

Chapter 2

The Broad Foundations of Adaptationist-Computational Evolutionary Psychology

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2.1 What Evolutionary Psychology Is

Sociological Introduction What is known as *evolutionary psychology* is a broad scientific paradigm and disciplinary synthesis that is little more than a quarter of a century old as this chapter is written. Its beginnings are probably best identified with the publication of the first of a string of programmatic papers by Cosmides and Tooby (1987), as well as a paper by Symons (1987).¹ The scientist couple Leda Cosmides and John Tooby, David Buss, and Steven Pinker, have been the leading first-generation theorists of evolutionary psychology and continue to play central roles. Buss, Cosmides and Tooby, as well as Martin Daly and Margo Wilson, produced some of the best-known empirical results of the first years of evolutionary psychology.² In the course of the 1990s and 2000s, PhD students of these scientists developed various specializations and dispersed widely, geographically

This chapter is dedicated to the memory of my mother.

¹ If, as seems sensible enough, we choose to identify a first wave of major works in evolutionary psychology that were published by 1990, these would also include Daly and Wilson (1988), Buss (1989), Cosmides (1989), Pinker and Bloom (1990), Tooby and Cosmides (1989, 1990a, b), Buss and Barnes (1986), and Crawford et al. (1987). Evolutionary psychology was foreshadowed in the areas of human sexuality by the books of Symons (1979) and Daly and Wilson (1983/1978, Chaps. 11–12). The famous edited collection *The Adapted Mind* (Barkow et al. 1992), and the book-length treatise by Tooby and Cosmides (1992) it contains, are sometimes viewed by external observers as founding documents of the field. But evolutionary psychology was already well underway before this volume was published and considerable portions of the more significant material in it had already been published elsewhere.

² Valuable autobiographical remarks on early meetings of these scientists are provided by Buss (2008/1999, p. xvi f.) or Tooby and Cosmides (2005, p. 15, n. 3).

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speaking, with a number of them becoming influential contributors to the field in their own right. Many leading researchers in evolutionary psychology—from long-established senior figures to the youngest up-and-coming—are neither identical to any of the above nor former students of them. Many have their own theoretical emphases within the broad shared framework I wish to articulate in this chapter, yet they self-identify as ‘evolutionary psychologists’ and are regarded within the field as contributing to the same scientific enterprise. Evolutionary psychology is a quite rapidly developing field, it is bigger than ever before, and it continually attracts new and open-minded students who come to evolutionary psychology with the mindset that pursuing experimental work in this field is a perfectly natural thing to do.³

The reason I make these sociological observations is that they run contrary to an old, negative stereotype about evolutionary psychology. According to this influential stereotype, evolutionary psychology consists in the activities of a small coterie of researchers, or perhaps in activities controlled by such a coterie. Reflections of this stereotype are found in labels such as ‘Santa Barbara school’, based on the fact that Tooby, Cosmides, and Symons conducted their research at the University of California at Santa Barbara for many years. In fact, evolutionary psychology is not only a large field, but also a theoretically and methodically diverse one.

Aims of this Chapter Mapping the intra-field diversity of evolutionary psychology would be a formidable task worth executing systematically in a different work. Relatedly, it would be useful to compile some widespread misconceptions—short of out-and-out straw men—about what defines evolutionary psychology. These misconceptions would include misattributions of the following putatively defining characteristics: ideas that are merely typical of the field, derivative tenets, and inessentially strong emphases only endorsed by specific evolutionary psychologists. But this is beyond the scope of the present work.

In this chapter, I will try to state carefully what evolutionary psychology is positively *committed to*, as a field. I will not say very much about what it is not committed to, and I will say even less about specific criticisms of the field. Next to articulating evolutionary psychology’s basic commitments, the central theme here will be that these commitments are considerably *broadier than usually assumed outside the field*, although the commitments are certainly not trivial. Misconceptions about evolutionary psychology, for the main part, enter into the present discussion only via allegations of narrowness. Though I will not begin to map the field’s theoretical diversity in this chapter, the fact that there is room for substantive differences of theoretical emphasis within evolutionary psychology will hopefully become clear by implication of which commitments are stated here, and which are *not* stated.

³ It is interesting to note in this context that, while philosophers of special sciences generally try to be closely in touch with the activities of the sciences they specialize in, this norm does not seem to be widely observed when it comes to the human evolutionary behavioural sciences. There is a relative dearth of interaction between philosophers and the research communities in this broad field.

