

Prestige as a Driving Force in Cultural Transmission

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Abstract

Copying role-models can be an efficient method for acquiring knowledge. A common bias when choosing a role-model to copy is success bias: copying whoever appears more successful. This bias depends on the performance of the role-model alone, with no other factors. We propose an additional bias that may be prevalent in cultural transmission: influence bias, in which role-model choice is affected by the number of individuals that have already copied each potential role-model. We combine success and influence bias together to a “prestige bias” and analyze its effects on cultural-evolutionary dynamics using mathematical analysis and stochastic simulations. We find analytic approximations to our stochastic model, facilitating further mathematical analysis and reducing the computational complexity of simulations. We validate these approximations using simulations, and demonstrate their robustness to model assumptions. We also find approximations to the fixation probability and the fixation time of an invading advantageous cultural trait, in both a constant and changing environment, which resemble Kimura’s classical formulas. These approximations show that success bias effectively plays the part of natural selection, whereas influence bias effectively reduces the population size. It also accelerates the evolutionary dynamics, as can be expected in a *rich-getting-richer* process. Our model may provide a better description of human cultural transmission, especially in the last years where social networks are very popular. Further work is needed to test if this model could predict various phenomena in human cultural evolution when extended with the effects of selection and innovation.

Introduction

28 **Cultural transmission.** In cultural transmission, individuals transmit cultural traits (i.e., behavior, beliefs, norms) to one another, typically via learning and demonstrating (Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman, 30 1981). Examples for cultural traits in humans are behavioral patterns, such as personalities and habits, transmitted via both verbally and by observations (O'Brien et al., 2010). Although cultural 32 transmission is most common in humans, it is also observed in other animals such as chimpanzees (Horner et al., 2010; Kendal et al., 2015), dolphins and whales (Whitehead, 2017). In elephants, 34 McComb et al. (2001) showed that once a matriarch is removed from the group, the group's survival instincts are inferior and that "the possession of enhanced discriminatory abilities by the oldest 36 individual [matriarch] in a group can influence the social knowledge of the group as a whole." By playing audio recordings of African elephants, they showed that groups with a matriarch recognize 38 and react better to hostile or friendly calls than groups without a matriarch. Battesti et al. (2012) showed that choice of oviposition site in fruit flies is culturally transmitted: inexperienced flies that 40 spent some time with experienced flies chose the same type of oviposition site even without directly observing this behavior. How the information is transmitted is still an open question, but it has been 42 suggested that flies may use olfactory cues like other animals, such as rodents and bees.

Direction of transmission. Similar to genetic transmission, culturally transmitted traits can be trans- 44 mitted from parents to offspring, and their effects of can be physiological rather than behavioral. For example, parents can "teach" their children to be strong or tall, within some biological limits, by 46 instructing them to maintain a specific diet and engage in physical activity. Contrary to genetic transmission, cultural transmission can be non-vertical, that is, traits may be transmitted via social learning 48 from non-parental individuals, and even unrelated individuals such as teachers, leaders, media, or any stranger that interacts with the learning individual. Thus, cultural transmission may combine 50 vertical transmission, where parents transmit to their offspring; oblique transmission, where adults transmit traits to unrelated offspring; and horizontal transmission, where peers from the same age 52 cohort transmit to one another. Vertical transmission is also possible in the opposite direction: parents may copy traits from their offspring (Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman, 1981; Creanza et al., 2017).

54 **Transmission biases.** In social learning, transmission biases cause a trait to have a disproportionate probability to be transmitted compared to its frequency in the population. Although more common in 56 cultural transmission, transmission biases do occur in genetic transmission. For example, *wtf* genes in yeast bias their transmission to the gamete by secreting a long life-expectancy poison together with a 58 short life-expectancy antidote, so that a gamete without the gene will perish because the poison will outlive the antidote (Eickbush et al., 2019). Importantly, even when a trait is disfavored by natural 60 selection, it may still spread in a population due to transmission biases that are strong enough to overcome selection (Boyd and Richerson, 1988, Ch. 8 pg. 279). Cohen et al. (2021) show that 62 cooperative behavior can evolve in an individual due to horizontal transmission bias even when there is no benefit to it, or when it benefits its competitors.

64 **Success bias.** Rendell et al. (2010) have conducted a tournament between learning strategies. Each
strategy defines when individuals observe and copy from others, and when they engage in individual
66 learning, in which an individual learns a cultural trait on his own. The best strategies had a high
frequency of social learning relative to individual learning, even when the transmission error was
68 almost 50%. From these results we understand that all the winning strategies were mostly based on
success biased social learning, meaning it contributed more to the general success of the population
70 than individual learning. However, all winning strategies included individual learning to some degree,
implying that success-biased learning alone isn't the best way to advance, even when success is
72 measured accurately.

Evaluating success. Boyd and Richerson (1988, Ch. 5) suggest that the evaluation of success can
74 be divided into three groups: *direct bias*, *indirect bias* and *frequency-dependent bias*. A direct bias
occurs when a variation of a trait is more attractive than others, and is evaluated by *directly* testing the
76 variation of the trait. For example, an individual observing a Ping-Pong match can attempt both of the
observed paddle grips to determine which grip is better. An indirect bias occurs when an individual
78 uses the value of one trait to determine the attractiveness of another, so it *indirectly* evaluates the
attractiveness of the role-model. For example, an observer may copy the paddle grip of the Ping-Pong
80 player who scored more points in the match, thus indirectly evaluating the grip by the points scored. A
frequency-dependent bias occurs when an individual has a probability to copy a variant of the trait that
82 higher or lower than trait's frequency among demonstrators. For example, when an individual is 80%
likely to copy the common paddle grip even when only 60% of the population is using it, it is said to be
84 frequency-biased, or in this case, conformist. Frequency bias could be negative, i.e., non-conformist
bias. Conformity and non-conformity are well-known biases in cultural transmission (Molleman et al.,
86 2013), and its effect on cultural evolution have been studied with both models (Denton et al., 2020a,b)
and experiments (Aljadeff et al., 2020).

88 **Prestige.** Prestige means having a good reputation or high esteem, therefore does not directly signify
success (although it may imply it), making it an indirect bias. Both Boyd and Richerson (1988, Ch.
90 8) and Fogarty et al. (2017) suggest that prestige biases are probably more common in humans than
success biases. Boyd and Richerson (1988, Ch. 8) add that maladaptive traits may spread widely
92 in a population if indirect biases are strong enough. They suggest that such biases could lead to a
runaway process caused by a cultural equivalent of sexual selection (Andersson, 1994). On the other
94 hand, Henrich and Broesch (2011) suggest that prestige biases, over generations, can lead to cultural
adaptations, and that although prestige can lead to maladaptive traits spreading in the population, it
96 can also accelerate the spread of adaptive traits. Prestige is often mentioned in the cultural-evolution
literature, but seldom modeled.

98 **Influence bias.** Today, social media provides an easy way to estimate the influence individuals have
over others, and therefore may have an effect on decision making. Online social networks such as
100 *Facebook* or *Instagram* are known to affect the social influence of individuals (Anagnostopoulos
et al., 2008; Peng et al., 2018; Diga and Kelleher, 2009). For example, specific marketing practices
102 were invented following this realization (Lee et al., 2012), Here we propose an indirect bias that we

call *influence bias*, in which the choice of a role-model depends on the the choices made by other
 104 individuals that have already chosen a role-model. This bias depends on the state of a role-model
 rather than a trait, in contrast to frequency biases such as conformity, which depend on the frequency
 106 of a trait in the population or in a sample of role-models. We define a model for prestige bias that
 combines both success and influence biases, provide analytic approximations for this model, and
 108 analyze its dynamics.

Models and Methods

110 We begin with a continuous trait model with indirect bias suggested by Boyd and Richerson (1988),
 develop an extension with influence bias, and then develop a model with a dichotomous trait. We
 112 implemented our stochastic models and approximations, performed statistical analyses, and produced
 figures using Python (Van Rossum et al., 2007) with NumPy (Van Der Walt et al., 2011) and Matplotlib
 114 (Hunter, 2007).

Source code is available at [this notebook](#).

