

Chapter 2. Evolutionary Antecedents of Motivation

2.1. How would the interaction between evolutionary history and personal history show itself in the motivation of behavior? Your answer should involve the concept of preparedness to illustrate this interaction.

Humans are the product of a very long evolutionary past. This past shaped human nature. The accumulated results of our evolutionary past is acted upon by an individual's personal history or experiences. Both pasts shape the individual much like length and width both determine the area of a rectangle.

Preparedness refers to the tendency to be motivated differently by current situations because of our evolutionary past or human nature. For example, humans are more easily conditioned to fear snakes than to fear mushrooms. The conditioning experiences may be identical for snakes and mushrooms as a case of personal history. However, evolutionary experiences of snakes and mushrooms are not. Natural selection favored individuals who feared snakes versus those who did not. Natural selection probably played little role in the fear of mushrooms. Thus, experiences with snakes interacts with the evolutionary preparedness to fear snakes.

*2.2. a. Differentiate among human nature, psychological mechanisms, and universal motives?
b. What is the purpose of psychological mechanisms and universal motives according to evolutionary psychology?*

a. Human nature is the compilation of behavioral, motivational, and emotional similarities among people the world over that resulted from their common evolutionary history.

Psychological mechanisms are specific aspects of human nature that evolved as solutions to particular problems of survival. The mechanisms are psychological features of individuals like love, fear of reptiles, and the preference for sweets.

Universal motives are psychological mechanisms that specifically motivate behavior. Examples include a tendency to fear of reptiles, preferences for fat and sweets, jealousy, and women's preferences for men who are ambitious and industrious.

b. The purpose of psychological mechanisms and universal motives is to motivate behavior that will increase the likelihood of an individual's survival. The result is the increased ability to promote one's genes into the next generation, that is, to produce children and grandchildren.

*2.3. a. Describe the connection between sexual desire and romantic love.
b. Describe the different behaviors that each motivates.*

a. Sexual desire is the craving, longing, and yearning for sexual intercourse. The pleasure that results from sexual intercourse aids in the development of romantic love. This emotion motivates long-term attachment between individuals and provides the pleasant feelings that each partner instills in the other.

b. Sexual desire motivates sexual intercourse, which eventually results in children and the passing on of one's genes. In other words, couples have children and eventually grandchildren. Romantic love involves an emotional bond and motivates long-term commitment between a couple. Romantic love corresponds with the evolutionary perspective of motivation: survival and passing on of one's genes. Romantic love deals with the commitment problem. This refers to a couple remaining together for their mutual benefit and of their children.

2.4. Contrast the difference between evolutionary explanations and social explanations that are used to clarify mating strategies between men and women.

An evolutionary explanation emphasizes leaving behind the most surviving offspring as possible. Since women can have way fewer offspring than men, women seek out mates that are ambitious and industrious. These men should be good providers for raising a family. Because men can have many children, they seek young healthy women with whom to bear many children. Evolution motivates these behaviors.

A social explanation, in contrast, emphasizes that society is structured so that women's earning power is less than that of men. This is known as the structural powerless hypothesis. Consequently, women seek out and marry ambitious and industrious men to gain material wealth for herself and any children.

2.5. a. According to evolutionary psychology, how did "beauty" evolve?

b. What does beauty signify according to the good genes hypothesis?

a. Beautiful women have more children in our evolutionary past over thousands of years. Even today beautiful women have more children provide that birth control is not practiced. Thus, beauty evolved because this trait was passed on to succeeding generations; less beautiful women bear fewer children. Thus, beauty evolved because beautiful women have more children in our evolutionary past.

b. Beauty evolved because it signifies a young, healthy woman who has the ability to produce healthy children. Beauty also indicates that people are robust and free of disease. Furthermore, beauty signifies that the individual has good genes that would result in healthy, robust children.

2.6. a. What is a person's mate value?

b. Does a person's mate value have any evolutionary significance or is it an arbitrary value determined solely by society? Explain!

a. Mate value refers to those traits one individual possesses that a potential partner desires, considers worthwhile and useful. Mate value consists of physical attractiveness and traits like ambition, sense of humor, loyalty as well as common interests and social values. Relational mate value is the satisfaction that an individual derives from being in a relationship with his/her partner. A higher mate value means a person is more attractive or more in demand by the other sex.

b. Mate value determines one's chances of attracting a mate. The characteristics of mate value

indicate that a person would be a good mate and aid in the creation and successful rearing of any subsequent children.

2.7. a. Describe how and why emotions like love, jealousy, fear and innate taste preferences evolved in terms of Darwin's theory of evolution.

b. What do love, jealousy, fear, and taste preferences motivate?

a. Presumably, the emotions of love, jealousy, fear motivate behavior that increases an individual's chances of survival. Without these emotions, an individual may engage in behaviors that are dangerous or detrimental to their long-term survival and that of any children. Taste preferences motivated the eating of foods beneficial to health and avoiding those that are detrimental to health.

b. Love motivates behaviors that keeps a couple together for their mutual benefit. Jealousy also motivates behaviors that keeps a couple together, since it provides the impetus for defense against mate poaching by possible rivals. The emotion of fear increases the likelihood that an individual is motivated to avoid situations or animals that are dangerous and life-threatening to him or her. Without feeling fear individuals may put themselves at risk and be harmed or killed. Similarly, taste preferences motivates eating sweet tasting foods, since that implies high calories and energy while avoiding bitter substances that imply poisons and substances that produce illness.

2.8. What is the mismatch hypothesis? Provide examples.

In our evolutionary past, psychological mechanisms evolved that aided an individual's survival and that of any children. However, conditions that existed in our evolutionary past when the psychological mechanisms evolved are no longer present today. Current conditions may be at odds with the expression of these psychological mechanisms. Instead, the mechanisms motivate individuals to behave in a manner that is not the best for them and is detrimental to their well-being. For example, our current environment provides abundant delicious food, which causes over-eating; pleasure-inducing drugs, which causes drug addiction; and smart phones, which undermines relationships.

2.9. Why is the universal liking of music considered to be an evolutionary puzzle?

There does not appear to be any obvious survival value to liking and enjoying music. So, researchers have hypothesized various evolutionary explanations. For example, music unites people, playing music enhances one's mate value, and music can alter a person's music, and people enjoy listening. However, are these convincing evolutionary explanations for liking music?