

On Genetic Interests

What is our debt to fellow ethnics, and why have children?

Here is a [video review](#) – quite different from this print version, indicating how more recent science confirms Salters' points.

Organisms live and die, genes go on forever. This is a book about the genetic interests of individuals and collectives of people.

Salter employs the standard biological concept of fitness – fitness to reproduce. It is variously interpreted as actual and potential reproductive success. A human being shows high fitness if that individual is attractive to potential mates, interested in having sex and children with them, and has the resources to provide for the resultant family.

Salter bases his case on the thesis put forward by William D Hamilton in the 1960s. Hamilton wrote that in the extreme, an individual would advance his genetic interests by sacrificing his life for two siblings or eight cousins. The siblings together carry 100% of his genome (granted, with overlaps and exclusions) and the eight cousins together likewise carry 100%. Hamilton proposed the further insight that our fellow ethnics, though we are unable to trace the common descent, share quite a bit of our genome. When a nation-state engages in war to defend against invasion, the individual soldiers, even those without children, are defending their own genetic interests in that the gene pool of the citizenry they are protecting includes material that could presumably replicate that soldier many times over.

All of Salter's arguments are premised on the notion that we are interested in perpetuating our genome. He acknowledges throughout the book that in today's West this is most often not the case. People are interested in everything except raising children to pass on their genome. However, as products of evolution and links in the chain of evolution, no other point of view makes sense.

Our ethnic interest is to increase our own fitness - the prevalence of our genes. We do this by actively defending our fellow ethnics in warfare. We also favor fellow ethnics in social and business affairs. We encourage our kin to marry fellow ethnics, in order not to dilute the interest. We practice nepotism.

We do this within ethical constraints – different people and peoples recognize different ones – that limit the range of actions available for an individual to act in favor of self, family, tribe and nation. Nothing except common sense confines our altruism when it comes to the whole of mankind. Our fellow man will accept all that we are willing to give.

Individuals vs. genes

With the exception of identical twins, every person on earth is genetically unique. The human genome consists of approximately 50,000 genes. There can be several variations (alleles) for each gene. The total number of possible humans would therefore be orders of magnitude greater than the number of subatomic particles in the entire universe. We are each unique.

On the other hand, with only 50,000 or so unique genes, all of them occur many times within a population. The genetic interest of an individual is in his family, which he knows about; his clan and tribe, which were relevant in former times; and in his nation and lastly in all of humanity. Salter uses the term "ethny" to describe the inner of these concentric circles of interest – family, clan, tribe and nation.

Thus, while each of us (except for identical twins) is unique, each of us could be assembled many times over from the genes available within our ethny.

Most of our genes are common to the entire species. In fact, 98% of our genome is shared with the chimpanzee. The genes that interest Salter are the ones that individualize us.

Arithmetic of relatedness

An individual's collection of genes is unique to that individual and his identical twin – if any. That individual's children each receive 50% of his or her genome. Here's how it happens. The process of meiosis selects genes located on that individual's 46 chromosomes – 23 from the father and 23 from the mother - randomly picking material inherited from either parent to assemble 23 chromosomes to include in the gamete – sperm cell or egg cell.

When the egg is fertilized, the embryo receives exactly 50% of its genomic makeup from each parent. Because of the randomizing operation of meiosis, brothers and sisters share about 50% of their genome. Each of their 46 chromosomes is assembled from scraps of the 96 chromosomes carried between their two parents. Only about half of the randomly selected scraps will be the same.

Again, due to the randomness in the process of meiosis, grandchildren receive only approximately 25% from each grandparent. Of course there is a lot of overlap. The 25% from each grandparent obviously includes all of the chimpanzee genes that all humans share. No variation there. The 25% that matters is the variable portion of the genome. Even there one finds a lot of overlap. My wife's family has lived in the same corner of Ukraine for generations. Those 25 percents contain a lot of common genetic material from common distant ancestors. There is, for instance, more overlap - less genetic distance - between my wife's parents than between her Ukrainian self and my American (German/English/French) self.