116 Continuous trait

We follow the model of Boyd and Richerson (1988), assuming only oblique transmission of the
 118 indicator trait and omitting the indirect trait in order to reduce model complexity. We consider a
 population of N individuals, described by a single indicator trait with a continuous value. Each
 120 generation, N naive individuals, or copiers, choose an individual from the previous generation, or
 role-models, from which they will copy their trait. Similar to a Wright–Fisher model, we assume non-
 122 overlapping generations such that the entire population is replaced in each generation. The population
 at time t can be described by $\mathbf{A}(t) = (A_1(t), \dots, A_N(t))$ where $A_i(t)$ is trait value of individual i at
 124 time t . We assume the initial population is drawn from a standard normal distribution, $\mathbf{A}(0) \sim N(0, 1)$
 . Cultural transmission is modeled by a function F such that

$$126 \quad A_i(t+1) = F_i(\mathbf{A}(t)) . \quad (1)$$

Success bias. Boyd and Richerson (1988, Ch.8, p.247-249) describe a blended transmission algorithm
 128 by defining F as a weighted average of the traits of all role-models,

$$F_i(\mathbf{A}) = \sum_{j=1}^N G_{i,j} \cdot A_j , \quad (2)$$

130 where $G_{i,j}$ is the success bias of role-model j in the eyes of copier i ,

$$G_{i,j} = \frac{\beta(A_{i,j})}{\sum_{k=1}^N \beta(A_{i,k})} , \quad (3)$$

132 $A_{i,j}$ is the absolute indicator trait value copier i estimates for role-model j with some error $e_i \sim N(0, \frac{1}{\eta^2})$,

$$134 \quad A_{i,j} = A_j + e_i, \quad (4)$$

and $\beta(\cdot)$ is the bias function that quantifies the success bias of a role-model,

$$136 \quad \beta(A_{i,j}) = b \cdot \exp\left(-\frac{(A_{i,j} - \hat{A})^2}{2J}\right), \quad (5)$$

with \hat{A} as the arbitrary optimal indicator value, and J and b as parameters that control the bias strength.

138 Therefore, $G_{i,j}$ is a relative success score that copier i assigns to role-model j , equivalent to relative fitness in evolutionary-genetic transmission models.

140 Boyd and Richerson (1988) note that the deterministic blended transmission algorithm they use has alternatives. We thus develop a similar stochastic model with transmission from a single random
142 role-model. Instead of eq. (2), we define the transmission function F as a random variable with its distribution given by

$$144 \quad \Pr(F_i(\mathbf{A}) = A_j) = G_{i,j}, \quad (6)$$

such that $G_{i,j}$ gives the probability of copier i to choose to copy the trait of role-model j .

146 **Influence bias.** Here we introduce a new element to the model. We assume that in each generation, copiers choose their role-models one by one. We denote $K_{i,j}$ as the number of copiers that chose
148 role-model j after copier i chose a role-model. Thus, i out of N copiers already chose a role-model, $\sum_{j=1}^N K_{i,j} = i$, and there are $N - i$ copiers that have yet to choose a role-model. The stochastic process
150 of role-model choice,

$$\{\mathbf{K}_i = (K_{i,1}, \dots, K_{i,N})\}_{i=1}^N, \quad (7)$$

152 is described by the recurrence equation

$$K_{i,j} = K_{i-1,j} + S_{i,j}, \quad i, j = 1, 2, \dots, N, \quad (8)$$

154 where $S_{i,j} = 1$ if the i -th copier chose role-model j and 0 otherwise, and the initial state is $K_{0,j} = 0$.

156 Following eq. (6), the probability that the i -th copier chose role-model j is given by the prestige of role-model j in the eyes of copier i ,

$$158 \quad \Pr(S_{i,j} = 1 \mid S_{1,j}, S_{2,j}, \dots, S_{i-1,j}) = G_{i,j}. \quad (9)$$

The prestige $G_{i,j}$ of role-model j in the eyes of copier i is determined by the estimated biased indicator
160 value $\beta(A_{i,j})$ and the number of copiers that chose role-model j before copier i , $K_{i-1,j}$, replacing eq. (3) of Boyd and Richerson (1988) with

$$162 \quad G_{i,j} = \frac{\alpha_j \cdot \beta(A_{i,j}) + (1 - \alpha_j) \cdot K_{i-1,j}}{W_i}. \quad (10)$$

Here, the bias weight α_j is a characteristic of role-model j that determines the relative significance of
 164 success and influence in his prestige, the indicator value of role-model j estimates by copier i , $A_{i,j}$,
 remains as in eq. (4), and W_i is a normalizing factor that sums the numerator over all role-models
 166 ($1 \leq j \leq N$) to ensure $\sum_{j=1}^N G_{i,j} = 1$.

Dichotomous trait

168 To allow for mathematical analysis of the model, we introduce a simplified version where the indicator
 trait only has two phenotypes: the optimal phenotype \hat{A} and the sub-optimal phenotype A . All role-
 170 models with the same phenotype will contribute to the probability of that phenotype to be transmitted,
 and thus influence is determined by the number of copiers that have already chosen a role-model with
 172 either phenotype. Therefore, the probability of the i -th copier to copy phenotype A is

$$P_{i,A} = \frac{(N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + K_{i,A}}{i - 1 + (N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + X\alpha'\beta(\hat{A})} = \frac{(N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + K_{i,A}}{i - 1 + (N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + \alpha'X} \quad (11)$$

174 where X is the number of role-models with trait \hat{A} and $K_{i,A}$ is the number of copiers that already chose
 A when copier i chooses a role-model and α' is the odd ratio of the indicator trait $\alpha' = \frac{\alpha}{1-\alpha}$.

176 We prove this equation later, based on the proof of the Dirichlet-Multinomial approximation.

Initially, we assume the population has a single individual with phenotype \hat{A} and $N - 1$ individuals
 178 with phenotype A . The rest of the details follow the continuous trait model.

Results

180 Approximations

Our model is defined by two nested stochastic processes. Change over multiple generations is described
 182 by the phenotype distribution at each generation, $\{\mathbf{A}(t)\}_t$. The transition from one generation to the
 next is described by the number of copiers each role-model has after i copiers have chosen a role-
 184 model, $\{\mathbf{K}_i\}_{i=1}^N$. We emphasize that the models are nested: $\mathbf{A}(t + 1)$ can be computed from $\mathbf{A}(t)$ by
 evaluating \mathbf{K}_N . However, the former requires iterating over eqs. (8) and (9). Thus, we sought to find an
 186 equivalent stochastic process that has the same joint distribution as \mathbf{K}_N . We found two approximations
 such processes, summarized here and explained in detail below:

- 188 1. The number of copiers of a specific role-model at each step, $K_{i,j}$, follows the *generalized*
binomial distribution (Drezner and Farnum, 1993) and therefore,
 - 190 (a) the expected number of copiers of role-model j equals its prestige in the eyes of the first
 copier, multiplied by the total number of copiers, that is, $E[K_{N,j}] = N \cdot G_{1,j}$ if trait
 192 estimation error is uniform for all copiers ($e = e_i$ for $i = 1, \dots, N$).
 - (b) the expected number of copiers of each role-model equals its relative biased indicator
 194 value, similar to the role of relative fitness in population-genetic models, that is, $E[K_{N,j}] =$

$\beta(A_j + e)/\bar{\beta}$ if the bias weight is uniform for all role-models ($\alpha = \alpha_j$ for $j = 1, \dots, N$),
 where $\bar{\beta} = 1/N \sum_{j=1}^N \beta(A_j + e)$ is the population mean estimated indicator value.

2. The role-model choice process, $\{\mathbf{K}_i\}_{i=1}^N$, is equivalent to a *Pólya urn* model if trait estimation error is uniform for all copiers ($e = e_i$ for all $i = 1, \dots, N$), meaning there's no meaning for the order of copiers. Therefore, the number of copiers of all role-models, $\mathbf{K}_i = (K_{i,1}, \dots, K_{i,N})$, follows a Dirichlet-Multinomial distribution, $\mathbf{K}_i \sim DM(N, \mathbf{G}_1)$, where $\mathbf{G}_1 = (G_{1,1}, \dots, G_{1,N})$ is the prestige vector of all role-models in the "eyes" of the first copier. Note that here $G_{i,j}$ is only a function of the indicator values A_j and the bias weights α_j , as the estimation error is uniform, meaning all copiers are identical.

Generalized binomial distribution

The generalized binomial distribution (GBD) emerges from a series of dependent Bernoulli trials (in contrast to the standard binomial distribution in which trials are independent) and is parameterized by $GBD(n, p, \theta)$ where n is the number of trials, p is the probability of success of the first trial, and θ is the correlation between trials ($\theta = 0$ gives the standard binomial distribution).

Result 1 (GBD approximation). *The number of copiers of role-model j after i copiers have chosen a role-model follows the GBD, $K_{i,j} \sim GBD(i, \alpha_i \cdot \beta(A_j + e))$ if $e_i = e$ for all role-models $i = 1, \dots, N$.*

Proof. We denote $Q_j(k, i) = P(K_{i,j} = k \mid K_{i-1,j})$ as the probability that exactly k out of i copiers choose role-model j given $K_{i-1,j}$ our of $i-1$ copiers chose role-model j . Using conditional probability and eq. (8),

$$Q_j(k, i) = P_j(S_{i,j} = 1 \mid k-1, i-1) \cdot Q_j(k-1, i-1) + P_j(S_{i,j} = 0 \mid k, i-1) \cdot Q_j(k, i-1), \quad (12)$$

where $S_{i,j} = 1$ when the i -th copier chooses role-model j . Equation (12) is equivalent to eq. (2.1) by Drezner and Farnum (1993), which completes the proof.

Corollary 1. $E[K_{N,j}] = N \cdot G_{1,j}$.

