

1 Negative Niche Construction Favors the
2 Evolution of Cooperation

3
4 **Abstract**

5 TODO

6 **Introduction**

7 Cooperative behaviors are common across all branches of the tree of life. In-
8 sects divide labor within their colonies, plants and soil bacteria exchange es-
9 sential nutrients, birds care for others' young, and the trillions of cells in the
10 human body coordinate to provide vital functions. Each instance of cooper-
11 ation presents an evolutionary challenge: How can individuals that sacrifice
12 their own well-being to help others avoid subversion by those that do not? Over
13 time, we would expect these *defectors* to rise in abundance at the expense of
14 others, eventually driving cooperators—and perhaps the entire population—to
15 extinction.

16 Several factors can prevent this *tragedy of the commons* (Hamilton, 1964;
17 Nowak, 2006; West *et al.*, 2007b). One such factor involves non-random so-
18 cial interaction, in which cooperators benefit more from the cooperative act
19 than defectors. This can occur when cooperators are clustered together in
20 spatially-structured populations (Fletcher and Doebeli, 2009; Nadell *et al.*,
21 2010; Kuzdzal-Fick *et al.*, 2011) or when cooperators use communication
22 (Brown and Johnstone, 2001; Darch *et al.*, 2012) or other cues (Sinervo *et*
23 *al.*, 2006; Gardner and West, 2010; Veelders *et al.*, 2010) to cooperate condi-
24 tionally with kin. Cooperation can also be bolstered by pleiotropic connections
25 to personal benefits (Foster *et al.*, 2004; Dandekar *et al.*, 2012) or through as-
26 sociation with alleles encoding self-benefitting traits (Asfahl *et al.*, 2015). In
27 these cases, the alleles may provide private benefits that are completely inde-
28 pendent from the public benefits of cooperation. In an asexual population of
29 cooperators and defectors, this sets the stage for an “adaptive race” in which
30 both types vie for the first highly beneficial adaptation (Waite and Shou, 2012;
31 Morgan *et al.*, 2012). The tragedy of the commons can be deferred if a coop-
32 erator, by chance, wins the adaptive race.

33 Hammarlund *et al.* (2015) recently demonstrated that in spatially-structured
34 populations, the “Hankshaw effect” can give cooperators a substantial leg up
35 on defectors in an adaptive race. When cooperation increases local popula-
36 tion density, the likelihood of acquiring beneficial mutations is also increased.
37 The cooperative trait can then rise in abundance by hitchhiking along with
38 these adaptations. Nevertheless, this advantage is fleeting. As soon as the
39 opportunities for adaptation are exhausted, cooperators are once again at a

selective disadvantage against equally-adapted defectors that arise via mutation. However, Hammarlund et al. (2015) demonstrated that cooperation can be maintained indefinitely when frequent environmental changes produce a steady stream of new adaptive opportunities. Although organisms typically find themselves in dynamic environments, the nature and frequency of these changes might not ensure long-term cooperator survival.

Importantly, however, organisms do more than simply experience changing environments passively. Through their activities, their interactions with others, and even their death, organisms constantly modify their environment. These changes can produce evolutionary feedback loops in which environmental change alters selection, which, in turn, alters the distribution of phenotypes and their corresponding influence on the environment (Odling-Smee *et al.*, 2003). The nature of this feedback can have dramatic evolutionary consequences. One critical distinction is whether the constructing phenotype or some other phenotype is most adapted in the constructed environment. Under positive niche construction, selection favoring the constructor is reinforced, and evolution eventually stagnates. Under negative niche construction, the constructed environment favors a different phenotype than the constructor. In this latter case, populations find themselves continually chasing beneficial mutations as their adaptive landscape perpetually shifts.

Here, we explore whether the selective feedbacks that result from niche construction can prolong cooperation. We build upon the model presented by Hammarlund et al. (2015) to allow populations to modify their local environments in ways that affect fitness. We use this model to address whether

64 niche construction can extend the Hanks effect, enabling cooperation to
65 continue to hitchhike as populations continually adapt. As part of this, we
66 focus on how niche construction influences local interactions when isolated
67 cooperator populations encounter populations of defectors, either through mi-
68 gration or through mutations that inevitably produce defectors that share the
69 same adaptations. Finally, niche construction has frequently been shown to
70 increase diversity (???). We explore whether this diversity helps or hinders
71 the evolution of cooperation.

72 We find that niche construction can promote and sustain cooperation indef-
73 initely. However, the niche construction must have a negative component.
74 Furthermore, we show that the level of diversity promoted by this negative
75 feedback must be sufficiently low to favor the evolution of cooperation.

76 **Methods**

77 Building upon Hammarlund et al. (2015), we develop an individual-based
78 model in which cooperators and defectors evolve and compete in a population
79 of subpopulations (i.e., a metapopulation). Through mutations, individuals
80 gain adaptations to their environment, which increase reproductive fitness,
81 and allow those lineages to rise in abundance. Migration among neighboring
82 subpopulations allows more successful lineages to spread.

