

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

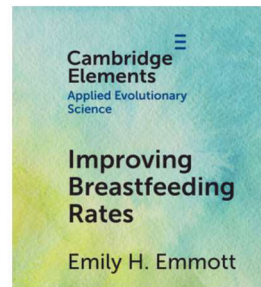
Cambridge Element Series

Half a century ago the biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky wrote that, “Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution.” Since Dobzhansky’s time, evolutionary thinking has made its way into the human sciences to the extent that many social and behavioral scientists today might say that “nothing in psychology, anthropology, sociology, child development, education, public policy, culture, medicine, and mental health makes sense except in the light of evolution.”

Consequently, evolutionary thinking now has a solid foothold in nearly all of the social and behavioral sciences, and not only does an evolutionary approach benefit scholars trying to understand all levels of human functioning, but it also can be applied to important real-world social issues. An important contribution that an evolutionary perspective can offer is the analysis and solution of practical and societal problems. An evolutionary perspective provides better guidance to the design and functioning of institutions because it has a more realistic micro-foundation – assumptions about how humans function – than other approaches to institutional design.

Cambridge University Press awarded EI a five-year contract to provide five Elements each year for its Cambridge Elements in Applied Evolutionary Science series. At 20,000-30,000 words (40 to 75 pages), Elements are significantly longer than journal articles but shorter than a typical book.

This hybrid format is in part a response to the frustration of authors in the social sciences with journal-article requirements that do not allow space to adequately contextualize and present research. By allowing greater freedom in word and page counts, the series enables authors to publish their work at its natural length.



Three publications are slated for 2024, and these five appeared in 2023:

“Improving Breastfeeding Rates: Evolutionary Anthropological Insights for Public Health,” by Emily H. Emmott; “The Hidden Talents Framework,” by Bruce J. Ellis, Laura S. Abrams, Ann S. Masten, Robert J. Sternberg, Nim Tottenham, and Willem E. Frankenhuis; “An Introduction to Positive Evolutionary Psychology,” by Glenn Geher, Megan Fritche, Avrey Goodwine, Julia Lombard, Kaitlyn Longo, and Darcy Montana; “Superorganism: Toward a New Social Contract for Our Endangered Species,” by Peter A. Corning; “Attachment; and Parent-Offspring Conflict,” by Sybil L. Hart.

The aim of Cambridge Elements in Applied Evolutionary Science is to become a leading reference publication in the field. Research and reviews are presented in ways that are engaging for a range of readers – from interested laypeople to students and research academics.