

HUMAN BEHAVIORAL ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION
ANTH 4/58830
KENT STATE UNIVERSITY: Fall 2010

INSTRUCTOR: Marilyn A. Norconk: mnorconk@kent.edu
OFFICE: 236 Lowry Hall, (330) 672-4123
(departmental office: 672-4363)
COURSE HOURS TH 12:30-1:45
OFFICE HOURS: After class & by appointment

About the course: There are many ways to study human behavior. The social sciences— psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology, each offer points of view starting from different perspectives. Psychology uses the individual as the point of reference. Sociology uses societal or group norms as the jumping-off point. And, cultural anthropology uses inter-cultural comparisons to study the fundamentals of human behavior. Another perspective on human behavior is biological, in which some aspects of human behavior is predictable based on evolutionary theory.

Called sociobiology or evolutionary biology, "shared inheritance" is the starting point from which biological anthropologists examine explanations for the existence of similarities in human behaviors, particularly those behaviors that influence reproduction. Since all humans have a shared biology, we ought to find striking similarities in the way that humans of all cultures approach behaviors such as finding and attracting mates, and producing and raising children. However, just as in the social sciences that are also devoted to the study of humans, variation is a real and important phenomenon. Variation in individual expression leads to novel behaviors — some successful, others disastrous.

We will look at human behavior from the perspective that you are the current "end-product" of hundreds of generations of humans who adapted successfully to biological and environmental problems. Solutions to these problems are often incorporated into culture so we expect to find convergences in solving problems culturally even among widely separated populations geographically. During this semester, you will recognize behaviors that you may have interpreted as unique to yourself as belonging to a family of behaviors that converge in all humans. In this way, evolutionary biology provides one of many possible interpretations of who we are and why we behave the way we do.

TEXTS (2-required)

Betzig, Laura (1997). *Human nature: A critical reader*. New York: Oxford University press.

Hrdy, Sarah B. (1999). *Mother nature: Maternal instincts and how they shape the human species*. New York: Balantine Books.

List of assigned readings by week

Week	Book	Chapter title	Chap #	Authors
week 1- 8/31		COURSE INTRODUCTION		
	Betzig	introduction: people are animals	1	Betzig
week 2 – 9/7	Betzig	The logic of optimality	2	Kacelnik & Krebs
	Betzig	Inuit foraging groups	5 & 6	Smith
week 3 – 9/14	Betzig	Sex differences in human mate preferences	18 & 19	Buss
	Betzig	When and where are women more selective	22 & 23	Kenrick et al.
week 4 – 9/21	Betzig	Kipsigis' women preference for wealthy men	11 & 12	Borgerhoff Mulder
	Betzig	Polygyny and inheritance of wealth	31 & 32	Hartung
week 5 – 9/28	Betzig	Dowry as a form of female competition	35 & 36	Gaulin
	Betzig	Paternal confidence and dowry competition	29 & 30	Dickemann
week 6 – 10/5	Betzig	Roman polygyny	37 & 38	Betzig
IN CLASS MIDTERM EXAM				
COVERING ALL MATERIAL THRU 10/5				
10/7				
week 7 – 10/12	Betzig	Rape-victim psychological pain	24 & 25	Thornhill
	Betzig	Life histories, blood revenge and warfare	9 & 10	Chagnon
week 8 – 10/19	Hrdy	Motherhood as a minefield & new view of mothers	1 & 2	Hrdy
	Hrdy	Development, variation, adaptation	3,4,5	Hrdy
week 9 – 10/26	Hrdy	The milky way	6	Hrdy
	Hrdy	From here to maternity	7	Hrdy
week 10 – 11/2	Hrdy	Family planning primate style	8	Hrdy
	Betzig	Bushman birth spacing	7 & 8	Blurton Jones
week 11 – 11/9	Hrdy	Three men and a baby	9	Hrdy
	Hrdy	The optimal number of fathers	10	Hrdy
week 12 – 11/16	Hrdy	Unnatural mothers	12	Hrdy
	Hrdy	Daughters or sons?	13	Hrdy
week 13 – 11/23	Hrdy	Child abuse and other risks	16 & 17	Daly & Wilson
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – 11/24-11/29				
week 14 – 11/30	Hrdy	Born to attach & Meeting the eyes of love	15 & 16	Hrdy
	Hrdy	Empowering the embryo	18	Hrdy
week 15 – 12/6	Hrdy	Why be adorable? How to be an infant worth rearing	19 & 20	Hrdy
		Of human bondage & Alternate paths to development	22 & 23	Hrdy
FINAL EXAM FOCUSING ON HRDY –				
Thursday 12/ 16 12:45-3 pm				

Distribution of labor

1. **Writing intensive (50%)** 2 essays 20% and 30% of final grade, respectively. First essay is due before the midterm exam. The second is due after the midterm and before Thanksgiving. [Graduate students receive one score, no rewrites.]
2. **Exams (40%)** two exams (midterm and final) 20% and 20%, respectively.
3. **Student discussion (10%)** PowerPoint presentation organized in a uniform way using 6 slides (see below). [Graduate students please sign up for 2 discussions.]

