

Chapter 6

Evolutionary Theory & its Impact on U.S. Psychology

Why are we spending so much time talking about evolution?

- Relatively old theory (dating back to the ancient Greeks), but *Origin of the Species* was a watershed moment for science
 - Changed the way people thought about the world
 - Changed the way people thought about science
- Evolution is a lightning rod—ever since evolutionary theories were first proposed, its been highly controversial, and it remains so
 - It is important to understand the arguments for and against something that controversial so you can form your own opinions
- Understanding evolution will inform your understanding of science in general, and psychology in particular

Impact of Evolutionary Theory on Psychology in the U.S.

1. Emphasis on function as well as structure.
2. Acceptance of broader methodology and data.
3. Study of normal and abnormal adaptation.
4. Comparative psychology.
5. Individual differences.

