

Introduction

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but interdisciplinary approach
to human behaviour!

Cultural/musical taste judgments as an evolutionary self-organizing mechanism within society

- Traditionally sociology of culture is concerned meaning in texts - music, lyrics, writings etc.
- Try to look at the processes how a social meaning is developed.
 - Link these back to cognitive/evolutionary mechanisms.

Evolutionary Psychology

- Slow pace of genetic evolution means man has not evolved since Pleistocene times: "Psychologically speaking, we are Pleistocene hunter gathers locked into a twentieth-century political economy" Dunbar 1996:77

- To link the two: genetic explanation of Pleistocene man + social-cultural memetic explanation = modern man?

Grooming and Gossip

- Dunbar argue for the evolution of humans bigger brain was for language to enable to live in larger social group.
- Cooperation (Axelrod prisoners dilemma) has huge benefits for humans.
- But unless a strategy to protect there is always the problem of freeriders
- The larger the social group the more vulnerable to free-riders

Grooming and Gossip

- It's suggested to protect need to form and maintain a relationship with allies.
- One way to do this is to make an investment in the relationship.
- Dunbar argues that grooming is used in primates to do this but group sizes are limited by the amount of time it takes to physically groom someone.
- Therefore language and gossip allows time to be spent together, directly maintain social relationship, update information on other social relationships.

Bourdieu: Distinctions

Argues that taste is socially learnt. That this learning is tied up with the class system, as actors are embedded within a social network.

Taste displays perform 3 functions:

1. Distinguish between groups by displaying superior taste
2. Group within similar tastes
3. Distinguish within this subgroup - hierarchy

{ Alife Mutants Hackingsession on Systems and Organisms, Bielefeld 2004 }

{ 'Evolutionary' uses of
taste displays of culture
knowledge }

- Free-rider prevention
- Mating advertisement
- Ally forming - equality selection -> class system?
- Hierarchy forming

{ Alife Mutants Hackingsession on Systems and Organisms, Bielefeld 2004 }

{ Sub-cultures or
groups }

To prevent free-rider invasions:
Visual tags - fashions
Verbal tags - dialects, slang

Internal
Topics of mutual interest to:
Allow time investment with allies
Demonstrate a skill of understanding and social skills to group for: a) position within hierarchy
b) advertising skills to potential mates.

{ Alife Mutants Hackingsession on Systems and Organisms, Bielefeld 2004 }

{ Bounded knowledge
and beyond }

Actors locally assess others for:

- Potential co-operators/allies
- Potential free-rider
- Potential mate

■ Actors have value of self-worth to compare with ally mate assessment

- How does global media information on 'stars' affect this?