Proof. Drezner and Farnum (1993, eq. (2.3)) show that $E[k] = N \cdot Q_j(1, 1)$ (modified from their notation). $Q_j(1, 1)$ is the initial probability to choose role-model j , before any role-model choices are made. $Q_j(1, 1) = G_{1,j}$ by definition, which completes the proof.

Corollary 2. $E[K_{N,j}] = \alpha_j \cdot \beta(A_j + e) / \overline{\alpha \cdot \beta(A + e)}$, where the averaging in the denominator is over the role-models index, j .

Proof. The initial prestige of role-model j based on eq. (10) is

$$G_{1,j} = \frac{\alpha_j \cdot \beta(A_j + e)}{\sum_{m=1}^N \alpha_m \cdot \beta(A_m + e)}. \quad (13)$$

226 The denominator of eq. (13) can also be formulated as:

$$\sum_{m=1}^N \alpha_m \beta(A_m + e) = N \cdot \overline{\alpha \cdot \beta(A + e)}, \quad (14)$$

228 where $\overline{\alpha \beta(A + e)}$ is the mean value of $\alpha_m \cdot \beta(A_m + e)$ for all m . Using eq. (14) and **Corollary 1** we get,

$$230 \quad E[K_{Nj}] = \alpha_j \cdot \beta(A_j + e) \left/ \overline{\alpha \cdot \beta(A + e)} \right., \quad (15)$$

completing the proof.

232 The special case where the bias weight is uniform for all role-models ($\alpha = \alpha_j$ for $j = 1, \dots, N$) is interesting, because we can evaluate the expected number of copiers using a linear equation

$$234 \quad E[K_{Nj}] = N \cdot \frac{\alpha \cdot \beta(A_j + e)}{\sum_{m=1}^N \alpha \cdot \beta(A_m + e)} = \beta(A_j + e) \left/ \overline{\beta(A + e)} \right., \quad (16)$$

where the only variable is $A_j + e$, because $\overline{\beta(A + e)}$ is the mean of the distribution we draw the indicator values from, modified by some constant parameters of β . We can then denote $L = 1/\overline{\beta(A + e)}$ and write

$$238 \quad E[K_{Nj}] = L \cdot \beta(A_j + e). \quad (17)$$

Numerical validation. To be added

240 **Dirichlet-Multinomial distribution**

Pólya urn model. This stochastic process consists of N draws from an urn with an initial amount of colored balls of M colors. When a ball is drawn, it is then placed back in the urn together with an additional new ball of the same color. Let $\mathbf{U}_i = \{u_{i,1}, u_{i,2}, \dots, u_{i,M}\}$ where $u_{i,j}$ is the number of balls of the j -th color in the urn after i draws. Let $S_{i,j} = 1$ when drawing a j -colored ball on the i -th draw, and 0 otherwise. The probability that $S_{i,j} = 1$ given \mathbf{U}_{i-1} is

$$246 \quad P(S_{i,j} = 1 \mid \mathbf{U}_{i-1}) = \frac{u_{i-1,j}}{\sum_{m=1}^M u_{i-1,m}} = \frac{o_j + w_{i-1,j}}{\sum_{m=1}^M o_m + w_{i-1,m}} = \frac{o_j + w_{i-1,j}}{i - 1 + \sum_{m=1}^M o_m}, \quad (18)$$

where o_j is the initial number of balls of the color j in the urn, and $w_{i,j}$ is the cumulative number of new balls that were added to the urn after i draws of the color j .

250 **Result 2** (Pólya urn model). *The role-model choice process, $\{\mathbf{K}_i\}_{i=1}^N$, is equivalent to a Pólya urn model if both trait estimation error and bias weight are uniform in the population, $e = e_j$ and $\alpha = \alpha_j$*
 252 *for all $j = 1, \dots, N$.*

Proof. Denote $\alpha' = \frac{\alpha}{1-\alpha}$ as the bias weight ratio, and $A'_j = A_j + e$. From eq. (10) and because
254 $\sum_{j=1}^N K_{i,j} = i$, we have

$$G_{i,j} = \frac{\alpha' \beta(A'_j) + K_{i-1,j}}{\sum_{m=1}^N \alpha' \beta(A'_m) + K_{i-1,m}} = \frac{\alpha' \beta(A'_j) + K_{i-1,j}}{i - 1 + \sum_{m=1}^N \alpha' \beta(A'_m)}. \quad (19)$$

256 Substituting $M = N$, $\alpha_j = \alpha' \beta(A'_j)$, and $w_{i,j} = K_{i,j}$ in eq. (18) gives eq. (19), thus completing the proof.

258 Frigyik et al. (2010, section 2) prove that the proportion of different colored balls in a *Pólya urn model* converges to the Dirichlet distribution as the number of draws approaches infinity, based on
260 the *Martingale Convergence Theorem* (Durrett, 1999). We therefore have an approximation for the relative prestige each role-model has when evaluated by copiers. Thus, choosing the role-models for
262 all copiers is equivalent to drawing from a Multinomial distribution where the parameters are the modified weights from a Dirichlet distribution and we have the following corollary.

264

Corollary 3. *The number of copiers of each role-model follows a Dirichlet-Multinomial distribution,*
266 $\mathbf{K}_i \sim DM(N, \mathbf{G}_1)$, *under the conditions of Result 2.*

Numerical validation. To validate our analytical result (corollary 3) and test its sensitivity to the
268 assumptions ($e_i = e$ and $\alpha_i = \alpha$ for $i = 1, \dots, N$) we compare it to results of stochastic simulations. We executed varying amount of simulations of our original model to compute an observed distribution of
270 number of copiers from the average empirical distribution. The number of simulation required depended on the parameters used. To compare the observed distribution with the expected DM distribution,
272 we use a Pearson's chi-squared test of goodness-of-fit to reject or accept the null hypothesis that the simulation results are drawn from a DM distribution.

274 When testing multiple values of the bias weight parameter α , the test p-value was always 1, meaning that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected.

276 For high α values (above 0.5), very few simulations are needed to reach p-value of 1 (less than five simulations for $\alpha = 0.9$, and less than 20 for $\alpha = 0.7$) For very low α values, which means very high
278 influence weight, the number of simulations needed was 100. When testing our observed distributions against different distributions, for example the uniform distribution (all role-models have exactly one
280 copier), the p-value was 0, so that the null hypothesis was rejected, as required.

Model testing

282 Here we examine the difference between the dichotomous trait model defined in eq. (11) and the Dirichlet-Multinomial approximation we presented in corollary 3. We focus on the fixation probability
284 and fixation time of the advantageous phenotype \hat{A} when invading a population of phenotype A .

First, we find that the number of simulations needed to sufficiently approximate our model with the DM
286 approximation is roughly 1000 (Figure 1). Next, we examined the robustness of the DM approximation

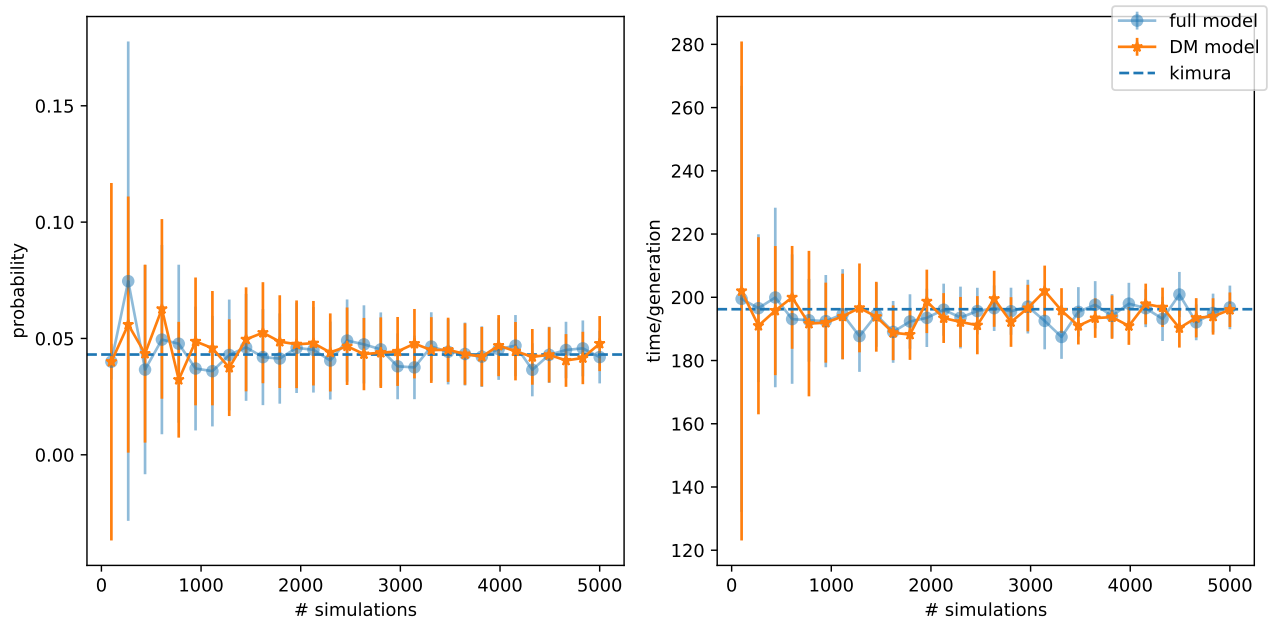


Figure 1: Number of simulations needed to get a good approximation. The approximation (orange) fits simulation results (blue) well when using 1,000 simulations. Markers for average value across simulations, error bars for 95% confidence interval. Here, population size, $N = 1000$; bias weight, $\alpha = 0.5$; phenotype values, $\hat{A} = 1$, $A = 0.7$; success bias value, $\beta(A) = 0.956$.

to relaxing the approximation assumptions First we relaxed our assumption of no estimation error e .
 Estimation error in the original model was drawn from a normal distribution, and added to the trait
 value before evaluation of the bias ($A_{ij} = A_j + e_i$).

