

Re: Most important paper in evolutionary biology

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- *From:* "John Edser" <edser@xxxxxxxxxx>
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"Perplexed in Peoria" <jimmenegay@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

>> I have to disagree with you here, Jim, although not about altruism or kin
>> selection. I disagree on another basis that neither Darwin or Wallace
>>ever
>> considered: selection at the level of the gene. ...

>Shhhhh! I didn't want to alarm John. But you are right. In my 'proof'
>that a gene reducing TDF can't be favored, I was ignoring the possibility
>of segregation distorters. I guess I should have said that Hamilton was
>not stupid enough in 1964 to say that an OFA-reducing gene could be
>favored by evolution. He didn't become that stupid until he had read
>Dawkins. ;-)

JE:-

Dear oh dear...

I am not "alarmed" just stunned and amazed. ANY "solution" using Hamilton's rationale remains classically group selective. The recipients gain or lose as just the one fitness dependent organism group and not even as a mean gain to each fitness independent (competing) individual while Hamilton's actor remains classically Darwinian because it gains or loses as just the one fitness independent individual. Guy's "selection at the level of the gene" is actually just a rehash of discredited classical organism group selection, i.e. selection at the level of the group and Hamilton's Rule is just a restatement of the old warhorse: individual selection Vs group selection except now, group selection is HEURISTICALLY ALLOWED to win over Darwinian selection providing altruistic individuals (mostly it seems for just political purposes), even if it cannot do so EMPIRICALLY. What segregation distorting genes prove are two things:-

1) Meiosis is not a random process as was originally thought.

2) Classical group selection (incorrectly referred by Guy as "selection at the level of the gene") cannot absolutely win over individual selection just win, RELATIVELY. As predicted by Darwinism so called classical group selection must compliment and not contradict individual selection, i.e.

Re: Most important paper in evolutionary biology

increase TDF otherwise NEITHER win. Darwinism does not exclude such events emerging from time to time by chance e.g. mutated cancer cells which act like segregation distorters, i.e. fitness independent selectees, it simply states that they will be rare and not common and have no future unless the host TDF is INCREASED.

I argued over 4 years ago that if ever a segregation distorter was discovered that pushed a gene that selection at the Darwinian level had also selected for, then the acceleration this provides will enormously increase selectee TDF. Such a discovery would allow an explanation as to why segregation distorter genes are tolerated in nature: on average their cost in fitness is < the fitness gains produced.

In REALITY no naked genes actually wander about the place waiting to be selected just Darwinian individuals except of course genes in vitro in a lab. Is this what was being referred to by "selection at the level of the gene"?

Regards,

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- Prev by Date: [**Re: A FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE**](#)
 - Next by Date: [**Re: A FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE**](#)
 - Previous by thread: [**Re: Most important paper in evolutionary biology**](#)
 - Next by thread: [**Re: Most important paper in evolutionary biology**](#)
 - Index(es):
 - ◆ [**Date**](#)
 - ◆ [**Thread**](#)