

Brian Mayer, Cornell, Ithaca/NYC
Thomas Hirschmann, Mannheim/Germany



Standards for the Practical Application of Evolutionary Psychology (EP) –

First Sketches for an Applied EP Whitepaper

Binghamton/NY
NEEPS Fifth Annual Conference
April 1, 2011

YOUR HOSTS OF THIS TALK



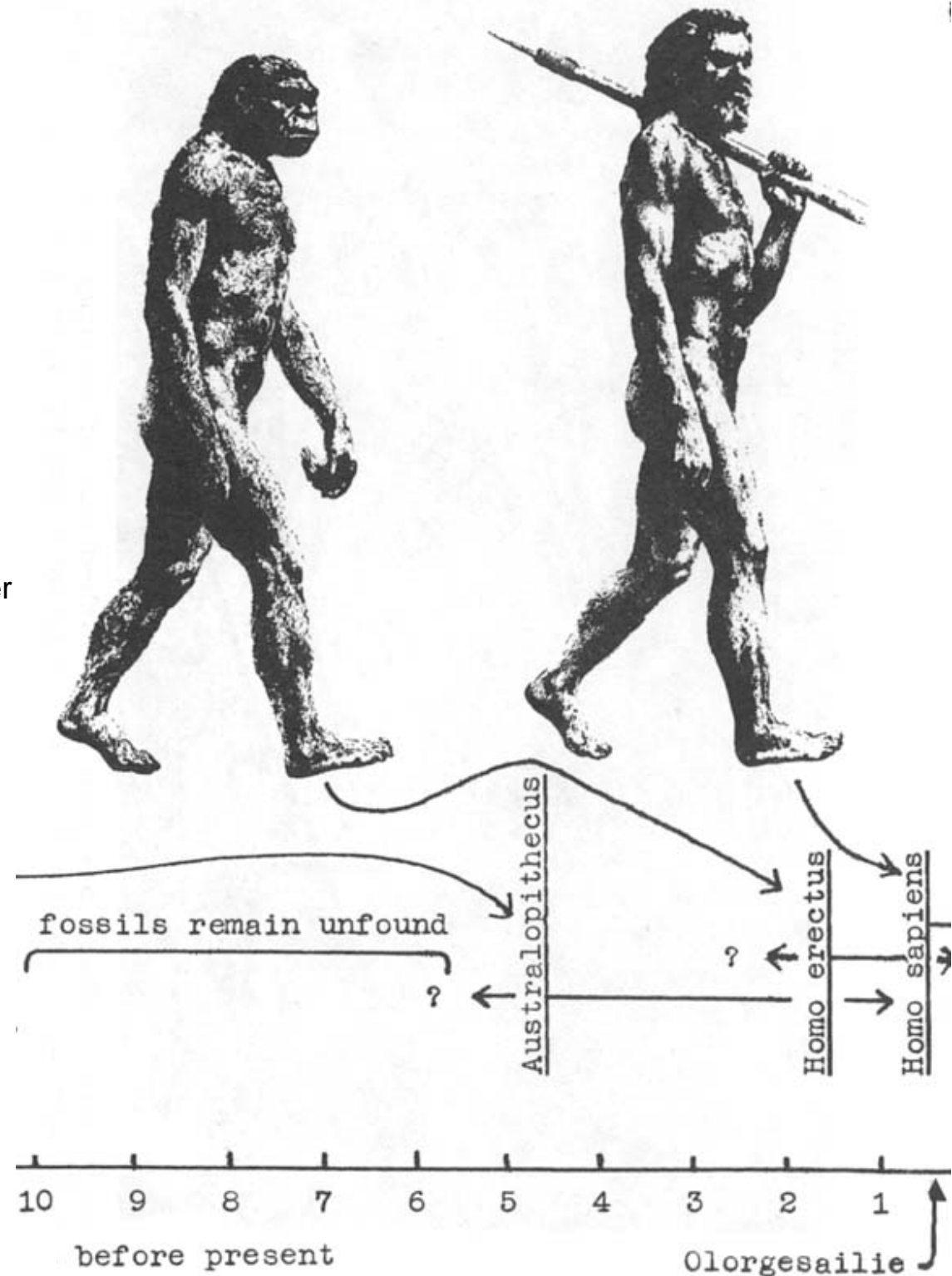
BRIAN MAYER

B.A. in psychology (Cornell University) & MSc in evolutionary psychology (University of Liverpool). Pursues PhD in evolutionary studies of human behavior with emphasis on practical applications. Currently adjunct lecturer in psychology. Co-founder of AEPS and of EVONOVATION.



THOMAS HIRSCHMANN

Jurist & psychologist, Munich/Germany, pursues PhD about evolutionary roots of creativity & innovation. Experience in applied innovation as founder of XYNESIS and co-founder of AEPS and of EVONOVATION.



STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF EP



Agenda

1. INTRODUCTION

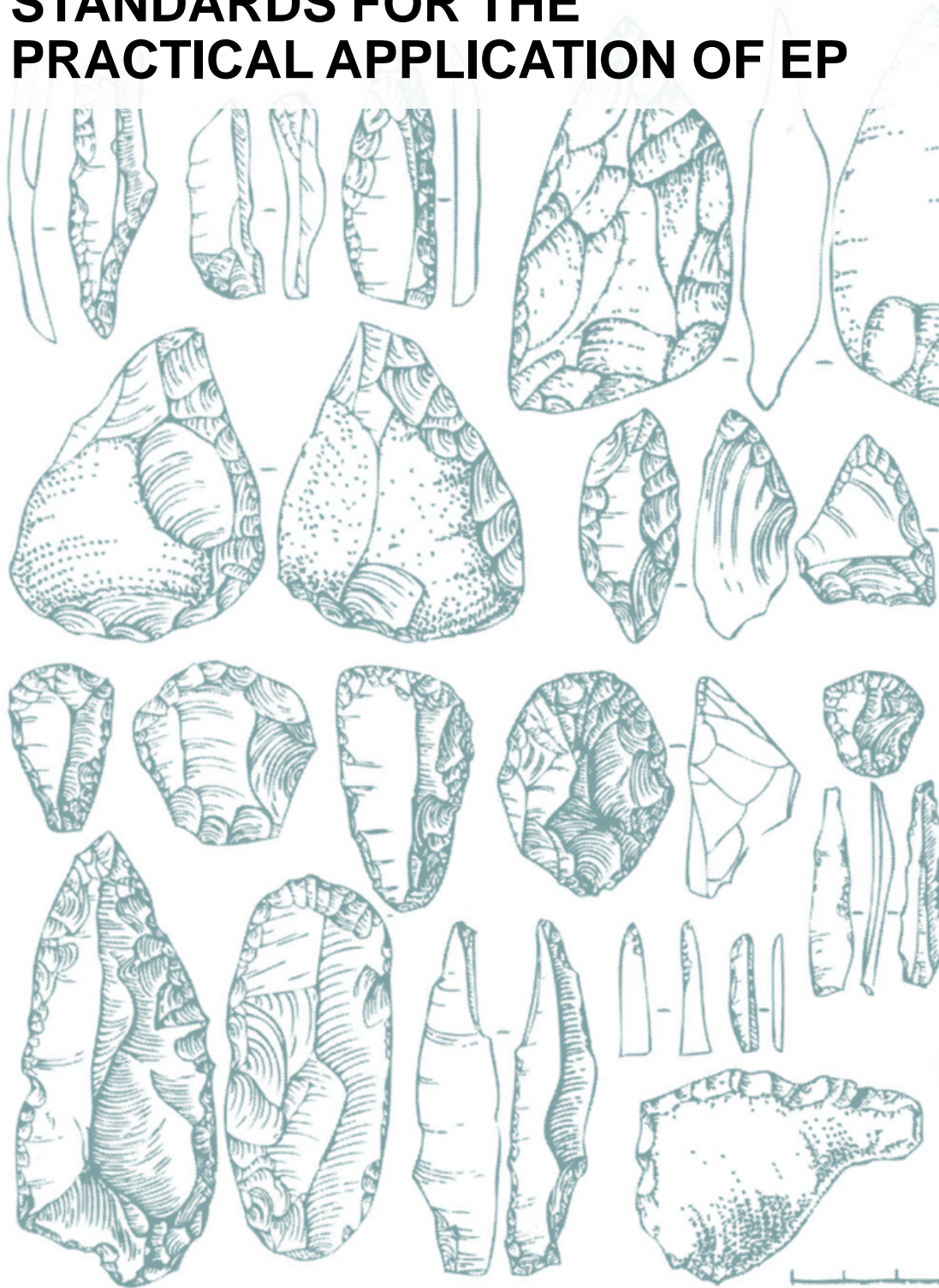
2. MODEL

3. EXAMPLE

4. DISCUSSION

5. REFERENCES

STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF EP



Agenda

1. INTRODUCTION

2. MODEL

3. EXAMPLE

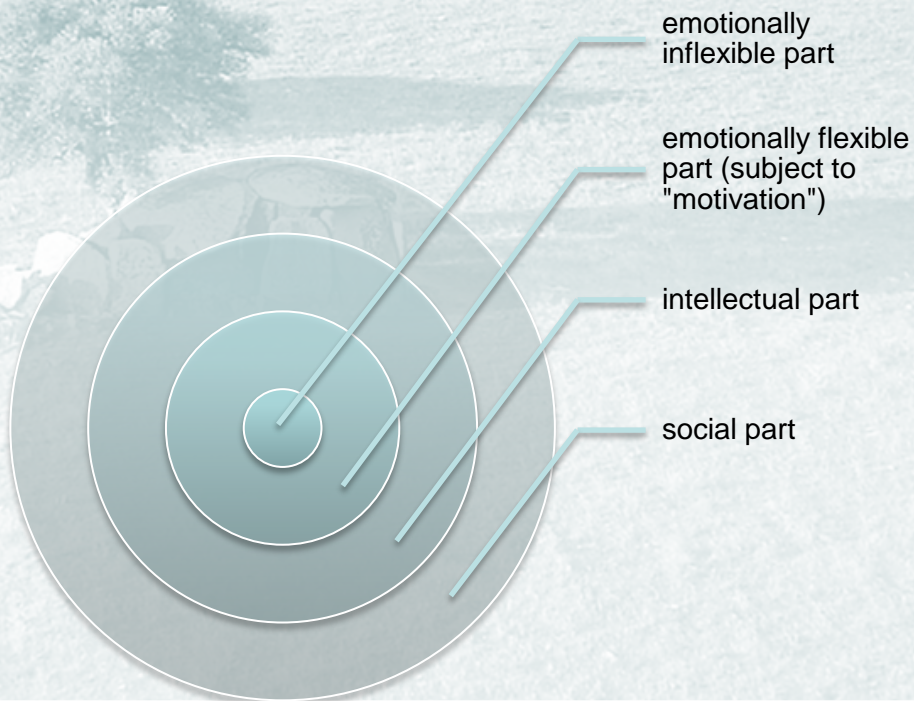
4. DISCUSSION

5. REFERENCES

OUR MODEL

1. Situational Context

- Beneficiary
- Timeframe
- Options
- Quality Requirements



From Anamnesis to Evaluation- Our 5 Steps to Finding EI Solutions

Extending the classic change approach of Lewin (1951) we have set up a five step process aiming at an optimal adaption in the face of problems with EP references. Our proposed five steps for finding an evolutionarily informed solution are:

