

Philosophy 3334 Fall 2023
Reading questions #4

Your answers should be uploaded into Blackboard before class on Tue, Sept 19th.

1) Read Chapter 6 again.

At one point Dawkins argues that in many species (and he is assuming in humans) there is a reason that maternal grandmothers (the mother of the mother of a child) spend more time and effort on grandchild care than paternal grandmothers do. Explain why he thinks kin selection theory makes that prediction.

2) Question from former students (in multiple semesters): if the gene is trying to maximize the number of copies of itself in future generations and there are copies in close relatives, doesn't kin selection theory predict that natural selection would **favor** incest (say between brother and sister)? The answer is no, it doesn't. Explain why. HINT: Selection is always comparing between alternative strategies. What is the alternative strategy here?

2) After reading the chapter, come up with a question that you want answered or a topic that you would like to be discussed. This could be something that the chapters forced you think about or it could be something that you thought was particularly confusing in the chapters.