
A THEORY OF PERSONAL DRIVE SATISFACTION STRATEGIES AND THE CULTURE THEY GENERATE

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Abstract

Utilizing concepts derived from the field of evolutionary psychology, two forms of collective behavior in human populations are explored. Collective behavior (or group behavior, or team behavior, or communal behavior) is examined as an outgrowth of individual Drive Satisfaction Strategies. The presumption is that the most important element(s) in an individual human being's natural environment is now the artificial social context within which one lives, and the people of whom these social contexts are composed. This implies that for a human organism to play the game of natural selection effectively, that organism will need new clusters of behaviors that allow it to obtain needed resources and avoid different types of dangers in this natural environment of new and rapidly evolving social contexts. A Drive Satisfaction Strategy (DSS) provides these clusters of behaviors. For human organisms there are two types of DSSs. There are Competitive DSSs, and there are Collaborative DSSs. There are two Competitive DSSs: Alpha Climbing (the offensive strategy) and Status Quo Preserving (the defensive strategy). There are two Collaborative DSSs: Leading (the strategic, community-forming strategy) and Contributing (the tactical, solution-forming strategy). The nature of the collective behavior is determined by the types of DSSs most commonly at play in any given population. If this collective behavior starts to exhibit habits practiced widely among the population, we call those habits the culture of the group.

Introduction

NATURAL SELECTION IS NOT, as near as can be told, a social phenomenon. However, it is clear that natural selection “conducts experiments” with various forms of collective behavior, with examples that include insect colonies and hives, fish schooling, pack hunting and other herd behavior, as well as the various forms of social structure exhibited by assorted great ape and human populations. What is it about

collective behavior that could provide an individual organism advantages as it plays out the game of natural selection? Some examples are

- The brute-force ability to do things as a group that individuals alone simply couldn't do.
- The classic "safety in numbers."
- Greater group efficiency through behavior specialization distributed across the group (as observed in ants and bees).

For animals, collective behaviors have to serve what we have called Drive Satisfaction Strategies (DSS). Most animals operate on the basis of one or, at most, two pre-wired (*i.e.*, instinctive) DSSs to succeed in the struggle of natural selection. These DSSs define a wide range of pre-programmed behavioral responses to a pre-supposed set of environmental conditions. Some instincts are open to a bit of modification, and many are not.

It appears that human beings have the option of utilizing as many as four DSSs, two of which actually supply an individual the ability to design new behavioral responses. Perhaps more significantly, because of a relative lack of instinctive behavioral presets, human beings are not locked into environment-specific approaches to life. If an individual is placed in a strange environment, he or she can usually find a means for coping with, and eventually even thriving in, the new conditions. These two DSSs in human beings that deliver behavior-design capabilities also deliver the capabilities for designing collective behavior strategies.

Drive Satisfaction Strategies

Based on our readings in primate social behavior, combined with our experience dealing with groups of business leaders and creative working teams, we found it convenient to define a concept of the Drive Satisfaction Strategy, or DSS for short. For great apes and humans, we view these strategies as a locus of mental activity that establishes individual drive priorities and the execution of behaviors to meet those priorities. For convenience, here are the three primary drives that allow an individual animal to play the game of natural selection most effectively (see Meylan 2005¹ for the derivation of these drives):

- The drive to eliminate or avoid all forms of pain or discomfort.
- The drive to have sex.
- The drive to nurture offspring to self-sufficiency in the shortest time possible.

The degree to which an animal's behavior complies with these drives (better than some other competitor in the environment) determines its chances of transmitting those relative advantages to the next generation. Social structure in human populations merely constitutes another set of environmental conditions that have to be handled successfully. These conditions can be handled in terms of winning the game of natural selection, or conversely, in terms of personal human gratification (especially in those cases when an individual has opted out of the game of natural selection, such as those who practice birth control, or as in the gay populations).

Culture

There have been many definitions of culture offered, each of which certainly meets the needs of various students and investigators. Since our ultimate aim with these studies is the formation of training applications to improve leadership and the productivity of organizations, we have defined culture in a specific way that lends itself to objective investigation. We have also insisted that the definition pertains to observable human behavior, because regardless of the motivations of people to act, all we have sure access to is the record of their actual behaviors. With these requirements in mind, we define culture for any given group in the following way:

Culture is the complete collection of behavioral habits exhibited by a group of human beings.

