

Prestige as a Driving Force in Cultural Transmission

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March 28, 2022

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. Although cultural transmission is most common in 32 humans, it is also observed in other animals such as chimpanzees (Horner et al., 2010; Kendal et al., 2015). In elephants, McComb et al. (2001) showed that once a matriarch is removed from the group, 34 the group's survival instincts are inferior and that "the possession of enhanced discriminatory abilities by the oldest individual [matriarch] in a group can influence the social knowledge of the group as a 36 whole." By playing audio recordings of African elephants, they showed that groups with a matriarch recognize and react better to hostile or friendly calls than groups without a matriarch. Battesti et al. 38 (2012) showed that choice of oviposition site in fruit flies is culturally transmitted: inexperienced flies that spent some time with experienced flies chose the same type of oviposition site even without 40 directly observing this behavior. How the information is transmitted is still an open question, but it has been suggested that flies may use olfactory cues like other animals, such as rodents and bees.

42 **Direction of transmission.** Similar to genetic transmission, culturally transmitted traits can be transmitted from parents to offspring, and their effects of can be physiological rather than behavioral. For 44 example, parents can "teach" their children to be strong or tall, within some biological limits, by 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 46 from non-parental individuals, and even unrelated individuals such as teachers, leaders, media, or 48 any stranger that interacts with the learning individual. Thus, cultural transmission may combine vertical transmission, where parents transmit to their offspring; oblique transmission, where adults 50 transmit traits to unrelated offspring; and horizontal transmission, where peers from the same age cohort transmit to one another. Vertical transmission is also possible in the opposite direction: parents 52 may copy traits from their offspring (e.g playing video games)(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).

62 **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

64 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
66 almost 50%. It is important to note that all of the strategies included some frequency of individual
learning.

68 **Evaluating success.** Boyd and Richerson (1988, Ch. 5) suggest that the evaluation of success can
be divided into three groups: *direct bias*, *indirect bias* and *frequency-dependent bias*. A direct bias
70 occurs when a variation of a trait is more attractive than others, and is evaluated by *directly* testing the
variation of the trait. For example, an individual observing a Ping-Pong match can attempt both of the
72 observed paddle grips to determine which grip is better. An indirect bias occurs when an individual
uses the value of one trait to determine the attractiveness of another, so it *indirectly* evaluates the
74 attractiveness of the role-model. For example, an observer may copy the paddle grip of the Ping-Pong
player who scored more points in the match, thus indirectly evaluating the grip by the points scored. A
76 frequency-dependent bias occurs when an individual has a probability to copy a variant of the trait that
higher or lower than trait's frequency among demonstrators. For example, when an individual is 80%
78 likely to copy the common paddle grip even when only 60% of the population is using it, it is said to be
frequency-biased, or in this case, conformist. Frequency bias could be negative, i.e., non-conformist
80 bias. Conformity and non-conformity are well-known biases in cultural transmission (Molleman et al.,
2013), and its effect on cultural evolution have been studied with both models (Denton 2020 PNAS;
82 Denton TPB 2021) and experiments Aljadeff et al. (2020)

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

94 **Influence bias.** Today, social media provides an easy way to estimate the influence individuals have
over others, and therefore may have a major effect on human decision making. For example, the number
96 of "followers" a person has on social networks such as *Facebook* or *Instagram* may significantly affect
how his beliefs are perceived by the population. Here we propose an indirect bias that we call *influence*
98 *bias*, in which the choice of a role-model depends on the the choices made by other individuals that
have already chosen a role-model. This is a context bias, which depends on the role-model rather than
100 the trait, in contrast to frequency biases such as conformity, which depend on the frequency of a trait
in the population or in a sample of role-models. We define a model for prestige bias that combines

102 both success and influence biases, provide analytic approximations for this model, and analyze its
 dynamics.

104 **Models and Methods**

We begin with a continuous trait model with indirect bias suggested by Boyd and Richerson (1988),
 106 develop an extension with influence bias, and then develop a model with a dichotomous trait. We
 implemented our stochastic models and approximations, performed statistical analyses, and produced
 108 figures using Python with NumPy and Matplotlib. Source code is available at

Continuous trait

110 We follow the model of Boyd and Richerson (1988), assuming only oblique transmission of the
 indicator trait and omitting the indirect trait in order to reduce model complexity. We consider a
 112 population of N individuals, described by a single indicator trait with a continuous value. Each
 generation, N naive individuals, or copiers, choose an individual from the previous generation, or
 114 role-models, from which they will copy their trait. Similar to a Wright's Fisher model, we assume
 non-overlapping generations such that the entire population is replaced in each generation. The
 116 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 time t . We assume the initial population is drawn from a standard normal distribution,
 118 $\mathbf{A}(0) \sim N(0, 1)$. Cultural transmission is modeled by a function F such that

