

Dan Sperber

Rethinking 'Common Ground'

Abstract: Humans typically share a vast amount of information including higher-order information about the fact that they share this information. This constantly updated and enriched 'common ground' plays a fundamental role in their interactions. When it comes to defining common ground, the most common approach is to give a (semi-)definition formal as an optimal model for the cognitive and social sciences to work with. Drawing on the notion of manifestness and on that of cognitive utility, I try to give a more empirically plausible account of common ground, one that casts doubts on standard approaches, raises interesting questions, and provides novel insights.