1. Analyzing and understanding **the situational context**:
 - a) the interests of the parties involved
 - b) the timeframe
 - c) the options
 - d) the quality requirements
2. Learning about **the state of individuals/group** involved,
 - a) socially
 - b) intellectually
 - c) motivationally
 - d) emotionally
3. Making an informed decision about **what to adapt**:
 - a) the environment
 - b) one's own behavior or
 - c) one's own attitude in order to solve the problem
4. The solution must be **practically useful** regarding
 - a) sustainability
 - b) autonomy and
 - c) prosociality
5. The **outcome has to be evaluated** with regard to
 - a) quantity
 - b) quality
 - c) timing
 - d) social effects

STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF EP



Agenda

1. INTRODUCTION
2. MODEL
- 3. EXAMPLE**
4. DISCUSSION
5. REFERENCES

EXAMPLE (Maggie)

1. Situational Context

- Beneficiary
- Timeframe
- Options
- Quality Requirements



Intense Jealousy - Generally Maladaptive?

Maggie, a college teacher, is out with her boyfriend Kevin when suddenly Kevin's old friend from college Susie appears and they start getting into an animated conversation about the past. Maggie starts to feel very jealous, even though there are no direct signs of flirtation between the two.

1. The **situational context**:

We are looking for a solution for Maggie in a multi-optional long-term context with high quality requirements.

Jealousy can be understood as a “defense to prevent infidelity” (Buss, 2007), a built-in mechanism that is activated “whenever there is a threat to a valued relationship” (ibid.).

Men tend to be more jealous about sexual infidelity while **women tend to get jealous over emotional infidelity** (Buss, 1992). Behind this stands the fact that a woman with an unfaithful husband “risks losing his time, resources, and commitments” for her and her own offspring (Buss, 2007).

EXAMPLE (Maggie)

2. Decision-maker(s)

- Social
- Intellectual
- Motivational
- Emotional



Jealousy - Generally Maladaptive?

Maggie, a college teacher, is out with her boyfriend Kevin when suddenly Kevin's old friend from college Susie appears and they start getting into an animated conversation about the past. Maggie starts to feel very jealous, even though there are no direct signs of flirtation between the two.

2. Maggie's personal situation:

Maggie is **emotionally very involved in her relationship** with Kevin - she is making family plans but has not yet discussed them with Kevin. There is a gap between Maggie's desired and the existing relation quality.

From the fact, that women's jealousy is more activated by signals of emotional infidelity and by female rivals who exceed them on attractiveness (Buss, 2007), we may assume that **Maggie might assess Susie as a potential threat** and tries to secure her Kevin's resources exclusively.

EXAMPLE (Maggie)

3. Decision: Adaption

- Environment
- Behavior
- Attitude



Jealousy - Generally Maladaptive?

Maggie, a college teacher, is out with her boyfriend Kevin when suddenly Kevin's old friend from college Susie appears and they start getting into an animated conversation about the past. Maggie starts to feel very jealous, even though there are no direct signs of flirtation between the two.

3. Deciding about **the best adaption:**

There are different strategies for Maggie to adapt: She could try to **figure out whether her jealousy is justified** and if Kevin is still committed to her. If this is not the case, Maggie could split up and find a new boyfriend who is more mature and more interested in having kids and a family – and has the resources to support a family.

Second, Maggie could change her behavior and start to be **more open with Kevin**. Although difficult, she could talk with him about her jealousy and also about her family plans.

Third, Maggie could try to change her general attitude towards relationships in a way that she can better **deal with jealousy** and become more aware of her own needs and interests and make them a requirement for her relationship.

EXAMPLE (Maggie)

4. Execution

- Sustainability
- Autonomy
- Prosociality



Jealousy - Generally Maladaptive?

Maggie, a college teacher, is out with her boyfriend Kevin when suddenly Kevin's old friend from college Susie appears and they start getting into an animated conversation about the past. Maggie starts to feel very jealous, even though there are no direct signs of flirtation between the two.

4. Implementing her decision:

Maggie should look for a **long-lasting implementation** of her decision. If possible, she should not only adapt her behavior in the current situation but improve her whole state of mind to avoid getting into situations of jealousy in the future.

She should try to reach **autonomy** in her relationship with a balanced state between giving and receiving.