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

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

$$122 \quad F_i(\mathbf{A}) = \sum_{j=1}^N G_{i,j} \cdot A_j , \quad (2)$$

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

$$124 \quad G_{i,j} = \frac{\beta(A_{i,j})}{\sum_{k=1}^N \beta(A_{i,k})} , \quad (3)$$

$A_{i,j}$ is the absolute indicator trait value copier i estimates for role-model j with some error $e_i \sim$
 126 $N(0, \frac{1}{\eta^2})$,

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

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

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

130 with \hat{A} as the arbitrary optimal indicator value, and J and b as parameters that control the bias strength.
 Therefore, $G_{i,j}$ is a relative success score that copier i assigns to role-model j , equivalent to relative
 132 fitness in evolutionary-genetic transmission models.

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

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

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

Influence bias. Here we introduce a new element to the model. We assume that in each generation,
 140 copiers choose their role-models one by one. We denote $K_{i,j}$ as the number of copiers that chose
 role-model j after copier i chose a role-model. Thus, i out of N copiers already chose a role-model,
 142 $\sum_{j=1}^N K_{i,j} = i$, and there are $N - i$ copiers that have yet to choose a role-model. The stochastic process
 of role-model choice,

$$144 \quad \{\mathbf{K}_i = (K_{i,1}, \dots, K_{i,N})\}_{i=1}^N, \quad (7)$$

is described by the recurrence equation

$$146 \quad K_{i,j} = K_{i-1,j} + S_{i,j}, \quad i, j = 1, 2, \dots, N, \quad (8)$$

where $S_{i,j} = 1$ if the i -th copier chose role-model j and 0 otherwise, and the initial state is $K_{0,j} =$
 148 0.

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

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

152 The prestige $G_{i,j}$ of role-model j in the eyes of copier i is determined by the estimated biased indicator
 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)
 154 of Boyd and Richerson (1988) with

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

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

160 Dichotomous trait

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-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 either phenotype. Therefore, the probability of the i -th copier to copy phenotype A is

$$166 \quad P_{i,A} = \frac{(N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + K_{i,A}}{i - 1 + (N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + X\alpha'\beta(\hat{A})} = \frac{(N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + K_{i,A}}{i - 1 + (N - X)\alpha'\beta(A) + \alpha'X} \quad (11)$$

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

Results

172 Approximations

Our model is defined by two nested stochastic processes. Change over multiple generations is described 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-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 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:

- 180 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,
 - 182 (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 estimation error is uniform for all copiers ($e = e_i$ for $i = 1, \dots, N$).
 - 184
 - 186 (b) the expected number of copiers of each role-model equals its relative biased indicator 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.
 - 188
- 190 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 $i = 1, \dots, N$). Therefore, the number of copiers of all role-models, $\mathbf{K}_i = (K_{i,1}, \dots, K_{i,N})$, follows a Dirichlet-Multinomial distribution,

192 $\mathbf{K}_i \sim DM(N, \mathbf{G}_1)$, 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
 194 the bias weights α_j , as the estimation error is uniform.

Generalized Binomial Distribution

196 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
 198 $GBD(n, p, \theta)$ 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).

200

Result 1 (GBD approximation). *The number of copiers of role-model j after i copiers have chosen a
 202 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
 204 choose role-model j given $K_{i-1,j}$ our of $i - 1$ copiers chose role-model j . Using conditional probability
 and eq. (8),

$$206 \quad Q_j(k, i) = P_j(S_{i,j} = 1 \mid k - 1, i - 1) \cdot Q_j(k - 1, i - 1) + P_j(S_{i,j} = 0 \mid k, i - 1) \cdot Q_j(k, i - 1), \quad (12)$$

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

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

210 *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
 212 made. $Q_j(1, 1) = G_{1,j}$ by definition, which completes the proof.

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

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

$$216 \quad G_{1,j} = \frac{\alpha_j \cdot \beta(A_j + e)}{\sum_{m=1}^N \alpha_m \cdot \beta(A_m + e)}. \quad (13)$$

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

$$218 \quad \sum_{m=1}^N \alpha_m \beta(A_m + e) = N \cdot \overline{\alpha \cdot \beta(A + e)}, \quad (14)$$

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

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

completing the proof.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 .

