

HOW CULTURE EVOLVES: THE DARWINIAN PERSPECTIVE

IRP, Spring 2015, Syllabus

Coordinator: James Smith

Readings: Peter J. Richerson and Morten H. Christiansen, editors, *Cultural Evolution: Society, Technology, Language, and Religion* (MIT Press, 2013, ISBN 0262019752; \$45).

Week 1: The Evolutionary Perspective on Culture

- 2: The Evolutionary Roots of Human Sociopolitical Systems
- 3: Human Cooperation among Kin and Close Associates
- 4: How did Large-Scale Complex Societies Evolve
- 5: The Cultural Evolution of Technology
6. Neuroscience of Technology
7. The Scientific Method as Cultural Innovation
8. Language Evolution: the interplay of cultural and genetic factors
9. Language Acquisition as a Cultural Process
- 10: The Cultural Evolution of Language
- 11: The Evolution of Prosocial Religions
- 12: The Cultural Evolution of Religions
- 13: What Have We Learned? How are we going to Change?