83 In our expanded model, subpopulations modify their local environment. As
84 this process occurs, environmental changes feed back to affect selection. We
85 perform simulations using this model to explore how niche construction affects

86 this adaptation process and whether selective feedbacks enable cooperation to
87 be maintained.

88 **Model Description**

89 **Individual Genotypes and Adaptation**

90 Each individual has a haploid genome with $L + 1$ loci (see [Table 1](#) for model
91 parameters and their values). Different alleles at each locus are represented by
92 different integers. A binary allele at the first locus (here, locus zero) determines
93 whether that individual is a cooperator (1), which carries fitness cost c , or a
94 defector (0). Cooperation is independent from adaptation to the environment.
95 The first L loci are *adaptive loci*, and are each occupied by 0 or a value from
96 the set $\{1, 2, \dots, A\}$. Allele 0 represents a lack of adaptation, while a non-zero
97 allele represents one of the A possible adaptations at that locus. Adaptations
98 confer a fitness benefit δ , regardless of which non-zero allele is present. We
99 assume $\delta > c$, which allows a minimally adapted cooperator to recoup the
100 cost of cooperation and gain a fitness advantage. The benefits that these
101 adaptations engender are purely exogenous, and are not affected by the other
102 individuals or the state of the environment.

103 **Niche Construction and Selective Feedbacks**

104 Individual fitness is also affected by the current state of the local environment.
105 Here, we represent the “niche” implicitly based on the allelic states present in

106 the subpopulation. As allelic states change, subpopulations alter aspects of
 107 their environment, creating a unique niche.

108 We use a form of density dependent selection to favor individuals that better
 109 match their niche. Specifically, the selective value of adaptive allele a at locus l
 110 increases with the number of individuals in the subpopulation that have allele
 111 $a - 1$ at locus $l - 1$. As a consequence, genotypes with sequentially increasing
 112 allelic states will tend to evolve. We treat both adaptive loci and allelic states
 113 as “circular”: the selective value of an allele at locus 1 is affected by the
 114 allelic composition of the subpopulation at locus L . Similarly, the selective
 115 value of allele 1 at any locus increases with the number of individuals carrying
 116 allele A at the previous locus. This circularity is represented by the function
 117 $\beta(x, X)$, which gives the integer that is below an arbitrary value x in the set
 118 $\{1, 2, \dots, X\}$:

$$\beta(x, X) = \text{mod}_X(x - 2 + X) + 1 \quad (1)$$

119 Here, $\text{mod}_X(x)$ is the integer remainder when dividing x by X . The selective
 120 value of adaptive allele a at locus l is increased by ϵ for each individual in the
 121 subpopulation that has allele $\beta(a, A)$ at locus $\beta(l, L)$. Thus, ϵ specifies the
 122 intensity of niche construction.

123 Consider a genotype g with the allelic state at locus l given by $a_{g,l}$; the fitness
 124 of an individual with this genotype is defined as:

$$W_g = z - \underbrace{ca_{g,0}}_{\text{cooperation}} + \underbrace{\delta \sum_{l=1}^L I(a_{g,l})}_{\text{adaptation to external env.}} + \underbrace{\epsilon \sum_{l=1}^L n(\beta(a_{g,l}, A), \beta(l, L))}_{\text{adaptation to constructed env.}} \quad (2)$$

125 where z is a baseline fitness and $I(a)$ indicates whether a given adaptive allele
 126 is non-zero:

$$I(a) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } a \in \{1, 2, \dots, A\} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad (3)$$

127 Thus, an individual's fitness is determined both exogenously by adaptation (δ)
 128 and endogenously by its niche (ϵ).

129 Because mutations occur randomly (see below), each subpopulation will evolve
 130 different consecutive sequences. These different sequences represent the unique
 131 niches constructed by subpopulations.

132 **Population Growth and the Benefit of Cooperation**

133 Cooperation benefits a subpopulation by enabling it to reach greater density.
 134 This benefit affects all individuals equally and accumulates linearly with the
 135 proportion of cooperators in the subpopulation. If p is the proportion of co-
 136 operators present at the beginning of a growth cycle, then that subpopulation
 137 reaches the following size:

$$S(p) = S_{min} + p(S_{max} - S_{min}) \quad (4)$$

During growth, individuals compete through differential reproduction. Each individual's probability of success is determined by its fitness. The composition of a subpopulation with size P and cooperator proportion p after growth is multinomial with parameters $S(p)$ and $\{\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_P\}$, where:

$$\pi_i = \frac{W_{\gamma(i)}}{\sum_{j=1}^P W_{\gamma(j)}} \quad (5)$$

Here, $W_{\gamma(i)}$ is the fitness of an individual i with genotype $\gamma(i)$ (see Equation 2). The value π_i represents an individual's reproductive fitness relative to others in the subpopulation.