238

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 $\alpha = \alpha_j$ 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 $\sum_{j=1}^N K_{i,j} = i$, we have

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

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

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

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

256 **Numerical validation.** To validate our analytical result (corollary 3) and test its sensitivity to the
assumptions ($e_i = e$ and $\alpha_i = \alpha$ for $i = 1, \dots, N$) we compare it to results of stochastic simulations.
258 We executed many simulations of our original model to compute an observed distribution of number
of copiers from the average empirical distribution. To compare the observed distribution with the
260 expected DM distribution, 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.

262 When testing multiple values of the bias weight parameter α , the test p-value was 1, meaning means
that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. For high α values (above 0.5), very few simulations are
264 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 influence weight, the number of simulations needed was
266 100. When testing our observed distributions against different distributions, for example the uniform
distribution (all role-models have exactly one copier), the p-value was 0, so that the null hypothesis
268 was rejected, as required.

Numeric comparisons

270 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
272 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
274 approximation is roughly 1000 (Figure 1). Next, we examined the robustness of the DM approximation
to relaxing the approximation assumptions. First we relaxed our assumption of no mutation. To include
276 mutation in the dichotomous trait model, it needs to be redefined, since in the original model it
was based on the fact the traits are drawn from a continuous scale. In the dichotomous trait model
278 mutation will be manifested as an error when evaluating the bias itself. This is easily done by using a
heterogeneous J parameter, which controls the strength of the success bias in eq. (5).

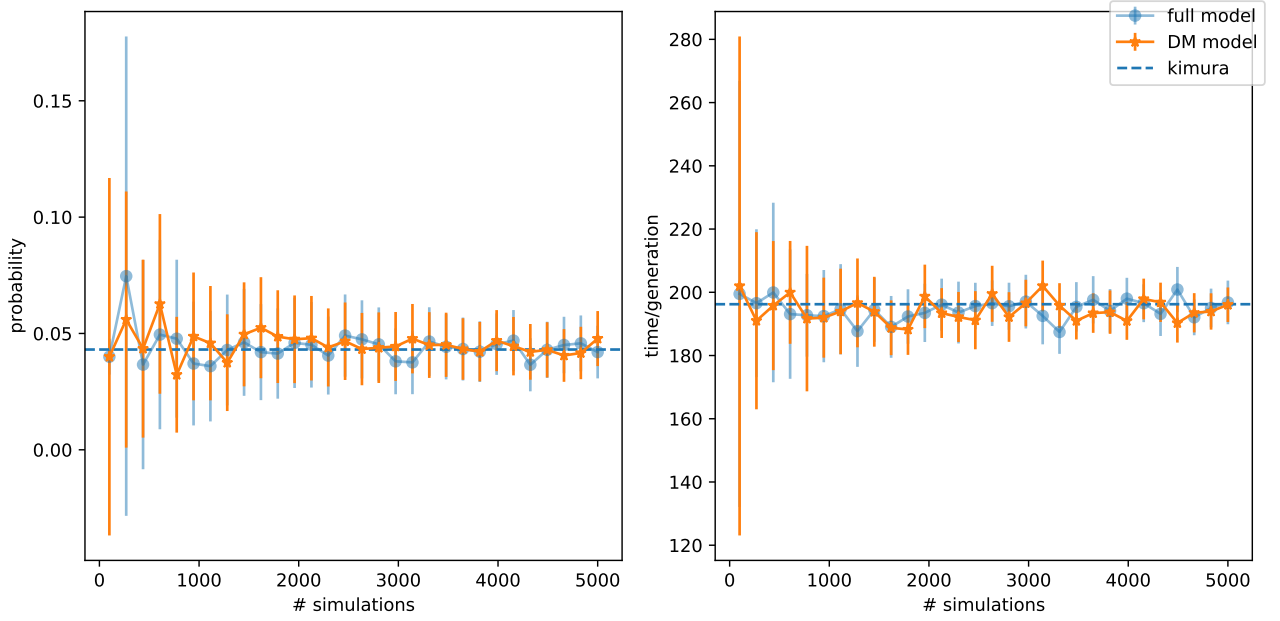


Figure 1: Number of simulations needed to get a good approximation. The approximation (orange) fits simulation results (blue) well when using 1,000 simulations. Markers for average value across simulations, error bars for 95% confidence interval. Here, population size, $N = 1000$; bias weight, $\alpha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

280 In fig. 2 we see the comparison when heterogeneous mutation is applied to both models. When
 mutation is applied, we sample J_i for each copier i from a normal distribution with varying scale
 282 (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).

284 In fig. 3 we relaxed our assumption of a homogeneous α , and used a heterogeneous α instead. Similar
 to the mutation comparison, we drew α_j for each role-model j from a normal distribution with varying
 286 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.

