

## Re: Humans "unique" social

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- *From:* "g" <[gillawton@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:gillawton@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Thu, 25 Aug 2005 18:38:46 -0400 (EDT)
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"William Morse" <[wdmorse@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:wdmorse@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote in message  
[news:dejkgc\\$29di\\$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:dejkgc$29di$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

> "g" <[gillawton@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:gillawton@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote in

> [news:degtg4\\$194p\\$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:degtg4$194p$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx):

>

>>> "Anthony Cerrato" <[tcerrato@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:tcerrato@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote in message

>>> [news:dcu6kn\\$262e\\$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:dcu6kn$262e$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

>

>>>> Is human sociality really unique, or is it simply an  
>>>> extension of the herding instinct of many animals which was  
>>>> originally developed for protection and honed by evolution.

>

> (snip)

>

>> In the context of modern society, the eclectics of risk vs. advantage  
>> give way to something of a, "What would I like to do this morning, or  
>> the rest of my life, instead of eating another of those endless snacks  
>> awaiting my beck and call, or sitting down and just twiddling my  
>> thumbs while time slips away?"

>>

>> What have social affiliations (and corresponding activity advantages  
>> and disadvantages... such as little schedule-juggling annoyances) to  
>> do with what occurs with herding animals and herds, where survival  
>> lies in the balance?

>

> An excellent question, and what is your answer. I would say that the  
> group joining proclivity of humans is a relic of an earlier time when  
> survival was in the balance. As opposed to other herd animals, humans  
> refined the proclivity to reflect similar interests, thus making the  
> groupings more productive. But much of the fine tuning may be culturally  
> controlled – i.e. humans may have a genetic tendency to form groups, but  
> the degree of attachment and the specificity of the groups is largely a  
> product of the culture.

My answer would not be simple, nor cut and dried. If we begin with calling  
any cooperation or mutual goal striving "herding," then deer are herding  
animals. There is a conventional meaning of "herding" which excludes them.  
By the same token, if we begin with the notion that all current behavior is

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a product of the cumulative experience of all one's ancestors, then if a baseball player chews tobacco, grabs his crotch and spits before stepping up to the plate, then this because his ancestors chewed vegetable matter, had fleas and occasionally put something into their mouths with a stinging insect in it.

With all due respect, it merely seems to me that it is easy to generalize about modern social phenomena and the experiences of ancestors. I cannot say such generalizations are incorrect, nor that they are correct. Such ideas are innocuously drawn in casual contemplation, but if we begin to base conclusions on them that guide managerial normatives, or laws, or regulations of day care facilities... or some such thing on them, would those be based on "science" or just on casual speculations?

If we should agree that, "yes," man is a herding animal. What puzzles me is, "Okay. So what do we do with this as an established "finding?"

Respectfully,

g

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• **References:**

- ◆ **Humans "unique" social**  
◇ From: Anthony Cerrato
- ◆ **Re: Humans "unique" social**  
◇ From: Perplexed in Peoria
- ◆ **Re: Humans "unique" social**  
◇ From: g
- ◆ **Re: Humans "unique" social**  
◇ From: William Morse

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