If the Ukrainians were truly a single family, all descended of the same mother and father, they would be siblings sharing approximately 50% of their genomes. If they were descended of four wholly unrelated grandparents, they would each carry about 25% from each grandparent. Salter contends that there is a fairly high level of commonality in the genomic makeup of any ethny. It is highest in tight, isolated hunter gatherer groups, but remains quite high even in nation-states such as Japan and Ukraine.

Measuring Ethnic Interests

This commonality, this overlap with other people within our ethnic group who carry the same genes, is the Genomic Interest of Salter's title. We as individuals most obviously preserve our ethnic interests by having children with people who are genetically similar to ourselves. However, we also defend our genomic interest by defending people who are like ourselves, members of our ethny, whether by war or by acts of preference such as nepotism.

Luigi Cavalli Sforza has spent decades researching human genomics in an attempt to tease out patterns of evolution and migration. As technology has improved he graduated from counting the incidence of blood types to counting gene clusters. He and his team have published extensively on the "genetic distance" between human populations. As a baseline, he defines the genetic distance between two random members of the same ethny to be zero. Working from that baseline, he finds English and Danes to be closely related, with a relationship coefficient, or genetic distance of .0021. The most distant populations he measured are the Mbuti pygmies of Africa and Australian aborigines – a genetic distance of .43.

Combining the concepts of common genes within an ethny and genetic distance Salter devises a new concept. How many brothers or sisters would be lost (i.e., the genes to make siblings) through the replacement of 10,000 members of the ethny with an equivalent number from another ethny? He computes that replacing 10,000 English with 10,000 Danes would be the genetic equivalent of losing 167 full English siblings. On the other hand, replacing those 10,000 English with 10,000 Bantu would be the genetic equivalent of losing 10,854 siblings. The arithmetic is rather arcane but the concept is simple – English are much more closely related to Danes than they are to the Bantu. It can exceed 10,000 because "migration has a double impact on fitness (ability to reproduce), first by reducing the potential ceiling of the native population, and secondly by permanently replacing those lost individuals' familiar genes with exotic varieties."

In other charts Salter inverts the figures, computing the number of immigrants needed to reduce the genetic interests of a random native by the equivalent of one child. It would take 51 Danish immigrants, but only 3.5 Lapps to reduce the genetic interests of a random Englishman by one child. The English and Danish are closely related; Lapps not so much. See [\[\[ASIN:B07XXDVVKF Individualism and the Western Liberal Tradition\]\]](#) for an evolutionary / migratory history of European peoples.

Salter doesn't include Ukrainians in his figures. Assuming that they are halfway between Poles and Russians, it would take 20 of me immigrating to Ukraine and displacing 20 outbound emigrants to reduce the genetic interests of the average Ukrainian by one child. That compares with about 3 emigrants for my Japanese/Irish former wife. The differences in our natures were palpable, and it made the children of that prior marriage less sure of who they were. I would project, based on Salter's statistics, that I am genetically closer to my Ukrainian wife than I would be to the average Caucasian in the United States. It is absolutely clear that I am genetically closer to the average Ukrainian than the average member of America's multicultural society.

Ethics

There are legal and ethical trade-offs among the interests of self, family, ethny and humanity. Nepotism is often illegal. Being too altruistic in service of your ethnic kin can come at a cost to family or humanity. Salter poses a great many ethical dilemmas and talks about the moral way to resolve them. He arrives at something called "Adaptive Utilitarianism", the greatest good for the greatest number, interpreting good as equivalent with genetic interest.

