



european human behaviour
and evolution association

EHBEA 2015 Newsletter

Dear EHBEA members,

To my great astonishment, I realise that this is the final newsletter of my term as president. It seems like only yesterday that I attained the tiara from Rob Barton. This means that my post, as well as Tamsin Saxton's post of EHBEA secretary and Jan Havlíček's post of Outreach Officer, will soon be coming up for election. Please consider standing, and watch out for the nomination announcement when it comes. It's been a wonderful year for EHBEA, in which we have seen growing membership, enjoyed a spectacular conference in Finland as well as supporting several smaller workshops, and given small grants to a number of students setting out on the path of research. All these activities are described within these pages.

Reading through the reports, I am struck by how much progress we are making in practising as well as preaching interdisciplinarity. Not only are the local divisions between evolutionary psychology, human behavioural ecology and cultural evolution finally disappearing, but I also sense productive interactions occurring along a wider frontier, with social science, public health and archaeology to name but a few areas. The much-anticipated London conference in April 2016 promises to see these interactions grow. Now I know that the reports of the demise of disciplinary boundaries tend to be exaggerated, but maybe this time it really is beginning to happen. Certainly hiring and funding policies, in the institutions I know at any rate, seem to be providing more and more space for people to develop radically interdisciplinary careers. All of this is good news for EHBEA and its members.

I hope that as many people as possible will be able to attend the London conference, and that we will hear a selection of talks as varied and stimulating as those we heard in Helsinki. For those of you unable to attend, there are other ways

of benefitting from EHBEA membership, such as student research grants and funding for smaller workshops – for more details, see inside.

It remains only for me to thank the committee members past and present, conference organizers and everyone else who has put time into EHBEA for their hard work; and to wish you a satisfying and productive academic year.

Daniel Nettle

EHBEA President

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1 News and Announcements

1.1 Changes to the EHBEA Committee

The following changes have been made to the EHBEA committee:

- Gillian Brown (Vice President), Sandra Virgo (Publicity Officer), and Jeremy Kendal (Early Career Officer) left the committee.
- Anna Rotkirch (incoming Vice President), Charlotte De Backer (incoming Publicity and Website Officer), and Carmen Lefevre (incoming Early Career Officer) joined the Committee.

Many thanks to outgoing committee members for their substantial contributions to EHBEA and a warm welcome to the new committee members.

We are seeking nominations for people to take up the posts of President, Secretary or Outreach Officer from March 2016 – March 2019. The attached nomination form gives full details, but in brief, the posts allow the individual to support and develop the Association; costs for Committee meeting(s) attendance are covered. Please consider standing and/or nominating an EHBEA member. The nomination deadline is **5pm on 31st October 2015**.

1.2 Membership Renewal reminder

The membership year runs until the end of September each year. If you are unsure when your membership term expires, you can check by logging in to the EHBEA website, and then looking at the 'membership expires' date displayed in the right-hand column, under your log-in name (<http://ehbea.com/old/members/>). Please remember that you must be a current member in order to apply for Student Research Grants, Student Travel Grants, Workshop Grants and to be nominated (or nominate) for the New Investigator Award or a Committee position, so don't forget to renew if you are applying for one of these.

1.3 Student Research Grant

EHBEA supports research by its student members through a bi-annual Student Research Grant competition. The next deadline for submitting a funding proposal is **5pm GMT on 1st March 2016**. Applicants must be pursuing postgraduate

research degrees and be members of EHBEA in order to apply. Up to two grants will be awarded each year. The maximum award per grant is 500 Euros. Funds could be requested for participant payments, travel to field sites, or other research costs. Grant applications will be assessed on the basis of scientific quality, feasibility and quality of the applicant. More information, and application forms, are available on the EHBEA website, and attached to this newsletter. Please contact the EHBEA Early Career Officer Carmen Lefevre (carmenlefevre@me.com) if you have any questions.

1.4 Workshop grants

EHBEA supports occasional workshops and meetings to promote understanding of evolution and human behaviour, facilitate research collaborations, and further research. Application deadlines for workshop funding are yearly on 1st March and 1st August, with funding available up to a maximum of 1000 Euros per workshop. The next deadline for submitting a funding proposal is **5pm GMT on 1st March 2016**. Students organising workshops are also encouraged to apply. More information, and application forms, are available on the EHBEA website, and attached to this newsletter. Please contact the EHBEA Secretary Tamsin Saxton (ehbea.secretary@googlemail.com) if you have any questions.