Mutation

For simplicity, we apply mutations after growth. Mutations occur independently at each locus and cause an allelic state change. At the binary cooperation locus, mutations occur at rate μ_c . These mutations flip the allelic state, causing cooperators to become defectors and vice versa. Mutations occur at rate μ_a at each adaptive locus. These mutations replace the existing allele with a random selection from the set $\{0\} \cup \{1, 2, \dots, A\}$.

152 Migration

153 Populations are composed by N^2 patches arranged as an $N \times N$ lattice, where
154 each patch can support a subpopulation. After mutation, individuals emigrate
155 to an adjacent patch with probability m . During each migration event, a
156 single destination patch is randomly chosen with uniform probability from
157 each source patch's Moore neighborhood, which is composed of the nearest 8
158 patches on the lattice. Because the population lattice has boundaries, patches
159 located on the periphery have smaller neighborhoods.

160 Population Initialization and Simulation

161 At the beginning of each simulation, subpopulations are seeded at all patches
162 with cooperator proportion p_0 and grown to density $S(p_0)$. An environmental
163 challenge is then introduced, which subjects all subpopulations to a bottleneck.
164 For each individual, the probability of survival is μ_t , which represents the
165 likelihood that tolerance arises via mutation. Because individuals have not yet
166 adapted to this new environment, the allelic state of each individual's genotype
167 is 0 at each adaptive locus. Following initialization, simulations are run for T
168 cycles, where each discrete cycle consists of subpopulation growth, mutation,
169 migration, and dilution. Dilution thins the population to support growth in
170 the next cycle. Each individual remains with probability d , regardless of allelic
171 state.

Simulation Source Code and Software Dependencies

The simulation software and configurations for the experiments reported are available online.¹ Simulations used Python 3.4, NumPy 1.9.1, Pandas 0.15.2 (McKinney, 2010), and NetworkX 1.9.1 (Hagberg *et al.*, 2008). Data analyses were performed with R 3.1.3 (R Core Team, 2015). Reported confidence intervals were estimated by bootstrapping with 1000 resamples.

Results

Using the model described in the previous section, we perform simulations that follow the evolution of cooperation in a population consisting of subpopulations that are connected by spatially-limited migration. Individuals compete in these subpopulations by gaining a limited number of adaptations that confer fitness benefits. While cooperation does not directly affect the selective value of these adaptations, cooperation can have indirect effects on the adaptive process. Specifically, cooperation increases subpopulation density. As a result, larger subpopulations of cooperators experience more mutational opportunities to gain adaptations. Cooperation can hitchhike along with these adaptations, which compensate for the cost of cooperation. During this process, subpopulations alter their local environments, which, in turn, influences selection. Here, we explore how niche construction affects the evolution of cooperation in the simulation environment defined by the parameter values

¹These materials will be made public at the time of publication, and a reference will be placed here.

192 listed in Table 1.

193 Cooperation Persists with Niche Construction

194 Without any opportunity for adaptation ($L = 0$), cooperators are swiftly elim-
195 inated in competition with defectors (Figure 2A). Despite an initial lift in
196 cooperator abundance due to increased productivity, the cost of cooperation
197 becomes disadvantageous as migration mixes the initially isolated subpopu-
198 lations. When there are opportunities for adaptation ($L = 5$) but no niche
199 construction ($\epsilon = 0$), cooperators are maintained transiently (Figure 2B). Here,
200 larger cooperator subpopulations can more quickly adapt to their environment
201 as before. As previously described by Hammarlund et al. (2015), however,
202 cooperation is subsequently lost once populations become fully adapted to
203 their environment. Once this has occurred, adapted defectors that arise via
204 mutation at the cooperation locus have a selective advantage and displace
205 cooperators. However, when niche construction creates selective feedbacks,
206 cooperation persists in over 2/3 of the replicate populations (Figure 3A).

207 Fitness Increases Alone do not Support Persisting Coop- 208 eration

209 In the model, both adaptation and niche construction contribute to an indi-
210 vidual's fitness. To determine whether cooperation is maintained solely due to
211 the larger selective values that result from the contributions of niche construc-
212 tion (ϵ), we performed simulations in which these contributions were removed

213 ($\epsilon = 0$), and we instead increased the fitness benefits conferred by adaptation
 214 ($\delta = 0.6$). In doing so, we conservatively estimate the selective effects of niche
 215 construction, as fitness benefits of this magnitude would only be given for se-
 216 quential allelic states that are fixed in fully-populated subpopulations. We find
 217 that simply increasing selective values does not enable cooperators to persist
 218 (Figure 3B). Niche construction therefore plays an important role here.

