Mismatch: Translating Concepts of Evolutionary Psychology Into an Aggregation of Various Aesthetic Mediums

Brianna McQuade

Glenn Geher, Bryan Czibesz

The State University of New York at New Paltz

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Author Note

Preliminary research in regard to this thesis project began in part of Glenn Geher’s Seminar in Psychology course that focused on the concept of positive evolutionary psychology. This literature review, similarly to aspects of evolutionary psychology, is not stand-alone. In addition to research that will be provided on the concept of evolutionary mismatch, I will be discussing how I chose to artistically interpret these subconcepts within mismatch—and apply them to various mediums within the realm of fine arts. Having the space and support to combine my interests to create this interdisciplinary project is something I am really thankful for.

Glenn, thank you for always pushing me to be a more grand and ambitious student. Bryan, thank you for encouraging me to run with whatever (outlandish and strange) ideas I wanted to create. You both have been a huge source of motivation for me throughout this process, and hopefully, I will be a source of light and knowledge for someone in the ways that you both are for me!
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Introduction

It is not out of the ordinary to note that we differ in extreme ways comparatively to our ancestors. Our ancestral history provides us with information that lends us to understand our evolutionary history. Nomadic tribes were composed of kin members and other close relationships in which humans were in a state of constant exercise, experiential learning, and overall closeness to those they loved and cared for. As mentioned by Ronald Giphart and Mark van Vught (2018), for two million years, our ancestors hunted for meals, gathered nuts and seeds to sustain themselves, and lived a life based on constant nourishment.

Then, human lives took a turn at their discovery of agriculture. From this point on, the exigency of cultural and revolutionary changes began to swallow the idea of what we as a species had once been familiar with—*the days of efficiency through simplicity were long gone*. The track of our biology in comparison to our cultural evolution are moving at vastly different rates—and we as humans are experiencing rapid progress and are trying to survive under these conditions with our primitive brains (Giphart & van Vught, 2018).

We as a species, experience forms of cultural evolution at much faster rates than biologically. This is not all bad, due to progress under our modern conditions enabling us to adapt and achieve things our ancestors could never have imagined. Humans are unique in that we are able to communicate with one another, and share human universals that aid our ability to survive and in some cases, flourish, anywhere on Earth.

The concept that is to be grappled with throughout the entirety of this paper is that of *evolutionary mismatch*. This is something that not only humans have to act in accordance with,
every species in one way or another has dealt with this concept on some scale. Then why is it that this term is unfamiliar to most, when positive lifestyle changes could be made to combat such a widespread issue?

**Why Mismatch and Art?**

The creative process behind this artistic undertaking was driven by evolutionary reasoning (Davies, 2012). Evolutionary studies on the whole is interdisciplinary in nature, and I find that my approaches to the collection of pieces I created works under the same constructs. The first thing I would like to make clear to everyone who is taking the time to read this is that I am far from professional in regard to my art style. I find that art that is *interesting* is often overlooked due to its lack of symmetry and “cleanliness.”

Additionally, people quickly become uncomfortable by chaos presented to them on a canvas, wood board, or what have you. Visual means presented in a way to make a viewer think more, and feel a bit self-conscious in their current state—is exactly my goal. Bringing forth uncomfortability the whole works with a subject such as evolutionary psychology—and more so, evolutionary mismatch—due to the fact that mismatch runs on this exact idea. This being that we as humans are presented with physical and behavioral problems due to our current environment differing at such drastic levels from our ancestral conditions.

Through trial and error, I am introducing different components with tangible and visual pieces of art through an aggregation of materials that bluntly display just how problematic our fast paced cultural evolution can be for both our physical and mental well-being. These pieces all have drastically different motivations in their construction and completion, as well as unique approaches and processes in the same regard. This was
a way I was able to highlight the interdisciplinary nature of both the arts and evolutionary studies—in which I hope I did both fields justice—in my own unique way.