1.5 EHBEA Conference Proposals

EHBEA welcomes suggestions to organise future conferences. Negotiations are currently underway regarding the possibility to organise EHBEA 2017 in Paris. Conferences are a wonderful opportunity to host the EHBEA community and encourage the study of evolution and human behaviour in different parts of Europe. Ideally, submissions are made 18 months in advance. The application form and the revised guidelines for conference organisers are available at the EHBEA website.

2 EHBEA 2016 Conference

We are pleased to announce the **10th European Human Behaviour and Evolution Association Conference** which will be hosted at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), United Kingdom from **5th to 8th April 2016**.

Abstract submission (deadline **31st December 2015**) will open later in the autumn - the dates and more information will be announced on the conference **website** (<http://ehbea.com/conference2016/>), **Facebook page** (<https://www.facebook.com/EHBEA2016>), and **twitter account** (@ehbea2016).

The organisers welcome submissions on all topics, but this year also specifically encourage submissions applying evolutionary approaches to questions of health and social policy relevance. A special symposium is planned on this topic, to mark the first occasion EHBEA has been hosted at a world-leading centre for public and global health, LSHTM.

Plenary speakers:

[Ron Lee](#) (Demography - University of California, USA)

[Grazyna Jasienska](#) (Anthropology - Jagiellonian University, Poland)

[Jens Krause](#) (Behavioural Biology - Humboldt University, Germany)

[Louise Barrett](#) (Comparative Primatology - University of Lethbridge, Canada)

[Jay Stock](#) (Bioarchaeology - University of Cambridge, UK)

[Jonathan Wells](#) (Public Health - University College, London)

If you have any questions, please contact the organizing committee at ehbeaconference2016@gmail.com

3 EHBEA 2015 New Investigator Award

The EHBEA Steering Committee is calling for nominations for the 2016 EHBEA New Investigator Award.

The prize will be a plenary slot at the EHBEA 2016 annual conference in London from 5th to 8th April with expences paid. All EHBEA members are invited to nominate one or more candidates. A nomination form including further details is attached to this newsletter. The deadline for nominations is **5pm GMT on Saturday October 31st 2015.**

4 EHBEA 2015 New Investigator Award Winner

Gert Stulp (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)



[Gert Stulp](#) is a Research Fellow at the Department of Population Health at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He received his PhD in Evolutionary Social Psychology in 2012 from the University of Groningen. Gert's main interest is understanding human behavior from an evolutionary perspective. He is particularly interested in evolutionary processes in contemporary populations. Currently, he focuses on understanding fertility (the number of children an individual has) and fertility-

decisions using a behavioural ecological framework. More specifically, he is interested in which components of these decisions can be considered (mal)adaptive.

He is also interested in the evolutionary relevance of human height. Throughout the animal kingdom, natural and sexual selection act on body size. In his research, he examines whether the same holds true for human body size and height. More specifically, he investigates if height is related to mate choice, intra-sexual competition, and ultimately biological fitness. He uses a variety of methodologies in his research, ranging from online questionnaires and archival datasets to behavioural observations and experiments.

Selected Publications

Stulp, G., Buunk, A. P., Kurzban, R., & Verhulst, S. (2013). The height of choosiness: mutual mate choice for stature results in suboptimal pair formation for both sexes. *Animal Behaviour*, *86*(1), 37-46.

Stulp, G., & Barrett, L. (in press). Evolutionary perspectives on human height variation. *Biological Reviews*.

5 EHBEA 2015 Best Student Presentation

Venla Berg, Population Research Institute, Väestöliitto

Birth intervals between siblings and the risk of parental divorce.



Shorter time elapsed between the births of siblings is associated with perinatal complications, development of the children and reduced longevity of the parents, even in contemporary Western societies. Decreased parental longevity implies increased stress levels in parents with tightly spaced children, and this stress may affect marital relationship quality. We hypothesize that short birth intervals increase the risk of parental divorce. Data and methods The FINNFAMILY data is a compilation of national register data with a representative sample of Finns from birth cohorts of 1955, 1960, 1965, 1970, and 1975 (10,000 persons/cohort). For this study, we used parents with exactly two children who were both born in marriage (N=9,952, 53% women). Cox regressions were applied to study whether the interbirth interval of the two children was associated with parental risk of divorce in the next ten years after the birth of the second child. The average follow-up time was 3242 (SD 866) days. Sex and age of parent, length of marriage at second birth, and birth cohort were controlled for. Results show that as expected, short birth intervals increased the risk of divorce. Compared to parents with very short interbirth intervals (<18 months), parents with a birth interval between 24.01 to 30 months (hazard ratio = .78, p=.035), 30.01 to 36 months (HR = .68, p=.003), and 36.01 to 42 months (HR = .70, p=.010) had significantly lower risks of divorce. Studies of hunter-gatherers suggest that the species-typical birth interval of humans is circa three to four years, although there is much variation. We conclude that in a modern Western society, for parents of two children, a birth interval around three or four years seems to be ideal with regards to duration of marriage. The research is part of the Linked Lives project, Academy of Finland.