219 **Negative Niche Construction is Critical to Cooperator** 220 **Persistence**

221 Negative niche construction can occur in our model due to the selection for
 222 sequentially-increasing allelic states and the circular arrangement of these al-
 223 leles. This occurs when the number of adaptive alleles (A) does not divide
 224 evenly into the number of adaptive loci (L). In such a case, any sequence of
 225 integers on the circular genome will always contain a break in the sequence;
 226 that is, one locus with an allele that is not one less than the allele at the next
 227 locus (see Figure 1). Given this unavoidable mismatch, any genotype that has
 228 fixed will always favor selection for a new genotype. However, if this negative
 229 niche construction is removed (by setting $L = 5$, $A = 5$), cooperators are again
 230 driven extinct after an initial lift in abundance (Figure 3C).

231 **Selective Feedbacks Limit Defector Invasion**

232 The adaptation resulting from selective feedbacks can limit invasion by de-
 233 fectors, which arise either through immigration from neighboring patches or

234 through mutation from a cooperator ancestor. The challenge is particularly
235 threatening, as they are equally adapted, yet do not incur the cost of coop-
236 eration. When homologous defectors (i.e., defectors with identical adaptive
237 loci) are introduced at a single patch in the center of an 11×11 population
238 of cooperator subpopulations, they quickly spread if no mutations are allowed
239 (Figure 4A). However, when resident cooperators can adapt (mutations oc-
240 cur at adaptive loci), cooperators evade defector invasion in over half of the
241 replicate populations (Figure 4B). Figure 5 depicts one such instance where
242 cooperators gained an adaptation that stopped and eliminated invading de-
243 fectors. We further highlight this process in Figure 4C, where an adapted
244 cooperator genotype can rapidly invade a population of defectors.

245 The Rate of Niche Construction Matters

246 TODO: defector can invade a diverse population of cooperators, while adapta-
247 tion to a matching defector can't spread to stop invasion.

248 Discussion

249 Despite their negative effects, deleterious traits can rise in abundance due to
250 genetic linkage with other traits that are strongly favored by selection (May-
251 nard Smith and Haigh, 1974). In a process termed the “Hankshaw effect”,
252 Hammarlund et al. (2015) recently demonstrated that cooperation can pro-
253 long its existence by increasing the likelihood of hitchhiking with a beneficial

254 trait. While this process does favor cooperation in the short term, it eventually
255 reaches a dead end; when the opportunities for adaptation are exhausted, and
256 cooperators can no longer hitchhike, they face extinction. In this work, we
257 have considered whether niche construction might serve to perpetually gener-
258 ate new adaptive opportunities, and thus favor cooperation indefinitely.

259 When niche construction occurs, cooperation can indeed persist (Figure 3A). In
260 our model, niche construction introduces additional selective effects that could
261 influence the evolutionary process, leading to a more pronounced Hankshaw
262 effect. However, simply raising the selective benefits provided by adaptations
263 does not prolong cooperation (Figure 3B), and indicates that niche construc-
264 tion plays an important role.

265 We find that cooperator success is due to niche construction. Further, we find
266 that it is specifically negative niche construction that maintains cooperation
267 (Figure 3C). Without adaptive opportunities, adaptation eventually grinds to
268 a halt. Once this occurs, cooperators face the threat of invasion by defectors
269 that arise de novo through mutation. Since these defectors are equally adapted
270 but do not bear the cost of cooperation, they quickly drive cooperators to
271 extinction. Because every genotype constructs an environment in which a
272 different genotype is more fit, negative niche construction creates continual
273 adaptive opportunities. These opportunities can allow cooperators to resist
274 invasion by defectors, even when defectors are equally adapted (Figure 4B).
275 Here we observe another facet of the Hankshaw effect: because populations
276 of cooperators are larger, they are better able to respond to the adaptive
277 opportunities that result from negative niche construction.

278 TODO: diversity results TODO: references about diversity

279 In our model, cooperation and niche construction are orthogonal, which al-
280 lows us to focus on hitchhiking. However, the form of cooperation used in
281 this model could itself be seen as a niche constructing behavior. Explicitly
282 modeling this cooperative behavior, which is akin to the production of pub-
283 lic goods, would likely yield additional insights into the relationship between
284 cooperation and niche construction. For example, previous work has shown
285 that niche construction can favor deleterious alleles (Laland *et al.*, 1996, 1999).
286 Cooperation, especially in competition against equally-adapted defectors, can
287 be considered deleterious, so introducing selective feedbacks from cooperation
288 could further bolster cooperation. Van Dyken and Wade (2012) showed that
289 when two cooperative behaviors co-evolve and niche construction feedbacks
290 benefit the other type, niche construction can increasingly favor these traits,
291 which were otherwise disfavored when alone. Arguably, this can be viewed
292 as another instance of hitchhiking: the maladaptive form of cooperation is
293 maintained by association with the adaptive form. However, negative niche
294 construction then reverses these roles and perpetuates the cycle.