How the group is defined is dependent on the aspects of group behavior one wishes to study. We usually study the culture of businesses, since we're interested in the behaviors that produce a business's value (or habitually detract from it, as the case may be). A lot of social science is done on groups defined by their ethnic characteristics. Problems in culture studies arise when a person wishing to understand one group over-generalizes categories of behavior from some other group...usually "their own."

For a variety of reasons, these over-generalizations are difficult to avoid. One reason is that we actually seek to generalize from particular cases to larger classes of phenomena. That's a primary aim of science. Over-generalization means we've insisted on mapping our findings to cases that simply don't fit them. We will try not to do this anyway.

Positions "At the Top"

Studies in groups and cultures often, if not always, attempt to determine how the hierarchy in a group forms. Specific attention is given to leadership roles. A common flaw in studies such as these is the assumption that the person at the top of the hierarchy is "the leader." In watching business people at close range for some decades, observations suggest that few groups have leaders in top positions. What appears to be the case most often is that the person "at the top" is merely the top competitor in the group. Leadership may be of secondary interest to the person at the top, but the chances of that being the case are slim; being top competitor may be the only interest of that person.

We have defined two DSSs that motivate people into positions at the top. One is called *Alpha Climbing*. This occurs when an individual is attempting to acquire a place in the social structure that delivers the resources he or she wants for the level of effort they're willing to exert. If they exert enough effort they can get the top spot. The second DSS driving people to the top is called *Leading*. This occurs when an individual is able to coordinate group behavior in a way that delivers greater resource payoff than working alone could for similar levels of effort.

The prevalence of people operating under either of these strategies affects the type of culture that forms in a given group. Groups dominated by Alpha Climbers will succeed or fail based primarily on the strengths and weaknesses of the climbers. Groups dominated by Leaders will succeed or fail based on the ability of the leaders to coordinate the strengths and weaknesses of group members to accomplish "bigger things."

Wrapping up the Introduction

The thoughts and behaviors of human beings are generated by a set of habits we are calling a Drive Satisfaction Strategy. All animals have them; most animals' DSSs are more heavily pre-coded than those of a human being. Human DSSs tend to optimize the combination of habitual

behavior (to save time in survival emergencies) and new learning (to adapt quickly to unfamiliar environmental circumstances).

When a group of human beings gets together, their DSSs often cause them to compete and conflict with each other. There are notable exceptions to this general rule, however. Sometimes individuals recognize important skills in each other that make certain tasks easier to accomplish, or perhaps even make things impossible for individuals to do possible as a group.

Methodology

There is a certain compulsion to be defensive when you strike out on your own in a given field of study, as we are doing here. With little to build on from other investigators, we are limited to extensive years of experience as data, and a relatively new paradigm for understanding human thought and behavior as an interpretive tool. However, training seminars we have designed based upon this approach are proving effective for most of the knowledge-based industries where they have been presented.

In a previous paper we spent some time justifying the validity of this work, and those who wish to see the fuller treatment may read it in Meylan 2007². The main points are distilled below.

- Evolutionary psychology (ev psych) literature has jumped from building its own discipline to attempting answers for other disciplines before it's ready to generalize at that level.
- Previous attempts to integrate ev psych and industrial psych do not exist.
- We are doing “rough science” from field observations.
- We assert evolution/natural selection as primarily a macro-scopic phenomenon (as opposed to a genetically-driven micro-scopic phenomenon).
- Observations on human work behaviors have been collected by three people, over 100 years combined observations, including over 50 years in management/leadership roles in a variety of industries.

- Long term observations have been combined with simple ev psych principles to reverse engineer human thought and behavior to obtain a system level model.
- More detailed analysis of external and internal sensing systems in the human body and their effects on workplace emotional states has been conducted using interpretive tools based in ev psych.

In this presentation we are extending previous work to understand how the Drive Satisfaction Strategies of individuals produce interactions among people to generate the habits of collective, group behavior. In most animal existence individuals of any given species have to compete against the environment, against other animals in the niche, and even against other members of their own species. In a few cases, noted above, competition instinctively gives way to various forms of collaborative behavior. Humans, on the other hand, appear to make specific choices about competing or collaborating, depending on specific factors such as payoff for level of effort or previous success in working with known members of earlier teams.

