TODO title

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3 Abstract

Through their interactions, their activities, and even their mere presence, organisms change the environment for themselves and others. This "niche construction" process becomes particularly interesting when it creates evolutionary feedback, whereby selective pressures are altered in response to environmental change. Here we consider how niche construction influences the evolution of cooperation, which has been a longstanding challenge to evolutionary theory. We simulate populations of individuals that cooperatively produce a public good that permits increased growth in a stressful environment and investigate how local- and global-scale niche construction affects the ability of these populations to resist invasion by non-producing cheats. We find that niche construction profoundly impacts the evolution of cooperation by creating new opportunities for adaptation. Cooperators are able to escape subversion by cheats as long as niche construction clears these paths of adaptation. This work provides a crucial step towards understanding how evolution occurs in complex environments like those found in nature.

20 Introduction

- Cooperative behaviors are common across all branches of the tree of life. Insects divide labor within their colonies, plants and soil bacteria exchange essential nutrients, birds care for others' young, and the trillions of cells in the human body restrain their growth and coordinate to provide vital functions. Each instance of cooperation presents an evolutionary challenge: How can individuals that sacrifice their own well-being to help others avoid subversion by those that do not? Over time, we would expect these defectors to rise in abundance at the expense of others, eventually driving cooperators—and perhaps the entire population—to extinction. Several factors can defer this potential tragedy of the commons (Hamilton, 1964; Hardin, 1968; Nowak, 2006; West et al., 2007b). For example, cooperators must benefit more from the cooperative act than others. This can occur when cooperators are clustered together in spatially-structured populations 33 (Fletcher and Doebeli, 2009; Nadell et al., 2010; Kuzdzal-Fick et al., 2011) or when cooperators use communication (Brown and Johnstone, 2001; Darch et al., 2012) or other cues (Sinervo et al., 2006; Gardner and West, 2010; Veelders et al., 2010) to cooperate conditionally with kin. Interestingly, cooperation can also be bolstered by genetic linkage with self-benefitting traits (Foster et al., 2004; Dandekar et al., 2012; Asfahl et al., 2015), setting the stage for an "adaptive race" in which cooperators and defectors vie for the first highly-beneficial adaptation (Waite and Shou, 2012; Morgan et al., 2012).
- 42 Hankshaw and Kerr (2015) recently showed that in spatially-structured popula-

tions, cooperators can gain a substantial leg up on defectors in an adaptive race when the cooperative behavior increases local population density, thus increasing the likelihood of acquiring beneficial non-social mutations. By hitchhiking along with these adaptations, the cooperative trait can rapidly rise in abundance. Nevertheless, this advantage is fleeting. As soon as the opportunities for adaptation are exhausted, cooperators are once again at a disadvantage against defectors. However, Hankshaw and Kerr (2015) demonstrated that cooperation can be maintained indefinitely when frequent environmental changes produce a steady stream of non-social adaptive opportunities. Although organisms typically find themselves in dynamic environments, change might not occur at a rate that provides sufficient adaptive opportunities to ensure longterm cooperator survival. In this work, we demonstrate how cooperation can be maintained indefinitely by niche construction. We expand upon the model presented in Hankshaw and Kerr (2015) to allow populations to alter their local environment. As environments change, so too does selection. This creates an eco-evolutionary feedback whereby selection is altered based on current phenotypes, which changes the composition of phenotypes and their effects. The effect on selection can be either positive or negative, depending on whether the environmental change increases or decreases the fitness of the niche-constructing individual. Although niche construction occurs independently of cooperation in our model, the increase in density that results from public good production has a profound effect on how populations evolve in the presence of selective feedbacks. First, these populations exert greater influence on their environments, which better

- enables them to benefit from positive niche construction. And as environments
- change, either through negative niche construction or external influences, these
- 69 larger populations can adapt more quickly. We show that it is the combination
- of these factors that allows cooperation to persist.

71 Description of positive NC effects

Include Smax and m sweeps here, or in a later paragraph?