_Here is to being comfortable with recognizing just how uncomfortable we are in our current environment, and further, how the cultural advances we have made on the whole have created disadvantages for our species. It is time to sit with that, and in this case—stare at it too. From up close or from far away, it is your choice to confront it._

**Evolutionary Mismatch and the Building Blocks of Evolutionary Psychology**

Evolutionary mismatch is a concept that can be defined in a considerable amount of different ways. In order to understand this term in its completeness there are some basic aspects of evolution that are helpful to be aware of. The first being naturally selected qualities of species. Heritability of helpful qualities are naturally selected by a species if they have the potential to increase survival or reproductive success of said species (Giphart & van Vught, 2018). In the case of this paper, all aspects of research and writing will relate to us… humans.

We as a whole subconsciously work towards generating scenarios and making connections with people that will bolster our success in an ultimate manner (Geher & Wedberg, 2020). For example, being seen as trustworthy is a good trait to hold, not only in the case of a potential career—but more so to be seen as an ideal potential mate. Humans are wired to work toward ensuring the projection of their own genes into the future, reproductive success is the ultimate goal in regard to sustaining one’s bloodline, which is extremely important both evolutionarily speaking, as well as generally for the betterment of our species on the whole. This is a core idea in the realm of evolutionary psychology, that humans (and species generally), have evolved features that help facilitate the ability to reproduce. The concept of reproductive success
showcases that survival is simply an aspect of our evolution that works to bolster one’s ability to procreate (Geher, 2013, p. 5). Ensuring reproductive success on the whole is both an individual and species wide goal.

The history of the term “mismatch” began through a biological perspective. In the 1960’s this term was used in the realm of biology to describe a predator and prey relationship, where the environment is changing around them at a rate in which both species are unable to keep up with (Giphart & van Vught, 2018). Evolutionary psychologists rather use this term to describe a situation in which a species under modern conditions, are no longer well suited for the conditions of their environment—and as a result, their chances of successful survival and reproductive ability are impaired, and have the potential to diminish completely (Geher, 2013). In other words, mismatch occurs when humans exhibit behavior to keep up with the cultural evolution occurring around them in their modern contexts.

With this, there is also a light side to evolutionary mismatch. Being better informed on this matter enables one to make better conscious decisions in the best interest of themself, and further, bolstering decision making that promotes an environment that better matches those of our ancestors. Recognizing both the positive and negative aspects to evolutionary mismatch and its effects on health and well-being at both an individual and collective level provide us with an upper-hand in beginning to modify and revise our lives—beginning with small instances, and then graduating to the larger scale problems that humans are faced with on this matter.

The likelihood of mismatched scenarios under our modern conditions has exponentially increased, and it's detrimental impact on humans’ emotional and physical health is intertwined with the fact that this issue has become universal and difficult to control. Areas that are impacted by this evolutionary hurdle are not few and far between. Rather, things like our educational
system, diet, technological advancements and even things as personal to us as our family ties are all impacted by this complicated term (Geher, 2017). Following are more in-depth examples of how these things are instances of evolutionary mismatch at their cores, as well as steps one can take at the individual level to evade (as best as one can) these debilitating problems.

**Our Convoluted Modern Diet**

*Author Note: This subsection of review was written in Kathleen Geher’s psychology course that has a focus on health psychology. This portion is part of a paper I had written in regard to paleo-diet and evolutionary psychology.*

Beginning with an aspect of life that is near and dear to my heart, as well as many globally, pertains to what we choose to put in our bodies to fuel ourselves everyday. Currently, there are a plethora of choices we are exposed to when we step foot in a grocery store, many of those options consist of high levels of sugars and cholesterol—take a trip around your local grocery store, and compare the size of the produce section to the candy and chip aisles. You will quickly see the problem we are presented with.

Our ancestral diet consists of foods that were relatively easy to forage and hunt for. These foods were rarely high in sugars and fats, which is why we were lean and strong (Wolf, 2010). More specifically, our ancestors consumed different types of hunted meat, found nuts, seeds, and fish caught by the hunters of the tribe (Geher, 2017). Berries were a rarity, and are sweet in comparison to the rest of the cuisine our ancestors were accustomed to—but bitter in nature. The sweetness of these small fruits are nothing like the sugars we are exposed to in our modern day conditions. These rarities in humans’ evolutionary history were sought out to such extreme levels, that our preferences for taste evolved to preference of foods that are high in sugar and fat due to its rarity and adaptive nature under ancestral conditions.
Our brains and bodies are unable to keep up with the sheer amount of caloric intake we oftentimes aimlessly put into our bodies. Many mistake something like a chocolate covered pretzel granola bar for “quick fuel”, while under ancestral conditions—if you were hungry at any point that was not sanctioned for a meal, you gathered nuts—that are high in protein which work to truly refuel one’s body.

