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Biology 101

Term paper – Selection

Mcclintock, E. (2014). Beauty and Status: The Illusion of Exchange in Partner Selection? *American Sociological Review*, 79(4), 575-604. Available at: https://na01.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/view/action/uresolver.do?operation=resolveService&package_service_id=1011378620100001842&institutionId=1842&customerId=1840

Summary

The article is about how beauty and status are exchanged by mating of human, and it shows how those factors affect selections. According to the article, pairs usually have similar beauty and socioeconomic status though men who have higher socioeconomic status would exchange his status (or shares his status) with women who have good looking. The article suggests data of married couples to show how they have similar attractiveness and status. According to the data: women had more physical attractiveness about 0.2 point, man had much more current and forecast income about 12 point, man had higher age about 2 years, and they had similar education. Though it would be not possible to accurately calculate one's attractiveness, it is quite believable; men have much better socioeconomical status, but they don't have much worse attractiveness; the pairs had been grown in similar environments.

This article is notable since it analyzes how selecting is done by humans. The given data makes it is easy to understand the selections, and source of the data is credible. Readers would be interested in the article's scientific approach to marriage.

Darwin, C. (2008). *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Available at: https://na01.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/view/action/uresolver.do?operation=resolveService&package_service_id=1011378620140001842&institutionId=1842&customerId=1840

Summary

The first part of this journal is about how men's mentality are different from its lower life forms. Darwin concludes that there is difference of degree but no difference of functions.

The second part of this journal is about sex selection. Darwin questions why male and female have different structure of body parts that are not related to reproduction system. For instance, men have bigger muscle but smaller subcutaneous fat, and those characteristics are not related to reproduction at all; testis and injector are only

needed parts for reproduction. Darwin observes some animals have body parts that are poorly function. According to his theory, natural selection, those parts make it harder to be selected by nature; it is very hard to survive. From the observation, he suggests sex selection. His view on the parts is that those parts are attracting organs: the animals have disadvantages on surviving nature but advantages on winning partners by having those attracting organs. Since not all individuals can mate because of wrecked sex ratio or monogamy, individuals have to compete with others in getting partners, and those organs make it easier to win the competition.

In addition, individuals' rank in the environment or society affects the sex selecting: higher rank individuals can easily get partners, but individuals of lower rank will rarely get partners. Charles Darwin wrote, "our difficulty in regard to sexual selection lies in understanding how it is that the males which conquer other males, or those which prove the most attractive to the females, leave a greater number of offspring to inherit their superiority than the beaten and less attractive males". Darwin concluded that lives are evolved to be selected by the opposite sex.

Discussion

The article of McClintok presents fair results according to the journal of Charles Darwin. Men compete with others to get women, so it makes sense that the data of McClintok's article indicates men has much better economical status than woman but are not much less attractive. The result of McClintok's article shows that mating pairs are from similar environment; they are similarly old and similarly educated. According to Darwin's journal, individuals' rank affects how they are likely to find partners. The result of McClintok's article agrees with Darwin's explanation; individuals from higher rank get partners from higher rank and individuals from lower rank get partners from lower rank unless there is polygamy system.

McClintok made instance of trophy wife, and it can be explained by Darwin's observation. In the case of trophy wife, the sex selection of the female is based on the standard of the male's surviving performance, and the sex selection of the male is based on the attracting organs of the female.

Overall, McClintok's article is credible as it reminds Darwin's theory of sex selection. However, McClintok's data is based on marriage, and marriage is not essential condition of leaving offspring and also vice versa, so it may not be fully credible; a female may have another mating partner and married with a male only for status; cuttlefish does this kind of tactic.