73 Description of negative NC effects

74 TODO

75 Stuff to be cut/integrated above

- 76 This niche construction creates feedback that increasingly favors the adapta-
- tions present in each population. We first examine how the intensity of these
- ⁷⁸ feedbacks affects the hitchhiking process. Because the production of public
- 79 goods increases population density, populations containing cooperators will
- 80 exert a greater influence on their environment. As a result, these environ-
- ments will be more quickly brought to states where fitness is higher.
- As populations construct unique niches, they potentially decrease the threat
- of invasion from neighboring patches. This occurs when the traits that were
- 84 advantageous in an immigrant's home niche are maladaptive elsewhere. Be-
- 85 cause environmental change is influenced solely by non-social phenotypes in
- this model, this change of invasibility affects cooperators and defectors equally.

Here again, however, populations containing a greater number of cooperators may have an advantage. The greater number of individuals that emigrate from these larger populations allow them to "export" their niche—and thus reduce the fitness of neighboring competitors—at a higher rate. We explore whether the range expansion that this process enables provides additional opportunities for cooperation to hitchhike. Finally, we demonstrate how *negative* niche construction, where populations change their environment in ways that reduce fitness, can further support cooperation. Even though the niche construction process creates selective feedbacks, we would expect the magnitude of these feedbacks to decrease as populations evolve. Once individuals can no longer gain adaptations that compensate for the costs of cooperation, they are then outcompeted by noncooperators. However if populations construct their environment in a way 99 which decreases fitness, cooperation can still hitchhike when this change also 100

₂ Materials and Methods

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We build upon the model described in Hankshaw and Kerr (2015), in which cooperators and defectors compete and evolve in a spatially-structured metapopulation of populations. Each of these populations grows to carrying capacity,
mutates, and migrates to neighboring patches. During this process, populations adapt to their local environments. In our extended model, we allow
populations to modify their local environment, and these modifications feed

creates the opportunity to gain compensatory adaptations.

back to affect selection.

10 Model Description

Our simulated environment consists of N^2 patches arranged as an $N \times N$ 111 lattice (see Table 1 for model parameters and their values), where each patch 112 supports a population of zero or more individuals. Each individual in the 113 population has a genotype, which is an ordered list of L + 1 integers (loci). 114 The first L loci are adaptive loci, and are each occupied by a 0 or an integer 115 from the set $A = \{1, \ldots, a_{max}\}$, where a_{max} is the number of potential alleles. 116 At each of these loci, the presence of a non-zero allele represents an adaptation 117 to the environment that confers fitness benefit δ . A binary allele at locus L+1118 determines whether or not that individual is a cooperator. Individuals with 119 allelic state 1 at this locus are cooperators, carrying a cost c, while individuals 120 with allelic state 0 are defectors. When $\delta \geq c$, a minimally-adapted cooperator 121 recoups the cost of cooperation. Equation 1 defines function n(a, l), which 122 gives the number of individuals in the population with allelic state a at locus 123 l. $I_x(y)$ indicates whether the allelic state y matches allelic state x (1) or not (0), and $\gamma(i)$ is the genotype of individual i.

$$n(a,l) = \sum_{i \in P} I_{a_{g,l}}(a_{\gamma(i),l}) \tag{1}$$

Organisms also influence their environment, which, in turn, influences selection. We model this as a form of frequency dependent selection. Specifically, the selective value of adaptive allele a at locus l increases with the number

of individuals in the population that have allele a-1 at locus l-1 (note that we treat both adaptive loci and allelic states as circular, so the allelic 130 state at locus 1 is affected by locus L, and allele 1 is best preceded by allele 131 a_{max}). The slope of this increase is ϵ , which specifies the intensity of niche con-132 struction. As a consequence of this form of frequency dependence, genotypes 133 with sequentially-increasing allelic states will tend to evolve. Because muta-134 tions are random, as described later, each population will evolve sequences 135 that start with different allelic states. These different sequences represent the 136 unique niches constructed by populations. Under this model, the fitness of an 137 individual with genotype q in population P is:

$$W_g = z + \delta \sum_{l=1}^{L} I_A(a_{g,l}) + \epsilon \sum_{l=1}^{L} n(\beta(a_{g,l}, a_{max}), \beta(l, L)) - ca_{g,L+1}$$
 (2)

where z is a baseline fitness, and $a_{g,l}$ represents the allelic state of genotype g at locus l. The function $I_A(a)$ indicates whether a given allelic state a is in A (i.e., it is non-zero), while the function $\beta(x, x_{max})$ gives the value below some value x in the circular set $\{1, \ldots, x_{max}\}$ (Equation 3).