Drive Satisfaction Strategies in Detail

Unlike most animal species, environmental effects on human beings are dominated by the presence of others of their own kind. Human drive satisfaction almost always takes place in the context of an association of people, or (more likely among North American knowledge workers) networks of associations of people. Groups of people are the most important features, and significant natural elements, in human environments.

This suggests that much human thought and behavior is going to be expended on the manipulation and management of other human beings in the environment. As the human race moves from individual struggles with the environment to labor specialization leading to the trade of goods and services, individuals' efforts in drawing resources directly from Nature decrease while efforts in drawing resources from other human beings increase. Individual skills in hunting or gathering are supplemented (or eventually replaced) by interpersonal skills that allow people with a surplus of "whatever" to acquire what they lack from another person with a different surplus.

At a point in natural history when virtually all resources have to be acquired from an individual or organization, human DSSs become a collection of skills and habits specifically suited to social interactions, with abilities to draw drive satisfaction from unaltered natural resources greatly atrophied or entirely lost. And even for those who still can farm, or hunt, or make tools by hand, they have to have a community with which they can trade to obtain their other needs. So the preponderance of drive satisfaction skills must be interpersonal and social for human beings to operate at their peak.

*Drive Satisfaction Strategies, and the Mental Subsystems
that Support Them*

In a previous paper (Meylan 2005¹), we applied evolutionary psychology and the information science technique of reverse engineering to parse out the way human information processing might actually work, from a systems engineering point of view. Of the four subsystems that exercise identified, two of them strongly influence the nature of DSSs in the social contexts we've outlined above. The older of these (from a natural history point of view) is what we called the system of environment condition assessments, which we experience most often as our emotions. The more recent of the two we called the problem-solving system with its extensive input/output subsystems. Each of these two information processing systems in human beings supports a separate class of DSSs. The system of environment condition assessments supports Competitive DSSs, while the problem-solving system can support Collaborative DSSs.

There is frequently confusion about the relative moral distinctions between competition and collaboration. It is often said that people who compete are usually nasty, while people who collaborate are usually nicer. This distinction must be discarded. While it may be true from a certain point of view, the fact is that a DSS is always a self-serving approach to daily existence. Everyone wants to avoid or eliminate all forms of pain or discomfort in their lives. Everyone at times competes to accomplish this; at other times people will collaborate. The context (including personal history) guides the choice.

In these two classes of DSSs we have identified two DSSs per class. In each class there is a DSS which can move people toward positions "at the top," and a DSS in each class that allows a person to

maintain a stable and suitable location lower in the social structure. That's a total of only four DSSs we've uncovered for functioning in environments where social interaction is required for survival. The Figure below provides a schematic relationship among these four DSSs with scales that may be useful in quantifying their significance for a given individual in a given place and time.

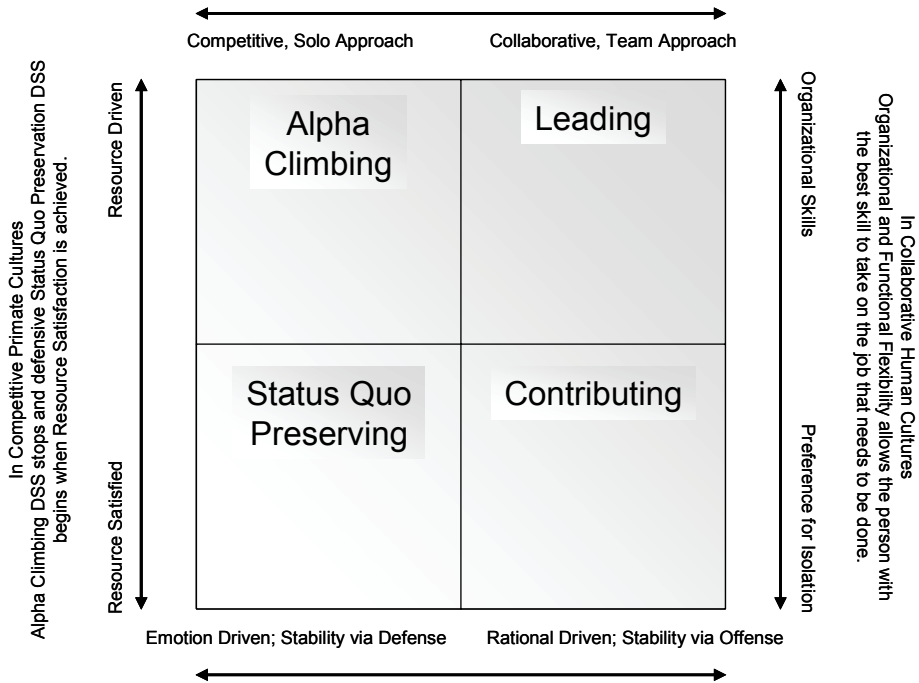
Competitive Drive Satisfaction Strategies

