

ANOTHER UNIQUE SPECIES?

A BBC article on the new species of homo UK | Magazine | Eton or the zoo? raises some excellent questions.

How would the new species be treated? If it is such a close relative, would we give these people the vote?

The discovery of homo floresiensis reiterates what anthropologists have been saying for a long while – that we are not unique as humans.

All living creatures may have a soul, but to what extent are we different? What is the character of humanity?

We are certainly a biological species. So is it that humans are conscious of their world? Many animals are clearly conscious and communicate their awareness. Maybe we have a higher order of self-awareness above this primary consciousness? Or maybe we are intentional beings. Again, many animals display what can be interpreted as intentional behavior.

How about this as a way to think of these questions –

The notion of species is too centered upon the characteristics of the individual biological organism.

[Australopithecus Afarensis – reconstruction from Johanson and Edgar](#) From Lucy to Language

What makes a species is also its ecology. And modern humans have a peculiarly [cultural ecology](#) (for at least 35 thousand years). This makes our identity and self awareness distributed phenomena – to be found outside the individual in cultural networks.

[Don't look for the soul inside the human being but outside.](#)

An argument from my new book project.