The advent of fire was introduced and then used not only as a form of animal deterrent and warmth, but as a gateway to food consumption. Utilizing a fire to cook food under ancestral conditions allowed less energy exerted by our ancestors in the process of chewing, swallowing and further, digesting (Giphart & van Vught, 2018). Additionally, this process enabled large pieces of meat to be cooked and shared amongst a tribe, ensuring that everyone is properly nourished and fueled. The idea that one eats until they are full was a principle idea under ancestral conditions—overeating was not often done due to food scarcity. Conversely, under present-day conditions we engage in unhealthy levels of snacking and often overeat. What is most interesting is that being able to consume more to fuel oneself would have had evolutionary benefits—providing our ancestors with more energy, in turn allowing them to complete more tasks in a day.

The features of our food preference adaptations, in wanting to consume foods high in sugar and fats, has shaped our current environment in comparison to our ancestral environment of potential food scarcity. This subconsciously motivates many to eat much more than we should in our mismatched, food-rich environment—too many options is far from beneficial in our current domain. These choices we make on the whole are to the detriment of our health and longevity—increased choice for the individual makes it harder for one to choose the right one. (Goetz et al., 2019)
The article *The Evolution of Diet* by Ann Gibbons (2013) explains that as time moves forward, we will have to be conscious of our diet not only for the betterment of our own health and well-being, but also for the planet we are living on (Gibbons, 2013). The paleolithic diet is a lifestyle that consists of conscious healthy choices that many have implemented into their lives to mitigate the mismatch problem in this regard. The paleo diet limits specific types of food that became more common to access once the advent of farming and agriculture emerged. The foods that the paleo diet tends to exclude are dairy products, legumes and grains, and refined sugars (e.g., cheese, lentils, and wheat). Specifically, these food groups are excluded due to the fact that they were not readily available to our ancestors, and were not the foods that we have been consuming through our biological evolution. Under ancestral conditions and in modern day contexts, food remains a staple social and emotional practice among kin members and beyond—but the types of food we choose to nourish our bodies with is considered an evolutionary mismatch. Further, our sedentary nature that is bolstered in the current context is a mismatch. We have to work towards engaging in consistent physical activity to prevent consequences, some as severe as death.

An individual change that can be consciously made in terms of the human diet, especially with food high in sugar at extremely cheap and attainable levels is to eat cleaner, and create less choice for oneself. Eating natural (although expensive at some times) lends to other positive lifestyle choices, and matches up with our ancestral diet. As mentioned above, the well known paleo-diet discourages high levels of sugar intake in addition to over-eating.
Mismatch of Diet Through Ceramics

The pieces created in regard to evolutionary mismatch of diet were created in ceramic. This choice was made with the intention of creating tangible items that represent greed and gluttony in some way, shape, or form. Both pieces were created using the hand building method, which relies on the artists’ fine-motor skills and further, reinforces an ancestral take on art. Hand-building reinforces the importance of the artists’ relationship with the material they are working with.

As for the first piece, titled: “YUM!” I created a large mouth that doubles as a large bowl. The mouth has yellowed teeth, and a large hand-built tongue that is protruding outside of the rim of the bowl. The expression shows the search for unhealthy food, with a clear gloss over the lips and tongue to emulate the way that we as a collective drool over foods that contain high levels of saturated fats and sugars. This piece was sculpted and then painted over twice before going into the kiln. Mixtures of underglazes and slips were created and applied to further enhance deep reds and blues on the surface of the piece. This piece specifically represents the gluttony that we as humans give in to when presented with food that is mismatched from our ancestral environment.