295 By their very nature, public goods benefit populations by making their envi-
296 ronment more hospitable (West *et al.*, 2007a). For example, bacteria produce
297 a host of extracellular products that scavenge soluble iron (Griffin *et al.*, 2004),
298 digest large proteins (Diggle *et al.*, 2007; Darch *et al.*, 2012), and reduce the
299 risk of predation (Cosson *et al.*, 2002). While many studies have focused on
300 how the environment affects the evolution of cooperative behaviors such as
301 the production of these public goods, relatively few have examined how the

302 resulting selective feedbacks influence evolution as public goods modify the
 303 environment. In these instances, environmental changes are likely to occur
 304 on different timescales than reproduction. These differences can have pro-
 305 found effects. For example, a multitude of factors including protein durabil-
 306 ity (Brown and Taddei, 2007; Kümmerli and Brown, 2010), diffusion (Allison,
 307 2005; Driscoll and Pepper, 2010), and resource availability (Zhang and Rainey,
 308 2013; Ghoul *et al.*, 2014) influence both the rate and the degree to which public
 309 goods alter the environment. Lehmann (2007) demonstrated that cooperative,
 310 niche constructing behaviors can be favored when they affect selection for
 311 future generations. When this occurs, conflict among contemporary kin is re-
 312 duced. The evolutionary inertia that this creates, however, may ultimately
 313 work against cooperators. When public goods accumulate in the environment,
 314 cooperators must decrease production to remain competitive (Kümmerli and
 315 Brown, 2010; Dumas and Kümmerli, 2012). This favors cooperation that oc-
 316 curs facultatively, perhaps by sensing the abiotic (Bernier *et al.*, 2011; Koestler
 317 and Waters, 2014) or biotic environment (Brown and Johnstone, 2001; Darch
 318 *et al.*, 2012).

319 In many instances where cooperation occurs, the environment is itself a biolog-
 320 ical entity, which can introduce additional evolutionary feedbacks. As the host
 321 population changes, so too does selection on their symbiont populations. Here,
 322 evolutionary outcomes depend greatly on the degree of shared interest between
 323 the host and symbiont. For example, the cooperative production of virulence
 324 factors by the human pathogen *P. aeruginosa* in lung infections is harmful to
 325 hosts with cystic fibrosis (Harrison, 2007). Conversely, cooperative light pro-

duction by *A. fischeri* is vital for the survival of its host, the Hawaiian bobtail squid (Ruby, 1996). It was recently argued that incorporating the effects of niche construction is critical for improving our understanding of viral evolution (Hamblin *et al.*, 2014) and evolution in co-infecting parasites (Hafer and Milinski, 2015). Incorporating host dynamics, co-evolution, and the feedbacks that they produce into models is likely to be equally important for gaining an understanding of how cooperative behaviors evolve in these host-symbiont settings.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to TODO for helpful comments on the manuscript and to Anuraag Pakanati for assistance with simulations. This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology under Grant No. DBI-1309318 (to BDC) and under Cooperative Agreement No. DBI-0939454 (BEACON STC). Computational resources were provided by an award from Google Inc. (to BDC and BK).

341 Figures

342 Figure 1

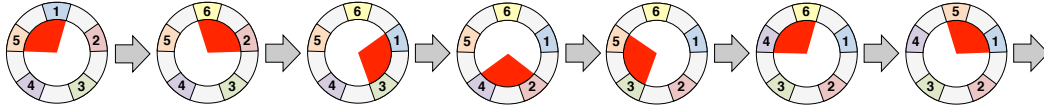


Figure 1: Negative niche construction is illustrated for the case of five adaptive loci ($L = 5$) and six alleles ($A = 6$). The adaptive loci are wrapped into a circle, where niche construction at each locus influences selection at the next locus in the clockwise direction. Suppose we start with a population fixed for the genotype on the far left, $[1,2,3,4,5]$. There is a mismatch in this genotype (highlighted by the red arc), because the niche constructed by allele 5 favors allele 6 (not 1) at its immediate clockwise neighbor. If the fitter mutant $[6,2,3,4,5]$ arises (see next genotype to the right), it will fix (we note that the strength of selection will drop as its frequency increases). However, now there is a new mismatch in the genotype (highlighted again with a red arc). Thus, we see that correcting one mismatch generates a new mismatch. Thus, this system will never escape these mismatches—the red arc just moves clockwise around the genome. Indeed, after six (or A) rounds of mismatch correction/generation, we have ended back where we started with the original genotype turned clockwise by one locus. Here, the adaptation to previous niche construction generates further niche construction that leads to novel adaptation.

