Macro-patterns of culture

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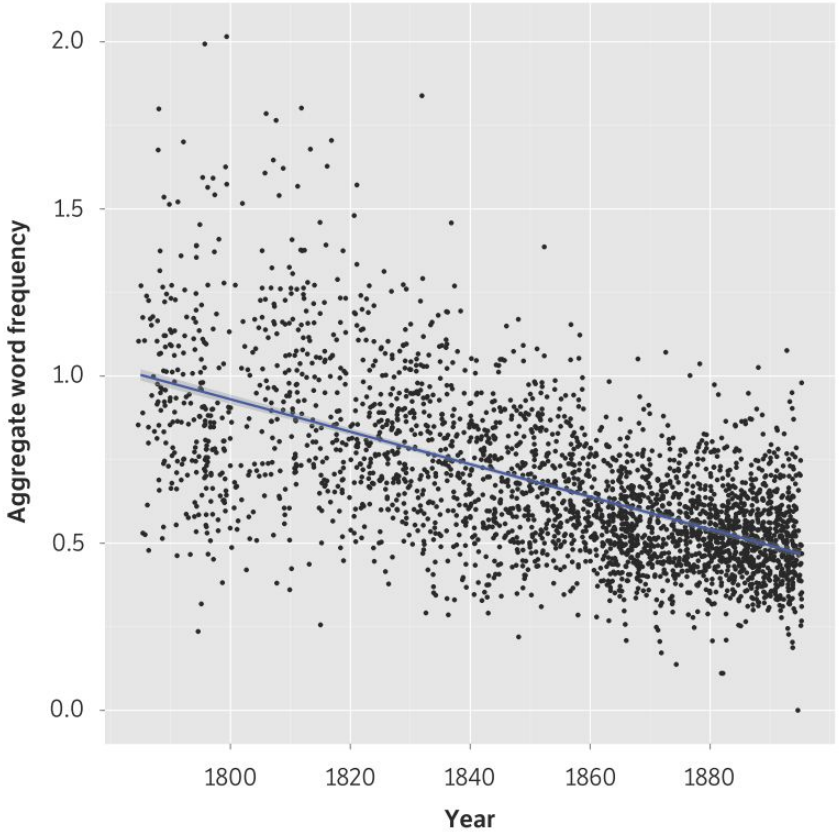
Google Books Ngram

Google Books Ngram

Decline of abstract words

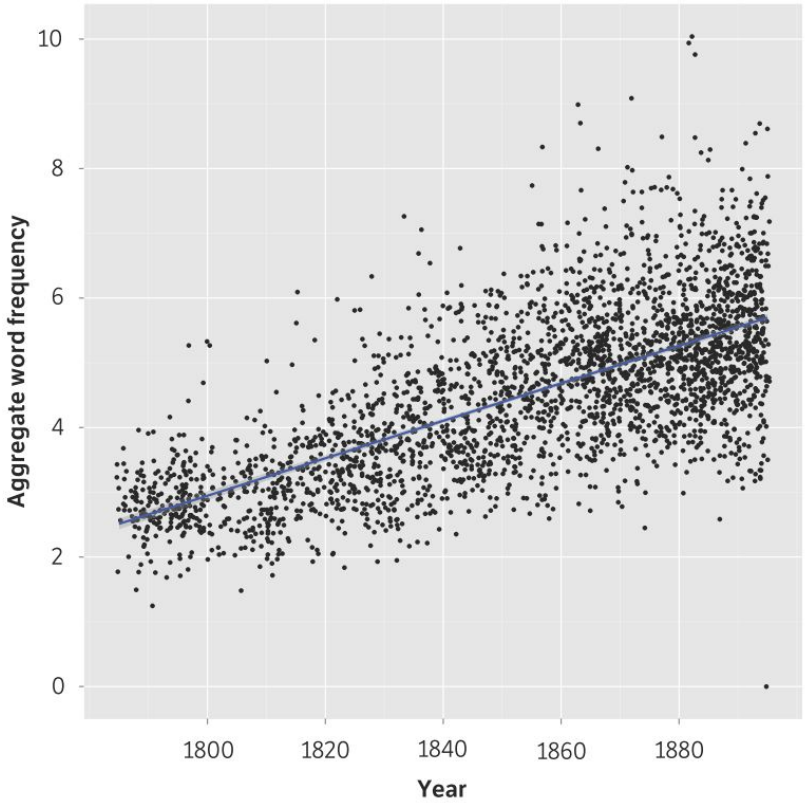
integrity,
modesty,
sensibility,
reason,
talent,
conduct,
elegant,
ostentation,
partiality,
friendship,
accomplishment,
character,
persevere,
vanity,
benevolence
...