6 EHBEA 2015 Best Student Poster Award

Sean Talamas, University of St Andrews

Perceived intelligence: the overthrow of the attractiveness halo



Perceptions of intelligence influence mate selection and shape student-teacher expectations. Impression formation is profoundly influenced by beauty, but the existence of facial cues which affect judgments beyond such an "attractiveness halo" may be underestimated.

We therefore investigated malleable facial cues that may influence first impressions of intelligence.

Methods: Perceived intelligence and attractiveness ratings of 90 school aged children, 100 adult and 24 facial images of the same person before and after sleep

restricted were gathered and compared to perceptual ratings and objective measurements of mouth curvature and eyelid openness.

Results: In both the adult and children's facial images intelligence impression was partially mediated by attractiveness, but there were independent effects of eyelid-openness and subtle smiling that enhanced intelligence ratings independent of attractiveness. Since the facial cues implicated can change within an individual, in a third set of stimuli we explored changes in these cues within participants with and without sleep restriction and again the variation in eyelid-openness and mouth curvature influenced intelligence ratings beyond their impact on attractiveness. The subtlety of the cues was apparent from the failure of observers to differentiate the subtle differences in seemingly neutral facial images. Nonetheless, perceptual judgments concurred with objective measurements when evaluators were instructed to focus specifically on mouth curvature and eyelid-openness.

Conclusions: These findings suggest potential overgeneralizations based on subtle facial cues that indicate low mood and tiredness, which impair cognitive ability. This combination of findings has important implications for mate selection, students who are directly influenced by expectations of ability and teachers who may form expectations based on first perceptions of intelligence.

7 Student Research Grant Awardees

The awardees of this year's student research grants are:

7.1 Fabian Probst (Bern University)

Dismantling the spandrels of Santa Barbara

Fertility detection in human and non-human animals has been a long-standing interest in evolutionary ecology. Accumulating evidence seems to suggest that men are able to detect subtle changes in women across the menstrual cycle. However, the adaptational value of such "leaky cues" to ovulation is highly debated. In particular, criticism has been voiced concerning methodological procedures and interpretation of such findings (Havlíček, Cobey, Barrett, Klapilová, & Roberts, 2015): the physical changes in women's appearance around ovulation are almost beyond human capacity to perceive and can only be observed by using sophisticated technology and experimental methods, which artificially increase the sensibility to detect ovulation cues.

The aim of the project is to assess whether men can detect ovulation cues in women's faces in an experimental paradigm that more closely resembles a real world situation. Instead of using a 2AFC-paradigm (as has been done in most previous studies), we will use a rating paradigm and will present participants with a series of photographs of women, which were either taken during the fertile or non-fertile phase. Then the same participants will be invited again after one week to repeat the rating, this time including the respective counterparts of the picture pairs. To increase ecological validity even more, the research will involve three separate samples of stimuli and judges (Prague, Newcastle and Bern).

7.2 Jolene H. Tan (Max Planck Institute for Human Development)

Investigating Error Management Strategies in Cooperation

Aim. Whether to resume cooperation after partner defection (i.e., forgive) is an evolutionarily recurrent error-management problem. Decision errors come in two forms: forgiving when it would have resulted in net fitness costs, or not forgiving when it would have resulted in net fitness benefits. What decision strategies do individuals use to decide whether to forgive? Do they reduce the likelihood of the more costly error in a way that enhances fitness?

Method. We will use a computerized conflict game where participants would have to solve a conflict of interest with an opposing player (OP). After each round, participants will have to decide whether to forgive the OP and play again with him/her in the immediate next round, or to play with a new OP. OPs will be randomly assigned relationship values that are low, medium, or high, which corresponds to the size of reward that the participant could potentially gain by playing with that OP again, and therefore the cost of decision errors.

Expected results. Participants' decisions will be compared to different decision models, each representing distinct approaches to error management. The model that best fits each participant's data would be categorized as the descriptive model for that participant. We expect that models that manage the cost of errors—i.e., that are biased towards forgiving OPs with high relationship value and biased against forgiving those with low relationship value— will be able to describe participants' decisions better than models that do not account for the cost of errors.

7.3 Jana Jarecki (Max Planck Institute for Human Development)

Domain-dependent decision processes

The project investigates whether domain-differences in human risk taking correspond to differences in information-processing strategies, across ten domains. The domain-specificity of human behavior is a core assumption of evolutionary psychology, but the information processing steps that lead to the behavior are rarely studied. Which strategies the mind uses to process information, on the other hand, is a central question in cognitive psychology, but domain-differences are rarely systematically studied. My project connects the study of evolutionary

adaptations to the study of cognitive information processing in the context of risk behaviour.