The face jug pictured below was created in ceramic to emulate the idea that if one truly wanted to, they could eat food out of these items--the irony of this all is that the portions these bowls and jugs would allow one to consume are far too much for just one. I wanted to bring a bit of satire and discomfort to the fact that we (especially westernized cultures) are greedy in regard to consumption. Our modern diet brings us to choose between bad and worse, whereas under ancestral conditions--nourishing our bodies looked and felt different (Gibbons, 2013). This jug particularly showcases some of the
negative consequences that can physically manifest if we continue to indulge in foods that contain high fats and sugars. The face jug has yellowed teeth, textured skin, and cheeks that are swelled. The inside of the container is filled with processed food remains, and junk food bags, that are crumpled and spilling over the top rim of the jug itself.

**Educational Instincts and Our Modern Day Experience**

A unique aspect of the human experience is that we are designed to be natural learners. Under ancestral conditions, we were taught through constant experience, and elders of tribes served as educational sources (Gray, 2019). Children have a natural instinct to emulate the skills of their elders, and those older than them—in attempts to gain cultural knowledge and applicable skills that will increase their ability to both survive and reproduce. In other words, survival of our kind relied on education and the ability of generations to come to gain skills and retain important knowledge passed down by the generation prior. There are extremely high levels of selective pressure for children to be successful in obtaining educational skills—these skills are sought through observations and hands-on exploration, which are then used consistently throughout the
These skills are foundational, and follow one into adulthood, and one can then pass this knowledge down to their kin.

From a general perspective, education can be described as an outlet for children to learn integral skills for their educational journey. Preparing young minds for ultimate success through foundational knowledge is seemingly simple, but our current educational system is yet another example of evolutionary mismatch. Cultural changes have been engulfing pedagogical aspects of what our ancestors used to know as education—outside, interdisciplinary, physical, and nuanced throughout one’s day. Now, rather, a child sits surrounded by their classmates for the entirety of the day—being taught by one teacher that is significantly older and more educated than they are. This leads many to ask the question… “Well, why isn’t that good? Learning from someone older and wiser than you makes sense! This modern methodology seems to be well thought out, but in reality, the conditions of our current educational environment are far from what our ancestors had experienced. Instead of being placed in mixed-age classrooms where one learns different things from others, as well as engaging in teaching themselves—students are being forcibly in age-segregated classrooms. Further, these students are additionally grouped by intelligence levels in regard to core subjects of our modern education—such as reading, math, and even science (Gruskin & Geher, 2017). Our school systems are separating it's students to such drastic lengths in order to ensure challenges in the classroom, when in reality—this mindset is far from our methodology of education in the EEA.

Currently we place our children in environments in which they are involved in activity that does not suit their ancestral desires. Oftentimes they are constricted in methods of play, which is replaced with structural and stagnant learning (Gruskin & Geher, 2017). Our ancestors, on the other hand, engaged in play-based learning that encouraged exploring, movement, and
skills essential to their daily lives. Further, not a single hunter-gatherer culture engages in the type of schooling we experience in our current environment (Gray, 2013). Instead, children supervised one another—leaving the adults of the tribe to complete tasks that were essential to the survival of the group, such as acquisition of food.

Art, on the other hand, matches ancestral education in an important way. Methodology of ancestral education is sought through play. Playing in a collaborative manner allows children of tribes to learn through experience without negative consequences (Gruskin & Geher, 2017). Learning was guided by the child themselves, and this concept parallels the relationship artists often have with their pieces. Humans attraction to the arts on a more general level stems from humans’ need to obtain reproductive success. Being talented in some way, shape, or form is adaptive for both proximate and ultimate reasons (Davies, 2012). The arts continue to serve great evolutionary function, and are far from mismatched conditions we are presented with in our daily lives. Similarly to ancestral education, forms of fine art in our modern context pervades our lives and help us to develop a relationship with both learning and enjoyment (Davies, 2012). With this noted, it is not surprising that we on the whole are attracted to all forms of art, consistently, in such unique ways.