(Heuser & Le-Khac 2012)

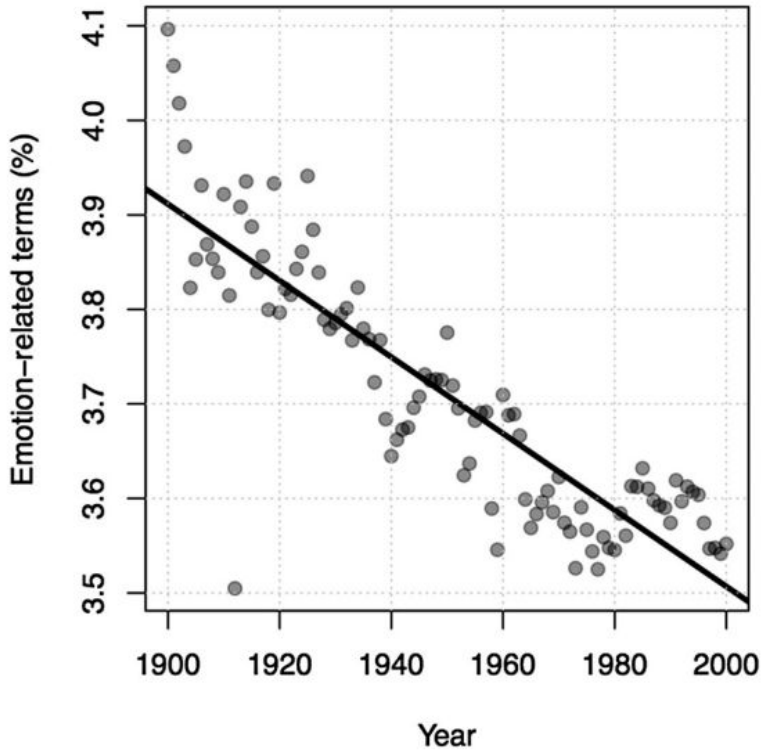
Rise of “hard seed” words

come,
go,
finger,
face,
hair,
fist,
red,
brown,
down,
back,
hard,
flat,
sharp
...



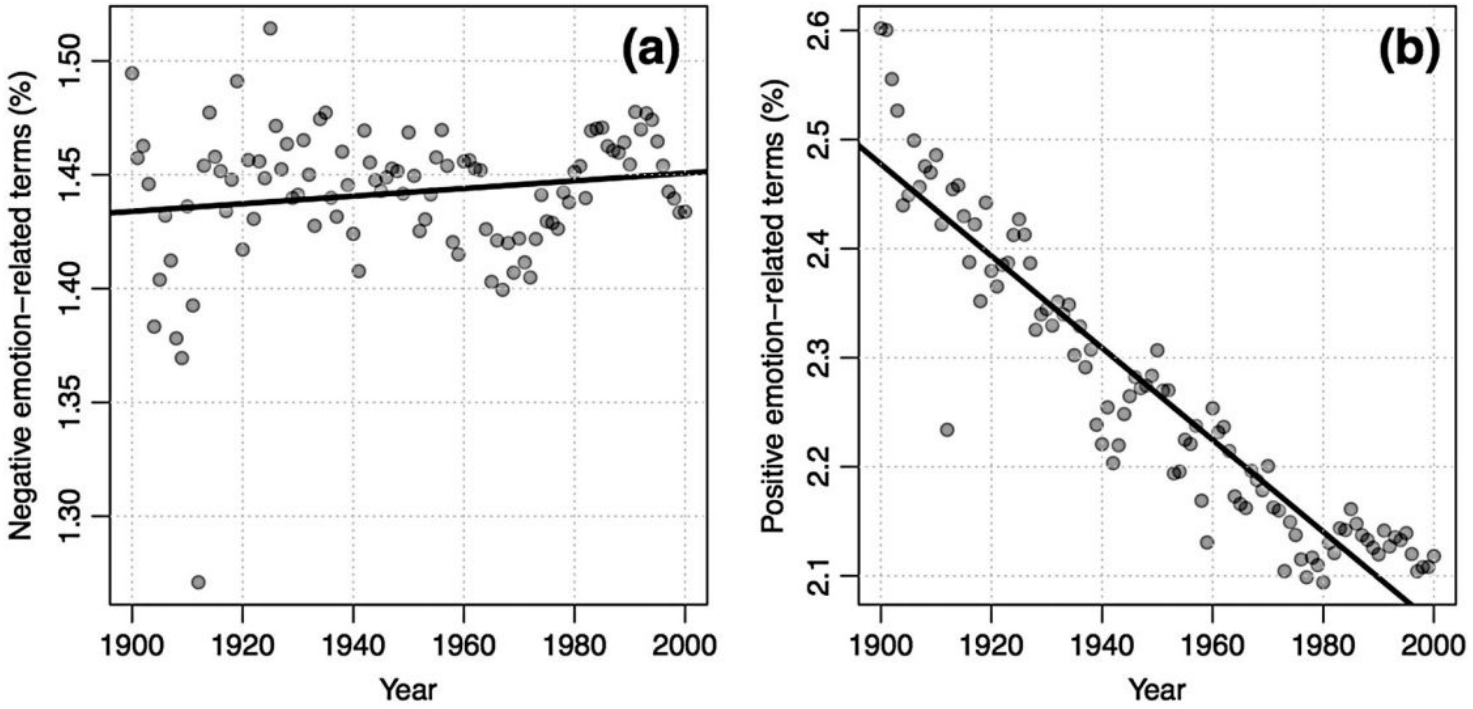
(Heuser & Le-Khac 2012)