288 Fixation probability and time - binary model

Kimura's approximation: After establishing a case in the favor of our DM approximation, we wanted
 290 to use it to examine the behavior of the population. Specifically, we wanted to analyze the influence
 of the indicator weight (α) on the fixation probability and time to fixation of the favored phenotype in
 292 a binary model. For simplicity, we don't include mutation rate in the binary model approximations.
 Following Durrett (2008), we used our DM approximation of the model to find the effective population
 294 size. From eq. (11) we can derive that the process of inheritance in our binary model is DM distributed
 with a parameters vector of size two: $\mathbf{V} = (\alpha'X, (N - X)\alpha'\beta(A))$.

296 **Result 3** (Effective selection coefficient). $1 - \beta(A)$ is equivalent to the selection coefficient s in a
 classic Wright-Fisher model in the diffusion equations meant to approximate the fixation probability
 298 and time of the advantageous trait.

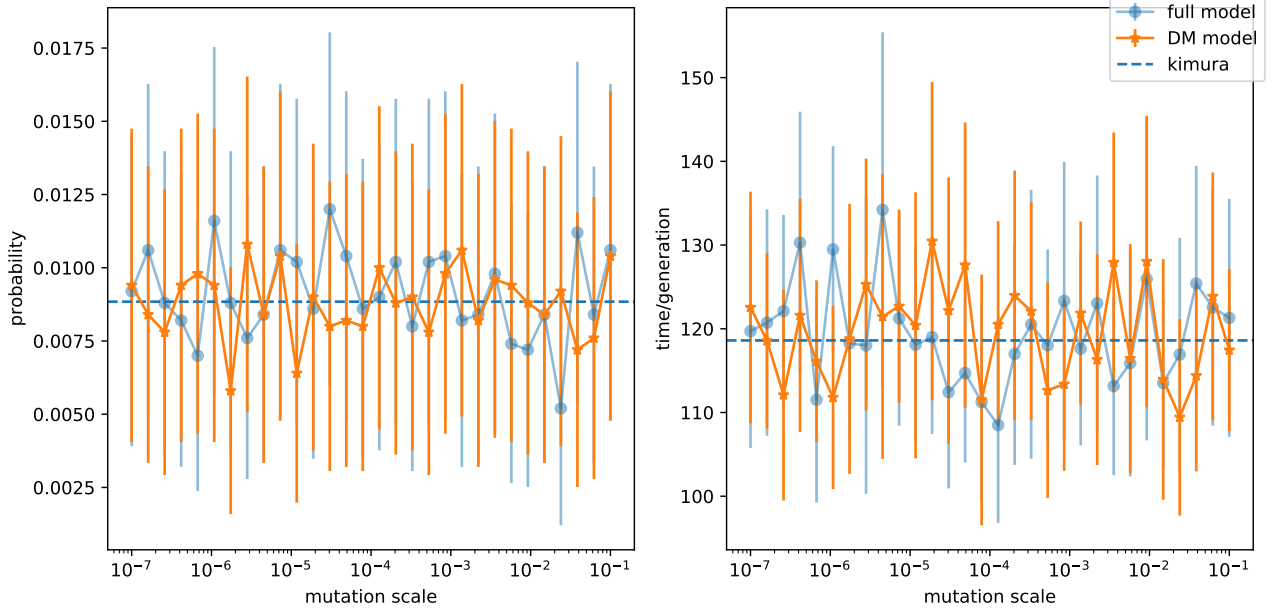


Figure 2: Robustness of DM approximations to inclusion of mutation. Both the DM approximation (orange) and Kimura's equation (black line) fit the stochastic simulations (blue) well even with a high mutation rate. Markers for average across simulations, error bars for 95% confidence intervals. 5,000 simulations 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 mutation scale in the x-axis.

