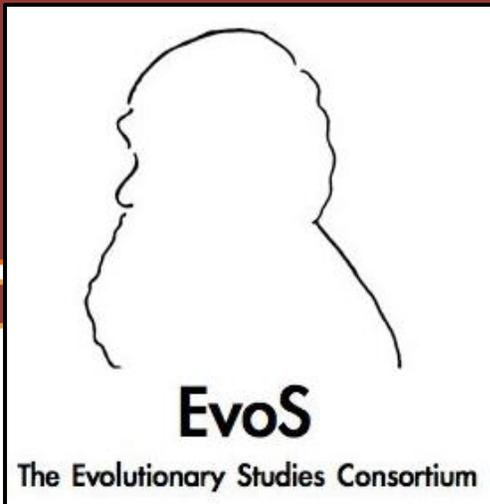


# EvoS Illuminate

## Newsletter of the EvoS Consortium



November 2014

### What's New in EvoS?

*EvoS Journal* has had some great facelifts! In continuing with our mission of advancing evolution education on a global scale, the journal now has a new editorial team, including Editors, John Montgomery and Glenn Geher, Associate Editors, Dustin Eirdosh and Melvin Philip, along with two new Editorial Assistants, Nicole Wedberg and Elizabeth Levy. We also have a new Undergraduate Editorial Review Board, including

\* Jason Goldfarb [Binghamton University](#)

Philosophy

\* Vishaaq Mathew Binghamton University  
Biology

\* Elizabeth E. Ford Binghamton University  
English

\* Juliana Costanzo [The University of Arizona](#)  
Anthropology

\* Amy Webb [Saint Mary's University](#) Psychology

\* Jason Hamburger [Connecticut College](#)  
Philosophy & Biology

Since its inception, created as part of an NSF grant, *EvoS Journal* has published more than 45 peer-reviewed articles on various facets of evolution education - and we look forward to great future contributions under this new leadership team!

#### Inside this Issue

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# New Paltz EvoS Lab Goes To The Big City!

By: Nicole Wedberg

New Paltz EvoS Assistant

*“Don’t be satisfied with stories, how things have gone with others. Unfold your own myth.” -Rumi*

This fall, members of the EP lab from New Paltz went on a trip to NYC to learn about creativity, imagination, and intelligence. Hosted by the Empiricist League, three experts in the field of psychology were asked to speak on the topic in the basement of a hip bar in Brooklyn, and we were itching to be there.

Our journey began on campus in New Paltz where Glenn Geher, John Montgomery, Gökçe Sancak Aydın, and I piled into an SUV and drove down to the city. After finagling through New York’s infamous traffic, we made it over the Manhattan Bridge and into the city to meet Dr. Scott Barry Kaufman (a former EvoS speaker at New Paltz - and current science director at Penn’s Imagination Institute) for dinner before the event. As you might imagine, the conversations that took place over dinner were wonderfully quick-witted and sharp. I think I speak for everyone when I say we had a blast picking Scott’s brain and exchanging ideas within the realm of psychology altogether.

Next: the event! Within walking distance of the restaurant is a place called Union Hall. We entered to find a cozy bar - decorated with books and a fireplace on one end, a bocce set was on the other. Naturally, we humored ourselves with a bocce game while we still had a bit of time to kill. Once 8:00 pm hit, we found our way to the actual event. Go to the far corner of the bar, climb down the stairs, show the doorman your ID and prepaid ticket, and voila - the Empiricist League. Without a single seat left open, people from near and far gathered to hear

ideas on creativity. The first speaker was Dr. Zachary Hambrick from Michigan State University. He spoke about his theory on expertise, and what it takes to become one. We heard about his research on practice and talent, and eyes were certainly opened. Next up was Gail Sultz, MD. She spoke about her ideas on the potential for pathology to be conducive for geniuses and creativity. She took us back in time to evaluate the works of people like Picasso and Marie Curie, and really look at their personal lifestyles and challenges. Lastly, Dr. Scott Barry Kaufman, who is a psychologist, author, researcher, and writer known for his works on intelligence and creativity (also our honored dinner guest!) shared his story and thoughts on the matter. Through his personal life story, he relayed to the audience his view of what intelligence really is, or is not, and how we should begin to approach education. It was a truly moving speech that was personally enlightening for me. After each speaker had their own turn, the three were joined together on stage for group discussion. This was when things got especially exciting. The audience picked the brains of each



speaker, at which point they eagerly responded. Moreover, the speakers began to debate among themselves where intelligence comes from, how we should approach it, where creativity stems from, and more. To be able to sit and watch these brilliant minds in psychology volley back and forth through ideas I had not yet even considered on such relevant topics was truly amazing. I felt absolutely star struck and privileged to be in that room at that moment.



