

Abstract

Since Darwin we have been in possession of two superficially dissonant facts. On one hand, humans are merely one of millions of animal species, all products of common ancestry. On the other, humans enjoy a level of ecological dominance that is spectacularly, qualitatively greater than that of any other animal that ever lived, including our closest relatives.

Moreover, this unique ascendancy results from a complex suite of attributes that are each individually also unprecedented, including cognitive virtuosity, complex language, and an expanded ethical sense.

Collectively, these facts constitute the human uniqueness problem. In spite of its importance, the superficial complexity of this problem has frustrated attempts to resolve it. Though a vast body of earlier work produced important isolated insights, no earlier theory has proven complete or convincing.

I briefly review here a new resolution of the human uniqueness problem. This new hypothesis appears to be the necessary theory-of-everything. It ostensibly accounts parsimoniously for every major nonstochastic feature of the human story from the origin of *Homo* approximately 2.0 to 2.5 million years ago through the present instant.

I use secondary, review literature where possible here to improve interdisciplinary accessibility. As well, I apologize to the many investigators whose important work could not be directly referenced because of length constraints.