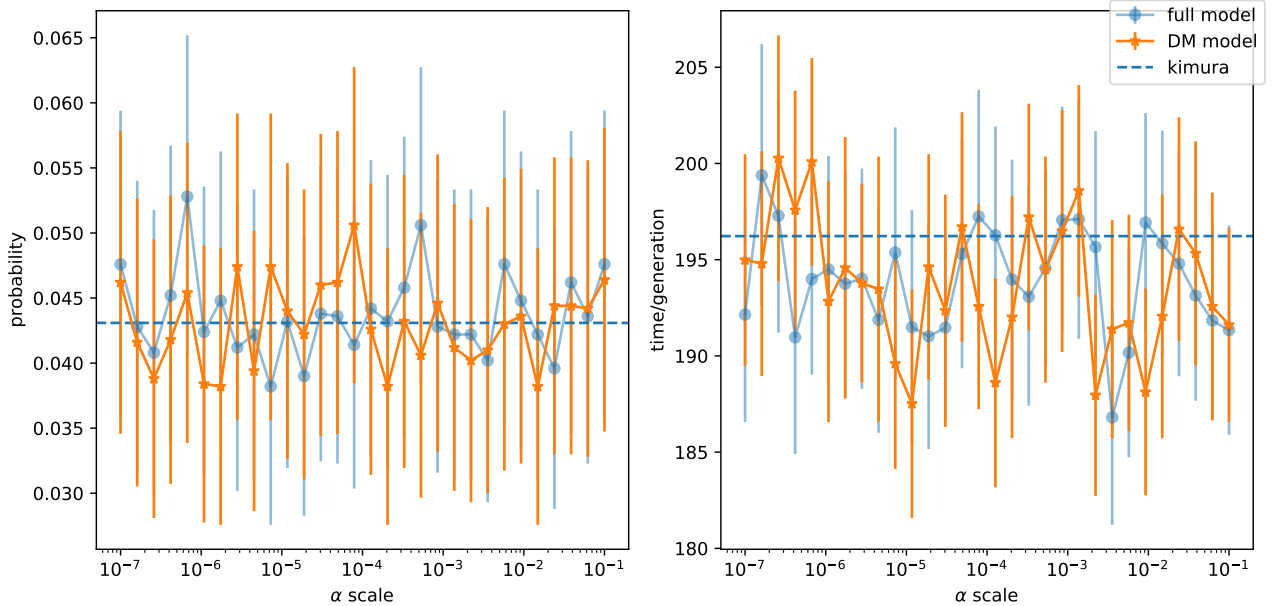


Figure 3: Comparison of the DM approximation and the full model when success weight is heterogeneous. High success weight variance distances the approximation and the full model of generations to fixation from the Kimura's approximation, but not by much (confidence intervals still cover it). Error bars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

Proof. Let x be the frequency of type \hat{A} in the population with N individuals. Let X be the number
 300 of 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 $\beta(A) = \beta$ ($\beta < 1$).

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

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

304 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 Durret's process so:

306
$$E[x'] = E\left[\frac{X'}{N}\right] = \frac{1}{N}E[X'] \quad (21)$$

Putting it together we get:

308
$$\begin{aligned} E[x'] &= \frac{1}{N} N \frac{\alpha'xN}{\alpha'xN + \alpha'N(1-x)\beta} \\ &= \frac{x}{x + (1-x)\beta} \end{aligned} \quad (22)$$

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

320 And again, we want to use frequencies so:

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

322 Putting it together with our model's notations:

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

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

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

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

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

328 Again following Durrett we want to calculate:

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

330 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

332 as α , so:

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

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

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

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

338 The fixation probability derived from Kimura is therefore:

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

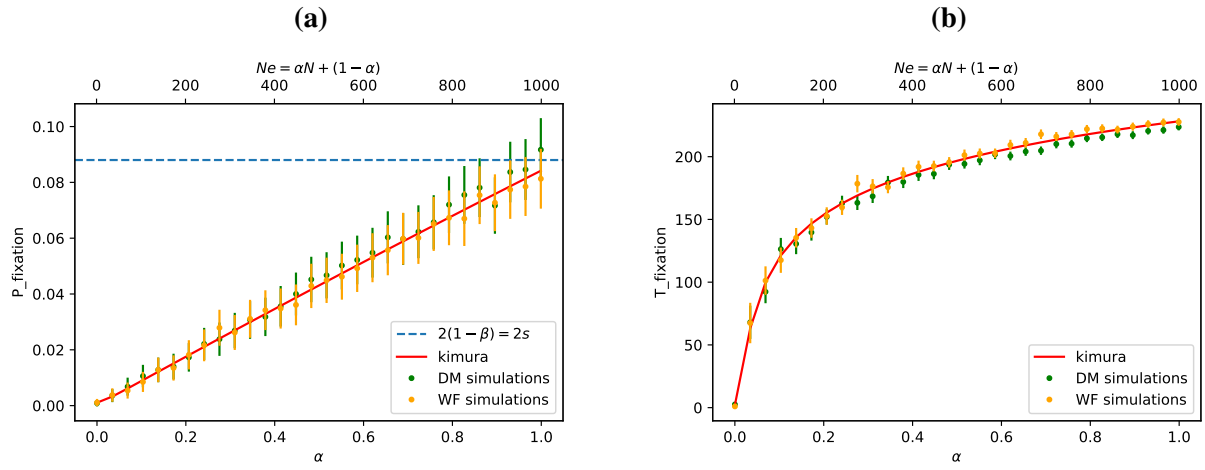


Figure 4: Comparison of the DM approximation and the WF model for different values of the effective population size. The approximation seems very good, and is also condensed around the mathematical equation expectancy. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals. Effective population calculated by $N_e =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

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

The time to fixation can be estimated by:

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

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-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 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).

