LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

### Aim of Lecture + Seminar:

- To discuss key findings and explanations concerning the connections between culture, cognition and general “forms of thought”

### Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe some key constancies and differences in “forms of thought” (reasoning, holism, lexicalisation) across cultures
- Describe some key constancies and differences in “forms of thought” (reasoning, holism, lexicalisation) across languages
- How might a “form of thought” be characterised? How might a “form of thought” be explained from an evolutionary perspective?

### References:

- Andrews, P. W. (2001). The psychology of social chess and the evolution of attribution mechanisms: Explaining the fundamental attribution error. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, **22(1)**, 11-29. GN365.9
- Gumperz, J. J., & Levinson, S. C. (1991). Rethinking Linguistic Relativity. *Current Anthropology*, **32(5)**, 613-623. GN1
- Gumperz, J., & S. Levinson (Eds.). (1996). *Rethinking Linguistic Relativity*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hirschfeld, L. A. (1995). Anthropology, psychology, and the meanings of social causality. In Sperber, D., Premack, D. & James-Premack, A. (Eds.), *Causal Cognition: A Multidisciplinary Debate*. Oxford University Press. BF311 C37
- Hunt, E., and F. Agnoli. (1991). The Whorfian Hypothesis: a cognitive psychology perspective. *Psychological Review*, **98**, 377-389. BF1
- Kay, P., & Maffi, L. (1999). Color appearance and the emergence and evolution of basic color lexicons. *American Anthropologist*, **101(4)**, 743-760. GN1  
Also available on-line via <http://www.ingenta.com>
- Levinson, S. (1996). Language and space. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, **25**, 353-382. GN1.
- Morris, M., & Peng, K. (1994). Culture and cause: American and Chinese attributions for social and physical events. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, **67**, 949-971. BF698  
Available at: <http://faculty-gsb.stanford.edu/morris/Homepage/Papers%20in%20pdf/Morris,Peng.PDF>
- Nisbett, R. E., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2001). Culture and Systems of Thought: Holistic Versus Analytic Cognition. *Psychological Review*, **108 (2)**, 291—310. BF1  
Also at: <http://www.cebiz.org/cds/nisbettetal.pdf>

### Seminar Discussion Topic:

*Do “forms of thought” vary across cultures? How might an evolutionary approach address this?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

**WEEK 8      ISSUE 1: CULTURE, PSYCHOLOGY AND SPECIAL PURPOSENESS**

**Aim of Lecture + Seminar:**

- To provide an overview of the key issues relating to the claim that the mind comprises a set of special-purpose mechanisms.

**Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:**

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe the major aspects of “massive modularity” thesis
- Discuss the connections between modularity and special-purposeness in an evolutionary approach to psychology
- Assess the extent to which a modular and/or a special-purpose approach to cognition can provide the basis for cross-cultural variations in the content and structure of thought

**References:**

- Bates, E. (1994). Modularity, domain specificity and the development of language. At: <http://www.cogsci.soton.ac.uk/~harnad/Papers/Py104/bates-1994.html>
- Coltheart, M. (1999). Modularity and cognition. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, **3**, 115—20.
- Fodor, J.A. (1983). *The Modularity of Mind*. MIT Press. BF311 F65
- Hirschfeld, L.A., & Gelman, S. A. (1994). Toward a topography of mind: An introduction to domain specificity. In L. Hirschfeld & S. Gelman (Eds.), *Mapping the Mind: Domain Specificity in Culture and Cognition*. Cambridge University Press. BF444 M29
- Karmiloff-Smith, A. (1992). *Beyond Modularity: A Developmental Perspective on Cognitive Science*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. BF723.C5 K11
- Marslen-Wilson, W. D., and L. K. Tyler. (1987). Against modularity. In J. L. Garfield (Ed.), *Modularity in Knowledge Representations and Natural-Language Understanding*. MIT Press. P40 M69
- Millikan, R. G. (1984). *Language, Thought, and Other Biological Categories*. MIT Press. P106 M65
- Samuels, R. (1998). Evolutionary psychology and the massive modularity hypothesis. *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*, **49**, 575—602. Q175
- Sperber, D. (1996). *Explaining Culture: a Naturalistic Approach*. Blackwell. Chapter 6. GN357 S74
- Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (1992). The psychological foundations of culture. In Barkow, J. H., Tooby, J., & Cosmides, L. (Eds.) (1992). *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*. Oxford University Press. BF711 A19
- Turiel, E. (1989). Domain-specific social judgments and domain ambiguities. *Merrill Palmer Quarterly*, **35**, 89—114.

**Seminar Discussion Topic:**

*Does an evolutionary approach to cognition and culture entail modularity of mind? Can special-purposeness provide sufficient flexibility to allow for cultural variation?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

**Aim of Lecture + Seminar:**

- To provide an overview of the key issues relating to cognition, culture and cultural learning and transmission.

**Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:**

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe the key forms of cultural transmission and learning
- Compare and contrast the memetic and epidemiological approaches to cultural transmission
- Outline major orientations on the connections between evolution, psychology and cultural learning and transmission

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**Seminar Discussion Topic:**

*Can ideas from evolutionary and cognitive psychology provide insight into cultural learning and transmission? How plausible is the theory of memes as an account of cultural transmission?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***

**Aim of Lecture + Seminar:**

- To provide an overview of the key issues relating to the kinds of descriptions and explanations provided by the cognition and culture approach.

**Learning Outcomes of Lecture + Seminar:**

After the lecture, seminar and appropriate reading, students should be able to:

- Describe major distinctions between types of universals in mind and behaviour
- Discuss the different styles of explanation and description employed in theories that stress the relativism of culture and cognition versus those that stress universals
- Outline the contrast between a reductionist and an inter-field approach to the connections between theories of evolution, cognition, and culture

**References:**

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**Seminar Discussion Topic:**

*At what level of explanation do cognition and culture explanations have purchase? How precise can its predictions be? Does it need augmentation by other approaches to provide a full account of culture and cognition?*

**Key References for Seminar are marked above by \***