343 **Figure 2**

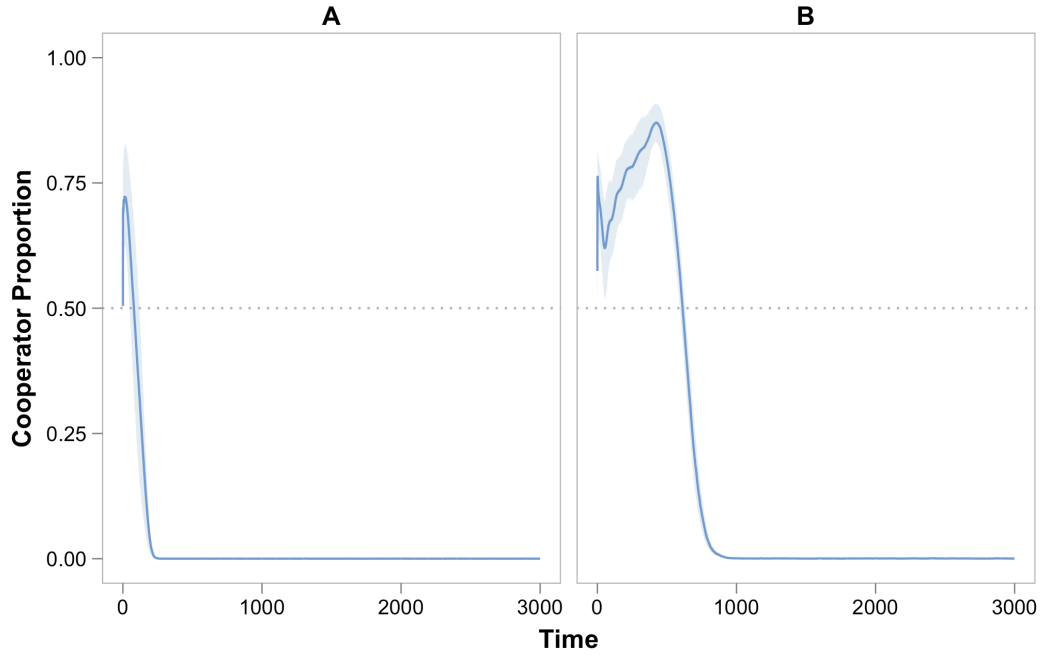


Figure 2: Adaptation, Hitchhiking, and the Evolution of Cooperation. The proportion of cooperators present in the population is shown for the duration of simulations. Curves show the average among replicate populations, and shaded areas indicate 95% confidence intervals. Unless otherwise noted, parameter values are listed in [Table 1](#). **(A)** Without any opportunity to adapt (L , the number of adaptive loci, is zero), cooperation is quickly lost. **(B)** When adaptation can occur ($L = 5$), but populations do not alter their environment (ϵ , the intensity of niche construction, is zero), cooperation hitchhikes along with adaptations, allowing cooperators to temporarily rise in abundance before eventually going extinct.

344 **Figure 3**

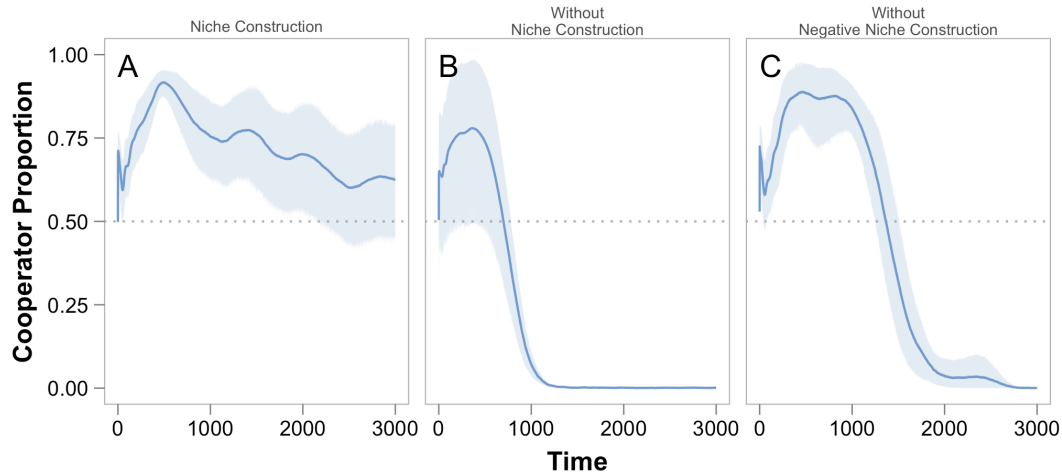


Figure 3: Niche Construction and the Evolution of Cooperation. The proportion of cooperators present in the population is shown for the duration of simulations. Curves show the average among replicate populations, and shaded areas indicate 95% confidence intervals. **(A)** Niche construction enables cooperation to be maintained indefinitely. In the majority of populations (13/18), cooperation remained the dominant strategy. **(B)** When niche construction is removed and the fitness benefit of adaptation is increased to compensate ($\epsilon = 0$, $\delta = 0.6$), adapted defectors arise and drive cooperators to extinction. **(C)** Without negative niche construction, cooperation is not maintained ($A = 5$).