We made our way back home after the event, and the car ride was full of discussion about the event. We all left so excited and curious. Comments about what we learned, want to learn, books we now want to read, hypotheses and future research, and more were all discussed in a fun and exciting tone. We're looking forward to future Empiricist League events in Brooklyn. The Empiricist League has famously featured many speakers related to evolution (such as Vassar College's John Long, who spoke about "Darwin's robots"). If you're into evolution and science and you are near the big city, check out the Empiricist League!

# NEEPS 2015

By: Daniel Glass



The Northeastern Evolutionary Psychology Society (NEEPS), with longstanding connections with the EvoS Consortium, will hold its Ninth Annual Conference on the Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences on April 9th-12th in Boston, Massachusetts at Suffolk University. NEEPS IX will have a decidedly New England flavor, and is shaping up to be the largest NEEPS conference yet! The theme of the conference will be Development, focusing on the ways that developmental and evolutionary approaches can complement each other, but as usual, the conference will feature talks from all across the evolutionary behavioral sciences.

The conference will feature keynote speakers Steven Pinker and Felix Warneken, both from Harvard University. David Sloan Wilson from Binghamton University will hold a special symposium on integrating the evolutionary approaches familiar to NEEPS members with those utilized by the Association for Contextual Behavioral Science (ACBS). A discussion panel on the intersection of developmental and evolutionary psychology, featuring members of Suffolk University's clinical psychology faculty and a special guest, will take place as well. Hope to see you there! To register for the conference and find out more, please visit the official NEEPS 2015 website: <http://neeps2015.weebly.com/>

## An Interview with Dr. Gordon Gallup



**Gordon Gallup is a professor in the Psychology Department at SUNY Albany - and is one of the world's leaders when it comes to generating high-impact research related to the evolutionary approach**

*Could you tell us a little about your interest in evolution? How has it shaped your research throughout your career?*

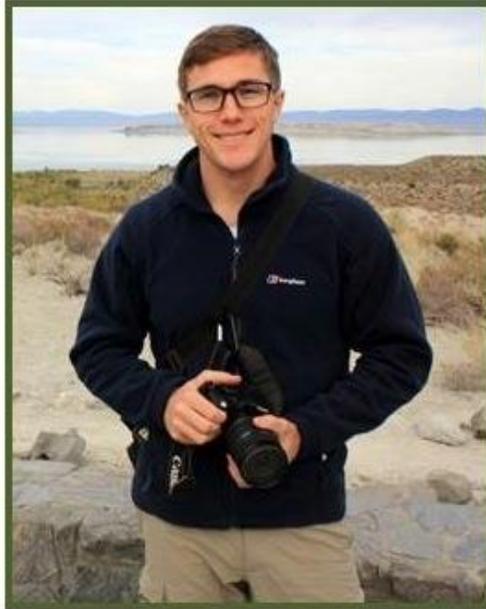
Gordon Gallup is a star in the field of evolutionary studies. Since obtaining his PhD in the 1960s, with a focus on primatology, he has published hundreds of articles and chapters that utilize evolution to shed light on such disparate phenomena as the origins of kissing, the origins of self-awareness, the

adaptive nature of responses to toxic plants, the evolutionary function of the female orgasm – and lots more. In his words, here is the story of a true EvoS Star:

**I was recruited from Tulane University in 1975 to Chair of the Psychology Department at the University of Albany, and I served in that role for three consecutive 3-year terms. Since then, I've gone from the position of editor of the Journal of Comparative Psychology to the current Associate Editor of the journal, Evolutionary Psychology. Topics I've researched and published include mirror self-recognition, the evolution of intelligence, human reproductive competition, semen chemistry and behavior, predator-prey relations, paternal assurance tactics, rape-avoidance strategies, evolutionary medicine, and the psychobiology of interpersonal attraction. Some of my recent research includes romantic kissing as an evolved courtship display, yawning as a brain cooling mechanism, menstrual cycle variations in voice, embedded reproductive messages in song lyrics, preeclampsia as a response to unfamiliar semen, and morning sickness as a maternal immune response.**

# An Interview with Matthew Gervais

By: Liz Ford



Matthew Gervais, one of the first graduates of Binghamton University's EvoS program, recently visited Binghamton to give a lecture on his current research as part of the ongoing "Current Topics in EvoS" seminar series.