Changing environment

After finding good estimations for our model in a constant environment, when the favorable trait is 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 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 favorable/invading trait and X_t is the number of individuals with the trait at time t .

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

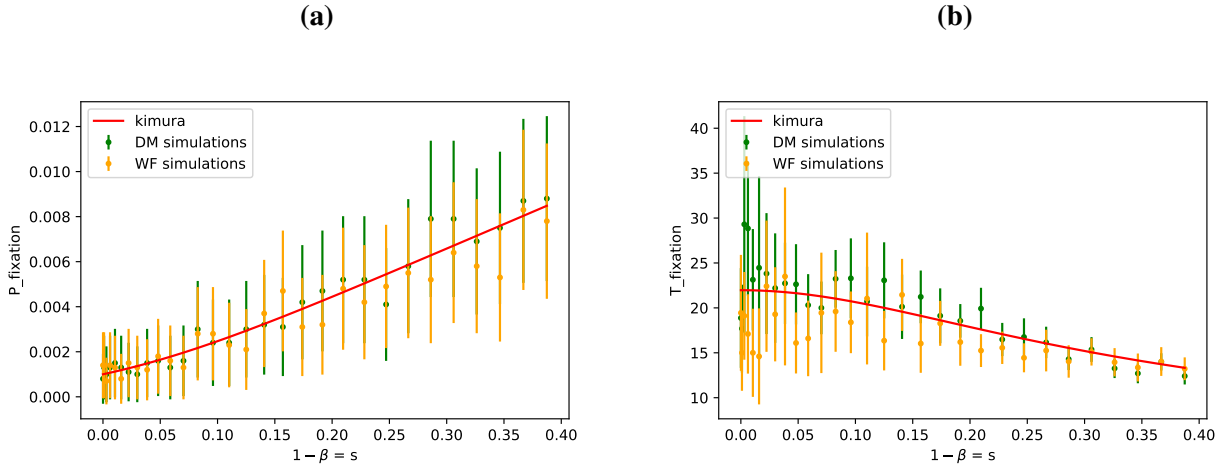


Figure 5: Comparison of the DM approximation and the WF model for different values of the selection coefficient, manifested as success bias in our model. The approximation seems good, and is also condensed around the mathematical equation expectancy. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals. Effective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

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

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

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

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

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

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

From eq. (35) we know that

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

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

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

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

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

so using the assumption we get

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

which proves the first part of our preposition.

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

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

380 using eq. (35) we see that:

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

382 Using eq. (32) we get:

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

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

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

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

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

388 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 see that:

$$390 \quad V\left(\frac{1}{N}s_{t+1}\frac{X_t}{N}\left(1 - \frac{X_t}{N}\right)\right) \leq \frac{1}{4N^2}s_{t+1}^2 \quad (50)$$

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

$$392 \quad V\left(E\left[\frac{X_{t+1}}{N}\middle|X_t\right]\right) = V\left(\frac{X_t}{N}\right) + O\left(\frac{1}{N^2}\right) \simeq V\left(\frac{X_t}{N}\right) \quad (51)$$

Using the induction assumption and eq. (48):

$$394 \quad V\left(\frac{X_{t+1}}{N}\right) \simeq \frac{1}{N_e}x(1 - x) + \frac{1}{N_e}tx(1 - x) \simeq \frac{1}{N_e}x(1 - x)(t + 1) \quad (52)$$

proving the second part of our proposition.

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

$$398 \quad P_{fix} = \frac{1 - e^{-2\frac{S_n}{n}N_ex}}{1 - e^{-2\frac{S_n}{n}N_e}} \quad (53)$$