Preparation for PPT/discussions

Please organize your thoughts using the points below. This organization is essentially the typical organizational scheme of a research paper: introduction, methods, results, and discussion.

- I. (Introduction) What were the research questions or hypotheses? Place the research question in a broader category (mate choice, parental investment. . .).
- II. (Background I) Who were the people described in the study? Where (country, city, region: include a map!) and when was the study done? Describe the physical or ecological setting, e.g., information on subsistence pattern, seasonality, climate (arid/tropical/arctic/etc).
- III. (Background II) Describe relevant aspects of the culture of the people that were studied (e.g., marriage pattern, birth rates, inter-birth intervals, infant mortality).
- IV. (Sample size and sampling methods) Who were the participants of the study (men, women, children)? How many people were involved (the sample size)? Was this a representative sample of the population or culture? What were the sampling methods (how were the data collected)?
- V. (Results) Describe the findings of the study. Often findings are demonstrated in tables or figures, so look carefully at these. In some cases the statistics used in the study may be unfamiliar to you, but make an attempt to figure out how the author(s) came to their conclusions.
- VI. (Discussion/Conclusion) Discussions are used to place studies in the context of other similar studies and begin by summing up the major points of the study. That is, do the results of the study conflict with or confirm results of other studies (as outlined in the paper or based on your experience?) Betzig asked authors of the original papers to revisit their studies and add corrections or any additional information. These updated paper paired with each original paper are ideal to bring up points of discussion. You may also end with questions that need further investigation and contribute to class discussion.

More about my interpretation of "writing intensive"

All active people in academia write a lot. A few years ago, the university realized that some students were receiving very little instruction about how to write papers in their field and introduced the "WI" requirement. The intensive part refers to effort invested by both you and me. Two essays are required during the course of the semester—one before the midterm exam and one after. The final grade on each essay is given after I make comments on the first draft and you revise it and resubmit it to me. I will try to get your essay back to you in a few days to a week and you should plan on resubmitting it within a week. The WI portion of your grade for the course is 50% with the second essay weighted heavier than the first. The first essay is due in week 4 or 5 (or earlier if you like). The second essay is due before Thanksgiving.

I will not define topics explicitly, but will help you settle on a topic after you have done some research on your own.

Constructing the essays:

Essays should be limited to about 3000 words, approximately 6-pages double-spaced (the paragraph above is 160 words). This means that you should develop your argument quickly and

use the rest of the essay to expand on the topic being discussed. You should expect to edit your essay several times before the first submission.

Use quotes for emphasis only — as a general rule, use **no more than one quote per essay**. Quotes are a powerful way to illustrate a point, but they are often overused—Sarah Hrdy starts each chapter of *Mother Nature* with a quote to set the stage for the chapter. If you paraphrase substantially (e.g. use numbers or definitive data from another article - be sure to cite the author, date: page #.) If you are stating someone else's ideas, they should also be cited (author's last name, date of publication) – as in the William Irons essay in Betzig, (p. 36).

Include a “List of References” on a separate sheet citing the references you used in the essay. Use the References format in Betzig for books, book chapters, and papers – starting on page 427. Web sites will not be accepted as references. Cite the references in the text by (last name, year of publication) or last name (year of publication). Do not use footnotes. You should review at least 5 papers to prepare your essay. Once you settle on a topic, you can use key words in OhioLink (<http://journals.ohiolink.edu/ejc/>) to find papers in pdf form. Betzig is all about classic papers. That's fine, but you can modernize the views by including more recent references.

Some formatting incidentals: provide a cover page with the essay title, your name & the date; the List of References should be started on a separate page; any tables or figures should follow the List of References, each on a separate page. USE PAGE NUMBERS.

Please use Microsoft Word and send the essay to me: mnorconk@kent.edu. Again, it is your responsibility to revise and resubmit the essay, taking into account my comments, in a reasonable length of time (a week to 10 days). I will make comments directly on the electronic version. In Word, go to the review item in the menu and make sure “track changes” is active.

Grading of essays: A total of 50 points for each essay will be distributed in the following way:

30% issues of grammar and style— things to avoid = typographical errors, errors in form (e.g. citations), plagiarized work (un-cited references or quotes). Things to focus on = transitions between paragraphs, development of paragraphs and sentences, and general flow of the essay (beginning, middle, end).

70% issues of content — accuracy, creativity, clarity.