When it comes to evolutionary psychology, foundational clarifications and replies to fundamental criticisms are peculiarly closely connected. Erroneously narrow and ill-informed conceptions of what evolutionary psychology is committed to are so pervasive, even among the less than hostile, that mere clarification by itself may constitute evolutionary psychology's most important avenue of defence.

The Essence of Evolutionary Psychology Evolutionary psychology can be viewed as combining *two ways of assimilating the study of the mind to the natural sciences*. It does so by combining two broad and standard research paradigms from psychology and evolutionary biology: (1) a broadly *computational* (information-processing) approach to the mind, and (2) an *adaptationist* (or, roughly equivalently: selectionist) approach to the accordingly conceived mind's architecture, where this adaptationism is based on the modern evolutionary theory of natural selection rather than pretheoretical, intuitive notions of function. Against this background, the research program generally known as evolutionary psychology might more accurately be called *adaptationist-computational evolutionary psychology*. This is how I understand the label 'evolutionary psychology' in what follows. Still more fully stated, the nature of evolutionary psychology is this:

(EP) Evolutionary psychology is experimental psychology in a broadly computational framework, organized, unified, and heuristically guided by adaptationist nativism based on modern evolutionary theory.

That is all there is to it. No stronger commitments than those in (EP) unite the scientists who unhesitatingly identify themselves as evolutionary psychologists. Nothing more specific underlies their use of the terms 'evolutionary psychologist' or 'evolutionary psychology'. But nothing less will do either. The present chapter aims to throw into sharper relief these basic commitments of adaptationist-computational evolutionary psychology, explaining them in some detail. For now, let me anticipate the following.

The broadly *computationalist* aspect, here as elsewhere, consists in positing mechanically interacting internal representations in the explanation of behaviour that are located at a functional level of description beyond that of common-sense psychology—or at least in requiring one's work to naturally lend itself to such a kind of explanation. Evolutionary psychology's *adaptationism* is based on the modern theory of natural selection and can be factored into a basic, ontological component, and an additional, disciplinary component. The disciplinary adaptationism of evolutionary psychology makes claims about how psychology is to be properly pursued, given that the ontological hypothesis is true. Ontological adaptationism hypothesizes that the human mind develops on the basis of many more naturally selected, content-specific acquisition mechanisms (and other information-processing adaptations) than have been traditionally assumed in mainstream psychology. This is the central idea of evolutionary psychology. It will be explained later what this means.

Ontological adaptationism has not been spelled out in (EP) for the sake of readability. But it is entailed by the inclusion of disciplinary adaptationism. This in turn is represented in (EP) through the requirements that psychology be organized, unified, and heuristically guided by adaptationist theory.

Psychological nativism is essential to evolutionary psychology if anything is, but it is an inextricable part of the adaptationist commitment. Evolutionary psychology makes no commitment to nativism independently of its adaptationist stance. This is why it is not treated as a separate pillar of evolutionary psychology here. Nonetheless, I will explain nativism in the context of evolutionary psychology's adaptationist commitments.

The Tooby-Cosmides Emphases⁴ If, in the following, repeated reference is made to works written in the 1990s by first-generation promoters of evolutionary psychology, this is not due to a lack of awareness of subsequent publications and developments. It is because my present interest lies in identifying and clarifying the fundamental commitments of evolutionary psychology and because, since its beginnings, no *new* potential tenets that might play this role have emerged. This is not to say that, conversely, *all* of the potentially defining ideas which have been associated with evolutionary psychology since its beginnings have really turned out to be defining ones. In fact, that is not the case.

In particular, since the early days of evolutionary psychology, Tooby and Cosmides have tended to advocate adaptationist-computational evolutionary psychology in a package together with a bundle of special emphases which are inessential to evolutionary psychology as such. Many card-carrying evolutionary psychologists do not share these particular emphases to the same degree, and many endorse other emphases instead. (There is no clearer testament to this than Miller (2000), a leading, almost paradigmatic evolutionary psychologist who I believe actually goes too far in his purported rejection of elements of the Tooby-Cosmides 'metatheory', as he calls it.)