In the dichotomous model the estimation error will be added by using heterogeneous J parameter,
 which controls the strength of the bias of eq. (5).

In fig. 2 we see the comparison when heterogeneous estimation error is applied to both models. When
 estimation error is applied, we sample J_i for each copier i from a normal distribution with varying
 scale (variance). We can see that even when the standard deviation is 0.1, the metrics of both models
 are both similar, and close to the Kimura approximation (more details in the next section).

In fig. 3 we relaxed our assumption of a homogeneous α , and used a heterogeneous α instead. Similar
 to the estimation error comparison, we drew α_j for each role-model j from a normal distribution with
 varying scale. We again see that the metrics of both models are similar in the entire spectrum of our
 x-axis, and the Kimura approximation is within both confidence intervals.

Fixation probability and time

After finding that the DM distribution is a good approximation of the role-model choice process we
 turn our attention to the evolutionary dynamics. We focus on the effect of the bias weight (α), which
 determines the relative effects of success and influence on prestige bias, on the fixation probability and
 fixation time of an advantageous phenotype, similar to analyses in population-genetic models. For
 simplicity, we do not include estimation error in this analysis. As shown above, transmission in our

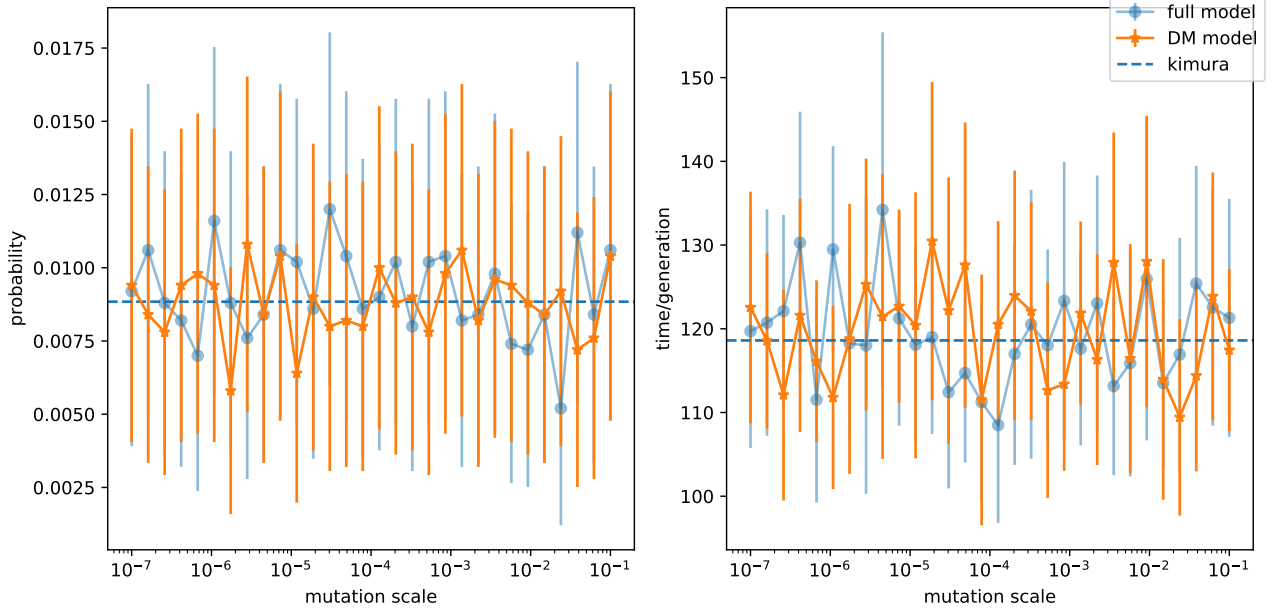


Figure 2: Robustness of DM approximations to inclusion of estimation error. Both the DM approximation (orange) and Kimura's equation (black line) fit the stochastic simulations (blue) well even with a high estimation error rate. Markers for average across simulations, error bars for 95% confidence intervals. 5,000 simulations per data point; population size, $N = 1000$; bias weight, $\alpha = 0.1$; phenotype values, $\hat{A} = 1, A = 0.7$; $J \sim N(1, x^2)$ where x is the estimation error scale in the x-axis.

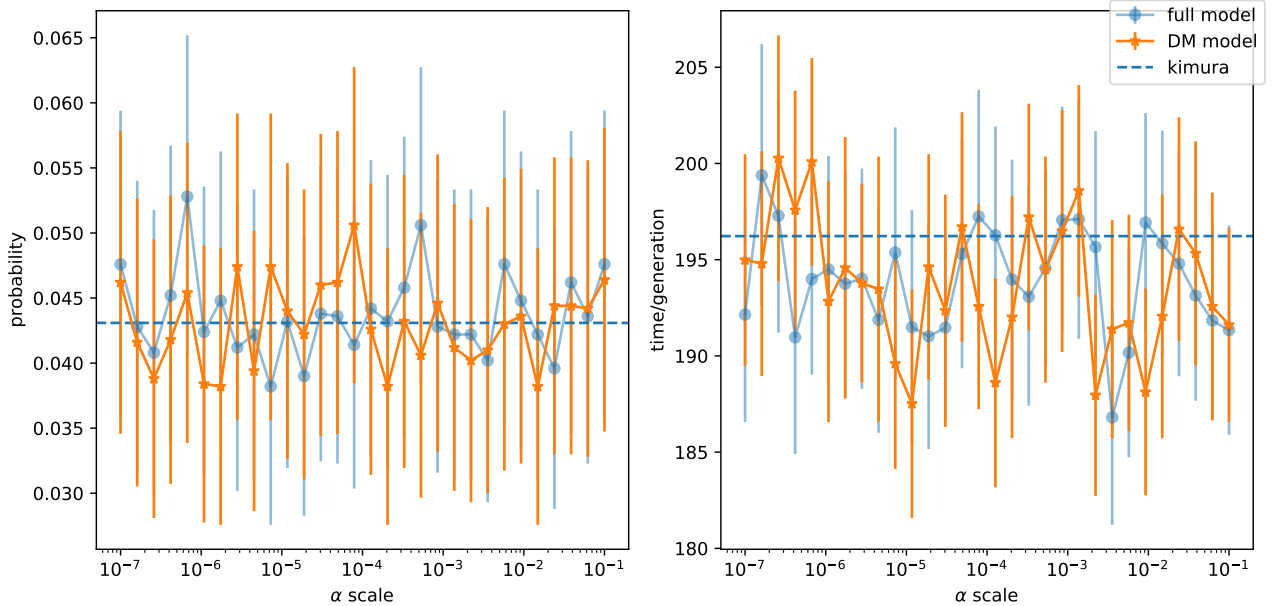


Figure 3: Comparison of the DM approximation and the full model when success weight is heterogeneous. High success weight variance distances the approximation and the full model of generations to fixation from the Kimura's approximation, but not by much (confidence intervals still cover it). Error bars are 95% confidence intervals, and are less condensed (± 0.03 probability and ± 40 generations) 5000 simulations per data point, $N = 1000$, $\alpha \sim N(0.5, x^2)$, $\hat{A} = 1, A = 0.7$, $J = 1$, $\beta(A) = 0.956$.

306 model is approximately DM distributed with a parameters

308 **Result 3** (Effective selection coefficient). $1 - \beta(A)$ is equivalent to the selection coefficient s in the
diffusion-equation approximation of the a classic Wright-Fisher model that approximate the fixation
310 probability and fixation time of an advantageous allele.

Proof. Let x be the frequency of type \hat{A} in the population with N individuals. Let X be the number of
312 individuals of type \hat{A} so $x = X/N$. X' is the number of individuals with \hat{A} in the next generation and
 x' their frequency. By definition $\beta(\hat{A}) = 1$, and for simplicity we'll denote $\beta(A) = \beta$ ($\beta < 1$).