*What was the EvoS program like when you were an undergraduate? How did you see it evolve over the course of your time at Binghamton University?*

**I became aware of EvoS as a freshman in 2002, around the year it began. The program was pretty small, there was no dedicated office and the same core of professors and students filled out the talks and discussions. There was a great seminar series though, with some speakers whose work I still cite. Some of the speakers (such as Paul Rozin) even inspired my future work. There was a lot of excitement about applying evolutionary theory to *everything*. It really buttressed and supplemented my own interdisciplinary evolutionary studies. Towards the end of my undergraduate studies, it seemed like EvoS**

**was becoming a destination for grad students and speakers. I'm delighted it has flourished.**

*Did you already know a lot about evolutionary studies before college? What led you to that path of study?*

**I went to Binghamton wanting to study psychobiology from an evolutionary perspective. I'd seen the first *The Matrix* movie in high school, and the idea that the brain creates the universe we experience really captivated me. I'd read some books (such as E.O. Wilson's *Consilience*) that had already convinced me that evolutionary theory was integrative and essential to the human sciences, and possibly the arts and humanities.**

Central to the EvoS program in its current form is the 100-level, introductory class, called "Evolution for Everyone." When you were an undergraduate, there was only a 400-level, upper-division biology class, taught by David Sloan Wilson, which you managed to take as a freshman. How did you get into that class, and what was your experience, taking it?

I was searching department faculty listings my first semester to find someone with whom to get some research experience. David's webpage said that students working with him needed to be interested "in the Big Questions about human nature." That was all I needed to read, and I scheduled a meeting with him. I think David felt my excitement, and he suggested in that meeting that I take his class the next semester, my second semester on campus. The class was awesome. It really covered all the important approaches, methods, and topics in human evolutionary studies in an accessible way. I still remember reading some of the assignments, such as Leda Cosmides' and John Tooby's *Evolutionary Psychology: A Primer*. Or the transcendent prose of *The Beak of the Finch*. I wrote a term paper for the class on the evolution of laughter - I think it was 55-pages long - and a couple of years and several rewrites later that became the publication that was my ticket to grad school in evolutionary anthropology.

How did the EvoS program influence you, academically?

EvoS and David's own work inspired me to take a broad, synthetic approach to human behavior, seeking consilience among levels of analysis. He definitely turned me onto to the study of culture from an evolutionary perspective. I went to grad school to study how culture and the human brain have co-evolved.

What does your active research entail? What future research goals do you have?

After Binghamton, I went to grad school at UCLA in biological anthropology. At the time, that was probably the best place in America to study modern human behavior from an evolutionary perspective -- integrating comparative primate studies, psychology experiments, long-term fieldwork in non-Western societies, and models of gene-culture co-evolution. It was within a collegial five-field anthropology department, making it as broad a place to study human behavior as anywhere. I still remember the meeting about grad schools where David mused aloud, "Maybe UCLA with Fessler and Fiske..." -- two scholars that were to become the chair and member of my dissertation committee, respectively.

My dissertation research was a bit of hybrid of all of this -- long-term, multi-method research in Fijian villages in the South Pacific that integrated ideas from anthropology, psychology, biology, even economics. During twenty months living in three villages, I focused on two things: how Fijians think and talk about their emotions, and how their emotions function within social relationships to structure their society and regulate behaviors like cooperation and punishment. Fiji is a great place to study social relationships. Love, respect, and joking suffuse daily life, and there are all sorts of norms and rituals about how people can interact and with whom. Plus people in a Fijian village are really interdependent, and social relationships are integral to subsistence and resilience in the face of drought, hurricanes, and political upheaval. They also must be the most generous people in the world -- I miss them like family and I can't wait to go back. Fortunately, I just started a position as a postdoc on a grant, funded by the John Templeton Foundation, which will send me back to Fiji each summer for the next three years. The grant is focused on human generosity, and I'll

## EVOS ILLUMINATE

continue my study of helping behaviors within and among Fijian villages. I'll do so using methods that will also be used in other sites around the world, in Africa and the US, for example. So it's a really exciting project, and yet a clear extension of the work I began in EvoS at Binghamton.

*What was it like to come back to Binghamton to deliver two lectures for the current EvoS faculty and students? Do you see a difference in the EvoS program between now and when you were an undergraduate here?*

**I was thrilled to return to Binghamton after nearly a decade away -- not the least because I'd been in Southern California for eight years, and Binghamton's wooded campus is so lovely in September. I was also really excited to share with the community the work I'd been doing while away. The students asked some really spot-on questions, both at lunch and during my talks. EvoS has clearly grown. The audience at my evening talk was the largest I've spoken to outside of a short conference talk. The EvoS office is a great space, and**

**Binghamton University should be proud to facilitate that community of scholars.**



In the new EvoS office, Matthew Gervais receives a gift from the Alumni Association.