Within this subsection of mismatch, it is important to note that many mistake the terms “education” and “schooling.” Most consider schools to be the environment in which education occurs, but history does not align with this definition. On the contrary, compulsory education and schools began with a narrow goal. This goal was originally motivated by the protestant religion, and was used as a form of control over children—in order to instill obedience in those attending. Curiosity and trial is no longer encouraged, and a strict curriculum is introduced. Learning through play became a short time slot known to all as recess, and the opportunity to learn
through observation, trial, and error soon dissipated—as it would seem counterproductive, and a waste of time (Gray, 2019).

A way in which this evolutionary mismatch can come to some resolution is through forms of self-directed education. Examples of such methods shine through methodology used in Montessori schools. This specific approach to education does not devalue play, strays from adult influence, and even is not structured similarly to the idea of “school” that many of us are familiar with (Gruskin & Geher, 2017). Allowing children to take the lead bolsters motivation and engagement in the learning progress. There is no linear path to educational success in these instances, and research shows that children in settings that align with our EEA develop more passionate interests which have the potential to lead to successes in the realm of their career (Gray, 2019). Gruskin and Geher (2017) found that those who implement aspects of ancestral methods of learning and evolutionary relevance in early educational instances have a positive relationship with success in later years of schooling. If changes such as promoting group discussion and self-directed learning are made to better align childrens’ educational experience with that of our ancestors, we can slowly mitigate instances of evolutionary mismatch that run rampant in our modern school systems (Gruskin & Geher, 2017).

**Interactive ceramic sculptural piece titled: MY BRAIN FEELS BEAT UP… IT'S A MESS UP THERE**

This piece specifically navigates the way in which I personally feel that our method of education is harmful to the way we process and feel our emotions. Being that our current educational system is a mismatch from our ancestral methods of learning, we must think about the potential “brain fog” that can occur, as we have to think about
school… almost all of the time. This handbuilt ceramic sculpture is quite literally the way I feel that my brain looks inside of my skull. If you were to cut it open, as this piece is, there would be a web of different trains of thought, accompanied by aspects of my education. For example, the sculpted apple core woven between strings is representative of just how tired and “done” I feel in regard to the structure of our modern schooling system. This apple is all eaten up for a reason. Students are tired.

Other stereotypical items that we associate with school are woven in between the strings, occupying space where they are not needed. Anxiety that results from our learned behavior in regard to education is unnecessary, and frankly--debilitating. Under ancestral conditions we learned from our peers and family members that are mixed in age (Geher & Wedberg, 2019). This aspect of learning is important to highlight within the arts. Critiques and workshops of this sort are the most similarly structured to our ancestors paths of learning. Skillset based knowledge is extremely integral to a changing mind--and prepares us to problem solve in various ways when presented with an issue.
Our Technological Crutch

Technology and social media on the whole is a rather new aspect of our lives, which serves as a helpful tool in obtaining information and staying connected with others. Increased levels of instant communication are extremely convenient and beneficial in many circumstances, but have the potential to undermine human connection and interpersonal relationships (Sbarra, Briskin, & Slatcher, 2019). The ability to constantly be connected, comes at a detriment in terms of our evolved history. Research from various disciplines has explicated the potential that our relationship with technology has to completely dissipate and damage our interpersonal skills, and just how deindividualized our current methods of communication are with one another (McDaniel & Radesky, 2017).

Most everyone who has a technological presence in their lives, turns their relationship with it—designed to be helpful—into counterproductive and disruptive. As per research by Gergen (2002), one can be physically engaged in conversation, but due to their relationship with technology and it's addictive nature—their mind is elsewhere. Perhaps their thoughts are what notifications they are missing while indulging in a personal conversation, or what new content they could be engaging in—but they are far from their physical self. This idea is described as ‘absent presence’ and is a negative consequence that evolutionary mismatch brings forth in humans’ personal experiences. Further than this, technoference is a concept that has been increasingly more prevalent—and technology is to blame. Under ancestral conditions, we as nomadic tribes engaged in face-to-face conversations with one another all of the time, this was the way we were able to relay important information to one another—and worked to our benefit in times of need. Generally our active choice to communicate with one another to promote personal and trusting relationships is a cross-cultural human universal that should carry forward
in our modern day conditions (Geher & Wedberg, 2019). Unfortunately, the introduction of
technology at such suffocating levels makes these relationships hard to obtain. Under our present
day lens, technoference has intruded and caused conflict for large scale issues regarding romantic
and platonic relationship, and even smaller scale issues such as being able to hold a conversation
at the dinner table (McDaniel & Radesky, 2017).