$$\beta(x, x_{max}) = \{(x - 2 + x_{max}) \bmod x_{max}\} + 1$$
 (3)

Cooperators produce a public good that is equally accessible to all members of the population. This public good increases the carrying capacity at that patch, allowing the population to reach greater density. This benefit increases linearly with the proportion of cooperators. Thus, if p is the proportion of cooperators in a population at the beginning of a growth cycle, then that population reaches the following size during the growth phase:

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

The function S(p) reflects the benefit of public good production. A population composed entirely of defectors reaches size S_{min} , while one composed entirely of cooperators reaches size S_{max} (with $S_{max} \geq S_{min}$). During growth, individuals compete for inclusion in the resulting population. The composition of population P with cooperator proportion p after growth is multinomial with parameters and S(p) and $\{\pi_1, \pi_2, \ldots, \pi_{|P|}\}$, where:

$$\pi_i = \frac{W_{\gamma(i)}}{\sum_{j \in P} W_{\gamma(j)}} \tag{5}$$

2). π_i therefore reflects that an individual's ability to persist is proportional 156 to its fitness relative to others'. 157 For simplicity, we apply mutations after population growth. Mutations occur 158 independently at each locus and cause the allelic state to change. Mutations 159 occur at each adaptive locus at rate μ_a , and cause a new allelic state to be 160 chosen at random from the set $\{0\} \cup A$. At the binary cooperation locus, 161 mutations occur at rate μ_c . These mutations flip the allelic state, causing 162 cooperators to become defectors and vice versa. Therefore, the probability 163 that genotype g mutates into genotype g' is given by:

Here, $W_{\gamma(i)}$ is the fitness of an individual i with genotype $\gamma(i)$ (see Equation

$$\tau_{g \to g'} = \mu_a^{H_a(g, g')} (1 - \mu_a)^{\{L - H_a(g, g')\}} \mu_c^{H_c(g, g')} (1 - \mu_c)^{\{1 - H_c(g, g')\}}$$
(6)

where $H_a(g, g')$ and $H_c(g, g')$ are the Hamming distances between genotypes gand g' at the cooperation locus and adaptive loci, respectively. The Hamming 166 distance is the number of loci at which allelic states differ (Hamming, 1950). 167 Because we define no inherent relationship among alleles, each of the $a_{max} + 1$ 168 allelic states is equally likely to arise via mutation at a given locus. 169 After mutation, individuals emigrate to an adjacent patch at rate m. The 170 destination patch is randomly chosen with uniform probability from the source 171 patch's Moore neighborhood, which is composed of the nearest 8 patches on the 172 lattice. Because the metapopulation lattice has boundaries, patches located 173 on an edge have smaller neighborhoods. 174 Metapopulations are initiated in a state that follows an environmental change. 175 First, populations are seeded at all patches with cooperator proportion p_0 and 176 grown to density $S(p_0)$. An environmental challenge is then introduced, which 177 subjects the population to a bottleneck. For each individual, the probability 178 of survival is μ_t , which represents the likelihood that a mutation occurs that 179 confers tolerance. Survivors are chosen by binomial sampling. Because indi-180 viduals have not yet adapted to this new environment, the allelic state of each 181 individual's genotype is set to 0 at each adaptive locus $(\forall i \in P, l \in \{1, ..., L\})$: 182 $a_{\gamma(i),l}=0$). Following initialization, simulations are run for T cycles, where 183 each discrete cycle consists of growth, mutation, and migration. At the end 184 of each cycle, populations are thinned to allow for growth in the next cycle.

