Presenter: Dr. Gad Saad, Concordia University

Title: On the Method of Evolutionary Psychology and Its Applicability to Consumer Research

Abstract: There is a growing interest amongst marketing scholars to examine the evolutionary bases of a wide range of consumer phenomena. While specific evolutionary hypotheses are typically tested using tools that marketing researchers are familiar with (e.g., experiments or surveys), the method of evolutionary psychology is rooted in its unique epistemology (the manner in which knowledge is generated and organized), which is comprised of three elements: 1) the distinction between proximate and ultimate explanations; 2) the building of nomolological networks of cumulative evidence (triangulation of convergent lines of evidence); and 3) an organizing tree of knowledge. The purpose of this paper is to describe this process using marketing-relevant examples, as a means of providing a framework of best practices to marketing scholars who might wish to incorporate the evolutionary lens within their research programs.

The title and abstract (and some of the associated contents of my talk) are from my forthcoming Journal of Marketing Research paper. It can be accessed here: http://dx.doi.org/10.1509/jmr.14.0645
Bio

Dr. Gad Saad is Professor of Marketing at Concordia University (Montreal, Canada), and the holder of the Concordia University Research Chair in Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences and Darwinian Consumption. He has held Visiting Associate Professorships at Cornell University, Dartmouth College, and the University of California–Irvine. Dr. Saad received the Faculty of Commerce’s Distinguished Teaching Award in June 2000, and was listed as one of the ‘hot’ professors of Concordia University in both the 2001 and 2002 Maclean’s reports on Canadian universities. Saad was appointed Newsmaker of the Week of Concordia University in five consecutive years (2011-2015), and is the coreipient of the President’s Media Outreach Award-Research Communicator of the Year (International), which goes to the professor at Concordia University whose research receives the greatest amount of global media coverage.

Professor Saad has pioneered the use of evolutionary psychology in marketing and consumer behavior. His works include The Consuming Instinct: What Juicy Burgers, Ferraris, Pornography, and Gift Giving Reveal About Human Nature (translated into Korean and Turkish); The Evolutionary Bases of Consumption; Evolutionary Psychology in the Business Sciences, along with 75+ scientific papers, many at the intersection of evolutionary psychology and a broad range of disciplines including consumer behavior, marketing, advertising, psychology, medicine, and economics. His Psychology Today blog (Homo Consumericus) and YouTube channel (THE SAAD TRUTH) have garnered over 4.2 million and 5 million total views respectively. In addition to his scientific work, Dr. Saad often writes and speaks about topics as varied as postmodernism, radical feminism, cultural and moral relativism, political correctness, the thought police, and Islam.

He received a B.Sc. (1988) and an M.B.A. (1990) both from McGill University, and his M.S. (1993) and Ph.D. (1994) from Cornell University.

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