Birth of the cool...

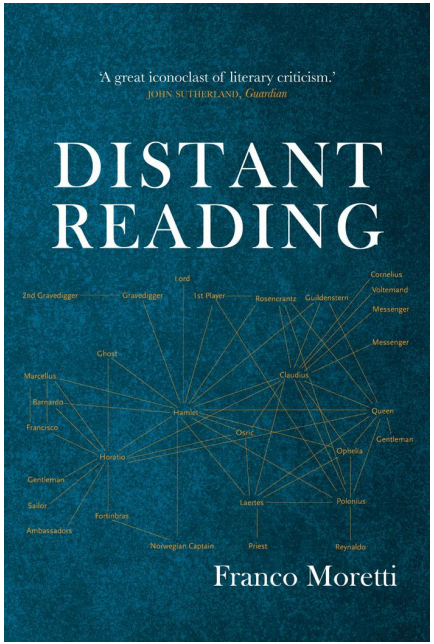


(Morin & Acerbi 2016)

A more precise look: **negative** vs. **positive** words



Distant Reading and distant reading



2013

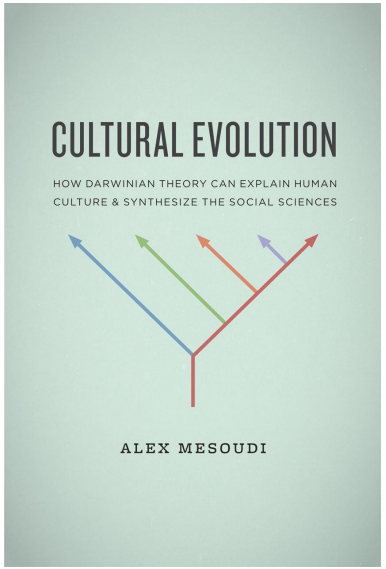
Franco Moretti

Length of book titles

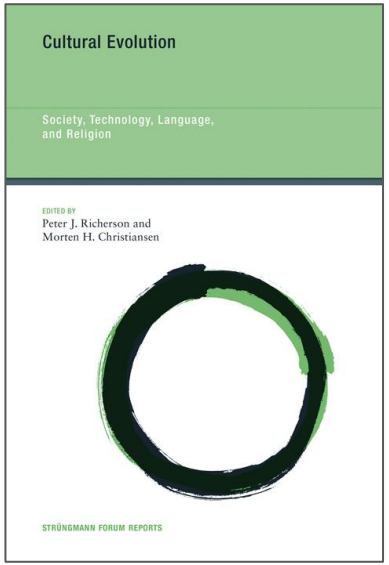
(Moretti 2009)

Cultural evolution

Cultural evolution is a relatively new discipline that studies the development of culture with empirical ***methods***, and typically takes Darwinian ***theory*** of evolution as explanatory framework.