# Spotlight on Members of the EvoS Consortium

## Chris Tripoli's post-EvoS Involvement

By: Chris Tripoli



Chris Tripoli joined the New Paltz Evolutionary Studies group (and the Evolutionary Psychology Lab) as a post-bac researcher after successfully finishing his degree in psychology from Skidmore College. Here is an update on this bright young scholar (with a focus on how EvoS has shaped his path):

After growing up in Sudbury, MA, I spent five years in New York between college and my time in New Paltz. I received a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from Skidmore College, where I also minored in philosophy. Now, I live in Boston. I recently moved there for a few reasons, but predominantly because it is a wonderful city for young people looking to start their careers. The city is full of universities and hospitals specializing in psychology and psychiatry, which is ideal for graduates in the field. I currently work with an organization called Engaging Minds. Engaging Minds is a tutoring organization

dedicated to teaching executive functioning skills to middle and high school students. As someone who hopes to one day teach at the college level (very possibly in evolutionary psychology), I believe practicing teaching skills to be just as important as gaining experience in my specific field of interest!

Evolution has always fascinated me because it is a process by which a stunning complexity can arise “accidentally” within the universe. It shows us that amazing biological phenomena - whether they be anatomical or psychological - follow a reliable pattern of providing some benefit to an organism’s reproductive capacity. Without the theory of evolution, all sciences may as well be called into question; the fact that intelligent observers can measure and manipulate the cosmos naturally leads to the idea that our species exists for some purpose. Consciousness, reason, and the experience of beauty are all things that seem not to fit into a purely physical, law-based picture of the universe. The theory of evolution, particularly as it is applied to psychology, shows us how these features still follow adaptive patterns and can arise in a purely accidental fashion.

Now that I think of it, I am actually pretty certain that my interest in evolution began when I watched the “Walking With...” BBC series. Comprised of seasons like “Walking With Dinosaurs,” “Walking With Beasts,” and “Walking With Cavemen,” these documentaries cover the entire history of life on Earth, focusing on

evolutionary leaps in both physiology and cognition. I was completely enthralled by the program, and the time scales really put into perspective the recency of our species.

People have been studying evolutionary biology for a while, but the exciting thing about evolutionary psychology is that it's a relatively new field with many more facets to be explored. I think the field is still in a place where there are many things we don't know and the discussions we have about evolutionary psychology are still largely hypothetical. Because the discipline is still so young, I wouldn't be surprised if some major breakthrough is about to debunk many of the things we thought we knew about evolutionary psychology. At the time Newton first proposed formal laws of physics, nobody knew how many times our understanding of that field had yet to be updated. Perhaps our understanding of evolutionary psychology is still in this elementary phase, and this is precisely what drives my interest in conducting research in the field. Hugely significant ground will likely be covered in the coming years, especially with advances in neuroscience, and I am incredibly eager to be a part of this effort.

My time with the Evolutionary Psychology Lab of SUNY New Paltz was quite valuable. I joined the lab because I

wanted exposure to research in the field before deciding to pursue evolutionary psychology in graduate school. As a lab alumnus, I can say with certainty that this is what I want to study going forward. I had the wonderful opportunity to assist with multiple studies, write a blog article, and be a part of the 2014 NEEPS conference. The intellectual highlight of my time with the lab was coauthoring a paper on the psychological implications of Bateman's Principle. This assignment exposed me to an entirely different side of the field. I have always been fascinated by personality psychology, but before working on the paper I had believed that personality (the study of individual differences) was irrelevant to evolutionary psychology, which focuses on the species as a whole. I have since become fascinated with the idea that evolution may produce multiple "types" within a species, each with a unique method of survival and reproduction. This may become a focus of mine in graduate school. My time at SUNY New Paltz opened my mind to many fascinating areas within evolutionary psychology, and I feel as though I left the lab with more questions than answers - an ideal outcome for someone who intends to make answering those questions his or her life's work!

# Gökçe's Involvement

By: Gökçe Sancak Aydın

This article is adapted from Glenn Geher's Darwin's *Subterranean World* blog posted at *Psychology Today*



## From Istanbul to New York City

Glenn: Gökçe, do you want to climb to the top of the mountain with us on Friday?

Gökçe: I will try.

For the better part of the past year, my research group, the Evolutionary Psychology lab at the State University of New York at New Paltz, was blessed to have Turkish doctoral student, Gökçe Sancak Aydın, as a visiting researcher in our lab. Gökçe joined us to develop research skills related to the social psychology of relationships (we've done a bunch of studies in this area), to learn some about how things are done in an American university, and to immerse herself in English - all qualities that should, in theory, help her better complete her PhD in Counseling Psychology at Middle East Technical University in Turkey. Along the way, Gökçe received authorship on at least three different scientific papers from our lab. She also

gave a great presentation at the annual meeting of the NorthEastern Evolutionary Psychology Society. And she contributed very positively to helping deliver my undergraduate courses in evolutionary studies and statistics.