185

The individuals that remain are chosen by binomial sampling, where each individual persists with probability d, regardless of allelic state.

Source Code and Software Environment

The simulation software and configurations for the experiments reported are available online (Us, 2015). Simulations used Python 3.4.0, 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).

193 Results

Niche Construction Maintains Cooperation

Despite being able to form larger populations, cooperators are swiftly eliminated in competition with defectors, despite spatial structuring in the metapopulation (Figure 1A). As demonstrated by Hankshaw and Kerr (2015), cooperators are temporarily bolstered by the ability to hitchhike along with non-social adaptations (Figure 1B). As shown in Figure 1C, we find that niche hiking can prolong cooperation, perhaps indefinitely (see Table 1 for model parameters).

(TODO describe the oscillations). We now explore this process further to identify the factors underlying this effect.

Not Just Because of Additional Fitness from Epsilon (TODO title)

In our model, an individual's fitness is the product of two processes. First, mutations can engender environmental adaptations, which are represented by 206 non-zero alleles. These adaptations create the transient lift in cooperation seen 207 in Figure 1B. The second process that contributes to fitness is niche construc-208 tion. Selection favors individuals with sequentially-increasing alleles. Because 209 larger populations will have a greater effect on their environment, this bene-210 fit is density dependent. In our experiments, this positive niche construction 211 contributed equally to fitness when all individuals shared the same allele in a 212 population at maximum carrying capacity. To determine whether cooperation 213 was maintained simply due to the higher selective values made possible by this 214 second source of fitness, we compared our results against the results of exper-215 iments in which the ordering of alleles did not matter, and the fitness benefit 216 provided by adaptation was doubled ($\epsilon = 0, \delta = 0.6$). That this doubling is an 217 over estimate of the magnitude of fitness contributions that arise from niche 218 construction, since these values would only occur in populations at maximum 219 carrying capacity, which does not occur in the presence of defectors. Nevertheless, Figure 2 shows that higher selective values have little effect (columns A and C) and do not explain the maintenance of cooperation that we observe when niche construction occurs (column B). Although we have seen that maximum fitness does not substantially effect the

maintenance of cooperation, perhaps the rate at which fitness accumulates in

cooperator and defector populations matters. When we compare the accumulation of fitness via adaptation in the presence of niche construction (Figure 3A) against simulations in which selective values are doubled (Figure 3B), two features emerge. In both scenarios, cooperators gain adaptations more quickly than defectors due to their size. When niche construction is not present, cooperator fitness is eventually surpassed by that of defectors (Figure 3B). As described by Hankshaw and Kerr (2015), this leads to the demise of cooperators. In contrast, cooperator fitness is never surpassed when niche construction is present (Figure 3A), which allows cooperation to persist.

²³⁵ TODO: discuss time at which fitness plateaus?

236 TODO: describe how maximum fitness is calculated?

Negative Niche Construction Plays a Key Role (TODO title)

Figure 3A also shows that niche-constructing populations never reach maximum fitness. One major contributor to this is the density dependence of
the benefit provided by niche construction. Because defectors remain present
(Figure 1C), the smaller populations that result are unable to unlock the full
benefit of niche construction. The second contributor to the reduced fitness
that we observe is negative niche construction. This occurs in our model due
to selection for sequentially-increasing allelic states and the circular arrangement of these alleles. When the genome length (L) is not evenly divided by
the number of non-zero alleles (a_{max}) , a conflict arises when the allelic state at

locus 1 is not 1 larger than the allelic state at locus L. For example, consider genotype (1,2) when L=2 and $a_{max}=3$. Here, allelic state 2 at locus 2 will be be beneficial, because it follows allelic state 1 at locus 1. However, due to the circular effects, allelic state 1 at locus 1 will be deleterious, because it does not follow 2.

