



Allmänna seminarier Psykologiska institutionen

The divide between human and animal cognition



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Föreläsare	Docent Johan Lind, Centrum för evolutionär kulturforskning, Stockholms universitet.
Titel	<i>The divide between human and animal cognition.</i>
Tid	Onsdag 20 september 2017, kl 14-15.
Plats	Rum 357, Frescati Hagväg 8, plan 3.
Ansvarig avdelning	Biologisk psykologi.
Presentation/ abstract	<p>Humans stand out among animals for unique capacities in domains such as language, culture, and imitation, yet it has been difficult to identify cognitive elements that are specifically human. Most research has focused on how information is processed after it is acquired, e.g., in problem solving or “insight” tasks, but we may also look for species differences in the initial acquisition and coding of information.</p> <p>In this seminar, I will present data and a new model showing that nonhuman animals are limited in terms of remembering arbitrary single events and lack a capacity for recognizing and remembering sequences of stimuli.</p> <p>Collating data from 108 experiments on stimulus sequence discriminations (from 13 bird and mammal species), we have demonstrated pervasive and systematic errors, that persist after thousands of learning trials in tasks that humans learn to near perfection within tens of trials. In conclusion, animals represent sequences of stimuli as unstructured memory traces. Because human-level cognition requires more accurate encoding of sequential information than afforded by memory traces, this suggest that improved coding of sequential information can be a key cognitive element that may set humans apart from other animals.</p>

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