314 The expected number of individuals of a DM distribution is:

$$E[X'] = N \frac{\alpha_1}{\alpha_1 + \alpha_2}, \quad (20)$$

316 where $\alpha_1 = \alpha'X$ and $\alpha_2 = \alpha'(N - X)\beta$, from eq. (11). We want to use frequencies instead of quantities
to follow Durrett's process so:

$$318 \quad E[x'] = E\left[\frac{X'}{N}\right] = \frac{1}{N}E[X'] \quad (21)$$

Putting it together we get:

$$\begin{aligned} 320 \quad E[x'] &= \frac{1}{N}N \frac{\alpha'xN}{\alpha'xN + \alpha'N(1-x)\beta} \\ &= \frac{x}{x + (1-x)\beta} \end{aligned} \quad (22)$$

which is identical to the equation in the top of page 253, chap 7.2 in Durrett (2008). We therefore use
322 the same approximation and say that:

$$\begin{aligned} E[x'] &= \frac{x}{x + (1-x)\beta} = \frac{x}{x + (1-x)(1-s)} = \\ &= x + x(1-x)s + o(s) \\ &= x + x(1-x)(1-\beta) + o(1-\beta) \end{aligned} \quad (23)$$

324 By definition, x is constant, so $E[x] = x$. We continue to calculate $E[x' - x]$:

$$E[x' - x] = E[x'] - E[x] = x(1-x)(1-\beta) + o(1-\beta) \quad (24)$$

326 where when substituting $1 - \beta$ with s , we get the same result as Durrett (2008) which is the desired
result.

328 **Result 4** (Effective population size). $N_e = \alpha N + (1 - \alpha)$, where N_e is the effective population size of
our binary model.

330 *Proof.* The variance of a DM distribution is:

$$V(X') = N \frac{\alpha_1}{\alpha_1 + \alpha_2} \left(1 - \frac{\alpha_1}{\alpha_1 + \alpha_2}\right) \left(\frac{N + \alpha_1 + \alpha_2}{1 + \alpha_1 + \alpha_2}\right) \quad (25)$$

332 And again, we want to use frequencies so:

$$V\left(\frac{X'}{N}\right) = \frac{1}{N^2} V(x') \quad (26)$$

334 Putting it together with our model's notations:

$$V(x') = \frac{1}{N^2} N \frac{x}{x + (1-x)\beta} \left(1 - \frac{x}{x + (1-x)\beta}\right) \left(\frac{N + \alpha'xN + \alpha'N(1-x)\beta}{1 + \alpha'xN + \alpha'N(1-x)\beta}\right) \quad (27)$$

336 Like Durrett, we'll use the zero order of the approximation when $\beta \approx 1$, so:

$$\frac{x}{x + (1-x)\beta} \approx x \quad (28)$$

338 and we also use $\beta \approx 1$ for the entire variance expression and get:

$$\begin{aligned} V(x') &\approx \frac{1}{N} x(1-x) \left(\frac{N + \alpha'xN + \alpha'N - \alpha'xN}{1 + \alpha'xN + \alpha'N - \alpha'xN}\right) \\ &= x(1-x) \left(\frac{1 + \alpha'}{1 + \alpha'N}\right) \end{aligned} \quad (29)$$

340 Again following Durrett we want to calculate:

$$V(x' - x) = V(x') - V(x) \approx x(1-x) \left(\frac{1 + \alpha'}{1 + \alpha'N}\right) \quad (30)$$

342 because x is a constant so $V(x) = 0$

In our model, α' is the odds ratio of a parameter we called "indicator weight", denoted in our model

344 as α , so:

$$\alpha' = \frac{\alpha}{1 - \alpha} \quad (31)$$

346 Combining eq. (30) and eq. (31) we get:

$$\begin{aligned}
V(x' - x) &\approx x(1 - x) \left(\frac{1 + \frac{\alpha}{1-\alpha}}{1 + \frac{\alpha}{1-\alpha}N} \right) \\
&= x(1 - x) \left(\frac{\frac{1-\alpha+\alpha}{1-\alpha}}{\frac{1-\alpha+\alpha N}{1-\alpha}} \right) \\
&= x(1 - x) \left(\frac{1}{1 - \alpha(1 - N)} \right) \\
&= x(1 - x) \left(\frac{1}{\alpha N + (1 - \alpha)} \right) \\
&= x(1 - x) \frac{1}{N_e}
\end{aligned} \tag{32}$$

348

Using our substitute for a selection coefficient, $1 - \beta$, and the effective population size N_e , we can
350 estimate the fixation probability and time of our binary model.

The fixation probability derived from Kimura is therefore:

$$352 \quad P_{fix} = \frac{1 - e^{-2(1-\beta)N_e x}}{1 - e^{-2(1-\beta)N_e}} \tag{33}$$

where x is the initial frequency of the advantageous phenotype \hat{A} .

354 The time to fixation can be estimated by:

$$T_{fix} = \frac{1 - P_{fix}}{1 - \beta} \int_0^x \frac{e^{2(1-\beta)\xi} - 1}{\xi(1 - \xi)} d\xi + \frac{P_{fix}}{1 - \beta} \int_x^1 \frac{1 - e^{-2(1-\beta)(1-\xi)}}{\xi(1 - \xi)} d\xi \tag{34}$$

356 where the integrals cannot be solved in closed form, so we can only estimate them numerically.

To validate our math we ran multiple simulations comparing our binary model with the classic Wright-
358 Fisher model, using different α and β each time, and using the corresponding values of s and N_e for
the WF simulations. In fig. 4 we changed α (and N_e accordingly) and used a constant β . In fig. 5 we
360 changed β and used a constant α . In both cases we can see that the two models behave similarly, and
both are approximated well by the Kimura's equations: eq. (33) and eq. (34).

362 Changing environment

After finding good estimations for our model in a constant environment, when the favorable trait is
364 always \hat{A} , we want to find an estimation for our model in a changing environment.

For that we will find an expression for the expected and variance of the change in frequency between
366 t generations. Let $s_t = N(1 - \beta_t)$, and $S_n = \sum_{i=1}^n s_i$, where β_t is $\beta(A)$ at time/generation t .

Proposition: $E[\frac{X_t}{N} - x] \simeq \frac{1}{N} S_t x(1 - x)$, $V(\frac{X_t}{N}) \simeq \frac{1}{N_e} t x(1 - x)$, where x is the initial frequency of the
368 favorable/invading trait and X_t is the number of individuals with the trait at time t .

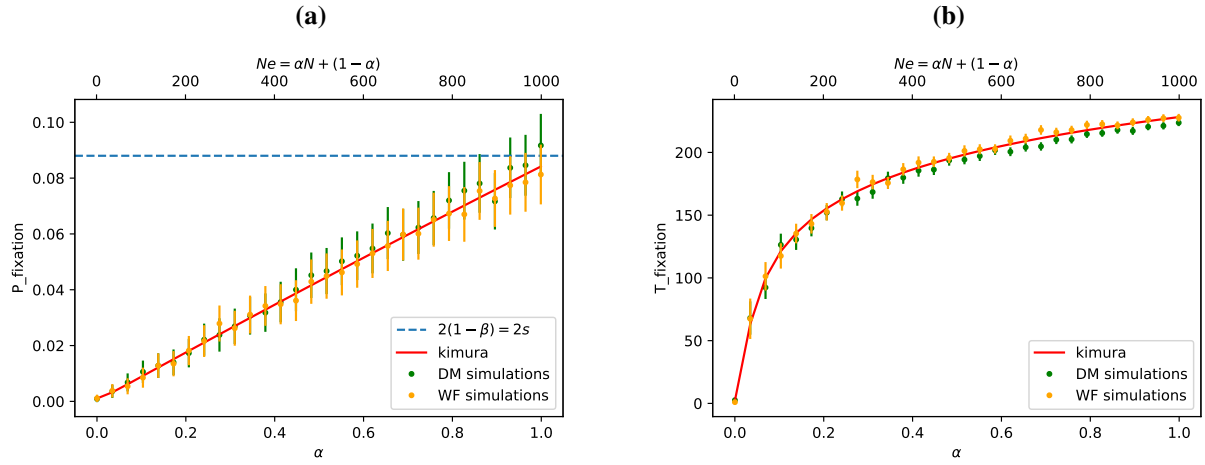


Figure 4: Comparison of the DM approximation and the WF model for different values of the effective population size. The approximation seems very good, and is also condensed around the mathematical equation expectancy. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals. Effective population calculated by $N_e = \alpha N + (1 - \alpha)$. 5, 000 simulations per data point, $N = 1,000$, $\hat{A} = 1$, $A = 0.7$, $J = 1$, $1 - \beta = s = 0.044$.