While here in the US, Gökçe joined our intellectual community - and my family - on lots of fun adventures - experiencing for the first time: days in NYC, trips to DC, Philadelphia, and Boston, meals featuring beer and chicken wings, sushi, my daughter's middle school talent show, and hikes in our local mountains.

Henry David Thoreau once wrote this: "Some will remember, no doubt, not only did they attend college, but that they went to the mountain."

So if you're wondering, yes, Gökçe did join our research team on an extra-curricular trip on which we climbed the Millbrook Ridge. And yes, she made it to the top of the mountain.

In the words of Gökçe Sancak Aydın herself, here is the story of an intrepid young scholar of the behavioral sciences who traveled half-way across the world to hone her understanding of research and statistical techniques in the field of psychology (and yeah, we will miss her!):

### A guest blog by Gökçe Sancak Aydın

A great number of students study in international field in nowadays. The US is a great host country providing many opportunities to international students. Although international students are equipped for contacting with US culture given the global influence of American culture in the mass media and movies, it is the case that direct experience is more valuable than the awareness provided by the media. For the past several months, I have served as a visiting researcher in the Psychology Department at the State University of New York at New Paltz - my home department is the Department of Psychological Counseling and Guidance at Middle East Technical University. This experience related to learning about psychology in such a different cultural context was very eye-opening.

As an international student and researcher, I found myself asking about the similarities and differences between cultures. Of course my standpoint for comparison was my own culture (Turkish). I notice my own cultural characteristics became more salient to me while immersed here in the US. This point gave me an opportunity to perceive my attitudes and behaviors in the light of my cultural background. That was a great experience to look at myself in that cultural perspective - and I would recommend such an experience to others.

*What are the Differences and Similarities between Turkish and US Cultures?*

I think we can classify differences into two categories; visible and psychological. Visible differences are based on the traditions, attitudes, and behaviors set by culture. Our special days and traditions are very different. For instance, we do not have Halloween in Turkey (but I think we should have this holiday - it is a great fun!). Also, we have different music, different cuisines etc. All of these are the characteristic differences that can be observed easily. In addition to that, there are psychological differences that are less visible. According to Hofstede (1980, 2001) individualism-collectivism is the most conspicuous dimension that characterizes differences among cultures. Individualism and collectivism are generally considered as the bipolar sides of a continuum among cultures (Cingöz-Ulu & Lalonde, 2007). Many psychological concepts are shaped in the light of this classification. While Turkish culture is classified as a kind of collectivist culture (Goregenli, 1997; Hofstede, 2001), US culture is perhaps the most clear instance of an individualistic culture (Hofstede, 2001). Individualistic cultures view the individuals as independent, free, and responsible for themselves and focuses on accountability and self-discipline (Cingöz-Ulu & Lalonde, 2007). On the other hand, collectivism is described by family integrity, ingroup harmony, an emphasis on commonalities rather than differences, sharp ingroup-outgroup distinctions, and the regulation of behavior by group norms (Triandis, 1995).

Turkey is also described as a society in transition. Studies have shown that there is a cultural change over time in Turkish culture (Kagitcibasi, 1982; Kagitcibasi&Ataca, 2005). Kagitcibasi (2005) explains this change with the family model of psychological interdependence and the autonomous-related self which is described as integrative syntheses. This

model integrates contradictory orientations about family interaction patterns and the self. According to Kagitcibasi (2005), the new generation of Turkish culture shows decreased material interdependencies but continuing emotional (psychological) interdependencies with acculturation and socioeconomic development. All these differences between these cultures result in differences such as using different conflict strategies (Cingöz-Ulu & Lalonde, 2007), using different parenting styles (Kagitcibasi, 2007), and even different attitudes toward romanticism (Medora, Larson, Hortacsu, & Dave, 2002). In addition to all these differences, I noticed many similarities between cultures which seem universal. We all have nearly same desires such as love, peace, feeling connected, and finding a meaning in life. Also, as described in many studies, we have universal emotions and just the way of expressing these emotions is different.

*What are the contributions of international experience to students and researchers?*

In the modern world, with the effect of globalization, people do not want to be limited by their national maps. They want to learn, teach and live in different countries. Students learn about their home culture and their host culture more with the international experience that empowers the awareness of students about cultures. Also, students improve their multicultural skills, which means that they will have capability to study in various cultural environments. Further, having skills for contacting with different cultures and understanding different perspectives may serve personal growth of students such as increasing self-esteem, coping skills, problem solving skills and creativeness. I strongly suggest this experience to students and researchers. Many studies show that acculturation of

students is a dynamic and complex process (Smith & Khawaja, 2011). An important contributor of acculturation process of students relates to their patterns of social interactions and their meaningful relationships within their new communities (Gómez, Urzúa, & Glass, 2014). In my experience as a visiting scholar of psychology, the SUNY New Paltz Psychology Department has provided a great atmosphere for adaptation of students. I would like to thank SUNY New Paltz Psychology Department, Evolutionary Psychology Lab and special huge thanks to the Chair of Psychology Department Glenn Geher for being so positive, supportive, and welcoming.

