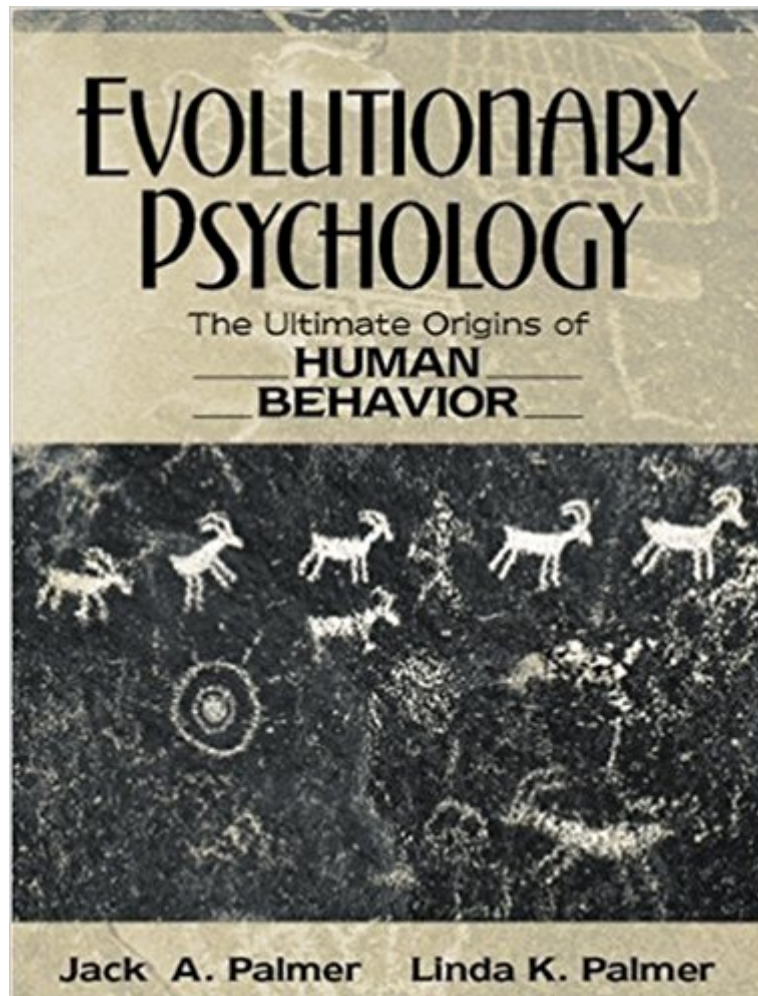




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Evolutionary Psychology: The Ultimate Origins Of Human Behavior



Synopsis

A short, broad introduction to the emerging field of evolutionary psychology (the study of adaptive significance of behavior). 10 short chapters introduce the reader to the major topics within the field of evolutionary psychology (from "Social Order and Disorder" to "Mating and Reproduction" to "The Creative Impulse: The Origins of Technology and Art"). For psychologists, students, or anyone interested in evolutionary psychology.

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Customer Reviews

A short, broad introduction to the emerging field of evolutionary psychology (the study of adaptive significance of behavior). 10 short chapters introduce the reader to the major topics within the field of evolutionary psychology (from "Social Order and Disorder" to "Mating and Reproduction" to "The Creative Impulse: The Origins of Technology and Art"). For psychologists, students, or anyone interested in evolutionary psychology.

This book, for all its faults, is surprisingly informative. Yes, the authors are poor writers (poor-to-bad punctuation, spelling, and run-ons abound); there's no question that the authors did not consult a style manual before writing some tortuous sentential structures. Even some key scientist's names are misspelled. But despite these obvious flaws, the authors explain evolutionary biology quite thoroughly, even if, or rather because, it is meant as a textbook. But taking some of the chapter and section highlights, look what's covered under one set of binding: Chapter One: The Roots of

