

## The Cultured Ape: An Evolutionary Journey

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<b>Phone</b>	303.871.2680	<b>Course Times</b>	Wednesday evenings October 10, 17, and 24
<b>Location</b>	Sturm Hall 154	<b>Office</b>	Sturm Hall 105

### Course Description:

The strong archaeological and biological (e.g., DNA) evidence for the evolution of *Homo sapiens* continues to accumulate. Although controversies about specifics abound, the general picture is now clear. From the heart of Africa, *Homo sapiens* spread across the globe while earlier, more primitive kinds of humans (including Neanderthals) were still alive. The course opens with that fascinating story, but just as interesting and of greater contemporary relevance is the evolution of human behavior and “culture”. To what extent did the evolution of human culture parallel the evolution of human biology? What were the “original” forms of human sexual relations, family life, and politics? Are contemporary human behavioral patterns in harmony or conflict with our fundamental biological nature? Is the monogamous, heterosexual pair bond necessary and natural? Have men always dominated women, and is differential male success in the workplace and in the sciences inevitable? Are tendencies to racism part of our nature? Are humans essentially warlike?

**Goals or take away(s):** A better understanding of human bio-cultural evolution and its contemporary relevance, especially for public policy issues around the “hot button” issues of our time—gender relations, ethnic conflict, warfare, ...

**Requirements:** Active participation in the seminars.

**Resources:** The seminars will be illustrated with slides, video, and the Department of Anthropology’s excellent collection of human fossil cast material.

**Text:** Several short readings will be distributed via email or in class.

**Course Schedule**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Required Reading</b>
1 Oct. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Meeting the Ancestors: Fossil Skull Lab</li> <li>• Evolutionary Background and Context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brooks, "Human Nature Redux"</li> </ul>
2 Oct 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humans as Primates.</li> <li>• Film: <i>The Last Great Ape</i></li> <li>• Biology, Culture, and Sex in Human Evolution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parker, "Swingers";</li> <li>• Barash, "Evolution's Odd Couple: Biology and Culture";</li> <li>• Muscarella, "Homoerotic Behavior in Human Evolution";</li> </ul>
3 Oct 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nature of human mating, sexual orientation, and violence</li> <li>• How are humans constrained by their biological heritage?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fisher, "The Nature of Romantic Love";</li> <li>• Thornhill and Palmer, "Why Men Rape";</li> <li>• Buss, "Murder is in Our Blood";</li> <li>• Angier, "Is War Our Biological Destiny?"</li> </ul>