What is unfortunate in this context is the following. Firstly, Cosmides and Tooby have not bothered to separate their special emphases from the commitments that constitute evolutionary psychology as such—a field they have always supported and been part of. Secondly, even though methodologically conscious evolutionary psychologists must have been long aware of the difference between their field's essential commitments and the Tooby-Cosmides emphases, even influential figures have only rarely commented on it explicitly in writing. Thirdly, by common consent, Cosmides and Tooby are co-founders of evolutionary psychology. This combination of facts has been deeply misleading. It makes it hard to blame outsiders one-sidedly for identifying evolutionary psychology tout court with the more specific package of theorems promoted by Cosmides and Tooby.⁵

Why have evolutionary psychologists rarely stated in print that the Tooby-Cosmides emphases are far from universally shared in the community of self-identified evolutionary psychologists which Cosmides and Tooby themselves feel part of?

⁴ The order of names in this descriptor is arbitrary with regard to the authors' contributions; it is chosen purely for rhythm and rhyme.

⁵ This is not to lay the entire blame for the present type of misconception on Cosmides, Tooby, and other evolutionary psychologists. Philosophers of science who publish on evolutionary psychology, for example, can fairly be expected to dig deep enough to know better—but as far as I can discern, they frequently have not.

Mainly for strategic reasons, surely. One publicly deemphasizes differing theoretical hunches and emphases when the shared foundation is more substantive and one's research enterprise is still continuously challenged (Kurzban 2010a) to justify its very existence. Detractors of evolutionary psychology may balk at the comparison, but the situation seems at least sociologically reminiscent of how disagreeing evolutionary scientists publicly close ranks in the face of creationism (cf. Dawkins 2003).

2.2 On a Broad/Narrow Distinction Regarding 'Evolutionary Psychology'

It is popular nowadays, especially among authors critical of standardly so-called evolutionary psychology, to draw a broad/narrow distinction between two ways of understanding the compound noun 'evolutionary psychology' (Scher and Rauscher 2003a; Rauscher and Scher 2003a; Heyes 2000; Wilson 2003; Buller 2005; Dunbar and L. Barrett 2007; Heyes and Huber 2000: passim). The distinction and its rationale can be roughly summarized as follows. On a broad and natural understanding, 'evolutionary psychology' might mean something like:⁶ psychology that is informed by evolutionary theory and the mind's evolutionary past. But Tooby, Cosmides, Buss, and colleagues established the term 'evolutionary psychology' with a far more specific and programmatically tendentious meaning than the generic meaning naturally derivable from the component meanings of this term. Consequently, it is desirable to restore an innocuous, generic meaning to the expression 'evolutionary psychology'. Sometimes, a separate label is suggested (or a special notational convention such as capitalization, see Buller 2005) to distinguish evolutionary psychology as a specific school of thought from the broad field.

An example of this way of framing things is provided by a 2003 volume entitled *Evolutionary Psychology: Alternative Approaches*, which contains various noteworthy contributions by well-known authors. Its editors Scher and Rauscher insert the following footnote towards the beginning of each chapter:

EDITOR'S NOTE: In this book, the term 'narrow evolutionary psychology' signifies the approach to evolutionary psychology developed by Cosmides, Tooby, Buss, et al. This term was chosen not to imply that this approach has an inappropriately narrow point of view, but merely to suggest that the approach adopts a narrower range of assumptions than 'broad evolutionary psychology' (or, just 'evolutionary psychology'). This latter term signifies evolutionary psychology generally, practiced with any of a very broad range of assumptions possible within the general framework of evolutionary approaches to psychology.

⁶ I am trying to be charitable here in suggesting how 'evolutionary psychology' might plausibly be understood by those without prior knowledge or expectations.

Incidentally, it requires no small amount of mental effort to understand the label ‘narrow evolutionary psychology’⁷ to be as void of suggestions of parochiality as the editors assure their readers. After all, the value-free logico-philosophical term that would be customarily used in such a context is ‘strong’, not ‘narrow’—and evolutionary psychologists who would happily introduce themselves to others as ‘narrow evolutionary psychologists’ are presumably yet to be found. Be this as it may, I will not adhere to a twofold terminological distinction of the kind just described. My previously introduced usage implies this already. Before I explain this, a couple of terminological clarifications are in order.

It is true, and certainly evident from characterizations like (EP), that the term ‘evolutionary psychology’ has a significantly more specific meaning than one that might be determined by a competent speaker of English simply by understanding its component expressions. Where misunderstanding threatens, we can and should use the more accurate term ‘adaptationist-computational evolutionary psychology’—or simply ‘adaptationist-computational psychology’, given that the modifier ‘evolutionary’ is strictly speaking rendered redundant by ‘adaptationist’. Or, as I chose to do earlier, we can expressly stipulate to use ‘evolutionary psychology’ with the meaning of ‘adaptationist-computational evolutionary psychology’ and then freely avail ourselves of the shorter, less cumbersome term, so entrenched in the scientific community already.