To isolate the effect of negative niche construction, we compare our results 253 against those from simulations in which this allelic conflict was absent (L=5,254 $a_{max} = 5$). Figure 2 shows that although positive niche construction still led 255 to an increase in cooperation (column D), these populations were not able to 256 maintain the same level of cooperation seen in the presence of negative niche 257 construction (column B). We find that because this lack of conflict allows 258 populations to reach a fully-adapted state, cooperators once again acquire 259 these adaptations more quickly but are eventually driven from the population 260 (Figures 3C and 1X). These results indicate that both positive and negative 261 niche construction is required to maintain cooperation. 262

²⁶³ (TODO: explain why defector fitness doesn't reach 4 (density de-²⁶⁴ pendent fitness) maybe better in figure caption?)

To further explore the influence of negative niche construction, we performed experiments in which the positive effects of niche construction were removed. Here, individuals had a single adaptive locus that was constantly in conflict $(L=1, a_{max}=6)$. As seen in Figures 2 (column E) and 3D, the constant source of adaptation that is provided by negative niche construction is not sufficient to maintain cooperation via hitchhiking, and cooperators are quickly purged

- 271 from the population. This provides further evidence that feedbacks from both
- 272 positive and negative niche construction are required for cooperation to persist.

NC Enables Cooperator Spread

Figure 4

NC Prevents Defector Invasion

Figure 5

277 How Public Good Fuels all of this

²⁷⁸ Figure 6 A: effect of Smax-Smin, B: effect of migration rate

Discussion

- summary of results
- similarities/differences from previous work
- Schwilk and Kerr (2002)
- -10.1073/pnas.0812644106
- negative/positive NC
- laland1996evolutionary
- public goods as niche construction

- future QS or other environmental sensing
- Facultative cooperation
- Rodrigues (2012)
- Dumas and Kümmerli (2010)
- Kümmerli and Brown (2010)
- Darch/Diggle
- QS?
- Environmental Sensing? (Koestler and Waters, 2014, Bernier et
- al. (2011))
- Negative Niche construction as a stragegy? would those that create this
- constant pressure (L=5, A=6) do better than those that do not (L=5,
- A=5?
- Niche construction and selective feedbacks Niche construction and other social
- 300 interactions

301 Public Goods

- 302 TODO: merge this in with the "Cooperative Niche Construction" section
- 303 **TEST**
- By their very nature, public goods benefit populations by making their environ-
- ment more hospitable. For example, bacteria produce extracellular products
- that find soluble iron (Griffin et al., 2004), digest large proteins (Diggle et al.,
- 2007; Darch et al., 2012), and reduce the risk of predation (Cosson et al., 2002),

among many others (West et al., 2007a). While many studies have explored 308 how the environment affects the evolution of cooperative bahviors, relatively 309 few have examined how those behaviors affect the environment and the result-310 ing change in evolutionary trajectories. Lehmann (2007) demonstrated analyti-311 cally that when niche construction act benefits future generations, cooperation 312 is favored due to reduced competition among kin. When rate-benefitting and 313 yield-benefitting altruistic acts co-evolve, Van Dyken and Wade (2012) showed 314 that "reciprocal niche construction", where the selective feedbacks produced by one act benefitted the other, can lead to increased selection for both traits. 316 While these studies have focused on the niche constructing effects of cooper-317 ation, we instead focus our attention here on how niche construction enables 318 cooperators to escape defection by hitchhiking along with non-social traits. 319

320 Primacy/Recency

In our model, alterations to the environment were immediately echoed by changes in selection. However, decoupling the timescales on which these pro-322 cesses occur can have substantial effects (Laland et al., 1996). By integrating 323 past allelic states into Equation 2, we can begin to explore how the cumulative 324 effects of niche construction affect the creation of non-social adaptive oppor-325 tunities and the benefits that they offer cooperation. Here, how these past 326 allelic states are integrated will play an important role. For example, when 327 the effects of earlier generations are weighted more heavily, the influence of 328 migration may be diminished. While this will reduce the threat of emigration 329

by defectors, cooperator populations will also be less effective at exporting their niche.

