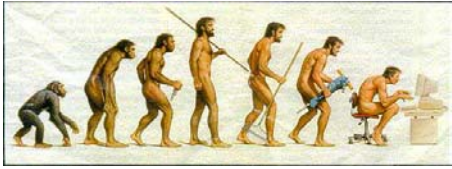


Environmental Psychology



James Neill
University of Canberra

Overview

Environment <-> Humans

"Traditionally, the field of environmental psychology has emphasized how the physical environment affects human thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. However, much recent environmental research has stressed the other side of the coin-how human actions affect the environment."
(Oskamp & Schultz, 1998, p. 206)

Overview

Environment <-> Humans

"Ecological issues of people's relationship to their environment, both natural and human-made, have assumed crucial importance to our quality of life, and even to the survival capacity of humanity." (Oskamp & Schultz, 1998)

Humans <-> Environment

Population & Environmental
Psychology

APA Division 34

<http://www.cas.ucf.edu/psychology/APA34/>

Environment -> Humans

1. Environmental Stress
2. Environmental Design
3. Natural Environment
4. Evolutionary Psychology
5. Biophilia

Environmental Stress

1. Human Spatial Behavior
2. Housing
3. Family
4. Noise
5. Environmental Risks
6. Complex relationship between the physical stressor and people's mental and emotional adjustment to it (e.g., control)

Human Spatial Behavior

Risk perception studies e.g., of

- 1.Natural disasters
- 2.Diseases
- 3.Pollution
- 4.Food contamination
- 5.Accidents
- 6.Nuclear power
- 7.Terrorism

Human Spatial Behavior

Density = # of people per space

Crowding = subjective -ve experiences
due to density

Perception of control

Lab-based studies

Personal space

Desire for privacy

Territorial behavior

Population Psychology

Bigger picture examination of the impacts
of human population and consumption
on the environment.

Also examines psychological strategies for
changing rates of population growth and
psychological impacts of population.

Population <-> Environment

Environmental Design

Assessing & planning environments
(describes & predicts human behavior due
to artificial design)

“We shape our buildings and our buildings
shape us” - Churchill

Architectural Psychology
Consumer Psychology
e.g., Shopping Mall Design
Permaculture

Natural Environment

People typically prefer a natural environment
over a built environment (Ulrich, 1986).

Favorite activities include outdoor leisure and
recreation.

People exhibit positive physical and
psychological reactions to exposure to
natural environments.

Mental imagery and sounds of natural
environments has +ve effects. (Kaplan)

Evolutionary Psychology

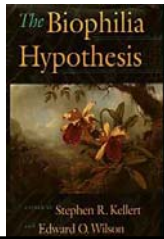
- **“Ishi was sure he knew the cause of our
discontent. It stemmed from an excessive
amount of indoor time.
'It is not a man's nature to be too much
indoors.”**



- "If today I had a young mind to direct, to start on the journey of life, and I was faced with the duty of choosing between the natural way of my forefathers and that of the... present way of civilization, I would, for its welfare, unhesitatingly set that child's feet in the path of my forefathers. I would raise him to be an Indian!" (Tom Brown)

Biophilia Hypothesis

Edward Wilson, an etymologist proposes that: humans have an instinctive affinity with life-like processes i.e., nature, due to our evolutionary history



Biophilia Hypothesis

Proposition:

Human beings have a genetic predisposition towards "life-like" or "nature" processes.

Humans evolved as creatures deeply enmeshed with the intricacies of nature, and that we still have this affinity with nature ingrained in our genotype.

Howard Frumkin

Literature review of the positive physical health effects of nature (in American Journal of Preventive Medicine)

Uses biophilia hypothesis as underlying the apparent positive benefits.

Research reveals positive, healthy effects of nature-based experiences e.g., effects of animals, nature scenes, adventure therapy, etc.

Example evidence of “nature’s” imprint on consciousness...

90% of children’s stories, cartoons, etc. feature animals as the main characters

Photos and artworks of nature and natural scenes adorn our homes, work-places, used as screen savers, etc.

Dwellings with views of nature (e.g., ocean views) are highly valued

Environmental Risks

Risk perception studies e.g., of

- 1.Natural disasters
- 2.Diseases
- 3.Pollution
- 4.Food contamination
- 5.Accidents
- 6.Nuclear power
- 7.Terrorism

Humans -> Environment

"Most psychologists still think that environmental problems are the concern of environmental scientists but environmental problems are caused primarily by human behaviors, feelings and attitudes. We can't solve these problems without psychology's help and we really need psychologists to go work on them."

- Deborah Winter

Humans -> Environment

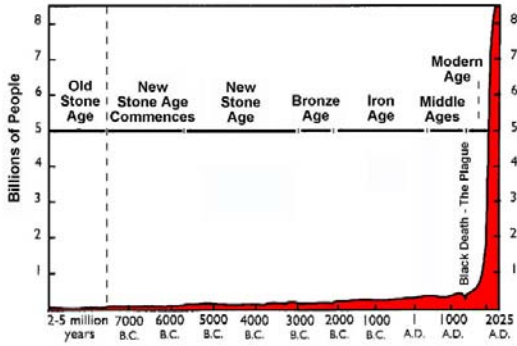
Environmental Concerns
Attitudes & Behaviors
Population <-> Consumption
Barriers
Technology
Policy
Sustainability

Environmental Concerns

Proenvironmental attitudes
Been rising significantly since the 1960s
Measures topic e.g.,

<http://www.roymorgan.com/resources/pdf/papers/20020702.pdf>

World Population Growth Through History



From "World Population: Toward the Next Century," copyright 1994 by the Population Reference Bureau

Population <-> Consumption



Attitude-Behavior

Actions often do not follow attitudes. Need awareness of serious personal consequences or strong proconservation personal norm.

Antecedent strategies not very effective unless combined with behavioral consequences e.g., reinforcement or feedback. Punishment more effective.

Attitude-Behavior

Use persuasion, social influence, remove obstacles, avoid social traps to increase desired environmental behaviors.

Lobby for effective policy change

Environmental Paradigms

Egocentric

e.g., Western worldview

Anthropocentric

e.g., Humanism

Ecocentric

e.g., Deep Ecology

Best Solution?

Slow Growth

Fast Transition to Sustainability – we can be 15 x as efficient

Only possible with assistance of public policy & psychology.

Public Policy

Remove Obstacles + Incentives
+ Punishments + Educate +
Feedback = Change Norms
(Worldview)

Dynamic > Static

Public Policy

Remove Obstacles + Incentives +
Punishments + Educate + Feedback =
Change Norms (Worldview)

Dynamic > Static

Energy Use

Pollution

Solid Waste

Environmental Justice

Natural Resource Management

Population?

Conservation Economy

Pattern Map of a Conservation
Economy

http://www.conservationeconomy.net/pattern_map/flash/index.htm

<http://www.conservationeconomy.net/images.cfm?PatternID=1>
