



Adaptive Origins: Evolution and Human Development

Peter LaFrenière

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In this text, students are invited to rethink psychology by grounding it in the natural sciences with the understanding that evolutionary and developmental processes work together with culture to solve problems of human adaptation. These processes are cast as interdependent: Development cannot be understood except in the light of evolutionary theory, and the best proof of evolution is the fact of development. For students of evolutionary psychology, all the central topics -- such as evolved mental modules for theory of mind or language -- require an understanding of the developmental processes that lead to their expression. Genes, as important as they are, are never the whole story.

The role of biological factors is explored in chapters outlining evolution, development, genetics, human origins, hormones and the brain. Then, the integrative value of this evolutionary/developmental vision in understanding key topics in psychology is illustrated by applying it to traditional area of inquiry including infancy and attachment, emotions and their expression, social relations with peers, cognitive and language development, sex differences, courtship and mating, violence and aggression, and cooperation and competition.

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