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

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

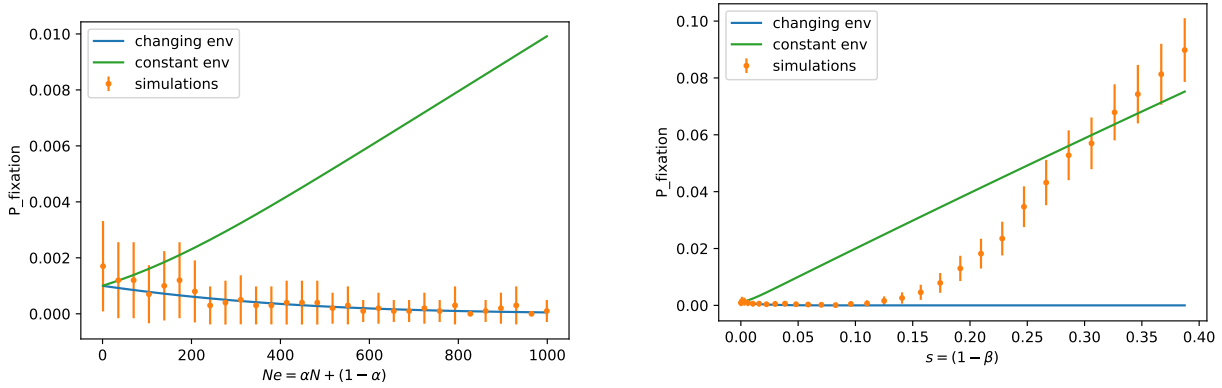


Figure 6: Model simulations compared with both the constant environment and the changing environment equations with different effective populations sizes and selection coefficients. Changing the effective population size doesn't affect the approximation, and it is condensed the mathematical expected 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, $N = 1,000$, $\hat{A} = 1$, $A = 0.9$, $J = 1$.

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
 400 $(k + l)$ as the selection coefficient in our original equation. In our proof we showed that the expected
 change in frequency and variance is only manifested in the selection coefficient S_n , and that we can
 402 use those modified equation as a base for Kimura's equation.

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

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

We plotted along the modified estimation the original Kimura's estimation, as a limiter. We suspect
 408 that when β is too large, there won't be many cycles in the simulations. This might happen if either
 410 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
 412 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
 414 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
 416 k, l accordingly.

In fig. 7 we see that the larger k relative to l , the closer the modified equation is to the original
 418 estimation of the constant environment. When using higher values of n , the simulation results doesn't

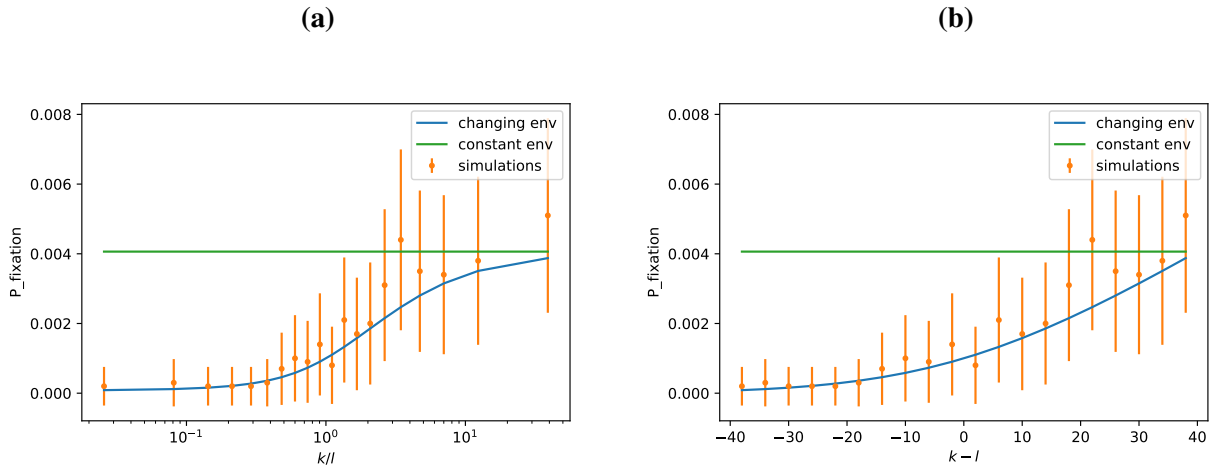


Figure 7: Model simulations compared with both the constant environment and the changing environment equations for different compositions of the environment cycle. When $k < l$ the approximation is good. When $k > l$, the approximation and the simulations are both very close to the constant environment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

fit the equation result as with lower values. This is due to the fact that our proof, and therefore our
 420 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.

422 Discussion

summary

424 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
 426 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
 428 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
 430 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**
 432 **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
 434 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
 436 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**
 438 **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
 440 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
442 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
444 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
446 **understand decision-making processes in humans, including life-changing choices such as oc-**
cupation or a life partner. Our model can be expanded in multiple ways: observing the effects of
448 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),
450 and analyzing the differences when including several optimal values for the indicator trait (multiple
preference traits in the population).