An additional aspect of evolutionary mismatch in the case of social media and our
modern technology is that technology, media, and our cellphones most specifically are used as a
crutch for our everyday activities—and we are addicted, whether we'd like to admit it or not.
This mismatch aggravates one’s mental health, because humans are innately social beings that
thrive off of companionship (Geher, 2013). We are confused as to what our relationship with
technology should be. Being socially connected with others in such an immediate way can
relieve stress, sadness, and sometimes anxiety—but the lack of social connection that media and
technology bring along pose serious implications to one’s mental health (Karim et al., 2020).
Research shows that utilizing social media platforms to the extent that we do can have a
detrimental effect on users’ mental health (Karim et al., 2020). Further, the extent of this damage
is yet to be determined which explains just how careful we should try to be with our relationship
with this unknown “beast”.

There is good news though! Positive evolutionary psychology can aid in understanding
what factors and decisions we can expose ourselves to in order to lead to positive affect in both
the long and short-term. It may be difficult at first, but spending a day outside disconnected from
technology with a good friend can bring us forward leaps and bounds in the right direction in
terms of contentment and mental health (Geher & Wedberg, 2019).
Why Art Evolutionarily, Makes Sense

Concepts of mismatch can be presented through various mediums due to our overall generous view of the arts on the whole. The history of visual arts dates back over thirty-five thousand years ago--and since, has only become more intricate and universally loved (Davies, 2012). Art has the ability to tell a story without the use of language, which can be a hurdle in understanding context presented to the viewer. Storytelling through art continues to be an integral aspect of the artist’s process, which matches our ancestral conditions on the whole.


Acrylic Painting Titled: “GET AWAY FROM ME, but please don't leave my side…”

I spent a lot of time and paint on this piece. It was the largest piece I chose to take on due to how closely this subsection of evolutionary mismatch impacts me on a daily basis, more so than any of the others I chose to research and review. I am aware that my technology use is far too intense, and I spend too much time communicating through a phone than I do face-to-face. This is why I wanted to challenge myself in the realm of creating a large scale painting.

Acrylic painting is a quickly moving and time sensitive process, as the paint dries on the canvas far quicker than oil paint. Taking a step back, the painting process felt similarly to how fast media output is that we are constantly being exposed to.

The general idea that I had beginning this piece was that I wanted a figure to be melting into their cell phone. I was sure that I wanted to push this piece in that specific direction, I just was not sure how far I wanted the idea of attachment to be. After some
thought, I had realized that I was in a bit of denial regarding just how addicted I am to my phone specifically. I constantly have it either in my hand or back pocket, and find myself checking it when I have no need to. I stay up late on social media, mindlessly scrolling and searching for something I can become fixated on.

I wanted to display to the viewers of this piece just how grand this problem really is by both the scale and extremism of the concept. Not only is the figure’s hand melting into their phone, but they are blatantly distressed, but unable to remove their eyes from the phone closest to them. These current generations, and those to come are essentially “glued” to media intake and obsessed with the idea of constant communication, and quick gratification. This 4 by 5 foot canvas was created with the intention of alarming viewers.

Being uncomfortable with the unhealthy and addictive relationship we have fostered with technology is the first step in making healthier decisions in terms of mental health, and mitigation of this mismatch.
The Space Between Us

Under our ancestral conditions, we were rarely surrounded by those that were not related to us in some way. Kin based relationships serve great importance in terms of human social relationships, and additional aid in times of need (Geher, 2013). Additionally, memories are shared and trust is strengthened by kin members within the same tribe, which serves high levels of importance in one’s ultimate success. Historically, children were surrounded by not one, but many of the females that the tribe was composed of—to allow constant attention towards the new and helpless child. Humans are an altricial species and rely on others especially in times of vulnerability, and kin are always there to lend a helping hand (Geher & Wedberg, 2019). There is a plethora of research that supports the idea that “blood is thicker than water”. One is willing to support and help a family member over a friend in most instances, solely based on the idea that they share some components of genetic makeup with one another—and at the end of the day “they’re family.” This idea remains true under our modern environment and conditions we are presented with—but at a cost.