Finally, she should try to act **morally adequate** if she finds out that she has to end the relationship with Kevin.

EXAMPLE (Maggie)

5. Evaluation

- Quantity
- Quality
- Timing
- Social Effects



Jealousy - Generally Maladaptive?

Maggie, a college teacher, is out with her boyfriend Kevin when suddenly Kevin's old friend from college Susie appears and they start getting into an animated conversation about the past. Maggie starts to feel very jealous, even though there are no direct signs of flirtation between the two.

5. Evaluating her decision:

After implementing her decision, we have to check if it serves Maggie well:

- Did her relationship with Kevin improve with regard to jealousy?
- Was she able to improve her self-confidence?
- Did she communicate her family plans openly?
- If things did not work out as planned and she had to break up with Kevin, did she not lose her self-esteem?

STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF EP



Agenda

1. INTRODUCTION
2. MODEL
3. EXAMPLE
- 4. DISCUSSION**
5. REFERENCES

DISCUSSION



Your Feedback - **Does the Model work?**

Please feel free to come up with your own examples of how we can discuss/apply the model here in question.

We would like to discuss with you

- the overall **quality** level of our framework
- ways to **improve** it and
- **cases** to which to apply it

Please **take one of our worksheets with you** to write down at a later point in time during the conference more ideas on how to apply / improve the framework as well as which cases might be best approached with our framework!

Bring us your worksheet with your ideas to the Saturday afternoon AEPS lunch and you could win - the best idea gets a bottle of wine!

STANDARDS FOR THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF EP



Agenda

1. INTRODUCTION
2. MODEL
3. EXAMPLE
4. DISCUSSION
- 5. REFERENCES**

REFERENCES

- Adams**, H.E.A., Wright, L.W.J. & Lohr, B.A. 1996. Is Homophobia Associated With Homosexual Arousal? *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 105, Nr. 3, 440-445.
- Burnes**, B. 2004. Kurt Lewin and the Planned Approach to Change: A Re-appraisal. *Journal of Management Studies*, 41 (6), 977-1002.
- Buss**, D.M., Larsen, R.J., Westen, D. & Semmelroth, J. 1992. *Psychological Science*, 3 Nr. 4, 251-255.
- Buss**, D.M. 2007. The Evolution of Human Mating. *Acta Psychologica Sinica*, 39(3), 502-512.
- de Waal, F.B.M. 1995. de Waal, F.B.M. Sex as an alternative to aggression in the bonobo. In P.R. Abramson & S.D. Pinkerton (Eds.) *Sexual nature sexual culture*, 37–56. London: University of Chicago Press.
- Erez**, M. & Gati, E. 2004. A dynamic, multi-level model of culture: From the micro-level of the individual to the macro-level of global culture. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 53, 583-598.
- Griskevicius**, V., Tybur, J.M., Sundie, J.M., Cialdini, R.B., Miller, G.M. and Kenrick, D.T. 2007. Blatant Benevolence and Conspicuous Consumption: When Romantic Motives Elicit Strategic Costly Signals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. Vol. 93, No. 1, 85–102.
- Guérguen**, N. & Ciccotti, S. 2008. Domestic Dogs as Facilitators in Social Interaction: An Evaluation of Helping and Courtship Behaviors. *Anthrozoos*, 21, Nr. 4, 339-349.
- Hofstede**, G. 1980. *Culture's Consequences – International Differences in Work Related Values*, Newbury Park, London, New Delhi.
- Hofstede**, G. 2001. *Culture's Consequences – Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*, 2. Ed., Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.
- Lewin**, K. 1951. *Field theory in social science; selected theoretical papers*. D. Cartwright. New York: Harper & Row.
- Miller, E.M. 2000. Homosexuality, Birth Order, and Evolution: Toward an Equilibrium Reproductive Economics of Homosexuality. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 29, (1), 1-34.
- Nesse**, R.M. 1999. Proximate and evolutionary studies of anxiety, stress and depression: synergy at the interface. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 23, 895–903.