452 **Prestige in the literature**

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

456 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
458 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
460 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,
462 individuals with many kin relations, or possess other dominant traits. When no individual possesses such
traits, or when the social network is lacking, a consensus is more likely to occur. When a leader
464 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 for-
466 aging 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
468 organisms as well, like fish. In these organisms however, the leader would usually be the hungriest
or the weakest, while the rest would prefer to follow, minimizing their costs. In baboons however,
470 King and Cowlshaw (2009) describe many benefits for the closest associates of the dominant male,
such as protection from predators. This is an instance of sexual-selection, where the leader, whose
472 survival chances are lower, gains more sexual partners due to the benefits. ("The greater the risk,
the greater the reward") What they describe could be the origins of what we know today as prestige.
474 In their paper, they show that in nature, when survival is the main concern at all times, the leaders
wouldn't be chosen due to their superior abilities, but because they have the least to lose. When in
476 said position of leadership, there are greater risks, but greater rewards to come with it. In humans,
leadership also has its perks and costs. Leaders can make decisions that would benefit them and their
478 closest followers the most, while still maintaining group cohesion. However, wrong decision making

that would harm the group could result in harm (media, social status, even violent behavior of subjects
480 on certain cases). In our society it is less common to worry about mere survival, and so the prestigious
positions, even though are not without risks and costs, are not as dangerous as for animals in nature.
482 This may be the reason humans strive for the prestigious positions, as they may reap rewards greater
than the risk and costs to achieve them. This is in complete contrast to animals, where the weak-
484 est/hungriest is driven to lead, compared to humans where leadership positions are mostly competitive.

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

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

504 Henrich and Gil-White (2001) support said claim that there are two types of leadership, and also
define the two as prestige based and dominance based leadership types. By their definition, the latter
506 is defined by acquiring social status by using aggression, intimidation and violence. It is also more
common than prestige in non humans. Their definition of prestige is somewhat synonymous with
508 ours. According to their manuscript, prestige is composed both of estimation in the eyes of people
(our indicator/success trait) and commanding position in people's minds, i.e number of copiers people
510 think they have, which they define as *influence* (similar to our definition for influence). In their paper,
they show that prestige evolved from natural selection, as an efficient process to extract reproductive
512 benefit from the flow of socially transmitted information. Simply put, prestige is a natural step where
social learning exists, due to saving costs of individual learning. It could be interesting in the future to
514 expand our model using this idea: observing the copier trait of *evaluation*, rather than only observing
the evolution of the indicator trait copied. Henrich and Gil-White (2001) suggest that the most skilled
516 role-models will, on average, end up with most copiers. Their research, definitions and results, is

consistent with ours.

518

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

Chudek et al. (2012), for example, tested the existence of prestige in young children. Chudek et al.
522 (2012) report the first direct tests in children that suggest the existence of *prestige bias*, a tendency
to learn from individuals to whom others have preferentially attended, learned or deferred. Their
524 definition of prestige is similar to our *influence bias*, and brings concrete proof of its existence and
effects. Their study showed that the odds of 3-4 years-old children learning from an adult model to
526 whom bystanders had previously preferentially attended for 10 seconds were over twice those of their
learning from a model whom bystanders ignored. In addition to this first study, they also discovered
528 prestige effects are domain-sensitive. They saw that prestigious models were listened to by most when
demonstrating artifact-use, but not as much as when presenting food preferences. It lead Chudek et al.
530 (2012) to believe that when the trait is costly to learn individually, prestige will have a higher effect. It
would be interesting to include costs in our model to try and observe these effects and their dynamics
532 in the simulations of a larger population than this study.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

550

Aside from children's learning biases and small villages in a relatively primitive population, we can
552 see prestige in more advanced domains as well, like western medicine. Norredam and Album (2007)

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. 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 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. 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 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 means that there may be very important practices that are neglected due to the prestige bias.

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, it is not always the case, and there could be negative repercussions to this bias, such as invasion of maladaptive traits.

Takahashi and Ihara (2019) mention that social learning not only takes the form of random copying of other individuals, but also involves learners's choice of what to learn and from whom to learn. They 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 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 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 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 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 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 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 even medicine. We saw it could aid invasion of maladaptive traits, or neglect of important medicinal specialties. But, it can also accelerate reversal of harmful traditions. Harmful traditions can be child 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 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 are often looked upon, and therefore they are ideal targets for interventions. This is the same concept

592 as our role-models, where a more prestigious individual will be copied more, therefore spreading his
trait wider in the population. Their research support therefore in our assumption that there are social
594 biases, conformist influence specifically. They also suggest a way to use this phenomena to change
existing traditions in a population. It is very clear however, that just as it can be used to end harmful
596 traditions, the same agents could be used for any negative way that comes to mind.

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

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