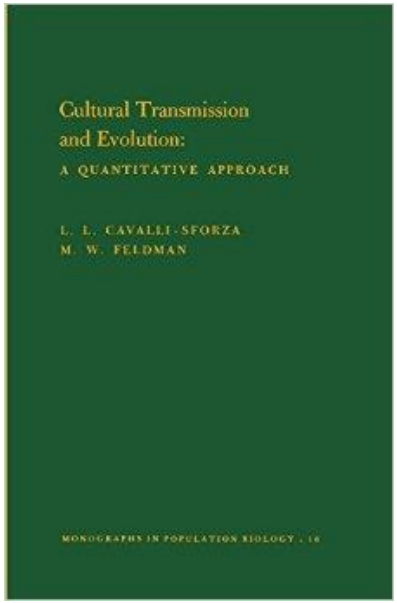


2011

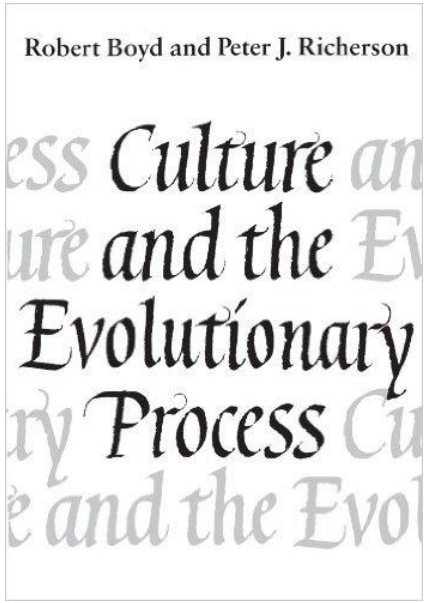


2013

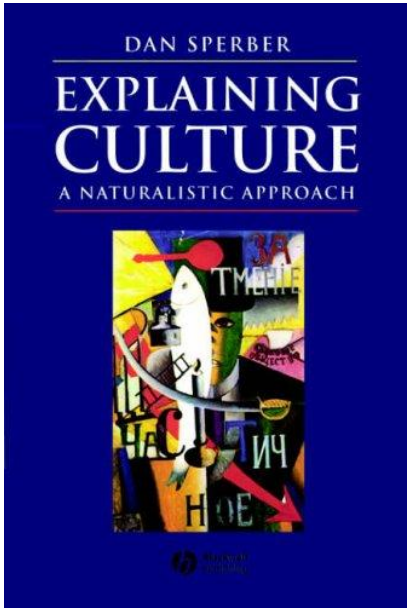
Founding fathers



1981

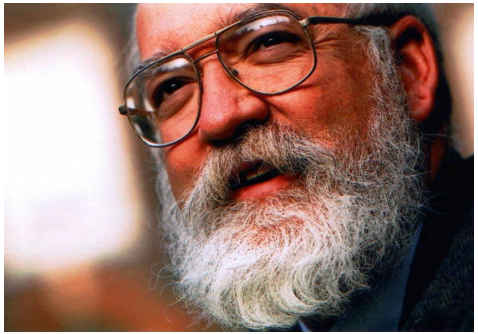


1985

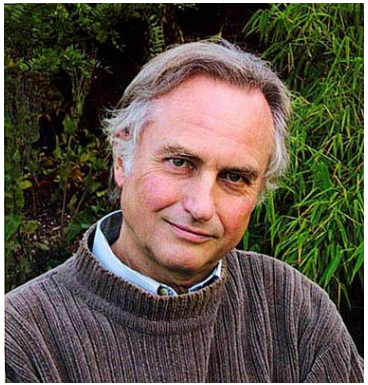


1996

A bit of name dropping...