How much loyalty does a person owe to his government? It depends. The government of a nation-state of one ethny presumably deserves quite a bit of loyalty. That would be the case in Japan, or Ukraine and the Visegrad countries (Hungary, Poland, Czech republic, Slovakia) that have refused the European Union's demand that they accept refugees from very different ethnies. The people in charge of these governments generally represent the ethnic interests of the governed. Not coincidentally, these leaders tend to be married and profess Christianity and traditional values regarding sexuality. Even Ukraine, with a Jewish president and vast Jewish overrepresentation in the Rada (parliament), seems to support traditional values. Jews here are conservative. Moreover, representing only 0.2% of the population, they cannot afford to upset the Orthodox Christian majority.

Proposition nations such as the United States, which have lost most of the ethnic unity that held them together in the past, must generally command loyalty from the citizenry through force and bribery. Citizens often do not pay taxes gladly; there is a widespread resentment of the fact that the ethnic interests of the taxpayers are at odds with the ethnic interests of the people to whom the tax monies are redistributed. Though some still display traditional patriotism, most American soldiers and policeman are attracted to service by the money. The people they are defending are not like them and by and large not grateful.

Above the level of the nation, all of humanity has some call on us. If global warming were seen as a real threat, and we at the individual level could do something about it, the ethical choice would be to divert some resources from self, family and nation and join the fight. This applies as well to fighting species extinctions, the garbage gyre in the Pacific, the hole in the ozone and other such causes. A person with an interest in his or her genetic future has to weigh these claims on his resources – whether they are real, and whether he can do anything – against more concrete investments in his genetic future via children, relatives, and ethny. The first step, if one were convinced that such threats were real, would be to devise a plan to convince the 90% of the world's population outside of the developed countries. Otherwise joining these fights would be a fool's errand – altruistic sacrifice on behalf of people who don't share the concerns and only laugh at the rich world's presumption.

Salter states that throughout history mankind has been territorial. Clans and tribes and nations have had a claim to territories and will defend them fiercely. Without territory they did not have the resources to feed themselves.

Salter defends the nation state system that arose out of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The most natural way to arrange human affairs is for each ethny to have its own territory. In the past this has led to conflict when populations exceeded the carrying capacity of their land, or when ambitious leaders pushed nations to expand their people's wealth and/or genomic interest through conquest. See [[ASIN:B00U58Y4EA Why Did Europe Conquer the World?]].

He makes the observation that the notion of defense has changed in the modern world. Whereas the Helsinki Accords and other agreements do a fairly good job of ensuring national borders, there have been vast migrations from the Third World to the first. Today's nation states must guard their borders and enforce immigration restrictions at airports to prevent illegal immigrants.

The demographic pressures that led to wars in the past have diminished. Nowhere in the first world is the fertility of the native peoples at replacement level. The nationstate system provides adequate resources for the advanced peoples of the world to live.

The conundrum is that the poor people of the world are also the most fertile. As French novelist Jean Raspail wrote half a century ago in *The Camp of the Saints*, the nation states of the West must find the nerve to exclude immigrants, if necessary letting the poor of the world starve. The alternative is to let themselves be inundated, overwhelmed and replaced. Salter does not state it that boldly, but that is what is at issue.

Recognizing ethnic interests

Although Salter only rarely mention specific ethnies, it is transparently clear that he is addressing (1) the widespread immigration into the developed world from Africa, the Middle East and Latin America and (2) the interests of merchant minorities such as the Jews, Armenians and overseas Chinese within their host countries. See Amy Chua [\[\[ASIN:B003GFIWAQ: World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability\]\]](#).

Salter writes that these people that Amy Chua calls "Market Dominant Minorities" are extremely aware of their ethnic interests and are constantly on alert to defend them against the majorities among whom they live. I observe – Salter doesn't go into the specifics – that the overseas Chinese who dominate business in Manila, Jakarta, Saigon, Bangkok and elsewhere are extremely attuned to the possibility of a recurrence of violence against them. Likewise the Jews' aggressive self-defense through the ADL, SPLC and other organizations, and the American Muslims' newfound aggressiveness through CAIR.