Evolutionary theory conceptualizes domain-differences as adaptations evolved to mediate reoccurring fitness challenges. Cognitive theories picture the mind as a general information integration apparatus. By unifying these views, I study the mind as selective information processor depending on the functional domain. The most prevalent methodology to study domain-differences in risk-attitudes or behavior are questionnaires. But they can't inform us about the underlying information transformation. To understand them, scientists use process-tracing methods (like verbal protocols), and cognitive modelling to formalize processes and choices. My project integrates these methods. I measure risk choice with questionnaires, discrete choice experiments, and process tracing; and formalize it within cognitive process models. I will then test these comparatively across the ten evolutionary domains. This yields the necessary data and tools to address: Do different information processing strategies relate to domain-differences in human risk-taking?

7.4 Evy van Berlo (Utrecht University)

Investigating the vigilance hypothesis in bonobos (*Pan paniscus*): yawning after post-conflict reconciliation and consolation

Yawning is an evolutionarily old behaviour that is widespread among vertebrates. It frequently occurs during periods with lower arousal and it is highly contagious. Although much is known about how yawning can be induced, its biological significance remains a conundrum. There is growing empirical support that yawning serves a brain thermoregulatory function, i.e. by inhaling cool ambient air, the blood in the brain is cooled through convection. Furthermore, through this function, yawning can lead to maintaining vigilance when needed, and its contagiousness can serve to spread arousal and improve group vigilance. The aim of our study is to further investigate the vigilance hypothesis by disentangling effects of stress versus vigilance on yawning. To achieve this, we will observe post-conflict yawning in a group of captive bonobos (*Pan paniscus*) and assess the effect of reconciliations and consolations on yawning rates. We predict that yawning rates will increase directly after a conflict relative to baseline, because conflicts cause a lot of stress in

the group and displacement behaviours such as yawning are reliable stress indicators. Furthermore, if yawning is purely stress-related, we expect that yawning rates will decrease after both reconciliation and consolation, because both have been shown to alleviate stress. However, if yawning serves to induce vigilance, we expect that its rate will only return to baseline after reconciliation, because reconciliation restores the damaged relationship between opponents and consolation does not, so the risk for further aggression is still present and it is therefore important to remain vigilant.

7.5 Sophie Hedges (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

Difficult Decisions: Rural livelihoods, child work and parental investment in education in northern Tanzania

The proposed research will investigate the difficult decisions parents face regarding child education and child work in a sample of Sukuma agro-pastoralists in Northern Tanzania. The project will draw on evolutionary anthropological studies of the family, where positive effects of juvenile work on the household economy and individual skill acquisition have been extensively studied. This will be contrasted to the policy literature where child work is typically viewed negatively through its competition with education. Data from 450 households will be used to test (i) which forms of child work (e.g. farming, domestic, external) are traded-off against education and how this varies by sex and age; (ii) that household heads will bias investments to their biological children, and the birth order and sex with highest perceived returns (generally early-borns and sons, but this may vary by subsistence base and wealth) (iii) that wealthier households will perceive higher pay-offs to child education, while poorer households primarily engaged in farming or herding will perceive child work as relatively profitable. The study will make a novel contribution to our understanding of parental strategies in rural populations undergoing development and foster new connections between evolutionary anthropology and the policy literature on child work and education.

7.6 Annemieke Milks (University College London)

Controlled experiment of untipped wooden thrusting spears on animal carcasses: wounding potential, hunting lesions and use – wear to weapons

Understanding the first use of weapons by humans informs theories about Pleistocene human behaviours, including both hunting strategies and potential interpersonal violence. Archaeological sites have provided the earliest direct evidence of weapon use in the form of wooden spears dating to ~400,000 years ago in Britain and ~300,000 years ago in Germany. Two British sites from the period have provided potential evidence of the use of such weapons in the form of possible hunting lesions on zooarchaeological remains. Untipped wooden spears clearly played a part in Middle Pleistocene subsistence strategies, but the wounding capacities and hunting lesions created by such spears when delivered by hand remains poorly understood, and proposed deficiencies of the weapons lack unambiguous empirical support.