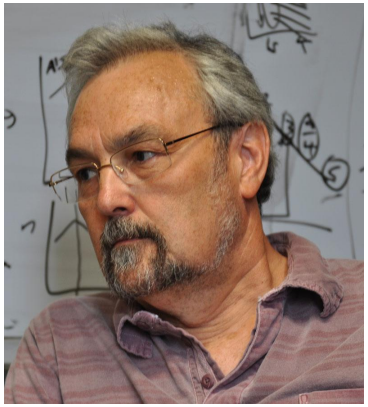


Daniel Dennett

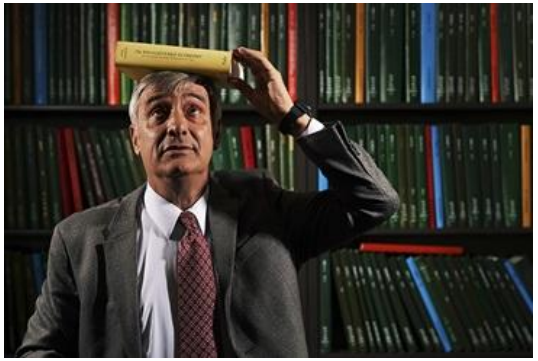


Richard Dawkins

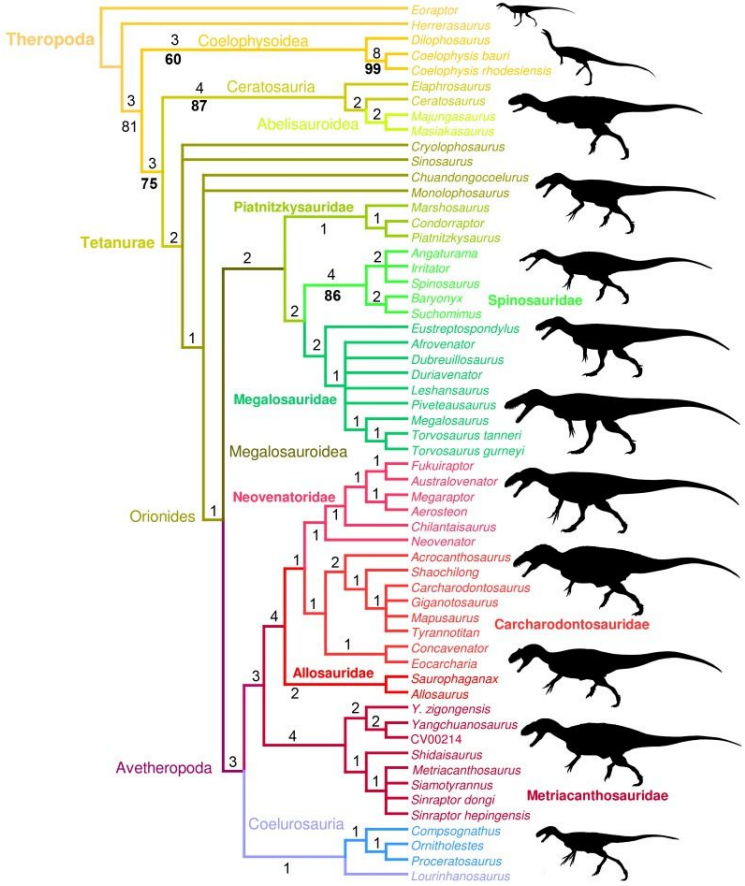
Michael Tomasello

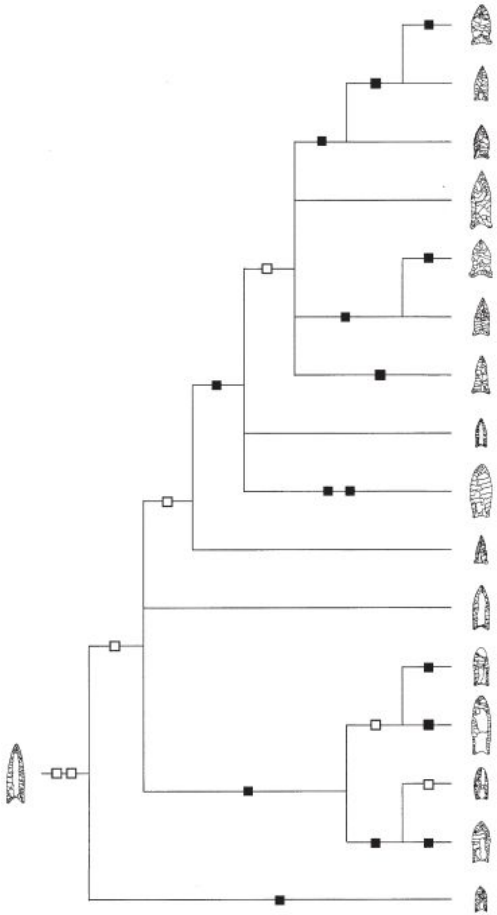


Robin Dunbar

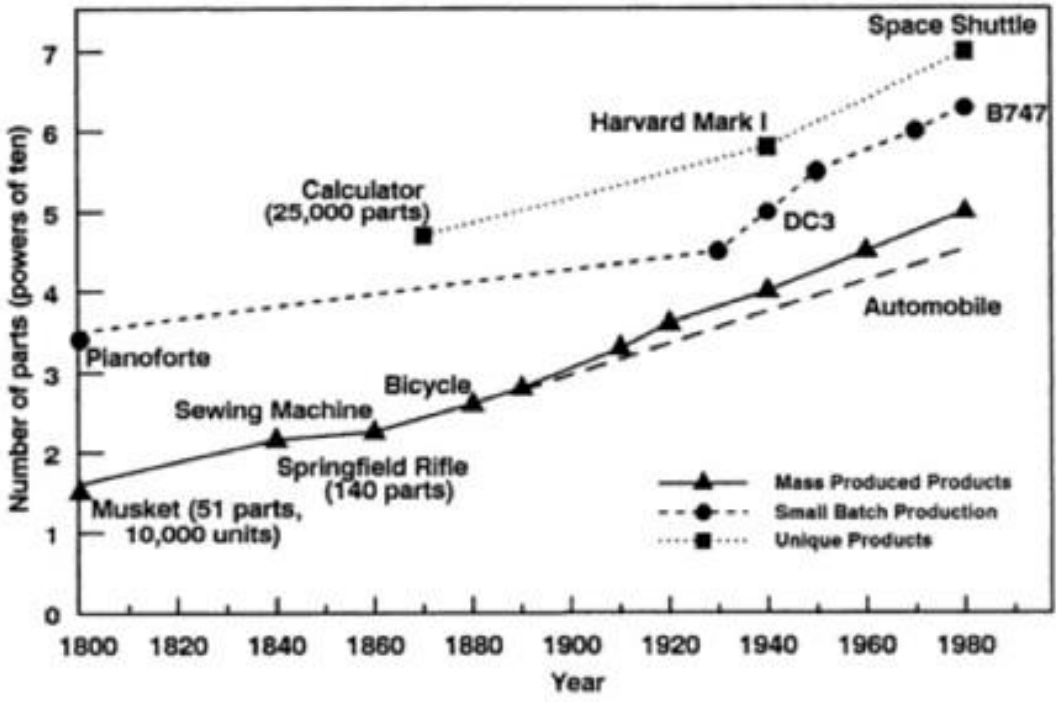


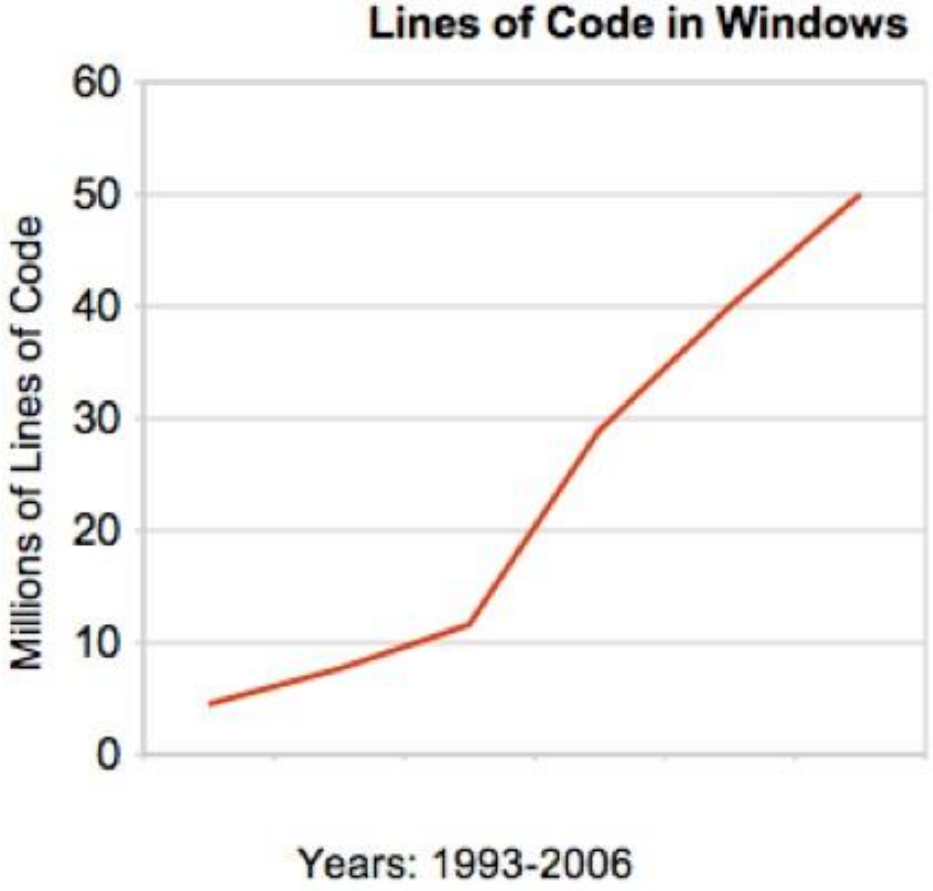
Joel Mokyr


Theropoda
Coelophysoidea
Ceratosauria
Abelisauroidea
Tetanurae
Piatnitzkysauridae
Spinosauridae
Megalosauridae
Megalosauroidea
Orionides