But here is why I think we should reject a terminological revisionism along the ‘broad/narrow’ lines above. Consider the assumptions it is based upon. Firstly, such revisionism takes for granted that the term ‘evolutionary psychology’ as such has a clear, broad, innocuous meaning, on which it refers to a doctrinally uncommitted field of research. This is the positive assumption about ‘broad’ evolutionary psychology. Secondly, this terminological revisionism assumes that the broad and natural meaning needs to be freed from the stranglehold of a rigid and narrowly doctrinally committed school of thought that Cosmides, Tooby, Buss, et al. established under the name ‘evolutionary psychology’. This is the negative assumption about ‘narrow’ evolutionary psychology. Let me comment on these in reverse order.

Rejecting the negative (‘narrow’) part of the conception underlying the broad/narrow distinction is part of the point of this chapter. Judging from the characterizations I have come across, whenever a broad/narrow distinction along the lines above is made, the conception of ‘narrow’ evolutionary psychology assumed as a foil is *practically always too specific to reflect actual understandings of ‘evolutionary psychology’ by self-identified evolutionary psychologists*, including paradigmatic representatives. It is likewise too specific to do any justice to the boundaries of the scientific community to which paradigmatic, self-identified evolutionary psychologists belong—that is, whom they associate with, whom they collaborate with, and whom they constructively discuss their ideas with. What would be problematic is if avowed evolutionary psychologists really did understand the term ‘evolutionary

⁷ See also the editors’ note in D.S. Wilson (2003, n. 1), who is described as having independently arrived at the same terminology—apparently also with no intention of insinuating narrow-mindedness.

psychology' as implying the endorsement of each tenet regularly attributed to them; or even, arguably, if they understood it as implying endorsement of every single theoretical emphasis pushed by Cosmides and Tooby. But this is not the case. Rather, a large scientific community of self-identified evolutionary psychologists exists who, whatever else they may believe, share a commitment to pursuing psychology roughly along the lines of (EP).

As for the positive ('broad') part of the conception underlying the broad/narrow distinction, a full criticism of it would involve commenting on the exact justifications offered by different authors for assuming the existence of a broader, untendentious field of evolutionary psychology. Suffice it to sketch the following general response here.

Once one avoids attributing inappropriately strong ideas to standardly so-called, self-described evolutionary psychologists, the question becomes pressing as to how an allegedly 'broad' evolutionary psychology is supposed to be more inclusive than standard evolutionary psychology at all. For example, it cannot be the potential inclusion of animal behaviour research and cross-species comparisons in one's considerations (*pace* Heyes 2000, p. 3) that sets 'broad' evolutionary psychology apart from standardly so-called evolutionary psychologists (see, e.g., co-founders of the field, Daly and Wilson 1995, 1999, 2005). Or, to mention another central aspect, it is unlikely that a refusal to commit to a computational, information-processing approach to psychology, understood along the broad lines explained below, motivates insistence on a 'broad' evolutionary psychology.

Fundamentally, I submit, there really is only one issue relative to which an interesting alternative evolutionary psychology might be distinguished from the standardly so-called evolutionary psychology that is the subject of this chapter. It is the issue of *adaptationist nativism*. One might distinguish from standardly so-called evolutionary psychology a *non-adaptationist* evolutionary psychology whose adherents are much more sceptical about the number of human-specific psychological adaptations which natural selection may have shaped, and whose adherents are much more optimistic about how many human psychological phenomena can be explained through learning from experience—including social learning and cultural transmission—rather than through specific innate learning adaptations. A distinction of schools of thought in recent decades along these lines might make sense.

However, the crucial point for present purposes is this. Such an alternative, non-adaptationist evolutionary psychology *cannot impartially be claimed to form a broader, more innocuous scientific undertaking*. To assume this without argument would be to beg the very question that separates such a non-adaptationist evolutionary psychology from its adaptationist counterpart. A non-adaptationist, alternative evolutionary psychology is not a broader, more modest, more open-minded research program—at least not ipso facto. It is rather a research program which places its bets differently: much nearer to the empiricist end on a continuum spanning between adaptationist nativism and empiricism in human psychology.

Having clarified this, let me now return to standardly so-called evolutionary psychology, the adaptationist-computational psychology characterized in (EP).