345 **Figure 4**

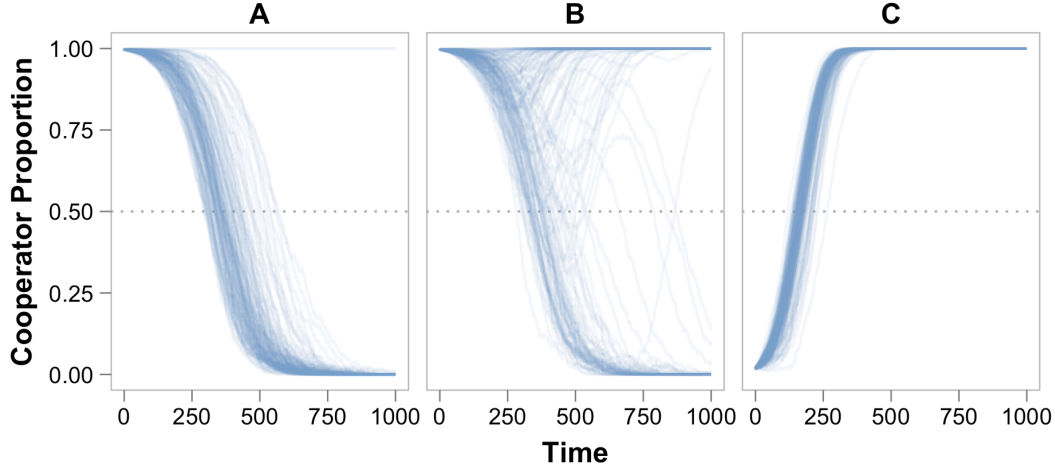


Figure 4: **Niche Construction and Invasion.** Curves trace the proportion of cooperators present in the population for the duration of 160 replicate simulations ($T = 1000$). These experiments examine whether a rare cooperator or defector strategy can invade when initiated at a single patch in the center of the population lattice ($N^2 = 121$). Unless otherwise noted, mutations ($\mu_a = 0, \mu_c = 0$) are disabled in these ecological simulations to focus on the dynamics of invasion. Figure S1 shows results from simulations where this limitation is removed. **(A)** When cooperators and defectors are matched at their adaptive loci (i.e., genotypes $[1,2,3,4,5]$) and mutation cannot occur, rare defectors quickly invade and drive cooperators to extinction due to the cost of cooperation. Defectors were stochastically eliminated in 2 replicate populations. **(B)** However, the adaptive opportunities produced by negative niche construction can allow cooperators to resist invasion by initially-matching defectors. Here, cooperation persisted in the majority of populations ($\mu_a = 0.00005$, the base mutation rate). **(C)** Here we demonstrate that these adaptations can enable an adapted cooperator (genotype $[6,2,3,4,5]$, see Figure 1) to displace a population of defectors when defectors cannot arise or adapt via mutation.

346 **Figure 5**

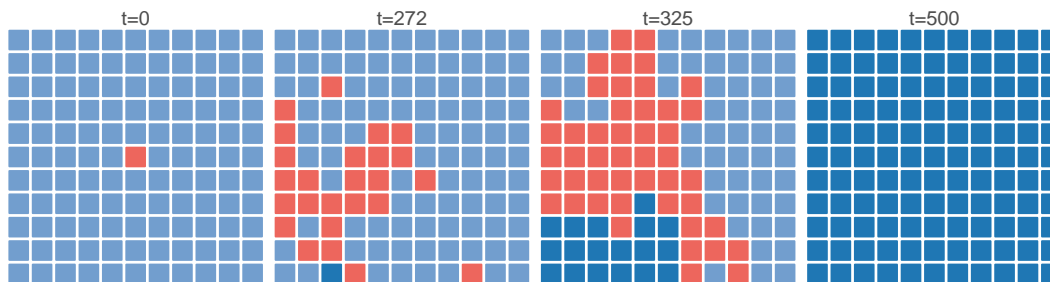


Figure 5: **Defector Invasion Stopped by Cooperator Adaptation.** Here we depict the distribution of dominant genotypes among populations over time for one representative simulation in which matched defectors arise. For clarity, mutations occurred at the adaptive loci, but not at the cooperation locus ($\mu_c = 0$) during this ecological simulation. A time $t = 0$ (leftmost panel), a single matched defector population (red) is placed among cooperator populations (light blue). Because it does not bear the costs of cooperation, it spreads ($t = 272$, second panel). However, one cooperator population gains an adaptation giving it a fitness advantage over defectors (dark blue, lower left). At $t = 325$ (third panel), defectors continue to invade cooperator populations. However, the adapted cooperator genotype, which can invade both defector populations and ancestral cooperator populations, can spread more quickly as populations with that genotype reach greater densities. Eventually, this strategy spreads and fixes in all populations (rightmost panel).

347 **Figure 6**

348 TODO: A: defector invading diverse C population, B: Adapted cooperators
349 cannot spread to resist defector invasion.