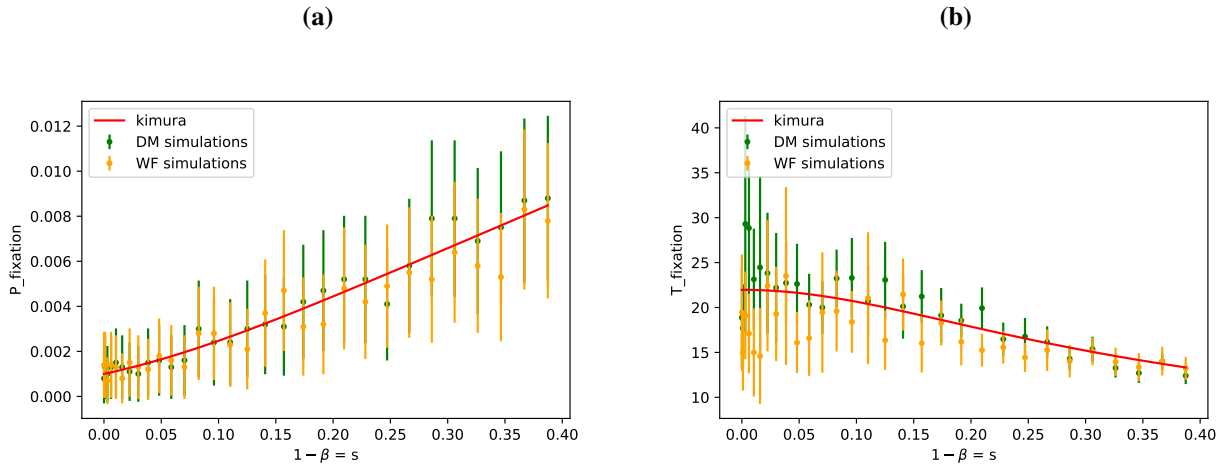


Figure 5: Comparison of the DM approximation and the WF model for different values of the selection coefficient, manifested as success bias in our model. The approximation seems good, and is also condensed around the mathematical equation expectancy. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals. Effective population calculated by $N_e = \alpha N + (1 - \alpha)$. 5, 000 simulations per data point, $N = 1,000$, $\hat{A} = 1$, $A = 0.7$, $J = 1$, $\alpha = 0.01$.

The proof is based on the proof of Ram et al. (2018), proving a similar scenario.

370 **Proof by induction:** From eq. (24) we know that

$$\begin{aligned}
 E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} - \frac{X_t}{N} \middle| X_t \right] &= \frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) (1 - \beta_{t+1}) \\
 &= \frac{1}{N} \frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) s_{t+1}
 \end{aligned} \tag{35}$$

372 Also note that using the definition of $V(y) = E[y^2] - (E[y])^2$

$$\begin{aligned}
E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \right] &= E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} - \left(\frac{X_t}{N} \right)^2 \right] \\
&= E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] - E \left[\left(\frac{X_t}{N} \right)^2 \right] \\
&= E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] - V \left(\frac{X_t}{N} \right) - \left(E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \right)^2
\end{aligned} \tag{36}$$

374 we can now use the induction assumption of $V(\frac{X_t}{N})$ and get

$$E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \right] \simeq E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \left(1 - E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \right) - \frac{1}{N_e} tx(1-x) \tag{37}$$

376 From eq. (35) we know that

$$\begin{aligned}
E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} - \frac{X_t}{N} \right] &= \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \right] \\
&\simeq \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \left(E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \left(1 - E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \right) - \frac{1}{N_e} tx(1-x) \right) \\
&\simeq \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \cdot E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \left(1 - E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \right) - \frac{1}{N_e N} s_{t+1} tx(1-x)
\end{aligned} \tag{38}$$

378 Now we'll omit $O(\frac{1}{N_e \cdot N})$ and get

$$E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} - \frac{X_t}{N} \right] \simeq \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \cdot E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \left(1 - E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] \right) \tag{39}$$

380 We'll now look at the induction assumption to see that

$$E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} - x \right] = E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] - E[x] = E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] - x, \tag{40}$$

382 so using the assumption we get

$$\begin{aligned}
E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] &\simeq \frac{1}{N} S_t x(1-x) + x \\
1 - E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \right] &\simeq 1 - \frac{1}{N} S_t x(1-x) + x
\end{aligned} \tag{41}$$

384 we'll use both expressions in eq. (39) and get

$$\begin{aligned}
E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} - \frac{X_t}{N} \right] &\simeq \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \left(\frac{1}{N} S_t x(1-x) + x \right) \left(1 - \frac{1}{N} S_t x(1-x) + x \right) \\
&\simeq \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \cdot x(1-x)
\end{aligned} \tag{42}$$

386 after again omitting $O(\frac{1}{N^2})$ parts of the equation. To conclude our proof, we see that

$$E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} - x \right] = E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} - \frac{X_t}{N} \right] + E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} - x \right] \quad (43)$$

388 so again using the induction assumption, together with eq. (42) we get

$$\begin{aligned} E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} - x \right] &\simeq \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \cdot x(1-x) + \frac{1}{N} S_t \cdot x(1-x) \\ &\simeq \frac{1}{N} x(1-x)(S_t + s_{t+1}) \\ &\simeq \frac{1}{N} S_{t+1} x(1-x) \end{aligned} \quad (44)$$

390 which proves the first part of our preposition.

For the second part, we'll use a property of variance:

$$392 \quad V \left(\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \right) = E \left[V \left(\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \middle| X_t \right) \right] + V \left(E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \middle| X_t \right] \right) \quad (45)$$

using eq. (35) we see that:

$$\begin{aligned} E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \middle| X_t \right] - E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \middle| X_t \right] &= \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \\ E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \middle| X_t \right] &= \frac{X_t}{N} + \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \end{aligned} \quad (46)$$

Using eq. (32) we get:

$$396 \quad V \left(\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \middle| X_t \right) = \frac{1}{N_e} \frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \quad (47)$$

and using the equation $y'(1-y') \simeq y(1-y)$ on the first part of eq. (45) we get:

$$398 \quad E \left[V \left(\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \middle| X_t \right) \right] = \frac{1}{N_e} E \left[\frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \right] \simeq \frac{1}{N_e} x(1-x) \quad (48)$$

and moving on to simplify the second part of eq. (45) using eq. (46):

$$400 \quad V \left(E \left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N} \middle| X_t \right] \right) = V \left(\frac{X_t}{N} + \frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \right) \quad (49)$$

and now, because $\frac{X_t}{N}$ is a frequency, i.e $0 \leq \frac{X_t}{N} \leq 1$, we know that $V \left(\frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \right) \leq \frac{1}{4}$. We therefore

402 see that:

$$V \left(\frac{1}{N} s_{t+1} \frac{X_t}{N} \left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N} \right) \right) \leq \frac{1}{4N^2} s_{t+1}^2 \quad (50)$$

(a) success bias/selection coefficient is: $1 - \beta = s = 0.005$

(b) success weight is: $\alpha = 0.1$

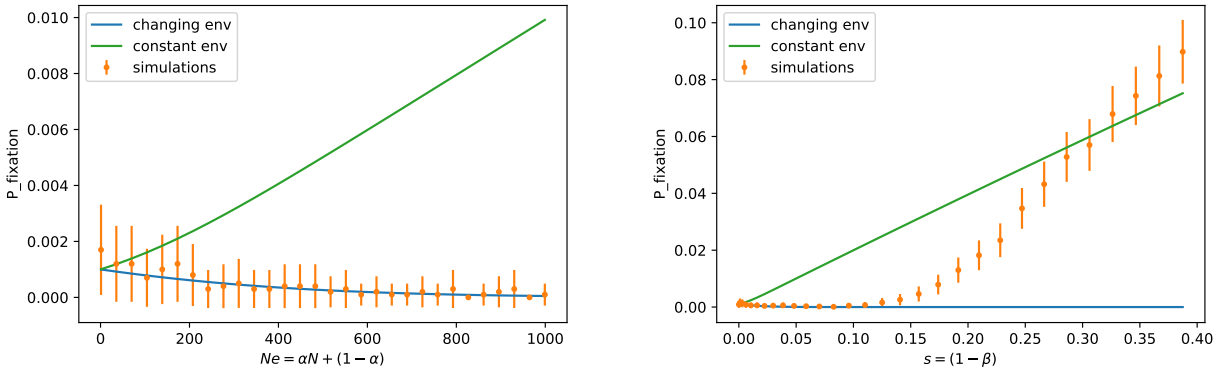


Figure 6: Model simulations compared with both the constant environment equations with different effective populations sizes and selection coefficients. Changing the effective population size doesn't affect the approximation, and it is condensed the mathematical expected values across all values. High values of success bias ($s > 0.1$) will distance the simulations from the changing environment expected values. Very high values ($s > 0.35$) will even deviate from the constant environment expected values. This is expected because Kimura's approximation are only viable for low selection coefficient values. 10,000 simulations per data point, $N = 1,000$, $\hat{A} = 1$, $A = 0.9$, $J = 1$.