2.3 On Fundamental Opposition and Methodological Misgivings

Fundamental opposition and disdainful comments on evolutionary psychology are still remarkably widespread in the philosophy of science and large parts of the cognitive or biological sciences, to say nothing of the social sciences. A frank disclosure therefore seems in order. The present chapter is written by ‘a sympathetic observer of the scene’, to borrow a self-description used in the same context by Richard Dawkins (2005, p. 975). After years of observing discourse in and on evolutionary psychology and studying relevant works from a thoroughly uncommitted standpoint, I have found myself agreeing with the assessment that evolutionary psychology is ‘subject to a level of implacable hostility which seems far out of proportion to anything sober reason [...] might sanction’ (ibid.).⁸ Evolutionary psychology’s central rationale is sound, I take it: The human mind/brain can be expected to show numerous effects of natural selection, no differently from the extracerebral body in general.

Attacks on the basic legitimacy of evolutionary psychology tend to be disconcertingly ill-informed about their target. This has often been pointed out in defences of evolutionary psychology, and it continues to be the case. Fundamental criticisms continue to rely more on prejudices, superficial misattributions, and popular vulgarizations than on attentive readings of the works that thoughtful evolutionary psychologists have actually written. Readers wishing to form an opinion on critiques of evolutionary psychology are referred to the works of Kenrick (1995), Alcock (2001), Pinker (2002 and 1997: *passim*), Kurzban (2002), Hagen (2005), Dawkins (2005), Tybur et al. (2007), Tooby and Cosmides (1992, pp. 33–49 and *passim*),⁹ more indirectly but foundationally: Ketelaar and Ellis (2000), Barrett (2006), Barrett and Kurzban (2006); and perhaps most instructively, in response to specific high-profile attacks: Tooby et al. (2003), Buss and Reeve (2003), Daly and Wilson (2008), Holcomb (2005) or Machery and Barrett (2006).

My aim in this chapter is not to respond directly and in detail to specific criticisms of evolutionary psychology, as many of the aforementioned works commend-

⁸ I have omitted from the Dawkins quote the added remark, ‘or even common politeness’, because I wish to focus on content here. Moreover, matters of politeness are hardly the problem in this context independently of content. Those openly hostile towards evolutionary psychology believe that their sometimes extraordinary reactions are justified by crass and pernicious ideas promoted by evolutionary psychologists. If I were to address any ethical issues here, it would be the lack of epistemic humility that is evidenced by critics commenting snidely or offensively on an entire field they often know remarkably little about.

⁹ In several respects, the genre to which the works cited here respond could be extended back at least into the 1980s, that is, into the so-called sociobiology controversy (see Segerstråle 2000; Dawkins 1985). Indeed, some of the above-cited works address attacks on human sociobiology and evolutionary psychology alike, and there is very considerable overlap between the charges these two have had to face (just-so storytelling, genetic determinism, political misgivings, etc.). However, I am assuming that, for the familiar reasons first advanced in early evolutionary psychology, much of human sociobiology was fundamentally flawed in a way that evolutionary psychology was not (Cosmides and Tooby 1987, pp. 277–283; Symons 1987, 1989; cf. Laland and Brown 2011/2002, Chap. 3). Accordingly, the responses referenced above were chosen specifically with evolutionary psychology in mind.

ably do. My main aim is rather to provide a positive characterization of evolutionary psychology, and to separate it from inessential or spurious ideas—and to do this clearly enough to make the identification of straw man attacks a relatively straightforward affair, rendering superfluous long lists of further disclaimers as to all the things that evolutionary psychology is not.

What I want to do in the remainder of the present section is to address three *methodological types of misgivings* about evolutionary psychology. These concern: (1) the quality of specific works in the field, (2) the scope of topics addressed in evolutionary psychology, and (3) the potentially myopic scope of methods employed therein.

Specific Studies Apart from misconceptions about the aims and claims of evolutionary psychology, criticisms often reduce to dismissive remarks about the quality or interpretation of *specific studies* which a critic has come across. Presumably, no good evolutionary psychologist would deny that a great amount of flawed studies, inferences, and claims have been put forth by self-identified evolutionary psychologists in the past. But evolutionary psychology hardly fares worse in this respect than other behavioural fields of inquiry, and evolutionary psychology is still in its childhood. The two or three most important replies that I would make to critics of specific studies are these.