*The Main Differences in the Turkish vs. US Academic Experience*

My experience in learning about psychology in two dramatically different cultural and educational contexts has implications for my understanding of how higher education operates. In US universities, undergraduate students are more encouraged to do research and they can find themselves a place in big studies. Also, having labs in social science as part of a culture of teamwork and collaboration in scholarship is another inspiring part of what I took in during my experience.

There are many similarities between the educational experience in the US and the experience in Turkey - this is partly due to the fact that the Turkish system of higher education is based on the US model - especially at my university (Middle East Technical University). This said, it was very eye-opening to see so many differences between how teaching and research operate - and I am grateful for having had the experience - and I strongly suggest that others take such opportunities if presented to them. Studying psychology in the US provided me with the kinds of

experiences and insights that I never would have gotten otherwise - and I hope that I am a stronger researcher and scholar for it.

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## Stony Brook Studies Abroad to Madagascar

By: Denise Lobo



"There they are!" exclaimed our professor, pointing toward dark shapes moving in the distant trees. My other peers and I clustered together in excitement, trying to catch a glimpse of the infamous *Indri indri*, a critically endangered lemur. Silently we moved off the trail and through the rain forest until we were only a couple feet away from these marvelous creatures. Mesmerized, we watched as the lemurs jumped effortlessly between tree trunks, while their calls radiated throughout the forest in a sing-song way. It was my third day in Madagascar, and I could not imagine my luck as I gawked at these beautiful animals native only to this country.



It was the fall of 2013 and I was studying abroad in Madagascar for two and a half months through Stony Brook University. What initially drew me to this

program was the unparalleled opportunity to apply my textbook knowledge to the real world and have a hands-on learning experience. Madagascar is a biodiversity hotspot and exemplifies evolution at its finest. In fact, approximately 90% of the country's species are endemic, meaning they are found nowhere else in the world. As my semester unfolded, I explored the country's various ecosystems (rain forests, spiny desert, canyons, barrier reef, etc.), viewed countless unique flora and fauna, and immersed myself in Malagasy culture. While my knowledge definitely grew over the months, so did I as a person. I pushed my boundaries physically, as I hiked up to seven hours in a day, and socially, as I tried to communicate past a language and cultural barrier.

The program had a strong evolutionary studies focus. Our professors often tied together how adaptations of flora or fauna observed in the field are evolutionarily advantageous for the species. Evolution was especially exemplified every time we gazed at different lemur species. Scientific research suggests that approximately 60 million years ago, a predecessor of lemurs were carried away from Africa on matted

vegetation. Surviving off this vegetation for an unknown amount of time, they washed upon the shore of Madagascar. Due to relatively few predators, the species grew in number and spread throughout the country. Due to processes such as dispersion, vicariance, and the found effect, the species diverged slowly over time to the many lemur species we know of today. Fascinatingly, there were more lemur species present when humans first arrived on Madagascar than there are today; and the smallest lemur back then was bigger in size than our current largest lemur.



The largest lemur to have lived is the now extinct *Archaeoindris fontoynontii*, whose size was comparable to a gorilla. Changes in the lemur population are prime examples of evolution and natural selection at work. Sadly, lemurs are very much on the decline today, mostly due to human exploitation of rain forests for agriculture purposes and lemurs for meat or sale.

Unknown to many, almost 94% of Madagascar's forest have been cut down, largely in part to tavy, otherwise known as slash-and-burn agriculture. This method depletes the land of its resources after one to two years, and the land remains

unusable for up to six years afterward. Farmers must then cut down further rain forest to provide for their families. Primarily due to the loss and defragmentation of their homes, many lemur species vary from being threatened to critically endangered according to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Hence, it is of particular importance that we help protect these species from becoming extinct in the wild.



For anyone looking for a unique study abroad opportunity, I cannot recommend this study abroad program enough. Highlights of my trip included swimming under a waterfall, snorkeling in barrier reefs, exploring a bat cave, participating in a home stay, conducting my own research project, and of course, observing over sixteen species of lemurs. For those afraid of exorbitant studying abroad costs, the price of this program was comparable to the cost of in-state attendance at any SUNY school for one semester. The program is offered during the fall and summer seasons and accepts up to 25 university junior and seniors from any university. This trip truly lived up to expectation and has become the most memorable travel experience I have ever had.

