PSYC W3450/G4450
EVOLUTION OF INTELLIGENCE & CONSCIOUSNESS
Fall 2006

Professors Janet Metcalfe & Herbert Terrace

September 5. Introduction

September 12 Reading period

September 19 Reading period

September 16 Darwin’s Theory of Evolution

October 3 Freud’s Theory of the Unconscious & it’s Implications of for Experimental Psychology

October 10 Comparative psychology

October 17 Behaviorism

October 24 Emergence of cognitive psychology

October 31 Animal cognition and comparative studies of intelligence

November 7 The Unconscious Mind

November 14 Theories Of The Development Of Consciousness

November 21 Theories Of The Development Of Language

November 28 Minds and machines

December 5 Theory Of Mind
Guidelines for Presentations

Initial meeting: Please check with one of us at least two weeks before your presentation for suggested readings. Ideally, you should see one of us 3-4 weeks before your presentation. That will allow you one week to find and digest those readings and to think about the focus of your talk, one week to start on specific readings for your topic and to select an assignment for other students to read, one week to prepare your outline and annotated bibliography, and one week to deal with unexpected crises.

Assigned reading: We’d like to aim for a reading assignment for each presentation of not more than 25 pages (total). Try to assign readings that will serve as background for your main argument(s). There is no need for students to read comprehensively about your topic. Your annotated bibliography should provide sufficient leads for those students who would like to read more.

Annotated bibliography: The purpose of your annotated bibliography is twofold. It should direct students to additional sources on your topic (at most 8-10 references) and it should provide a critical evaluation of each reference. Adjectives like “brilliant”, “controversial”, “clear”, “difficult but worthwhile”, “classic”, “misguided”, “muddled”, etc. or combinations of such adjectives are in order AND a few terse sentences justifying those adjectives is all you need to write. Do not try to summarize the reference. You will be graded on the critical quality of your remarks.

Outline: The outline (1 – 1.5 pp.) should function as a road map for your talk in the sense that it will help other students see what topics you will cover and in what order. It should also serve as a mnemonic for students to review the material you covered. While preparing the annotated bibliography and the outline keep in mind that it should be a resource for other students to consult when writing their take-home exam.

Some miscellaneous but important rules:
• Put your name and topic at the beginning of your annotated bibliographies and outlines.
• Send us the full reference(s) you want to assign by email at least one week before your seminar.
• Arrange for references to be xeroxed in the Psychology office (406 Schermerhorn) and then give the librarian of the Psychology library a clean copy that can be scanned to make a pdf file. The pdf files will be available by email and, possibly, on a web page. We will provide you with authorization forms for xerox requests.
Proposal for take home essay exam. Due on December 12. (No extensions!)

Write a critical essay on the evolution of intelligence and consciousness that addresses the following issues. Your paper should be about 10 double-space pages. When we grade your essay we will be more concerned with the clarity of your arguments about the positions you take on the issues listed below than on whether you agree with our positions (or anyone else’s). Attach an annotated bibliography of (~6) references based on the readings that had the greatest influence on your essay.

- To what extent do animal species exhibit qualitatively different forms of intelligence?
- What adaptive pressures might select for different types of intelligence?
- Distinguish between, Freud’s and Skinner’s views of consciousness.
- Your answer to Nagel’s question, “What is it like to be a bat?”
- The role of a theory of mind in language and consciousness.
- Are computers conscious and/or intelligent?
Week 4: DARWIN & THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION


Week 5 FREUD & THE UNCONSCIOUS


Week 6: COMPARATIVE PSYCHOLOGY & BEHAVIORISM


Week 7: BEHAVIORISM


Week 8: COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY


Week 9: ANIMAL COGNITION


Week 9: ANIMAL COGNITION (cont’d.)


Week 10: UNCONSCIOUSNESS & THE HUMAN MIND


WEEK 11: THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT OF CONSCIOUSNESS


Week 12: THEORIES OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT


Week 13: Minds & Machines


Week 14: THEORY OF MIND