Firstly, surely one ought to judge a scientific paradigm by its *better* work, by work that realizes the paradigm's potential, rather than by the worst of it. Anyone criticizing evolutionary psychology on the basis of specific studies ought to consider whether they are observing this point, or whether they are measuring evolutionary psychology by unfair standards by which they would not measure other research paradigms. Relatedly, what would be unsettling is if shoddy studies were nowadays regularly found among the celebrated and most-cited writings within the evolutionary psychology literature. But that can hardly be claimed to be the case. The scientific community's attention, its awards, the tenured professorships at top-tier research universities, the establishment of citation classics, the publications in high-impact journals: these do very much tend to go to authors of strong rather than poor works in evolutionary psychology. And if the rationale of evolutionary psychology is correct, the good work it brings forth offers more epistemic progress per study than comparable work in corresponding areas of non-evolutionary psychology.

Finally, banal as it may seem to point this out, evolutionary psychologists do not claim single studies or experiments to establish hypotheses about the existence of a psychological adaptation. It is many pieces of evidence together, plus the lack of a satisfactory alternative empiricist explanation of relevant phenomena, that jointly and in the long run make the postulation of specific psychological adaptations plausible.

Topical Emphases People new to the field frequently get the impression that certain topical emphases—above all, sex and mating, but also parenting, social exchange, etc.—and a concomitant marginalization of other topics are somehow central to the identity of evolutionary psychology. This impression is incorrect. The adaptationist approach defined in (EP) does not mandate a topical scope restriction.

On the contrary, it mandates its absence. Such a scope restriction is incompatible with evolutionary psychology's aspiration of unifying psychological research.

It is, however, quite understandable how one might get the incorrect impression that specific topical foci are central to evolutionary psychology's identity. The efforts of the evolutionary psychology research community are still unevenly distributed across the range of phenomena constituted by the human mind and its behavioural products. Similarly, the limited scope of topics covered in the field's leading textbook (Buss 2008/1999) and the relative allotment of space to the topics it does cover are bound to confuse in light of the book title's unqualified reference to 'evolutionary psychology' and the subtitle's promise to describe 'the new science of the mind' tout court.¹⁰ For an early tome in the field that is more evenly dedicated to a broad scope of themes and mental phenomena, compare Pinker (1997).

Methods and Disciplines Sometimes, a heavy reliance on certain methods or disciplines (the difference between these is not clear-cut) is portrayed as constitutive of the identity of evolutionary psychology. It is probably true that certain methods, typically convenient and inexpensive, still predominate in the field. But it is questionable whether the situation here is any worse than in realms of experimental psychology unguided by evolutionary thinking (cf. Baumeister et al. 2007). More importantly, evolutionary psychologists' choice of methods is not subject to any *programmatically driven* restrictions. On the contrary, good evolutionary psychologists welcome any method, if it helps discover the evolved architecture of the mechanisms of the human mind. Methodological overviews by evolutionary psychologists include a broad range of methods and data sources. They encourage their use. They sometimes even admonish them (Schmitt and Pilcher 2004; Schmitt 2008; Simpson and Campbell 2005; Buss 2008/1999, pp. 59–69, 42–49).

It is, in particular, provably wrong that evolutionary psychologists shun fields such as game theory, or behavioural genetics, or developmental psychology, or even neuroscience. Evolutionary psychologists are at work in all these fields. To claim otherwise is only to prove oneself ignorant of the literature. Not every *individual* evolutionary psychologist draws on the knowledge and methods of many different disciplines. But *between* them, evolutionary psychologists do aim to do so. That at least is the regulative ideal. Evolutionary psychology is programmatically keyed to *heavy disciplinary eclecticism*. Pinker, for one, has always been enthusiastic about this point, as in the following passage on what is required by good adaptationist explanations in psychology:¹¹

Unfortunately for those who think that the departments in a university reflect meaningful divisions of knowledge, it means that psychologists have to look outside psychology if they

¹⁰ See D.S. Wilson's (1999) review of the textbook's first edition—a highly differentiated and competent critique published in the leading journal of the human evolutionary behavioural sciences. Wilson's remarks on topical partiality reflect the same impression which I had upon first encountering the textbook.

¹¹ See also Pinker (2005b, p. xiv f.) and the entertaining remarks in Pinker (2005a, p. 19). The presently considered claim goes beyond what Cosmides et al. (1992, p. 3 and 14, n. 1) call 'conceptual integration', which imposes the weaker requirement of cross-disciplinary consistency.

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