332 Cooperative Niche Construction

While our focus for this work has been on the eco-evolutionary feedbacks created by non-social traits, it would also be interesting to explore how this system 334 is affected by the timescale at which carrying capacity at a given patch is in-335 creased by public goods. In natural settings, a multitude of factors including 336 protein durability (Brown, 2007; Kümmerli and Brown, 2010), diffusion (Al-337 lison, 2005; Driscoll and Pepper, 2010), and resource availability (Zhang and 338 Rainey, 2013; Ghoul et al., 2014) influence both the rate and the degree to 339 which public goods alter the environment (and thereby selection). Lehmann 340 (2007) demonstrated that a cooperative, niche constructing behavior can be fa-341 vored when it only affected selection for future generations, thus reducing the 342 potential for competition among contemporary kin. The evolutionary inertia 343 that this creates, however, may ultimately work against cooperators. When 344 public good accumulates in the environment, cooperators must reduce their in-345 vestment in production to remain competitive (Kümmerli and Brown, 2010). TODO: wrap up. Facultative cooperation requires sensing.

348 Host-Symbiont

In many instances of cooperation, the environment is itself a biological entity,
which can produce additional evolutionary feedbacks. As the host population

changes, so too will selection on their symbiont populations. Here, evolutionary outcomes depend greatly on the degree of shared interest between the host 352 and symbiont. For example, the cooperative production of virulence factors by 353 the human pathogen P. aeruginosa in lung infections is harmful to those with 354 cystic fibrosis (Harrison, 2007). Conversely, cooperative light production by A. 355 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 construc-357 tion 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 pro-360 duce into models is likely to be equally important for gaining an understanding 361 of how cooperative behaviors evolve in these host-symbiont settings.

363 Acknowledgments

• TODO: Organizers?

• TODO: lab comments

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Figures

Figure 1

Figure 1A

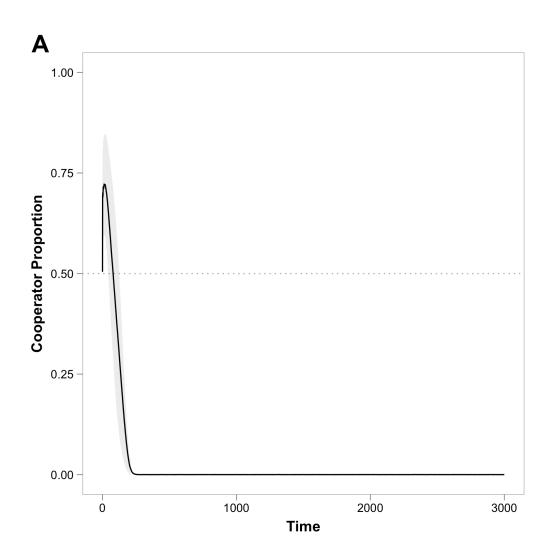


Figure 1: Proportion of cooperators over time when there are no opportunities for non-social adaptation

Figure 1B

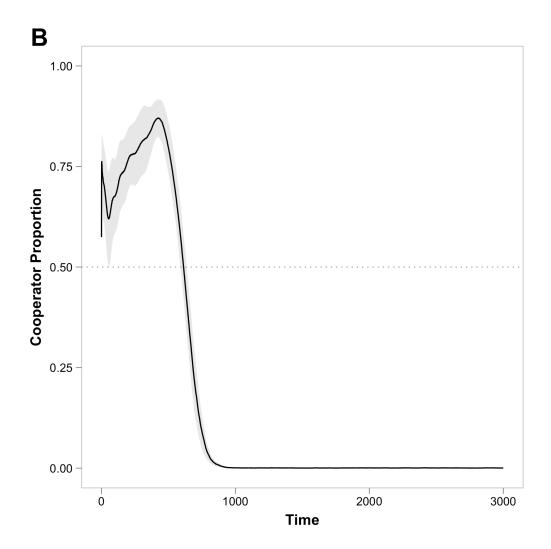


Figure 2: Proportion of cooperators over time with non-social adaptation (GNH) $\,$