This research project involves a collaboration between archaeologists at UCL's Institute of Archaeology and impact and armour researchers at Cranfield Defence and Security. It will use state-of-the-art equipment to test replicas of wooden spears as thrusting weapons on a large mammal carcass. The experiment will be designed based upon results from a human performance trial at Cranfield Defence and Security, which provided quantitative data on impact velocities and forces of thrusting spears when used by trained participants. This project, funded in part by EHBEA, involves a controlled experiment that will create a better understanding of wounding potential, as well as reference datasets of damage signatures on the weapons and bone. These reference datasets will enable an empirical assessment of the Middle Pleistocene archaeological dataset relevant to wooden spear use.

8 EHBEA WORKSHOP REPORTS

8.1 North-East Evolutionary Psychology

Conference (Northumbria University, UK) 18 June 2015

On the 18th of June 2015, the Evolution, Perception, and Behaviour research group at Northumbria University held the EHBEA sponsored North East Evolutionary Psychology Conference (NEEPC). **The aim of the meeting was to raise awareness of the local presence of evolutionary psychology and related research within the Northeast of England and surrounding areas.** A geographical clustering of like-minded researchers interested in related topics can be a fruitful ground for collaboration and knowledge exchange. However, without formal structures and meetings, such exchange can be lacking. With this aim in mind, we organized NEEPC to be a relatively informal event with special emphasis on discussion and interaction between scholars as opposed to the more traditional conference format highly dominated by lecture style presentations.

We welcomed over 30 attendees, from six different universities reaching from York in the south to Edinburgh in the north. The 14 talks represented a great breadth of evolutionarily relevant research topics and were each followed by a 10-minute slot for questions and discussion. This format proved a great success with lively discussion filling the day. Highlights included Colin Tosh (Newcastle University), presenting computer models of the evolution of brain modularity; Alex Weiss (University of Edinburgh) presenting an overview of his work on chimpanzee personality and its similarity to human personality; as well as Gillian Pepper (Newcastle University) providing evidence of mortality salience being an important factor for healthy life decisions.

Following the formal proceedings of the day, the discussion continued over local beer and food, marking a great finish to what was a **successful day**.

Report written by Dr. Carmen Lefevre.

8.2 Evolutionary Developmental Biology: Current Debates

(EHBEA conference satellite meeting) (University of Helsinki, Finland) 28 March 2015

On 28 March 2015, a satellite meeting was convened in Helsinki prior to the annual EHBEA conference. The theme of this meeting was the role of development in evolutionary biology, with especial emphasis upon behavioural biology. There has been much discussion about how to conceptualize the relationship between development and evolution and this has gathered some momentum in recent years. The ambition of this meeting was to reflect the diverse issues at play within evolutionary developmental studies at the same time as highlighting key areas of future growth. To that end a similarly diverse set of speakers were invited to give their views on these matters, based on their own theoretical and empirical work. Clark Barrett (UCLA) opened the meeting with a talk on Open reaction norms and human flexibility. Barrett argued that in biology, the concept of a reaction norm typically implies a closed mapping function: a curve that maps between a range of environmental conditions and a range of phenotypic outcomes, both of which are in some sense pre-specified. However, many of the things humans learn and the environments they face are evolutionarily novel in many ways, never having been encountered by prior generations. Empirically, humans and other animals often (though not always) deal with such novelty adaptively. Generally, adaptive responses shaped by selection must be due to the fitness success of phenotypes produced in the past, which poses something of a puzzle: closed reaction norms generally involve mapping functions from environments to phenotypes that occurred over stretches of past evolutionary time. As a possible resolution to this puzzle Barrett introduced the concept of an open reaction norm, which can include both open (i.e. unspecified) and closed (specified) parameters. He outlined how such reaction norms might evolve and how to conceptualize them theoretically, using as an example his recent work on children's cultural learning about danger. The next speaker was Ben Dickins (Nottingham Trent University) who discussed (Epi)mutational dynamics and bet hedging. His focus was upon new phenotypes, which arise through changes in sequence context maintained by epigenetic marks such as histone modifications. Dickins made clear that epigenetic changes underlie cell differentiation, and noted that their contribution to inter-individual variation in

multicellular organisms has attracted attention because this connects gene regulation, which is responsive to environmental variation, to changes in populations. In microbes, mutations are a significant source of adaptive and non-adaptive variation, yet this variation is not simply random and can also be responsive to the environment. More generally DNA replication and repair vary in efficiency between lineages and mutation rates and biases cause evolution directly and through interaction with selection or drift. Dickins presented an examination of these dynamics that he argued can be used to guide our understanding of the interaction between variation-generating mechanisms and evolution.

