

9.20 MIT

Classes #23: Genetic influences on social behavior

Wednesday Nov 2, 2005

Reading:

- John Alcock, *The Triumph of Sociobiology* (Oxford 2001), ch 3, pp 41-56.

Study questions:

1. What is the difference between genetic determination of behavioral traits and sociobiologists' views concerning genes and behavior? (p 41-43, p 20)
2. Sociobiology has often been deprecated by recitation of the "myth of the deterministic sociobiologist." Give some reasons why this myth has been so enduring since the publication of E.O. Wilson's book that gave the field its name. (p 44-46)
3. Interpret figure 3.1 by explaining how a difference in one allele (B vs b) could result in a behavioral difference between two adults. (p 46-47; cf p 72)
4. Explain exactly how the relative frequency of alleles B and b in Q3 could change over multiple generations.
5. Give an example of an artificial selection experiment that has shown strong genetic influences on behavior. How has this been supported by studies of humans? (p 49-52)
6. Each student should try to prepare an answer to at least one of the **three questions in the Appendix for ch 3**.