

Basic faculties

Note 1

(Pinker. 'The Blank Slate' p220)

Pinker point out that we have evolved cognitive faculties which allow us to understand the physical world that our ancestors lived in. Those used by artists include:

1. An **intuitive physics**
-awareness of objects which occupy space and exist for a time.
2. An intuitive **feel for nature**. Awareness of life vs. non-life
3. An **intuitive engineering** which allows us to use tools
4. An **intuitive psychology** An awareness of other minds.
5. A **spatial sense** which allows us to paint position in perspective.
6. A **number sense** which we use to think about small numbers (1 to 7)
7. A **sense of probability** - to reason about the likelihood of events.
8. An **intuitive economics**. A sense of value. (for the exchange of goods or favors)
9. A **mental database and logic** - use of logical operators such as AND, OR, NOT, ALL, SOME, NECESSARY, POSSIBLE, and CAUSE.
10. The **use of language** - symbols as shorthand for complex ideas, (English, Urdu, Greek, Babylonian, American Sign Language, Music notation, Mathematics, Fine Art.)

Pinker states:

“For many domains of knowledge, the mind could not have evolved machinery for the understanding of --- modern physics, cosmology, genetics, evolution, neuroscience, embryology, economics, and modern mathematics.”

However, it can be argued that the use of symbols combined with a sense of logical structure is sufficient for us to be aware of and make use of complex concepts in Quantum physics, Neuropsychology, Modern mathematics, and Abstract Art.