Neovenatoridae
Carcharodontosauridae
Allosauridae
Avetheropoda
Metriacanthosauridae
Coelurosauria
Eoraptor
Herrerasaurus
Dilophosaurus
Coelophysis bauri
Coelophysis rhodesiensis
Elaphrosaurus
Ceratosaurus
Majungasaurus
Masiakasaurus
Cryolophosaurus
Sinosaurus
Chuandongocoelurus
Monolophosaurus
Marshosaurus
Condorraptor
Piatnitzkysaurus
Angaturama
Irritator
Spinosaurus
Baryonyx
Suchomimus
Eustreptospondylus
Afrovenator
Dubreuillosaurus
Duriavenator
Leshansaurus
Piveteausaurus
Megalosaurus
Torvosaurus tanneri
Torvosaurus gurneyi
Fukuiraptor
Australovenator
Megaraptor
Aerosteon
Chilantaisaurus
Neovenator
Acrocanthosaurus
Shaochilong
Carcharodontosaurus
Giganotosaurus
Mapusaurus
Tyrannotitan
Concavenator
Eocarcharia
Saurophaganax
Allosaurus
Y. zigongensis
Yangchuanosaurus
CV00214
Shidaisaurus
Metriacanthosaurus
Siamotyrannus
Sinraptor dongi
Sinraptor hepingensis
Compsognathus
Ornitholestes
Proceratosaurus
Lourinhanosaurus