- Figure 1C
- Figure 1X

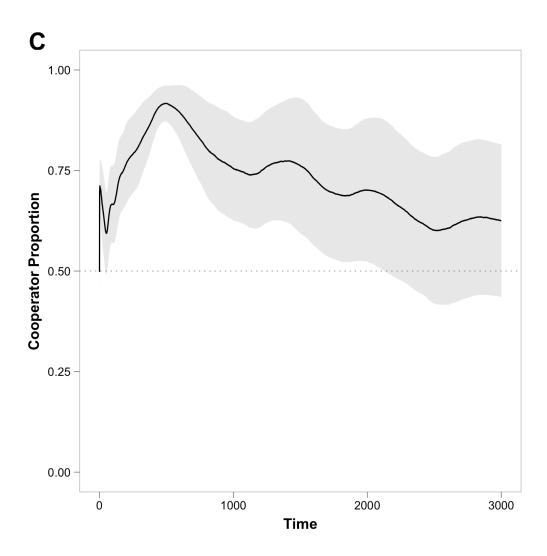


Figure 3: Proportion of cooperators over time with non-social adaptation and selective feedbacks $\,$

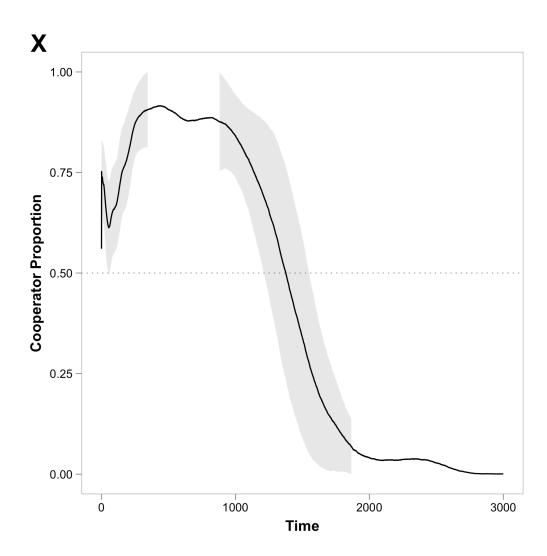


Figure 4: Proportion of cooperators over time without negative niche construction

Figure 2

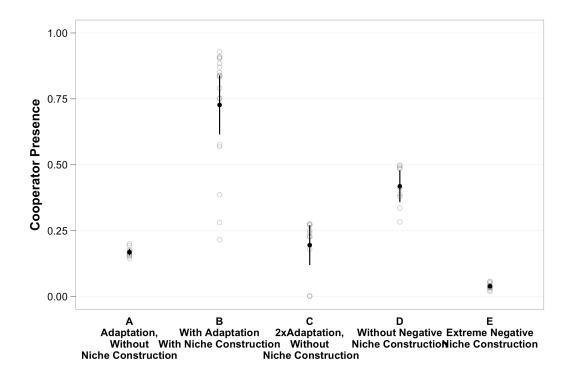


Figure 5: Cooperator Presence TODO

Figure 3

382 Mean fitness over time for the treatments shown in Figure 2

Figure 3A - Fitness for base case: niche construction

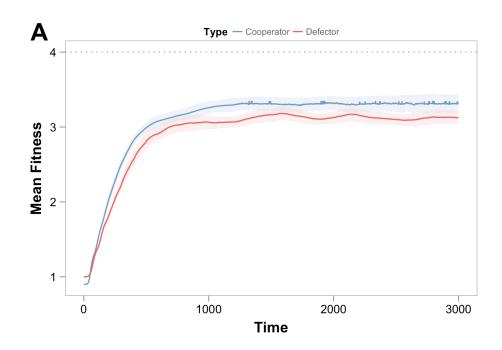


Figure 6: Grand mean Fitness of cooperators and defectors TODO

- Figure 3B Fitness with double delta, no epsilon
- Figure 3C Fitness with no negative niche construction (L=5, A=5)
- Figure 3D Fitness with extreme negative niche construction (L=1, A=6)