The DSSs on the left half of the Figure are the Competitive DSSs, Alpha Climbing and Status Quo Preserving. As noted above, these are supported largely by the system that produces our experience of emotions. This system is the current "end-product" of a very old mammalian approach to drive satisfaction. It presumes under most circumstances that there will be no assistance from any part of the environment to achieve drive satisfaction. This presumption therefore provides the basis for competitive DSSs in humans as well.

In the competitive mode an individual swings between Alpha Climbing and Status Quo Preserving depending on opportunity, need, and level of effort to acquire a drive-satisfying resource or otherwise eliminate a discomfort. All humans start out as climbers in a human society, and then switch to preserving their position when they've attained a place where opportunity, need, and effort are balanced against the level of drive satisfaction they have achieved. Even the person who succeeds at climbing all the way "to the top" switches to the defensive, Status Quo Preserving DSS to retain that top spot as long as possible.

Based as they are on ancient, mammalian wiring, competitive DSSs will manifest emotional barriers to behaviors of the following kind:

- Leading (in the human, social sense)
- Following (also in the human, social sense)
- Delegating important tasks
- Following up on delegated tasks
- Seeking drive satisfaction solutions requiring help or assistance
- Trusting



People's DSSs continuously shift on the basis of opportunity, threat, and need.
All people work toward stability in their living and working conditions.

In other words, most of the behaviors that make a civilized society work are emotionally unnatural for human beings to execute. They create various forms of emotional stress for individuals who attempt them. We have observed this frequently in work places, where people “in charge” often take “the lazy” or “the safe” path relative to employee interactions, and where employees say they’ll undertake something but don’t follow through. In a social setting populated by people executing competitive DSSs, everyone remains a “lone wolf” from a social and functional point of view.

The strength of these emotional barriers against collectively constructive behavior cannot be overstated. It is a basic part of human physiology designed for success in a non-social or pre-social species. The only thing that overcomes these natural emotional barriers is repeated collaborative drive satisfaction *success* with other individuals. However, once collaboration is over, or worse, when a former drive satisfaction collaborator disappoints, the pre-wired emotional barriers go back up.

Collaborative Drive Satisfaction Strategies

On the right half of the Figure are the collaborative DSSs, Leading and Contributing. Leading and Contributing are only needed when tactics requiring multiple human participants produce *superior* drive satisfaction than working alone will. If the level of effort to participate in group drive satisfaction is higher than the perceived value of the potential payoff, people will be “disinclined” to participate.

The preceding paragraph implies two things: first, that human beings are capable of deriving drive satisfaction tactics and solutions apart from pre-wired motivations to act certain ways under certain conditions and second, that individuals can evaluate the relative merits of one course of action over another. These two implications are huge departures from standard animal approaches to drive satisfaction. *Collaborative DSSs are solution oriented, not instinct based.*

This implies, further, that individuals can approach drive satisfaction either with a solution orientation, or with an emotion-laden instinctive approach, *whether or not a group is involved*. In other words, one can observe people who approach life as a series of solutions to be worked out, and other people who approach life as an interpersonal struggle to acquire and maintain status (not necessarily always high status as much as a reliable status for acquiring life’s necessities). This has tremendous implications for hiring, for example. Further, as the Figure suggests, the mix of DSSs that any given individual uses at any given time is likely to change as opportunity, threat, and need change. For example, a hard-charging, “take-no-prisoners” Alpha Climber might also be quite good and building effective, short-term teams to suit specific purposes to gain tactical advantages over other climbers.