Sinead English (Oxford University) discussed the use of Information as a loom to weave development and evolution. Her opening position was that natural selection shapes the developmental processes that construct the phenotypes, which, in turn, are under selection. She then went on to present a framework in which this interplay between development and evolution can be conceptualized by considering information transmission within and across generations. English showed how this perspective sheds light on major questions in evolutionary biology such as how individuals integrate different inputs for development (genes, parents, the environment) and the conditions under which non-genetic versus genetic mechanisms of inheritance evolve. A key component determining the reliability of information is the autocorrelation of the environment across generations. English described a meta-analysis on the empirical support for adaptive maternal transmission of information which illustrated how rarely studies have considered this autocorrelation. Thus, she argued, to move the field forward we need more theory-driven studies and data-driven theory.

Developmental changes in aggression and body size: an evolutionary perspective was the focus of Tim Fawcett's (University of Bristol) talk. Fawcett claimed that during development, humans and other social animals must learn how to navigate a dynamic, interactive environment in which the consequences of behaviour depend critically on how others perceive and respond to them. Given the uncertainty inherent in such situations, natural selection will tend to favour rules for adjusting behaviour flexibly in response to social feedback from previous interactions. These rules should generate ontogenetic changes in behaviour as individuals gain experience and gradually adapt to their personal social circumstances. Fawcett has been exploring whether or not this evolutionary perspective can help us to

understand observed patterns of behavioural development, using childhood aggression as an example. He presented a state-dependent evolutionary model that predicts developmental trajectories of aggression as a function of physical strength and information state, as individuals interact and learn about the consequences of their behaviour. He then analysed the developmental relationship between body size and physical aggression in humans, using a longitudinal cohort study of boys growing up in the Canadian province of Québec. Both the model and the data showed a strengthening association between relative size and aggressive behaviour across ontogeny, consistent with the hypothesis that individuals gradually learn about their physical capabilities through interacting with their peers. In the human data, after controlling for age-related changes, weight was the strongest predictor of aggressive behaviour: boys who were heavier than average for their age and height were more likely to get into fights or physically attack other children. These findings hint at the potential of evolutionary theory to shed light on the interplay between physical and behavioural development.

[Emma Flynn \(Durham University\) spoke about Developmental niche construction.](#)

Niche construction is the modification of components of the environment through an organism's activities. A core claim is that humans modify their environments mainly through ontogenetic and cultural processes, and it is this reliance on learning, plasticity and culture that lends human niche construction a special potency. Flynn, an educational psychologist, constructed her talk in order to facilitate discussion between researchers interested in niche construction and those interested in human cognitive development by highlighting some of the related processes. She discussed the transmission of culturally relevant information, how the human mind is a symbol-generating and artefact-devising system, and how these processes are bi-directional, with infants and children both being directed, and directing, their own development. She then reflected upon these in the light of four approaches: natural pedagogy, activity theory, distributed cognition and situated learning. She concluded by offering three future directions; two involving the use of new techniques in the realms of neuroscience and modelling, and the third suggesting exploration of changes in the effects of niche construction across the lifespan.

[The concluding talk was from Daniel Nettle \(Newcastle University\) on Developmental plasticity in the European starling: Empirical observations and](#)

evolutionary interpretations. Nettle discussed how in altricial birds, experience during the first few days of life can affect many different behavioural traits in adulthood. Nettle and his colleagues study such effects using cross-fostering in the European starling, and he reviewed recent findings with respect to boldness, food motivation, impulsivity, expectation of reward, and flight performance. He then noted that it is widely suggested that responsiveness to early developmental inputs is adaptive. Nettle outlined the prevailing adaptive explanations for such responsiveness (the 'weather forecast' model, in which a stressful ontogeny is suggested to carry information about the adult environment, and the 'making the best of a bad job' model, in which adult behaviour represents a compensation for phenotypic limitations resulting from development). He then suggested a non-adaptive alternative interpretation of some of the empirical findings. Nettle concluded by considering what needs to be demonstrated to show that a developmental response is adaptive, and how we discriminate between competing adaptive interpretations of the same phenomenon.

The meeting was well attended and much discussion was had during the day and also at the social event afterwards. This is testament to the high quality of the presentations and we thank our speakers for their investment in the process and for their clear and thought provoking talks. It was heartening to see colleagues from the various corners of our multidisciplinary subject interacting in such an animated fashion, and the satellite meeting clearly acted as an excellent stimulus package. For this gratifying situation we must also thank EHBEA, the Galton Institute and the Journal of Evolutionary Psychology (now Evolution, Mind and Behaviour) for financial support. We also owe a debt to Anna Rotkirch and her team in Helsinki for all the organizational work establishing rooms, refreshments and a social event thereafter. Without them none of this would have happened. Report written by Professor Clark Barrett, Professor Tom Dickins & Dr Willem Frankenhuis.