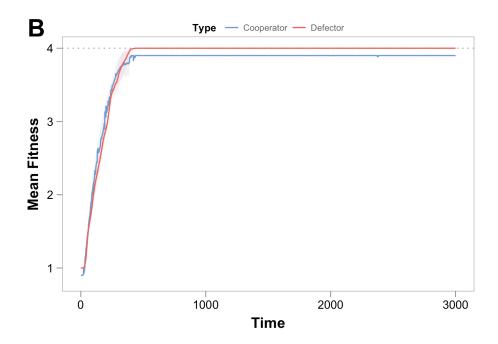


Figure 7: Grand mean Fitness of cooperators and defectors, double delta, no epsilon TODO

Figure 4

Cooperators invade from single population

$_{390}$ Figure 5

Defectors are kept at bay

Figure 6

 $_{393}$ Figure 6A - Effect of Migration Rate (m)

³⁹⁴ Figure 6B - Effect of Public Good Benefit (Smax-Smin)

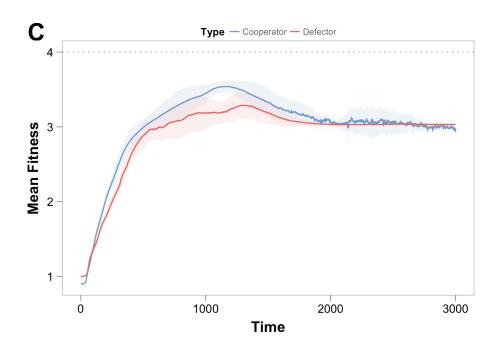


Figure 8: Grand mean Fitness of cooperators and defectors, no negative niche construction TODO

Tables ³⁹⁵

Table 1: Model parameters and their value

Parameter	Description	Base Value
N^2	Number of metapopulation sites	625
L	Number of adaptive loci	5
a_{max}	Number of alleles	6
δ	Fitness benefit, nonzero alleles	0.3
c	Production cost	0.1
ϵ	Fitness benefit, sequential alleles	0.00015
z	Baseline fitness	1

Parameter	Description	Base Value
S_{min}	Minimum population size	800
S_{max}	Maximum population size	2000
μ_a	Mutation rate (adaptation)	10^{-5}
μ_c	Mutation rate (cooperation)	10^{-5}
m	Migration rate	0.05
p_0	Initial cooperator proportion	0.5
μ_t	Mutation rate (tolerance to new stress)	10^{-5}
T	Number of simulation cycles	1000
d	Population dilution factor	0.1

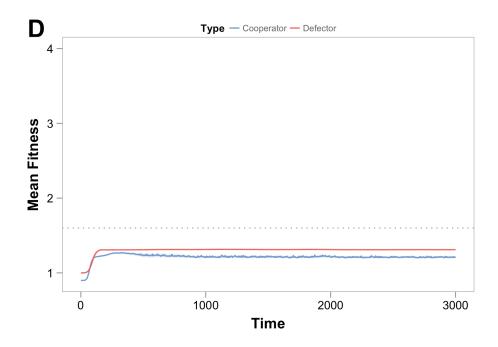


Figure 9: Grand mean Fitness of cooperators and defectors, extreme negative niche construction TODO

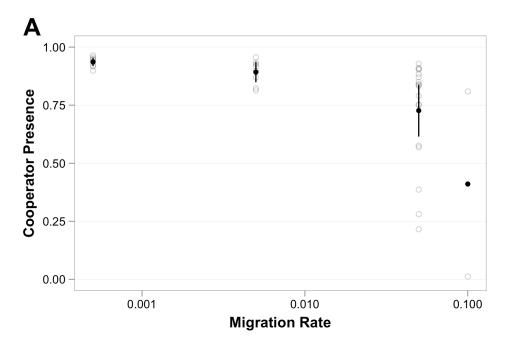


Figure 10: TODO Cooperator Presence for different migration rates

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