404 and so it can be ignored. Combining our equations we get:

$$V\left(E\left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N}\middle|X_t\right]\right) = V\left(\frac{X_t}{N}\right) + O\left(\frac{1}{N^2}\right) \simeq V\left(\frac{X_t}{N}\right) \quad (51)$$

406 Using the induction assumption and eq. (48):

$$V\left(\frac{X_{t+1}}{N}\right) \simeq \frac{1}{N_e}x(1-x) + \frac{1}{N_e}tx(1-x) \simeq \frac{1}{N_e}x(1-x)(t+1) \quad (52)$$

408 proving the second part of our preposition.

Following our proof, we can say that after many cycles, we can use a modified version of our fixation
 410 probability:

$$P_{fix} = \frac{1 - e^{-2\frac{S_n}{n}N_e x}}{1 - e^{-2\frac{S_n}{n}N_e}} \quad (53)$$

412 where $\frac{S_n}{n} = \frac{k-l}{k+l}(1 - \beta)$, $n = k+l$. Put into words, we use the average selection coefficient of a cycle
 (k + l) as the selection coefficient in our original equation. In our proof we showed that the expected
 414 change in frequency and variance is only manifested in the selection coefficient S_n , and that we can
 use those modified equation as a base for Kimura's equation.

416 We wanted again to validate our results, using simulations. This time, the number of parameters
 increased: in addition to α, β , there are also k, l as model parameters.

418 We again tried different variations of the parameters, changing only one of them at a time. In fig. 6
 we can see that α on its own does not cause any deviation for the the estimation. β however affects
 420 the results greatly.

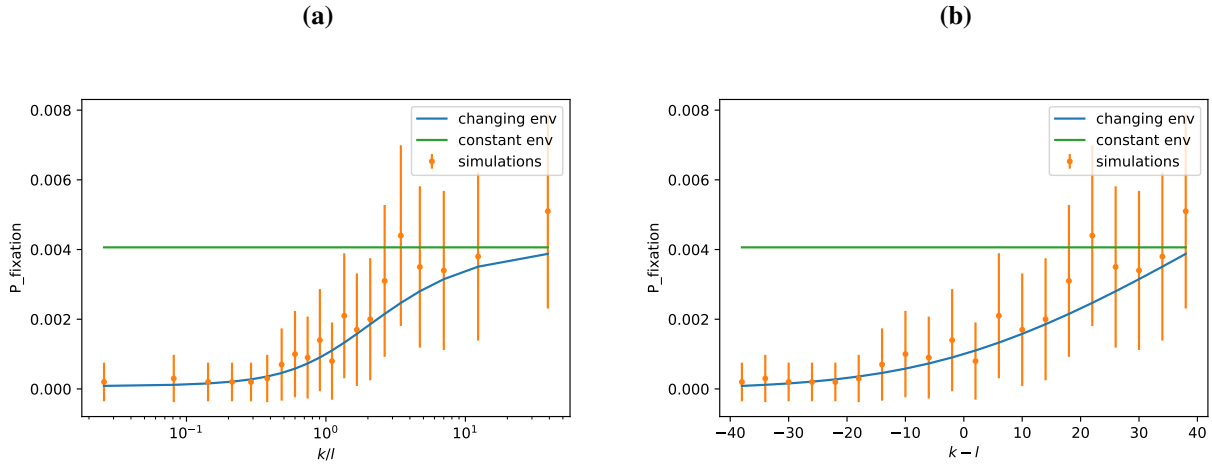


Figure 7: Model simulations compared with both the constant environment and the changing environment equations for different compositions of the environment cycle. When $k < l$ the approximation is good. When $k > l$, the approximation and the simulations are both very close to the constant environment approximation. 10,000 simulations per data point, $N = 1,000$, $\hat{A} = 1$, $A = 0.8$, $J = 1$, $1 - \beta = s = 0.02$, $\alpha = 0.1$.

We plotted along the modified estimation the original Kimura's estimation, as a limiter. We suspect that when β is too large, there won't be many cycles in the simulations. This might happen if either the population reaches a high frequency of the ideal trait after only a few cycles, or it get extinct very quickly, because the advantage it had in the k generations wasn't sufficient, and the same s becomes a greater disadvantage when the environment changes, resulting in a fast extinction.

In the larger values of β we even see a deviation from the original estimation environment, but it's to be expected, because Kimura's equations are only viable for small s values.

We then also tried changing the composition of the cycle, by keeping a constant $n = 40$, but changing k, l accordingly.

In fig. 7 we see that the larger k relative to l , the closer the modified equation is to the original estimation of the constant environment. When using higher values of n , the simulation results doesn't fit the equation result as with lower values. This is due to the fact that our proof, and therefore our equation is more accurate when more cycles occur. When n is high, there will be less cycles, and the simulations will get closer to the constant environment equation.

Discussion

summary

Cultural transmission is the phenomenon of which cultural elements, in the form of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavioral patterns, are transmitted between individuals, typically via copying. Some cultural traits can be more likely to be copied by others, regardless of their frequency in the population. Such transmission biases are common in cultural transmission processes. Many models are based on the assumption that success can be correctly identified, and easily copied. Here we assume that success isn't correctly identified, therefore individuals may use other indicators to try and estimate

the success of potential role-models. We believe, as Fogarty et al. (2017) suggest, that *prestige biases* are more common in nature than success biases, since estimating success accurately is harder. **We investigated the effects of prestige on a population:** we studied the behavior of an invading trait, analyzed its dynamics mathematically, and extended the basic constant environment to a changing one. We believe prestige is composed of two main components: a trait that indicates success (but doesn't guarantee it), and the influence the individual already has on others, i.e number of individuals already chose him as a role-model. We suggest a model for *prestige bias*, inspired by the model Boyd and Richerson (1988) have suggested, and added the *influence bias* to it. **We approximated our models using various distributions, and compared them to the original model using simulations.** We showed that a *Rich getting richer* type of model can be approximated well by the general binomial distribution and the dirichlet multinomial distribution. We experimented with constant and changing environment in our model, and created a variation of a binary model for easier mathematical and computational analysis. We believe that in this era of social media it is easy to estimate one's influence over others. It is therefore crucial to model the cultural biases more realistically than success bias based model, and we believe including influence is crucial for that purpose.

With a more realistic model of a common cultural transmission bias, we may be able to better understand decision-making processes in humans, including life-changing choices such as occupation or a life partner. Our model can be expanded in multiple ways: observing the effects of different bias functions, including errors in estimating the influence, combining factors of cost when copying from an influential role model (not all could afford to copy from the most popular role-model), and analyzing the differences when including several optimal values for the indicator trait (multiple preference traits in the population).

Prestige in the literature

So far we discussed prestige as a main bias in humans, and to some extent in non-human species. Here we further base our claims and present additional appearances of prestige in nature and in the literature.

King and Cowlshaw (2009) describe a manifestation of prestige in the form of leadership in animals. According to them, there are two main approaches to decision makings of groups in nature: leadership and consensus. Prey leaders would lead the pack when traveling, while other animal group leaders will decide on a nesting site or foraging patches. They found out that leadership is observed mostly when there is a profound social network in the group, and when there are individuals that present leadership behavior. Leaders would usually be high ranking members in the group, such as elders, individuals with many kin relations, or posses other dominant traits. When no individual posses such traits, or when the social network is lacking, a consensus is more likely to occur. When a leader is present, they will have greater selection costs, such as higher risk for predation, being poisoned by unknown experimental patch, but also greater benefits. For example, given the route to the foraging site was successful, the leader and his closest followers would gain most of the food, unlike in a consensus, where the food would be shared more equally. It appears leaders appear in simple organisms as well, like fish. In these organisms however, the leader would usually be the hungriest

482 or the weakest, while the rest would prefer to follow, minimizing their costs. In baboons however,
King and Cowlshaw (2009) describe many benefits for the closest associates of the dominant male,
484 such as protection from predators. This is an instance of sexual-selection, where the leader, whose
survival chances are lower, gains more sexual partners due to the benefits. ("The greater the risk,
486 the greater the reward") What they describe could be the origins of what we know today as prestige.
In their paper, they show that in nature, when survival is the main concern at all times, the leaders
488 wouldn't be chosen due to their superior abilities, but because they have the least to lose. When in
said position of leadership, there are greater risks, but greater rewards to come with it. In humans,
490 leadership also has its perks and costs. Leaders can make decisions that would benefit them and their
closest followers the most, while still maintaining group cohesion. However, wrong decision making
492 that would harm the group could result in harm (media, social status, even violent behavior of subjects
on certain cases). In our society it is less common to worry about mere survival, and so the prestigious
494 positions, even though are not without risks and costs, are not as dangerous as for animals in nature.
This may be the reason humans strive for the prestigious positions, as they may reap rewards greater
496 than the risk and costs to achieve them. This is in complete contrast to animals, where the weak-
est/hungriest is driven to lead, compared to humans where leadership positions are mostly competitive.