8.3 Perspectives on Cooperative Behaviour in Humans workshop (University College London, UK) 9 January 2015

On January 9th 2015, the Departments of Genetics Evolution and Environment and Anthropology, respectively, hosted the EHBEA-sponsored event, Perspectives on

Human Cooperation. The aim of the workshop was to build on the success of the previous year's event and to bring together practitioners from diverse disciplines and backgrounds to discuss the factors influencing cooperation in humans. The goal of the event was to attempt to bridge the gap between diverse academic disciplines and also between academia and the 'real world' by drawing together a truly eclectic mix of speakers.

Rory Sutherland (Vice Chairman of Ogilvy & Mather, UK) provided a wonderful and lively opening keynote on how a better understanding of social behaviour in humans can be used to business advantage. We were then treated to talks from David Papineau (Kings College London), Sarah Smith (University of Bristol), Rebecca Sear (LSHTM), Daniel Richardson (UCL), Oliver Curry (Oxford University), Nichola Raihani (UCL), Ruth Mace (UCL), Louise Barrett (Lethbridge) and Michael Sanders (UK Behavioural Insights Team). Together, the talks encompassed fields as diverse as philosophy, behavioural economics, evolutionary psychology, philosophy and behavioural ecology; and gave us a really good overview of how all these different disciplines can contribute to improving our understanding of human social behaviour.

All in all, the event fuelled a large amount of thought in how to approach questions relating to social behaviour and an insight into fields that are closely related to each other. The event provided a forum for discussion that often doesn't find its place in more traditional academic conferences.

Report written by Dr. Nichola Raihani and Professor Ruth Mace.

9 EHBEA CONFERENCE 2015 REPORT

Day 1 - The 10th annual meeting of the European Human Behavior and Evolution Society at the University of Helsinki turned out, in the end, to be an occasion for dancing. The opening ceremonies in the university's Great Hall commenced with a group of young circus performers in white leotards who flipped, tumbled, shimmied and constructed a human pyramid or two. At one point, they stood herd-like with their hands outstretched above their heads to evoke the antlers of Finland's reindeer. Melissa Hines followed on the heels of that exciting introduction with fascinating results from experiments on the effects of testosterone on gender-related behaviors in humans (and other primates). After the rousing plenary, we headed for the opening wine reception in the next room. The more prudent among us headed for dinner and a good night's sleep, while some others continued the opening ceremonies somewhat later into the night.

Day 2 - A cold, wet snow fell in the early morning—a reminder that this year's conference was being held in the European Union's northernmost capital city. In the lecture hall we warmed up listening to the first plenary speaker of the day, Oliver Schülke, describe the physiological aspects of how and why male macaques form friendships. We continued with nonhuman primates in the following session. Sofia Forss reported her experiments testing the differences in the capacity for cultural intelligence in two orangutan species in European zoos; next Alejandro Sanchez showed that captive chimpanzees can successfully cooperate in a snowdrift game. The first speed session of the conference, focused on the human family and maturation. Lisa DeBruine offered us intriguing experimental evidence that parent's influence on preference for a partner's eye color is not caused by sex-linked heritability; Peeter Hõrak drew on an extensive dataset of Estonian school girls to show that pathogen reduction had an effect on pubertal growth. Overall, the speed sessions were an efficient way to accommodate more talks, and were also well placed just before the lunch break. As sleet streaked the windows and wet snow congealed on the pavements outside, we returned from lunch to hear the next plenary speaker, Beverly Strassmann, present evidence that religion can help increase paternity certainty among the Dogon of Mali. This talk ushered in a session on religion. Nicolas Baumard presented a hypothesis that conflict between differing life strategies can explain the rise of moralizing religions, while Susanne

Shultz used data from British monasteries to make the case that the greater the benefits of a religious organization the more costly its membership. These talks generated a predictable amount of hushed but animated discussion outside the lecture hall. The final talks of the day were held in two parallel sessions. In the large lecture hall Jamie Tehrani showed us how phylogenetic methods revealed the oldest European fairytale motif (“the smith”). The Small hall saw Elena Miu demonstrate the emergence of conformity in cumulative culture from a data set on Matlab coding competitions. The poster session had already begun when suddenly, we were all asked to direct our attention to one end of the hall. A woman in dark eyeglass frames with a wilful resemblance to Frida Kahlo drew her own impromptu posters to the amusement of the crowd. After the performance, we returned to browsing the posters—but it would not be the last we’d see of her. The poster session ended and we headed for a reception held by the rector of the University of Helsinki. We had dinner in a room decked with the portraits of illustrious Finnish intellectuals (including the compiler of the Kalevala), as the rector exhorted us all to remember that, as scholars, we also had a duty to the public. Whether it was the stirring speech or the wine, the conference-goers were in high spirits, despite the dismal weather. The evening rounded out with a colossal post-conference session at Molly Malone’s Irish pub on Kaiseniemenkatu.