## Updates from Binghamton University

### **Big Changes at *This View of Life* and Calling All Aspiring Science Communicators!**

#### **David Sloan Wilson**

Most members of the EvoS Consortium already know about [This View of Life](#) (TVOL), the online magazine operated by the [Evolution Institute](#) that reports “anything and everything” from an evolutionary perspective. Big changes are taking place at TVOL that provide opportunities for EvoS Consortium students and faculty who want to communicate evolutionary science to the general public.

The first big change is a planning grant awarded by the John Templeton Foundation to support TVOL and a communication strategy that we call “the science to narrative chain”. The planning grant has enabled us to hire two editors with awesome credentials, Luba Ostashevsky and Eric Michael Johnson. Luba was one of the first students to receive an EvoS education at Binghamton University in the 1990’s and went on to a successful career in the publishing industry. Eric is earning his PhD in the history of evolutionary science at the University of British Columbia and writes widely for the general public in his [Primate Diaries](#) blog at *Scientific American* and elsewhere. Robert Kadar, the founding editor of TVOL, remains fully involved along with myself as Editor in Chief. This is the beginning of a “central office” capable of developing TVOL to its full potential as a science media outlet run by scientists.

The second big change is an overhaul of the TVOL website and integration with other EI websites that will be completed within a few weeks. I am very excited to share our new look and functionality with you.

One of our ambitions for TVOL is to provide a training ground and publishing outlet for people who are interested in communicating evolutionary science to the general public. Faculty who are already teaching courses in science communication can work with us create student projects that result in articles published in TVOL, which can be much more motivating than projects that never see the light of day. Suitably designed, our training ground can be made available to aspiring science communicators who are not taking a course in science communication.

We are brainstorming with a number of colleagues who teach science communication and welcome the participation of EvoS Consortium faculty and students. Please indicate your interest by emailing Luba at [luba.ostashevsky@gmail.com](mailto:luba.ostashevsky@gmail.com).

Here is a description of TVOL and benefits to contributors that will be featured on the new website.

*This View of Life (TVOL) is an online magazine that reports on evolution the way that Darwin imagined it-- as a theory that applies to all aspects of humanity in addition to the rest of life. TVOL makes modern evolutionary science accessible to the public on topics that are vital to our personal and social wellbeing, including health, education, environment, economics, politics, culture and the arts. It shows what Darwin meant when he wrote “There is grandeur in this view of life...”*

**More about TVOL:**

TVOL is operated by the Evolution Institute, which provides science-based solutions to today's most pressing social problems. Science is only necessary and not sufficient to solve the problems of our age. In addition, science must be related to values before it can guide action and value-based policies informed by science must be communicated to mass audiences through compelling narratives. TVOL plays a vital role in this process by making the latest developments in evolutionary science accessible to a broad audience, including thought leaders and policy experts in addition to the general public. In addition to directly reaching a broad audience, TVOL also serves as a launch pad for content published in other media outlets.

TVOL is a science media outlet operated by scientists. Unlike most popular science outlets, whose editorial staff is one or two links removed from the actual science, our editorial staff is composed mostly of practicing scientists at the forefront of studying evolution in relation to human affairs. This means that we can identify and report upon the most important issues with more authority than other popular scientific outlets.

**Reasons to feature your work in TVOL**

TVOL has much to offer evolutionary scientists wishing to reach a larger audience and science journalists wishing to feature their work. Advantages for the evolutionary scientist include:

- A much larger audience for one's work, compared to publishing only in the academic literature.
- This includes a larger *academic* audience, since TVOL is widely read by faculty and graduate students inside the Ivory Tower, in addition to readers outside the Ivory Tower.
- TVOL articles can result in content published in other media outlets.
- TVOL can serve as a research tool (e.g., publicizing surveys and sponsoring debates).

Advantages to the science journalist include:

- A widely read outlet for one's work.
- An opportunity to work directly with leading evolutionary scientists.
- An opportunity to write at greater length and depth than allowed by many other popular science outlets.
- An opportunity to cross-post your work published elsewhere.

TVOL currently does not pay for content, although we hope and expect this to change in the future.

This newsletter was edited by Nicole Wedberg & Glenn Geher.

Special thanks to all those who contributed to this issue.