People working in the collaborative mode are attempting to build effective, and usually superior, solutions out of sub-standard conditions. Or if the conditions are actually good, it still requires the effective coordination of a team to take advantage of them. In more primitive situations, people can watch the team to see if they are effective or not. It behooves individuals to find a way to associate with an effective team if it increases their individual abilities to satisfy drives. Conversely, if a group can’t produce, there’s no need to bother with it.

“Everybody loves a winner.”

The Competitive Strategy of Alpha Climbing

Let's now consider each specific DSS in turn.

Some species form colonies, packs, or troops that facilitate Drive Satisfaction Strategies for the individuals that belong to them. In some of these species there is a place of privilege in these groups where an individual with qualifying characteristics either gets special treatment from other members of the group, special access to resources, or both. The terms “queen bee” and “alpha male” have come to signify this place of privilege. Association with individuals in top positions also confers special treatments. Primate studies, for instance, make it clear that females also can obtain a place of privilege in the group when they are associated with the alpha male.

The set of behaviors that brings an individual to alpha status is termed the Alpha Climbing Drive Satisfaction Strategy. The whole point of the climb is to improve treatment by the group or obtain better access to resources.

When it comes to achieving true Alpha status in a primate group there are usually a number of individuals competing to take it. This is the most commonly “discussed” meaning of Alpha Climbing. However, the fact of the matter is that *everyone attempts the climbing competition*. Most participants, though, find the competition too demanding, and they settle for a lesser position in the group. The important thing about this is that this lesser preferred position still satisfies the “quitter's” drives. They climbed to the point where the drive satisfaction payoff was adequate for the level of effort involved to acquire needed resources.

People utilizing the Alpha Climbing DSS often exhibit characteristics such as the following:

- Climb to acquire more resources
- Consider most people as opponents
- View rules as something to control for advantage
- Mistrust communication among parties
- Keep agreements when convenient

The Competitive Strategy of Status Quo Preserving

If you're not playing offence to earn Alpha status or climb to some acceptable level, then you're playing defense. *Defense is an important*

competitive strategy. Even individuals who have topped out at the Alpha position have to play defense to retain the title.

Every individual in a primate group who stops climbing starts to defend the position of status and access to resources that they have attained. This is the Status Quo Preserving Drive Satisfaction Strategy. Under most conditions this strategy is implemented not only with preserving access to status and resources in mind, but also to reduce the level of effort needed to keep an effective defense against threats or challenges. It is usually a “least level of effort” approach to drive satisfaction maintenance.

People utilizing the Status Quo Preserving DSS often exhibit characteristics such as the following:

- Desire to preserve availability of resources
- Consider most people as potential threats
- View rules as preserving the good
- Avoid communication where possible
- Avoid agreements where possible

The Collaborative Strategy of Leading

As an individual transitions from emotion-based competitive strategies, it becomes increasingly important to operate on the basis of solutions to problems. In human beings this is implemented as a symbol-driven method for modeling local conditions along with the threats and opportunities those conditions can generate. Further, this modeling capability is not limited to assessments and plans for handling natural conditions. It is also useful for modeling social conditions, and how they can be used constructively to formulate solutions for improving the yield of drive satisfaction activities.

There are times when a person can formulate a drive satisfaction solution by using a team that delivers a payoff that would be greater than if they all expended the same level of effort as separate individuals. In fact, some of these solutions might not even be possible to execute without a team. People who implement drives satisfaction solutions of this kind are utilizing the Leading Drive Satisfaction Strategy. Leaders define the opportunity or threat, draft a plan of action, organize personnel and materiel, and set out to deliver the drive satisfaction solution with the team fully engaged to work.

Leaders are able to formulate solutions through symbol-driven, rational processes that will be very effective yet emotionally uncomfortable to implement. Why is this? This is because collaborative solutions require levels of trust that are not part of the emotional programming of animals, including human beings. Therefore, Leaders not only have to (more or less rationally) identify the issue and compose a solution, but they also have to overcome millions of years of naturally-selected emotional baggage to form a team that will stick together long enough to give Leaders and their proposed solutions a real try. This means that there are times when Leaders have to be able to formulate effective *emotional* appeals to a population, and sell or motivate some members on the merits of a given plan of action in order to form the team or group.

