



**Approaches to psychology**

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Evolutionary Approach.

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**Key concepts of the Evolutionary Approach.**

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- *Natural selection*- At anytime, the environment exerts selective pressure on individuals..it becomes survival of the fittest...the weak do not survive.
- *Fitness*- Extent to which a individuals characteristics allow them to adapt to their environment .

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**Key concepts of the Evolutionary Approach cont...**

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- Survival is aided by *reproduction* because this ensures the continuation of *genes* responsible for fitness. It is the *characteristic* rather than the *individual* that is selected by nature.

*Natural selection occurs when*

- (a) A characteristic appears
- (b) The characteristic is genetically transmitted
- (c) The gene is adaptive.

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**Key concepts of the Evolutionary Approach cont...**

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Sexual Selection

The selection of characteristics that are concerned only with *reproductive success*.

Females are the *selectors* whilst males *compete* for her attention. This is because males produce thousands of sperm and *invest little* in each 'reproduction', whereas females *invest a great deal* as they produce fewer eggs.

Therefore females select their mates strategically- Basically she only wants the best and nothing less!!

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**Key concepts of the Evolutionary Approach cont...**

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Kin Selection.

Passing on ones genes *directly* (offspring) and *indirectly* (helping relatives)..the total number of genes passed on through the above equates to *inclusive fitness*.

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**Key concepts of the Evolutionary Approach cont...**

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The Modular Mind.

This is explained as *ultimate* rather than *proximate* levels of causation.

Proximate: Concerned with the here and now.

Ultimate: Concerned with (EEA) environment of evolutionary adaptiveness. (How we used to behave, how the behaviour has adapted to now)

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## Evaluation of Evolutionary Approach.

- ü Not reductionist- It fully considers the meaning of our behaviour.
- ü Increases our knowledge of Nature Nurture with discussions on Genes and how they are vulnerable to environmental changes.
- (X) Maybe argued as reductionist- Behaviour reduced to genetic factors.
- (X) Ignores cultural influences on our behaviour.

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## Methodology used by evolutionary approach.

1. Naturalistic observations
2. Experiments: mainly with non-human animals.
3. Cross cultural studies.
4. Surveys/Interviews

Look back at PYA3 notes for more details on these research methods as well as the strengths and limitations.

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