³⁵⁰ **Supplemental Figure 1**

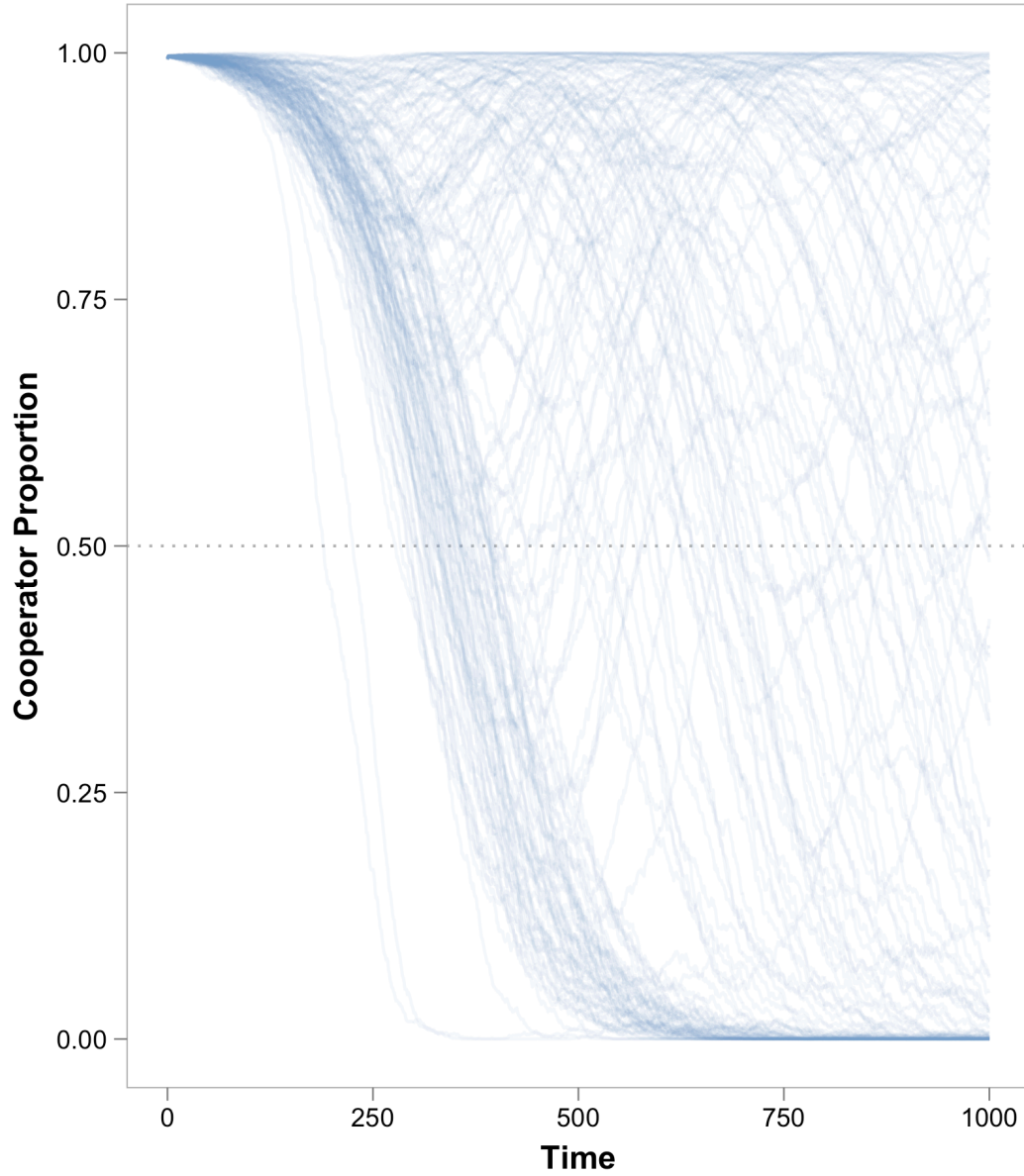


Figure S1: **Defector Invasion with Mutations.** With mutations occurring both at the adaptive loci and the cooperation locus ($\mu_a = \mu_c = 0.00005$), cooperation remains the dominant strategy in 58 replicate simulations. Curves trace the proportion of cooperators present in the population for the duration of 160 replicate simulations ($T = 1000$)

Table 1: Model parameters and their value

Parameter	Description	Base Value
L	Number of adaptive loci	5
c	Fitness cost of cooperation	0.1
A	Number of alleles	6
δ	Fitness benefit, nonzero alleles	0.3
ϵ	Fitness benefit, sequential alleles	0.00015
z	Baseline fitness	1
S_{min}	Minimum subpopulation size	800
S_{max}	Maximum subpopulation size	2000
μ_a	Mutation rate (adaptation)	10^{-5}
μ_c	Mutation rate (cooperation)	10^{-5}
N^2	Number of patches	625
m	Migration rate	0.05
p_0	Initial cooperator proportion	0.5
μ_t	Mutation rate (tolerance to new environment)	10^{-5}
T	Number of simulation cycles	3000
d	Subpopulation dilution factor	0.1

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