People utilizing the Leading DSS often exhibit characteristics such as the following:

- View resources as “leveragable”
- Consider people as partners in a mutual venture
- View rules as something to be discovered for each context
- Encourage wide networks of communication
- Renegotiate agreements as needed.

The Collaborative Strategy of Contributing

When people believe that they can leverage their efforts and the energy they expend on drive satisfaction by collaborating with a group, they are likely to utilize the Contributing Drive Satisfaction Strategy. They recognize that their drive satisfaction payoff will go up while operating with the group when compared to their operating alone.

What distinguishes this DSS from Status Quo Preserving? Primarily, Contributors are looking for places to leverage their skills in a group context. Instead of taking a defensive posture relative to their access to resources, Contributors know they have skills that can be combined with others to produce that higher drive satisfaction payoff. They perhaps can't, or don't wish to, Lead, but they have a clear sense about the benefits of joining the right group, or following the right Leader.

People utilizing the Contributing DSS often exhibit characteristics such as the following:

- View resources as a shared commodity
- Consider people as potential team mates
- View rules as helpful guides
- Feel free to communicate as situations warrant
- Trust people to keep agreements in the same manner that they will.

One Human Being Using Any of Four DSSs as Needed

While we have defined four clearly distinguishable DSSs falling under the two categories of “Competitive” and “Collaborative,” we have also shown that people switch DSSs based on their local conditions. We have also implied that individuals can combine them, such as when a top-level Alpha Climber builds teams to facilitate a specific part of his or her climb. The point is that we are not likely to find “true types” where people only make use of one DSS at a time, or only one for their entire lifetime. We can say, however, that at any given point in time we ought to be able to identify the DSS that dominates any given individual’s behavior under a given set of circumstances. It is usually on that basis that we interact with people. It is also on that basis that we build managerial strategies when leading groups of people.

Competitive Cultures vs. Collaborative Cultures

Let’s begin by reiterating our definition of culture:

Culture is the complete collection of behavioral habits exhibited by a group of human beings.

The fraction of people within a group who share a given habit determine that behavior’s strength as an element of the group’s culture. Consider a group comprised of 100 members. A behavior unique to one group member, or perhaps shared by one or two others, might not be thought of as an element of the group’s culture. Conversely, a habit shared by 90 or more members of the group could be thought of as an important cultural element, regardless of how trivial the behavior might seem on the surface.

Competitive Cultures

While there are many who believe themselves to be “above” competing with their fellow human being, common observation makes it clear that everyone does. The competitive behaviors might be guided by

polite custom. They might be slow and undramatic. They might be rude and churlish, as in the way high school women create their pecking orders. The point is that human animals are emotionally geared for competition just like all the rest of the large mammals on the planet. At this point the human race does NOT constitute a special case.

What might make the human case special, but not unique, is that the competitive environment INCLUDES competition with members of one's own species, and not just competition against the environment in general, or against competing species in the same niche. It is this backdrop of "in-group" competition that structures the foundations of all human cultures.

Why is this so? This is because the members of the group themselves ARE, or STRONGLY REPRESENT, the resources required for drive satisfaction. If I make great stone tools, and you need them to be the most successful hunter in the village, we'll cut deals that will feed us and our families more often than those who don't have such skills to apply to their DSSs. Too bad about the other village members who can't "play at our level."

On the other hand...what just happened in that last paragraph?

Collaborative Cultures

I might like to make stone tools. I hate hunting, but I'm good enough to do it if I have to. On the other hand, you might like the thrill of the hunt, and just plain HATE sitting around and taking little chips out of stones to make them extremely sharp. But if we can figure out how to do it, we both could eat better if we each simply do what we like to do best. So we collaborate; I supply hunting tools in exchange for fresh meat. You can kill more animals more quickly than others, so you have a surplus to trade with others in the village. The collaboration is a much more efficient use of both of our drives satisfaction efforts.

On the other hand, it's still a dog-eat-dog world out there. Maybe other hunters want to use my products, so I cut collaborative deals with them. That also gives me higher status as a climber in the village, a competitive DSS. If that undercuts your monopoly on fresh meat, you get mad and kill me, exercising the status quo preserving DSS. Now we all lose because fierce greed, as displayed by the climb of the tool maker, or

as displayed by the emotional fear of losing the top spot by the hunter, destroyed the superior, rational solution created by working together.