Evolutionary Psychology--Darwin's Theory--The Modern Synthesis--Behavior as a Function of Evolution
 Chapter Two: From Big Bang to Big Brain--Life in the Universe--The Beginning--Vertebrate Life--Hominid Evolution (Africa, Bipedalism, & First Humans)
 Chapter Three: Encephalization and the Emergence of Mind--The Five Movers in Hominid Encephalization (Machiavellian Intelligence, Ice Ages, Ballistic Hunting, Language, & Intraspecific Competition--The Modular Brain--The Modular Mind (Fear Learning, Social Reasoning, Gender Differences)
 Chapter Four: Language--The Nature of Language (Animal Communication, Animal Language Studies, & Feral Children)--Language Acquisition (Developmental Stages, Critical Periods)--Language Evolution (Universals, Ancient Origins, Conceptual Domains)
 Chapter Five: Mating and Reproduction--Sexual Selection (Sex Differences, Mate Selection Criteria)--Aesthetics of Attraction (Symmetry, Waist-Hip Ratio, Masculine Ideal, Feminine Ideal)--Human Pheromones (Menstrual Synchronicity, Major Histocompatibility Complex Preferences, Male Pheromones, Female Pheromones)--Jealousy and Mate-Guarding--Sperm Wars--Sexual Orientation--Pair-bonding Strategies (Limerence and Long-term Pair Bonding)
 Chapter Six: Ontogeny--Prenatal Development--Postnatal Development (A Priori Mind, Parent-Infant Conflicts, Incest Avoidance, Evolved Contingency Mechanisms, Optimizing Cognitive Potential, Adaptive Function of Menopause)
 Chapter Seven: Social Order and Disorder--Dominance Hierarchies (Affiliation and Aggression & Biochemical Status of Mood Disorders)--Evolution of Compassion (Kin Selection, Reciprocal Altruism, & Universal Morality and Ethics)
 Chapter Eight: Personality and Psychopathology--Early Personality Theorists--Contemporary Personality Theories (Case-Study, Trait, and Factor Analysis)--The Three-Factor Model--The Five-Factor Model--Evolutionary Theory of Personality (Adaptive Significance & Phylogeny and Ontogeny of Personality)--Personality and Abnormal Behavior (Axis I and Axis II Disorders)
 Chapter Nine: The Creative Impulse--Tool Use (In Nonhumans, Hominid Archeology, Tool-use as a Selective Force, Hominid Cognitive Ability)--Aesthetic Manipulation (Pleistocene Art, Adaptive Art)--Consciousness and the Symbolic Universe
 Chapter Ten: Ancient Mammal in a Brave New World--Mismatch Theory--Stress: Then and Now--Mental Health--Indoctrination, Nationalism, & War--Psychopharmacology (Substance Abuse & Pharmacology)--The New Eugenics: Genetic Engineering
 As one can see, almost every conceivable topic of evolutionary and psychological importance is covered in a single volume of about 250 pages. Admittedly, some features are not as well covered as I might have liked. For example: The distinction between altruism and reciprocal altruism is conflated, and the subsection on stress hormones identifies not a one. But these quibbles are minor compared to the magisterial accomplishment of having all these features in one, consolidated volume. And other than E. O. Wilson, this is the first volume I've encountered where

sexual orientation from an evolutionary perspective is addressed, even if it's in paltry terms. Nothing is more counterintuitive to evolutionary biology than the persistence of homosexuality. The authors explanation may fail, but at least they don't avoid it. And unlike some modern populizers of evolutionary biology and psychology, this book gives the facts and nothing but the facts. People used to other populizers' (Pinker for example) invasive and extemporaneous inputs might be bored by the lack of mindless interruptions, but I appreciated the straight-forwardness of this volume. As one who looks critically at evolutionary biology to explain human behavior, I appreciate this direct and unconvoluted approach. There are deficiencies, which I am sure the authors today would want to correct. But for explaining human behavior in terms of the Modern Synthesis, this one volume does it all without the extraneous. I encourage the authors to consult a style manual, rewrite, and repunctuate many of their sentences. I also encourage them to add new information that has come to light since this volume was printed in 2002. And I beseech the authors to try harder to explain homosexuality in evolutionary terms (they explain it only in ontogenic terms). But with these few admonitions, a second edition would be a welcome event. The "Further Reading" List is extensive, while the notes are cryptic (no page references); and the index is comprehensive. Read Pinker et al. for their hype, read and keep this volume for your reference.

It was a textbook.

As expected.

Perfect for my Evolutionary Psychology class.

The book is in good condition. My only issue is that it literally took about 3 weeks to arrive, the longest I have ever waited for a book to be delivered.

This is an extraordinary book. Authors give the base for human behavior understanding free of religion and moral. So we can see how much we moved from this 0 point and some problem connected to the move. The prediction of our future is just one of the possible variant. Currently trans-humanism took over the genetic modifications. The book presents great number of facts some of them have little explanation and require further reading.

Comprehensive and easy to read and full of useful information. Ample reference material and

evidence to back up the findings and theories. I especiall liked the explanations of psychopathologies from evolutionary perspectives and the effects of different brain damages on personality and behavior.

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