

Instructions for the Essay Assignment

The essay assignment is worth 25% of your final grade and is due in class on Tuesday May 5. LATE ESSAYS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Choose one of the following essay topics.

Topic 1.

"Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and in my own specified world to bring them up, and I will guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select - doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations and race of ancestors" (JB Watson 1930 *in* Cartwright 2008: 12).

Discuss Watson's famous quote with regard to Margaret Mead's (1928) rationale for conducting research in Samoa OR contrast with Napoleon Chagnon's (1988) rationale for reproductive success amongst the Yanomamo. How do these varied perspectives reflect historical ideas about the workings of **the Mind**?

Develop your essay with reference to several of the following readings (Reserve Book Room):

- John Cartwright. 2008. *Evolution and Human Behavior*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Chagnon N. 1988. Life histories, blood revenge, and warfare in a tribal population. *Science* 239:985-992.
- Kant I. 1781. *Critique of Pure Reason*. Extract "Introduction" I and II. http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason/Introduction
- Locke J. 1690/1947. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. New York: EP Dutton. Extract "Book II: Of Ideas. Chapter 1: Of Ideas in General and their Original". (also available online at Wikisource)
- Mead M. 1928/1963. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Study of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Topic 2. Compare and contrast opposing perspectives of **Human Nature** evident in portrayals of the Tasaday (Nance 1975, Headland 1992) OR Margaret Mead's Samoa (1928) AND Napoleon Chagnon's Yanomamo (1988). How do these varied perspectives reflect historical ideas about **Human Nature**?

Develop your essay with reference to several of the following readings (Reserve Book Room):

- John Cartwright. 2008. *Evolution and Human Behavior*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Chagnon N. 1988. Life histories, blood revenge, and warfare in a tribal population. *Science* 239:985-992.
- Headland TN (ed). 1992. *The Tasaday Controversy: Assessing the Evidence*. AAA Scholarly Series, Special Publication No. 28. Washington: American Anthropological Association.
- Hobbes T. 1651/1957. *Leviathan*. New York: Oxford University Press. Extract "Chapter XIII. Of the Natural Condition of Mankind as Concerning Their Felicity and Misery". (also available online at Wikisource)
- Mead M. 1928/1963. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Study of Adolescence and Sex in Primitive Societies*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

- Nance J. 1975. *The Gentle Tasaday: A Stone Age People in the Philippine Rain Forest*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Rousseau J-J. 1755/1994. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality Among Men*. New York: Oxford University Press. Extract "Part II". (also available online at Wikisource)
- Stocking GW Jr. 1989. *The Ethnographic Sensibility of the 1920's and the Dualism of the Anthropological Tradition*. In, *Romantic Motives: Essays on Anthropological Sensibility*, Stocking GW Jr. (ed). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Topic 3. Compare and contrast early (Schepartz 1993) vs late emergence models (Mellars 2005) of the evolution of **human language**.

Develop your essay with reference to several of the following readings (Reserve Book Room):

- Dunbar RIM . 1998. *The Social Brain Hypothesis*. *Evolutionary Anthropology* 6:178-190.
- Mellars P. 2005. *The Impossible Coincidence. A Single-Species Model for the Origins of Modern Human Behavior in Europe*. *Evolutionary Anthropology* 14:12-27.
- Schepartz LA. 1993. *Language and modern human origins*. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*. 36: Suppl S17:91-126.
- Stiner MC. 2002. *Carnivory, Coevolution, and the Geographic Spread of the Genus Homo*. *Journal of Archaeological Research* 10:1-63.

Topic 4. Do selfish genes inevitably lead to selfish behavior? Discuss whether the gene selectionist perspective is deterministic in regard to human behavior and psychology.

Develop your essay with reference to the following readings:

- Cartwright J. 2008. *Evolution and Human Behavior*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Dawkins R. 1976/1999. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hagen EH. 2005. *Controversies surrounding evolutionary psychology*. In, *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology*, Buss DM (ed). New Jersey: Wiley (Reserve Book Room).

Topic 5. In what ways do human life stages (Kaplan et al. 2000) relate to the mating strategies and conflicts discussed in Dawkins and Cartwright?

Develop your essay with reference to the following readings:

- Cartwright J. 2008. *Evolution and Human Behavior*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Dawkins R. 1976/1999. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kaplan H, Hill K, Lancaster J, Hurtado AM. 2000. *A Theory of Human Life History Evolution: Diet, Intelligence, and Longevity*. *Evolutionary Anthropology* 9:156-185 (Reserve Book Room).

Topic 6. Compare and contrast the different approaches to understanding the evolution of human behavior represented in the studies by Betzig (1988) and Sugiyama et al. (2002). Refer specifically to the discussion by Symons (1992) when constructing your essay.

Develop your essay with reference to the following readings (Reserve Book Room):

- Betzig L. 1988. *Redistribution: equity or exploitation?* In, *Human Reproductive Behaviour: A Darwinian Perspective*, Betzig L, Borgerhoff-Mulder M, Turke P (eds). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hagen EH. 2005. *Controversies surrounding evolutionary psychology*. In, *The Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology*, Buss DM (ed). New Jersey: Wiley.

- Sugiyama LS et al. 2002. Cross-cultural evidence of cognitive adaptations for social exchange among the Shiwiar of Ecuadorian Amazonia. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 99: 11537–11542.
- Symons D. 1992. On the use and misuse of Darwinism in the study of human behavior. In, *The Adapted Mind: Evolutionary Psychology and the Generation of Culture*, Barkow JH, Cosmides L, Tooby J (eds). New York: Oxford University Press.

Essay Length

The body of your essay will be a minimum of six and a maximum of eight double-spaced pages, 12-point font, 1" margins, excluding references and title page. Use a separate title page with your name and chosen essay topic, and start your reference list on a new page.

Essay Structure and Grading Expectations

Refer to *Dr. Sullivan's Undergraduate Essay Guide* (available from the class webpage) for further information on how to plan and organize your essay and my expectations in terms of grading your work.

Useful full-text journals that are available online at the CSUS library:

American Anthropologist

American Journal of Human Biology

American Journal of Physical Anthropology

Current Anthropology

Evolutionary Anthropology

Evolution and Human Behavior

Human Biology

Journal of Human Evolution

Nature (except the current year)

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (except the previous 6 months)

Science (except the current year)