Pockets of collaborative culture spring up for similar reasons today and often shatter just as quickly because of the same emotional responses that engender competition. People in successful pockets of collaboration forget the rational, solution-oriented basis that gave them drive satisfaction advantages, or in our modern times, business advantages.

These short scenarios illustrate some crucial things about collaborative cultures:

1. People creating a collaborative culture come together because the solutions they can implement as a group for drive satisfaction are superior to acting alone, or to competing with one another.
2. Whether consciously thought out or not, collaborative cultures are rooted in rational, solution-building processes that produce superior drive satisfaction results.
3. However, these cultures also often create social conditions that are frequently at odds with our basic emotional makeup, inherited from our large mammal ancestors.
4. If the success of the group generates strong emotions leading to climbing or status quo preserving, the collaborative culture will break down and the group members will revert back to wide spread utilization of competitive DSSs.
5. This suggests that collaborative groups with the best insight into human nature, and foresight to prevent the effects of emotion-driven competition from destroying a successful group, will establish rules for defining behavioral boundaries in order to preserve the drive satisfaction advantages produced by the group.

Now, let's continue our little pre-historic story a little longer. When the village across the valley heard that these people had killed their main weapons maker, they came storming down the valley, killed all the males at our first village, and took all the females as sex slaves (can't say breeding stock: they probably didn't know what sex REALLY does at that point in time). This represents a serious loss in drive satisfaction capabilities for our first village, doesn't it? Especially, oddly enough, in the areas of competitive advantage. This suggests a sixth point, namely

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6. In group-to-group competitive contexts, the group with the most solution-oriented, innovative, and “self-sustaining” (in terms of cohesion, resilience, and dedication to culture preservation) collaborative culture is more likely to win.

It is through this type of argument that we ascribe evolutionary advantages, as defined in the classic theory of natural selection, to collaborative cultures. Let’s look at a few properties observable in human culture that are possible outcomes of Points 5 and 6.

Enforced Social “Semi-collaboration”

To begin with, despite the long-term tradition to the contrary, we need to avoid the view that for the most part we live in artificial environments. By analogy, if we think of wave action as a natural force re-arranging the material along beaches, or if we think of ground water as a natural force re-arranging material underground to form caves, we can think of the actions of human beings as a natural force that also re-arranges materials. In so doing, environments can be created that make drives satisfaction activities more efficient.

But what happens if these environments become more dangerous than undeveloped regions of land? What happens when the natural force of human action becomes great enough to threaten drive satisfaction activities? What happens if collections of human beings prey on each other with greater efficiency than they could if they lived in smaller, less successful groups (such as other great apes do)? If communal living is dominated by competition, then the group is merely a stockpile of resources for the top competitors. On the other hand, if communal living is dominated by collaboration, the force of humanity on nature can become great enough to modify it in bigger and better ways for human drive satisfaction activities.

Yet we know that climbing is a pervasive and often dangerous activity. We know that we have to defend our accrued resources against criminal invasion and theft. Just because we all can intellectual affirm, “Yes, collaboration is the way human communities should operate,” we know that the pre-wired emotions we retain from our evolutionary past cause large numbers of people to act in self-interested ways that are a detriment to society as a whole, to members of their own group, and

therefore, ultimately, a detriment to the achievement of even greater personal goals.

This emotion-based, blind self-interest is what reduces the efficiency of communal living, sometimes to the point where leaving a group that is dysfunctional for drive satisfaction is the only course left for individuals to take. What can a group do to prevent people from seeking communities that serve their drive satisfaction needs more effectively?

While there is a whole spectrum of possibilities, let's define just two broad classes of things that groups have done. At the lowest level, they've established rules to prevent infringements on people's freedom to act out their DSSs, and to preserve the resources they've acquired through those activities. Early ancient legal codes prescribe various forms of "personal non-interference" ranging from the acquisition of mates to leaving other people's property (including mates) alone, to public health practices.

