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Subject: Master Class 2011 - some ideas

Date: Tue, 19 Apr 2011 21:28:40 +0000

Attachments: Ramacahndran_SundayTimes.pdf; Ramachandran-NewYorker.pdf; Nowak_Nature.pdf; Brockman_London_Catalog_2011.pdf

For this year's master class I am thinking about inviting one of three very interesting researchers who have important books coming out right now or in the fall: V.S. Ramachandran, Martin Nowak, Steven Pinker. I am thinking of running one event in Napa and another in Washington, CT, next to my Farm. Please keep this confidential because I have not mentioned it to any of the above yet.

In terms of dates, I am free all summer except for the SciFoo weekend at Google Aug 12-14.

Feedback, please??

JB

V.S. RAMACHANDRAN

http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/bios/ramachandran.html

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vilayanur_S._Ramachandran

V.S. Ramachandran was just profiled a week ago as the cover story in the London Sunday Times Magazine as "the world's leading neuroscientist". In May, 2009 he received the same major treatment in NEW YORKER profile. See pdfs.

His new book The Tell-Tale Brain: A Neuroscientist's Quest for What Makes Us Human has just been published. <http://www.amazon.com/Tell-Tale-Brain-Neuroscientists-Quest-Makes/dp/0393077829>

He's a great lecturer and a world-class scientist. In 1993 he gave the BBC Radio Reith Lecture: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/reith2003/>

here's his TED talk 2007: http://www.ted.com/talks/vilayanur_ramachandran_on_your_mind.html

MARTIN NOWAK

http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/bios/nowak.html
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Nowak

Martin Nowak's book **THE SUPER-COOPERATORS** just came out to glowing reviews.

http://www.amazon.com/SuperCooperators-Altruism-Evolution-Other-Succeed/dp/1439100187/ref=tmm_hrd_title_0

Nowak, director of the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics at Harvard, is a biological mathematician who works on the origins of advanced social behavior. Jeffrey Epstein put up \$30 million for Harvard to build a center around him.

NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

"How Evolution Explains Altruism"

By OREN HARMAN

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/10/books/review/book-review-supercooperators-by-martin-a-nowak.html>

NATURE

At the same time Nowak is involved in a major controversy over a paper he published in **NATURE** with mathematician Corina Tarnita and biologist E.O. Wilson. In it, they attack the ideas of William Hamilton on kin selection theory, a cornerstone of mainstream thinking. Five papers appeared in **NATURE** attacking the paper and one was signed by a who's who of 137 scientists. Leading the attack is Richard Dawkins and many other leading names in the field.

http://www.boston.com/news/science/articles/2011/04/17/where_does_good_come_from/?page=full

Here's what Jeffrey Epstein has to say about Nowak: <http://www.jeffreyepsteinscience.com/2010/11/about-martin-a-nowak/>

STEVEN PINKER

http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/bios/pinker.html

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Pinker

Pinker's new book **THE BETTER ANGELS OF OUR NATURE: WHY VIOLENCE HAS DECLINED** will be published in November. It's a mammoth tome, about 380,000 words and it makes an argument that will be talked about for years.

THE BETTER ANGELS OF OUR NATURE: WHY VIOLENCE HAS DECLINED documents the stunning fact that violence has gone down, by dramatic degrees, and in many dimensions. It has taken place all over the world (though highly unevenly); over several time scales (millennia, centuries, decades, and years), though with many spikes and zigzags; and in many spheres of behavior: genocide, war, human sacrifice, torture, slavery, and the treatment of racial minorities, women, children, and animals.

Pinker is the current rock-star among scientists and needs no introduction. His book, as well as those of Ramachandran and Nowak are presented in the current Brockman, Inc London Book Fair Catalog which is attached as a pdf.

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