The traditional Caucasian majority in the United States evolved a high level of [\[\[ASIN:B07XXDVVKF altruism\]\]](#) which served them well in their prehistoric societies. Conversely, they did not develop a sense of ethnic defensiveness against intruders. It is only recently, facing the prospect of becoming minorities within their traditional homelands, that they are waking up to their group interests. Salter's objective in writing this book is to make the ethnic interests of all ethnies clear. Since other groups are already attuned to their interests, his major objective is to bring Caucasians to a level of awareness equivalent to that of other groups.

Strategies

Assuming a person is interested in passing on their genome, how should he do it? It can be done that the level of the family, the extended family/tribe, the nation or all of humanity.

Most of Salter's arguments focus on the ethny – groups of related people - and nations. Today there is a vast misalignment between national boundaries and ethnic boundaries. Salter finds that only 10 of the Earth's 190 nations are nation states, of a single ethny. Some, such as the United States and India, have been a hodgepodge throughout their histories. Others, such as the European nations, were homogeneous up until the recent era of mass immigration. Salter writes that as late as the middle of the last century "the typical Western nation state approximated in outline an ethnic group strategy."

The key insight in this book is that our genomic interest as individuals is in the perpetuation of the genes that make us up. Each of us is responsible for perpetuating our own genes. Combinations within an individual make that individual successful. If the parent has a genetic combination for a good disposition, intelligence or particular skill, the children are likely to inherit that same combination of genes.

Reproducing is costly. Having children takes some and money and other resources to raise. If ego is the only consideration, an individual is better off not having children. Up until the modern age, with contraception, this has rarely been a consideration. However, in today's society there is a strong current of anti-fertility sentiment. People express concern that there are too many people on earth, and that it is immoral for families to have children at all, certainly not more than two.

From another perspective, lifestyles that do not lead to procreation are not only accepted but glorified. Women are encouraged to have careers which are difficult to balance with children, and people are encouraged to use their sexuality in ways that are not conducive to having children.

All of these movements are against our genetic interests. They mitigate against our having children and passing along our culture. As mentioned, they are not only accepted but glorified. This is an era of anti-fertility.

What should we do? Although Salter's book is primarily analytical, describing the situation, he is clearly an advocate for marriage and childbearing. By not having children we are letting down not only our families but our entire ethnic group.

How should we have children? That is a topic that other authors address more extensively. See [\[\[ASIN:B00CS8PUG6 Markus Willinger\]\]](#) and [\[\[ASIN:B074JF5Z2W Julian Langness\]\]](#). Most, unfortunately, don't get into specifics. I addressed this problem myself when, as a retiree, I found myself with a wife who was no longer interested in me and three children who were clearly not going to marry, create families, or even continue to talk to me. I moved to Ukraine to find another wife and start another family. These were the considerations:

- It is a traditional, religious country in which becoming a mother remains respected.
- Ukrainians are ethnically similar to me – though how similar I did not realize until reading Salter.
- Ukrainians are about as intelligent as Americans. One of the surprising things about Cavalli-Sforza's genetic distance measurements is that closely related peoples such as the Jews and Palestinians can vary quite widely in [\[\[ASIN:027597510X average intelligence\]\]](#).
- The average income in Ukraine is about \$ 3,000 per year, less than a tenth of that in the United States. My income makes me more attractive to Ukrainians than to Americans.

Conclusion

On Genetic Interests is an essential book for understanding the decline of Western culture and potential ways to resurrect it. The information Salter presents should be widely understood as background for any useful discussion as to a way out of our dilemma.

Although Salter has bent over backwards not to touch the tripwires of political correctness, there is no way to avoid the sensitivity of the topic. This book will be ignored as much as possible, and beyond that, denigrated when it is deemed necessary. For those reasons alone it should be included as mandatory reading for anybody interested in the future of our society. Clearly a five-star effort.