

# Bulletin 11 – 24 August 2003

## NOTICES:

After last week's bulletin 9A (ahem) we are now back on track with the numbering. Chris Knight has suggested the following article for those interested in the linguistic aspects of human evolution. It shows that mirror neurons are not a cure for all ills.

<http://www.ling.ed.ac.uk/~jim/mirrormit.html>

Jim Hurford's site has been added to the references page.

## ARTICLES:

*If you need copies let me know.*

### Nature 21 August 2003

*News and views:*

- Jared Diamond: Propaganda of the Pyramids – it is not states at the height of their power who indulge in macroarchitecture, it is up-and-coming states who need to impress
- Michael Richardson & Paul Brakefield: Hotspots for evolution – the evolution of physical characteristics might be powered by variation in just a few genes

*Letters:*

- Daniel Abrams & Steven Strogatz: Modelling the dynamics of language death
- Michael Sorenson, Kristina Sefc & Robert Payne: Speciation by host switch in brood parasitic indigobirds – a change of hosts causes a sympatric speciation event
- Nicholas Gompel & Sean Carroll: Genetic mechanisms and constraints governing the evolution of correlated traits in drosophilid flies – see Richardson & Brakefield above
- Elio Sucena et al: Regulatory evolution of shavenbaby/ovo underlies multiple cases of morphological parallelism – see Richardson & Brakefield above

### New Scientist 23 August 2003

*Frontiers:*

- Anil Ananthaswamy: Evolution returns to the same old genes again and again – see Gompel & Carroll above

*In Brief:*

- Studies of lice show that we started wearing clothes as long as 72,000 years ago, the spread of the body louse matches the spread of humans.
- Older brains may find it difficult to adapt and learn because the links between neurons become more stable with age. [Chomsky will find some way to link this to the LAD, but I think it points in precisely the opposite direction]

*Articles:*

- Emily Sohn: The fossil files – more on the paleobiology database – link is on the references page