



Psychology Research Seminar Programme

SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES | UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING

2nd October 2014

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Host: Professor Phyllis Lee



What Psychological Mechanisms Lubricate the 'Cultural Ratchet'?

Abstract

Cumulative culture – the ratcheting up of knowledge, and iterative improvements in technology over generations – has been proposed to be a uniquely human capability, accounting for the remarkable ecological and demographic success of our species. In this talk I will first describe a series of experiments that compared the performance of a range of primate species with a simple, cumulative puzzle. Secondly, by examining the evidence of the 'ratchet effect' in humans and examine evidence for its existence in other species. I will conclude by considering how the way we define cumulative culture has evolved, and the ramifications of this evolution for the field.

Seminars are free of charge and held on

Thursdays @ 4:00 pm Room 3A94

Refreshments are served upon arrival * All are welcome

http://www.stir.ac.uk/natural-sciences/research/seminars/psychology/autumn_research_seminar_2014/