Don't forget to visit the EvoS Consortium website at

[http://evostudies.org/!](http://evostudies.org/)

## SUNY New Paltz 2015 Seminar Series

New Paltz will see the return of its annual EvoS seminar series on February 9, 2015. On selected Mondays, there will be a lecture at 5:30pm on a variety of different evolutionary topics. As usual, these seminars are open to both the academic community and the general public. More information can be found at the New Paltz EvoS website:

<http://www.newpaltz.edu/evos/seminar.html>

### Scheduled Speakers:

#### February 9<sup>th</sup>

Lemur Evolution and Ecology

**Patricia Wright, Ph.D.**

Stony Brook University - Department of Anthropology

#### February 23<sup>rd</sup>

Songs and the Suburbs: What Birds Can Teach Us About Communication and

**Kara Belinsky, Ph.D.**

SUNY New Paltz - Department of Biology

#### March 9<sup>th</sup>

311 Hotlines and the Maintenance of the Urban Commons: Examining the Intersection of Policy and the Evolved Human Animal

**Dan O'Brien, Ph.D.**

School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs, Northeastern University, Boston Area Research Initiative, Harvard University - Department of Sociology

#### March 23<sup>rd</sup>

Primate Evolution in the Modern Age

**Todd Disotell, Ph.D.**

New York University - Department of Anthropology

#### April 6<sup>th</sup>

Facebook Frenemies and Selfie-Promotion: Intrasexual Competition in the Digital Age

**Mandy Guitar, M.A.**

Binghamton University - Department of Anthropology

#### April 13<sup>th</sup>

Transcendental Medication: Defraying the Costs of Analysis Paralysis

**Christopher Lynn, Ph.D.**

University of Alabama - Department of Anthropology

#### April 20<sup>th</sup>

The Evolutionary Psychology of Breaking up and Making up

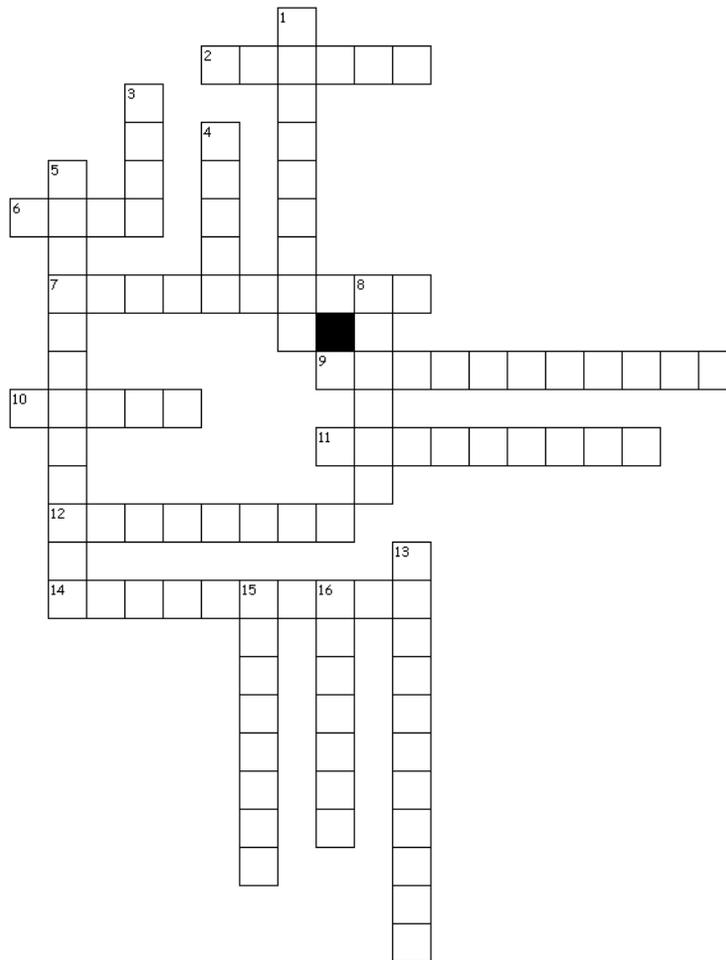
**Joel Wade, Ph.D.**

Bucknell University - Department of Psychology

Missed past New Paltz EvoS talks? You're in luck! You can find them here:

<http://newpaltz.mediasite.suny.edu/Mediasite/Catalog/catalogs/default>

# Evolutionary Psychology Crossword Puzzle!



### Across

2. Not Wallace, but \_\_\_\_\_
6. Dawkins' *The Ancestor's* \_\_\_\_\_
7. Trait that has evolved with a functional role
9. Eusocial insects provide evidence of \_\_\_\_\_ altruism
10. One of Darwin's favorite kinds of birds
11. Costly \_\_\_\_\_
12. Occurs at random, continues to evolve if it proves successful
14. genus: homo, closest extinct human relative

### Down

1. How apes move from tree branch to tree branch
3. The cultural version of a gene
4. Change in gene pool frequencies; also to be carried slowly by a current
5. \_\_\_\_\_'s rap guide to evolution
8. On the \_\_\_\_\_ of Species
13. Geological epoch for recent glaciations
15. Curator of the famous Darwin museum exhibit
16. He came up with parental investment theory

**ANSWERS AND A NEW PUZZLE TO BE FOUND IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF  
THE ILLUMINATE!**