As mentioned above, social relationships are what fuel humans. Plain and simple. We thrive from creating and keeping long standing relationships, and bond through methods of care (Geher, 2013). This is seen across cultures through caretaking. Under modern conditions, extended family members, if displaced from their family members (especially if a child is involved) feel as though they are missing out on important milestones in one’s life, and further, have to sit with the fact that they do not share as much common ground with their family as they used to. Social relocation is isolating, and being absent for parts of life that promote social bonds puts one at a disadvantage—and even can have poor effects on one’s mental health and well-being. Becoming a small, and anonymous figure in a completely new location far from people you are genetically bound to would likely have not occurred under ancestral conditions.
(Goetz, Pillsworth, Buss, & Conroy-Beam, 2019). These sad instances are yet another example of how modern innovations pushes cultural evolution to move at exponentially faster rates than its biological counterparts.

The introduction of geographic mobility introduces the mismatch problem, relocatability brings upon problems for kin members. Now people are slowly moving away from their immediate and extended family members, which was far from the conditions our ancestors lived under historically (Goetz et al., 2019). In our present day family members are displaced from one another in distance. The advent of large scale public transportation, enables individuals with the ability to spread far across the country and settle—creating a home and a life for their immediate family members. With this, members of a single family are now often in locations where they are too far to give their immediate hands on help if a problem were to arise for one of their kin members. Under ancestral conditions however, kin members were almost always together—therefore this was never an issue that one had to face. Further, this aspect of evolutionary mismatch created problems with communication levels between kin. Not only are kin members likely living in different locations than their other kin members, but conflicting schedules and time zone differences have the potential to make this problem more difficult to try to resolve.

Interactive ceramic sculptural piece titled: RING RING! PICK IT UP!

This piece is an interactive work that is a nod to the sometimes difficult process that is getting in touch with a relative. The constant games of telephone tag, to only have a mediocre conversation at best with one of your relatives. Taking what we know about evolutionary mismatch and the importance of familial connection--snarky remarks
floating around the device that has the potential to connect relatives and generate conversation is presented to the viewer. This idea supports the fact that we as a human race have a difficult time communicating with one another under modern conditions.

Further, this ceramic work is interactive in the sense that you can turn the dial of the phone and even take the telephone off of it's stand to begin talking if you so desire. This was slab constructed and coil built, along with decorative sculptural aspects supported by found objects.

Concluding Thoughts and the Bottom Line

Lives of nomadic people were drastically modified after the agricultural boom. The track of our evolved biology in comparison to cultural evolutionary changes have been moving at vastly different rates since this point in time. It is extremely difficult for both our evolved psychology and physical self to combat this — and we as humans are experiencing rapid progress
in more ways than one. Humans are subconsciously attempting to survive to their best ability under new, and modern conditions with our primitive brains (Giphart & van Vught, 2018).

This said, progression under our modern conditions is not all negative. Advancements in realms such as our technological world enables us to adapt off the cuff, and grapple with ideas our ancestors were not able to fathom. The concept of evolutionary mismatch creates conversation and instances to interject within ourselves and our relationships with others in our daily lives (Geher & Wedberg, 2019). Ways in which we can aid our own progression with this universal problem begin rather small. This movement could start with taking initiative to be on your phone less, and to engage in more in-person interaction--this is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of active changes we can make as a species to “match” better to our ancestral living conditions.

A note to all who’ve taken the time to read all of what I have to say, and see all of what I created.

Thanks for making it this far! I hope that in reading my work, you have learned a thing or two about just why and how mismatch impacts us on such deep levels both mentally and physically. Also, I hope my choice of presentation and my explication of these concepts through visual means has made you think a bit. Whether that be positive thoughts, or negative—that is up for you, the viewer, to decide.
References