498

Van Vugt and Smith (2019) suggest a different view of leadership. They note that most discussions
500 assume there is one type of leadership, as seen above, and so they differ in their definitions. Van Vugt
and Smith (2019) suggest a way to solve said contradiction by defining two types of leaderships:
502 prestige-based and dominance-based. They present classical views of leaderships by Confucius and
Machiavelli. Confucius views leaders as role models who exercise influence through possessing
504 superior knowledge, skills, and (outstanding) personal qualities. This description is very similar to our
indicator trait. By contrast, Machiavelli views leaders as rulers who exercise influence by imposing
506 costs through (the threat of) punishment. They say that these two opposing views are both partially
supported by the available evidence but each one on its own offers an incomplete view into the complex
508 and dynamic processes of leadership.

Our current model doesn't reflect the model described in this article, but several adjustments could be
510 made in order to match it. If we assume there's a correlation between trait value to a type of leadership
(so in our binary model, one trait would be of prestige, and the other of dominance) we can implement
512 their suggested model. For that we would need to add cost-benefit parameters, so the ones choosing
prestige will be rewarded, but pay more, while the ones choosing dominance would pay less, but gain
514 less benefits. It could be interesting to see the dynamics and relations between our model parameters
and these cost-benefit parameters.

516

Henrich and Gil-White (2001) support said claim that there are two types of leadership, and also
518 define the two as prestige based and dominance based leadership types. By their definition, the latter
is defined by acquiring social status by using aggression, intimidation and violence. It is also more
520 common than prestige in non humans. Their definition of prestige is somewhat synonymous with

ours. According to their manuscript, prestige is composed both of estimation in the eyes of people
522 (our indicator/success trait) and commanding position in people's minds, i.e number of copiers people
think they have, which they define as *influence* (similar to our definition for influence). In their paper,
524 they show that prestige evolved from natural selection, as an efficient process to extract reproductive
benefit from the flow of socially transmitted information. Simply put, prestige is a natural step where
526 social learning exists, due to saving costs of individual learning. It could be interesting in the future to
expand our model using this idea: observing the copier trait of *evaluation*, rather than only observing
528 the evolution of the indicator trait copied. Henrich and Gil-White (2001) suggest that the most skilled
role-models will, on average, end up with most copiers. Their research, definitions and results, is
530 consistent with ours.

532 So far we presented the theory behind prestige, and it's appearance in nature. The following will show
the appearances of prestige biases in humans, and in recent times.

534 Chudek et al. (2012), for example, tested the existence of prestige in young children. Chudek et al.
(2012) report the first direct tests in children that suggest the existence of *prestige bias*, a tendency
536 to learn from individuals to whom others have preferentially attended, learned or deferred. Their
definition of prestige is similar to our *influence bias*, and brings concrete proof of its existence and
538 effects. Their study showed that the odds of 3-4 years-old children learning from an adult model to
whom bystanders had previously preferentially attended for 10 seconds were over twice those of their
540 learning from a model whom bystanders ignored. In addition to this first study, they also discovered
prestige effects are domain-sensitive. They saw that prestigious models were listened to by most when
542 demonstrating artifact-use, but not as much as when presenting food preferences. It lead Chudek et al.
(2012) to believe that when the trait is costly to learn individually, prestige will have a higher effect. It
544 would be interesting to include costs in our model to try and observe these effects and their dynamics
in the simulations of a larger population than this study.

546

Henrich and Broesch (2011) researched Fijian villages, looking for evidence of social learning biases
548 and their origins. They mention that:

evolutionary theorists propose that natural selection has favored the emergence of psy-
550 chological biases for learning from those individuals most likely to possess adaptive
information.

552 Their goal is to bridge from the laboratory to the field by examining if and how these biases emerge
in a small-scale society. During their research they found that:

554 Fijian villagers (ages 10 and up) are biased to learn from others perceived as more
successful/knowledgeable, both within and across domains (prestige effects).

556 Their research shows promising evidence for our prestige model, suggesting that copying from others
who are *perceived* as successful, rather than actually are successful. In their paper, they show that the
558 social networks representing copier-role-model relationships are centralized, suggesting:

This degree of centralization is consistent with the prediction that people substantially
560 share notions about who is a good cultural model (network centrality), but that individuals'
model selections are influenced by multiple factors.

562 We see here support for both our indicator trait and our influence bias in their data.

564 Aside from children's learning biases and small villages in a relatively primitive population, we can
see prestige in more advanced domains as well, like western medicine. Norredam and Album (2007)
566 present a specific and important effect of prestige - its significance for medical specialties and diseases.
They examined literature from 1950 to 2005 regarding the effects of prestige on medicinal practices.
568 They discovered that active, specialized, biomedical, and high-technological types of medicine on
organs in the upper part of the bodies of young and middle-aged people were accorded high levels of
570 prestige, while medicine with opposite characteristics had low levels of prestige. They have concluded
that such differences in prestige bear consequences for actual priority setting in healthcare systems.
572 They discovered that surgery counts as the most prestigious specialty, while psychiatry is the less
prestigious. In addition, doctors tend to rank practices that require more time to master as more
574 prestigious, while other procedures that are considered *easier* are less prestigious. Simply put, they
found that the advance in technology and research was in accordance with the prestige rankings. This
576 means that there may be very important practices that are neglected due to the prestige bias.

578 As we seen so far, prestige can explain many behaviors and evolution of cultural traits. It is a tool to
cheaply estimate and acquire knowledge, which helps an individual to survive and breed. However,
580 it is not always the case, and there could be negative repercussions to this bias, such as invasion of
maladaptive traits.

582 Takahashi and Ihara (2019) mention that social learning not only takes the form of random copying
of other individuals, but also involves learners' choice of what to learn and from whom to learn. They
584 suggest a best-of-K model where an individual samples k role-models and choose the one he deems
most "successful". They mentioned that a previous mathematical analysis has shown that it may
586 sometimes result in maladaptive cultural evolution when the payoffs associated with cultural variants
vary stochastically. In such a case, learners may be selectively disfavored and in the long run replaced
588 by unbiased learners, who simply copy someone chosen at random. They develop new mathematical
models that are simpler and mathematically tractable. They found that best-of-k learning, unlike
590 unbiased learning, can facilitate the invasion of an on average inferior variant that sometimes gives
a very high payoff. Our model, which includes influence bias, is consistent with that claim. When
592 a maladaptive trait is "piggybacking" a role-model with high influence, said trait could spread in the
population, as mentioned. In addition, they show that best-of-k learning can be stable against invasion

594 by unbiased learning if social learning is sometimes combined with individual learning. Our model is
based on copying based learning only, but it could be interesting to combine it with individual learning
596 and see how it affects the dynamics of the population.

We discussed prestige in depth, and provided several proofs for its existence in nature, humans, and
598 even medicine. We saw it could aid invasion of maladaptive traits, or neglect of important medicinal
specialities. But, it can also accelerate reversal of harmful traditions. Harmful traditions can be child
600 marriage, open defecation, and domestic violence, to name a few. Efferson et al. (2020) suggest a
mechanism called *spillover*. By their definition, a spillover is when an intervention affect a large
602 enough group in a target population, so that others not included in the intervention starts changing
their behavior as well. In their research, they found that there are individuals who act as *agents*, who
604 are often looked upon, and therefore they are ideal targets for interventions. This is the same concept
as our role-models, where a more prestigious individual will be copied more, therefore spreading his
606 trait wider in the population. Their research support therefore in our assumption that there are social
biases, conformist influence specifically. They also suggest a way to use this phenomena to change
608 existing traditions in a population. It is very clear however, that just as it can be used to end harmful
traditions, the same agents could be used for any negative way that comes to mind.

610

Up until now, we showed that cultural transmission is a process that manifests in many species, with
612 emphasis on humans. We also displayed similarities between this process and genetic transmission,
while presenting differences between them, specifically selective biases such as influence and prestige.
614 We also presented examples of good and bad usages of such biases. All of these are mainly presented
as a parallel process to the natural selection process in regards to physical anatomy, or at least have
616 an indirect effect on it. Muthukrishna and Henrich (2016) offer a take on prestige as a factor of
human physical evolution directly. They present a concept called *cultural brains* - brains that evolved
618 primarily for the acquisition of adaptive knowledge. They build on the hypothesis of Dunbar (2009)
that shows that larger, more complex brains can store and manage more information and in turn, this
620 information can support the costs of a larger brain. Muthukrishna and Henrich (2016) built a model
that predicts a strong relationship between brain size and group size, because group size also provides
622 access to more adaptive knowledge. They later present their *cumulative cultural brain* hypothesis, an
approach which proposes that human brains have evolved with an ability and proclivity for selective,
624 high fidelity social learning. As part of this process, there are a variety of strategies and biases that
have evolved to hone in on the most adaptive knowledge. These strategies and biases include direct
626 and indirect cues of the popularity of cultural traits (e.g. success and prestige biases). In short, they
suggest that some of the reasons for the extreme increase in brain size in humans, are the ability to
628 "cheaply" acquire adaptive knowledge, i.e transmission biases, such as prestige.

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