These are minimal efforts at "enforced semi-collaboration." They are in place merely to keep large numbers of human competitors from preying on each other, especially in environments where other groups are part of the regional competitive landscape. Social behaviors that weaken your group's ability to respond to challenges from other groups in your region reduce the drive satisfaction capabilities of your group. Groups have defined criminal law, civil law, religious law, moral codes, and other mechanisms to keep human beings from preying on each other within groups and increasingly dense urban populations. The large body of contract law that has evolved over centuries also serves to enforce collaboration in the face of parties who may frequently find reasons to break agreements when advantages to do so become apparent.

Social-level "Intentional Collaboration"

The second broad class of approaches in large scale collaboration has fewer examples of note, but this is perhaps understood by the nature of collaborative strategies: they are situational. Whereas enforced collaboration in the sense defined above is a continuous need for social cohesion, "intentional collaboration" requires in the least a vision of the upside potential of working together to achieve greater "per unit output" from drive satisfaction activities. At this point we begin to see the appearance of various requisite leadership skills.

As it happens, most groups that form to improve the efficiency of their drive satisfaction activities also include safeguards against counterproductive competitive behavior on the part of group members. The skilled trade unions of medieval Europe, as well as the agreements of the Hanseatic League of northern Europe provide some examples.

The US Declaration of Independence and US Constitution are explicitly “intentionally collaborative” in the sense that they ground the intentions of the nation as supporting “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” and providing a legal framework for developing a complete continent. While they also establish the means to keep civil peace, they take a much more positive stance on the opportunities available to common citizens living within the jurisdiction of the US.

There are groups as well, which are almost completely supportive of the drive satisfaction activities of their members. In modern business, the Fortune 100 Best Places to Work exhibits companies who take the personal drive satisfaction activities of their employees very seriously by facilitating their personal DSSs in a variety of ways appropriate for modern worker lifestyles. Best Places to Work reap a much greater return on investment (ROI) for their labor dollars by engendering a drive-based level of trust between company and employee.

Conclusions

Evolutionary psychology can be utilized to link the requirements of individual success in the game of natural selection to various forms of collective behavior exhibited by some species. We have focused, for practical reasons, on the collective behaviors of human beings.

The behaviors of individual human beings must deliver certain levels of success in terms of reproductive success. Crudely speaking, this means living long enough to have lots of kids, mating often enough to create lots of kids, and training as many kids as possible to be successful adults in as short of a time as possible. We have identified four Drive Satisfaction Strategies, split between the Competitive and Collaborative classes of DSSs, which allow individuals to build successful sets of behaviors relative to the principles of natural selection.

These two classes of DSSs function in the formation of two distinct types of human cultures, those being, obviously, Competitive Cultures, and Collaborative Cultures. The default human culture is

Competitive. This is because human thought and behavior is dominated by old mammalian emotional wiring. However, people who approach their drive satisfaction activities with a predominantly “solution-based” orientation will often need the cooperation of neighbors to execute a high-payoff solution. In these cases collaboration becomes an important part of the collective behavior set. If the group persists in this communal-based solution mode, they will likely form a Collaborative Culture. Collaborative Cultures, however, were demonstrated to be fragile. The group needs to have or retain some form of purpose to justify the collaboration or the group will fall apart. Also, very successful Collaborative Cultures can fall victim to their own successes, where the abundance created by collaborative activities generates new levels of greed. This creates a new cycle of competition to grab up the excess. Emotions flare, and collaboration dies. The pervasive, emotion-driven Competitive Culture re-emerges from the social backdrop to re-assert itself as the default human culture.

Lastly, we examined the possibility of setting up systems of rules or bodies of law that could either protect people in a group or society from each other, or that could actually promote a wider range of drive satisfaction options for its members. In the first case, protecting each other from various forms of personal aggression, the aim is to keep inherently competitive, and often violent, behavior from taking too large a toll on a society. This prevents social order from collapsing, and allows people some measure of security for themselves and for the goods they might accrue. In the second case, law can be a means of promoting and supporting wider possibilities for collaboration, going beyond mere security against internal strife and creating expansive environments of economic opportunity.

Notes

¹ Thomas Meylan, “Using Evolutionary Psychology and Information Systems Engineering to Understand Workplace Patterns of Thought and Behavior: An Empirical Model of Human Information Processing,” Autumn, 2005, *Quarterly Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*.

² Thomas Meylan, “Environmental Impacts on Human Moods and Emotions: Implications for Workplace and Workflow Design,” Winter, 2007, *Quarterly Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences*.