

The Nature of Culture

March 05, 2014



Douglas Medin has explored scientific reasoning in children and adults across cultures, as well as across urban versus rural populations. His research also has focused on what is known as commons behavior. This line of inquiry asks why certain populations do or don't destroy a shared environment to fulfill selfish needs. His research teams have studied indigenous Mayan populations and found that they share natural resources without draining them, largely because they develop a rich, spiritual understanding of forest ecology. Medin's work has helped move psychological science beyond laboratory models to a broader focus on how our cultural background influences our view of the world.