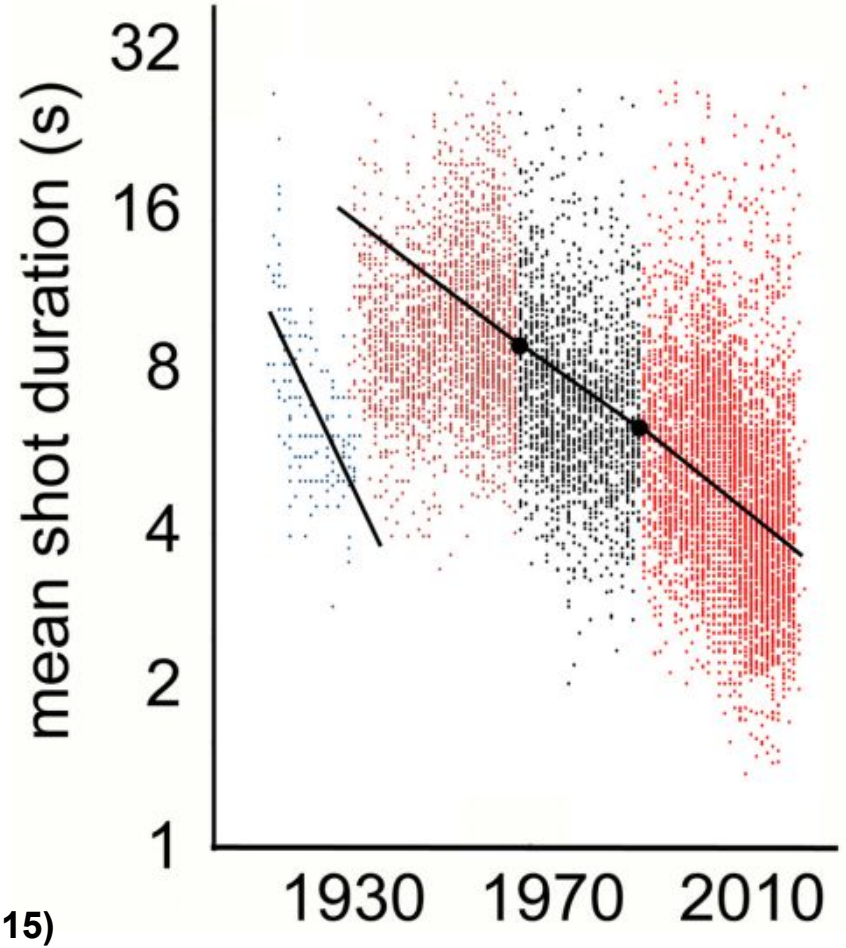


Culture becomes more complex



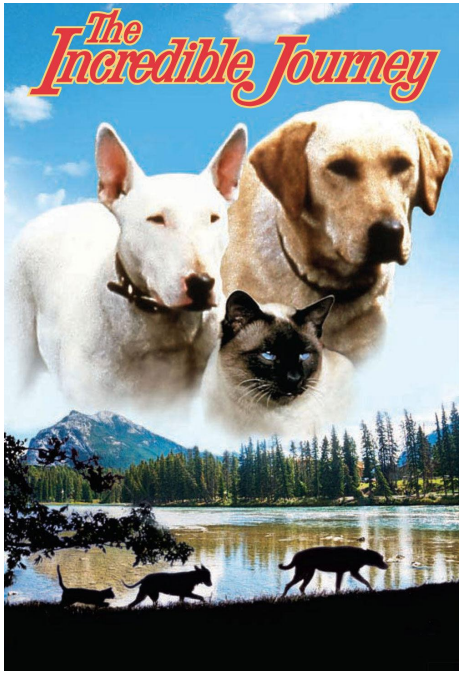

Lines of Code in Windows
Millions of Lines of Code
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Years: 1993-2006

Attention bias

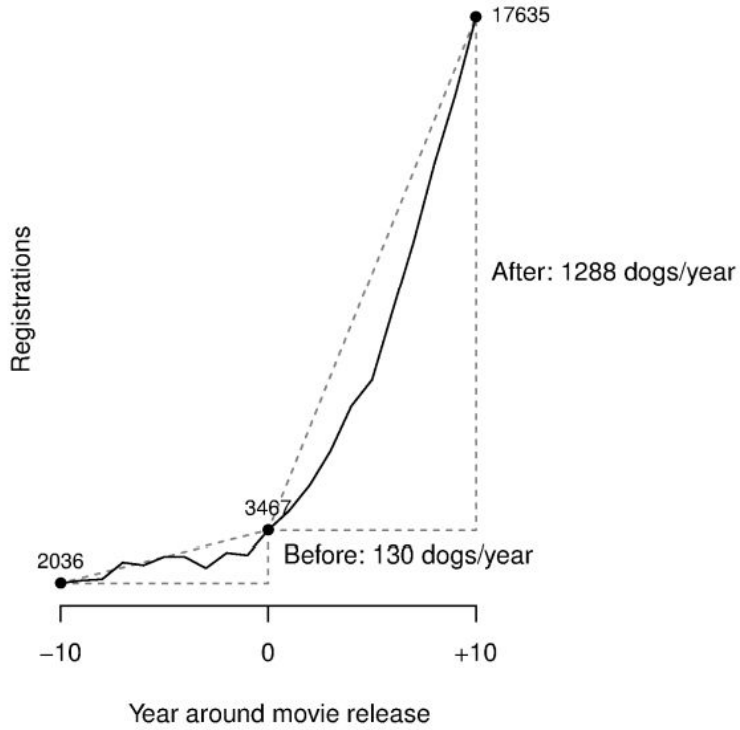


(Cutting & Candan 2015)

Prestige bias



1963



(Ghirlanda et al. 2014)