



Handedness is linked to tool use, not language

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Dense corpus analyses of case studies in human behaviour have proved extremely informative, for example, in the field of language acquisition. Applying these bottom-up quantitative methods to comparative studies of handedness suggests that human population-level right-handedness derives from emerging tool use, rather than from language, as currently commonly believed. Previous methods of assessing handedness have failed to take the context of action into account. New data indicate that handedness can be influenced by the animacy of target objects. These data support that the view that human handedness, and its origin in hemispheric brain organization is not a new or human-unique characteristic, but rather, it is a property related to tool use, and a trait that was inherited from an ancestor common to both humans and great apes.