Day 3- Yesterday’s snow had melted by the start of the morning plenary. Chris Kuzawa showed how the metabolic costs of brain growth are perhaps the reason for humans’ remarkably slow development. In the day’s first session Julien Barthes proposed kin selection as an explanation for male homosexual preference. Next, after a coffee break, was a daytime poster session. After lunch, Wil Roebroeks used his plenary talk to demonstrate the difficulty of finding evidence for the use of fire in the archaeological record, and the clever ways archaeologists have found of identifying those faint traces. We then broke up for parallel speed sessions. Highlights were Matthew Thomas’s experiments among Norwegian Saami that showed a propensity to cooperate with members of social groups, not necessarily kin groups. In the other session, Vanessa Ferdinand showed how a cognitive model for cultural copying can produce different patterns of neutral evolution than previously assumed in cultural evolution models. Another coffee and tea break passed before the day’s final round of parallel sessions. The evolution of art and language was featured in the large lecture hall. Terhi Honkola showed that

environmental differences, not geographic distance, were most strongly correlated with dialect differences in Finland. In the family dynamics session in the Small hall, David Lawson presented evidence that statistical confounds draw into question the idea that polygyny is harmful. The day's talks ended and a student contingent headed for the piney wilds of Seurasaari, an island park in the Helsinki archipelago. Later in the evening, the deputy mayor of Helsinki greeted conference attendees amidst the Corinthian columns of the grand banquet hall of Helsinki's city hall.

Day 4 - Gert Stulp opened the day with a stirring call for evolutionary psychologists to question the adaptationist perspective that can obscure the ways in which human psychology has evolved. Stulp was also the recipient of this year's Young Investigator's Award. His plenary talk inaugurated a session on evolution and cognition. Louise Barrett argued that computational models of cognition ignore the fact that cognition incorporates both mental representations, external material artifacts, and a social context. In the second morning session, Roberto Foa presented a study showing that the presence of pre-colonial states in the Indian subcontinent predicts behavioral differences in legal compliance and public contributions. Paul Rauwolf described theoretical results that indicate that impact bias, the tendency to exaggerate the emotional impact of an event prior to its occurrence, may be a way to navigate noisy environments. After we retired for lunch, the final parallel sessions of the conference were held. In the large lecture hall, Judith Burkart discussed findings that allomaternal care, rather than phylogeny, predicts proactive prosociality in primates. In the small hall, Marjolijn Das asked whether Dutch women were attracted to cities to find higher quality mates. The final joint session of the conference was held in the large lecture hall. For the final talk of the day, Bronwyn Tarr and Andrew Clark, roused the crowd of conference goers by asking us to clap our hands and tap our fingers. Soon we were up out of our seats as music pumped from the hall's loudspeakers. All this was by way of our two speakers demonstrating how the physical synchrony induced by dancing led to bonding. According to Tarr, "to not dance is to deny being human." The conference dinner followed in the elegantly appointed dining hall of the Pörssitalo restaurant, in downtown Helsinki. Our performer from the poster session made a return appearance, tapping one of our own—or so we thought—to join her at the stage in front of the room. The two performed a series of gymnastic and aerobic feats before the start of dinner. By the end of the evening, most of

us decided to heed Tarr's wise words from the final talk. We headed out to Navy Jerry's for drinks, dancing, and of course discussing the many talks that made the 10th annual EHBEA conference, the first hosted by a Nordic country, an unmitigated success. Helsinki has certainly set a high standard for London.

Special thanks to the local organizers: Venla Berg, Mirkka Danielsbacka, Markus Jokela, Ilmari Määttänen, Kristiina Janhunen, Essi Kaartinen, Liisa Keltikangas-Järvinen, Sonja Koski, Michael Laakasuo, Minna Lyons, Anna Rotkirch, and Antti Tanskanen. Performances were by Circus Helsinki and Kristiina Janhunen.

Report written by Elliot Aguilar

Newsletter compiled by Charlotte De Backer, EHBEA Publicity and Website Officer.

10 Attachments

10.1 Attachment 1 – EHBEA Student Grant 2016 Application Form

This form is attached as a Word document to the EHBEA Newsletter.

10.2 Attachment 2 – EHBEA 2016 New Investigator Award nomination form

This form is attached as a Word document to the EHBEA Newsletter.

10.3 Attachment 3 – EHBEA Proposal for a Workshop/Event

This form is attached as a Word document to the EHBEA Newsletter.

10.4 Attachment 4 – Nominations to Committee Posts

This form is attached as a Word document to the EHBEA Newsletter.