

Philosophy 3334 Spring 2020
Reading questions #5
Due Tues, Feb 18th

1) Read Chapter 9. It turns out that in a great many species (not all) there are roughly equal numbers of males and females born every generation. What is the basic explanation for why this is true? HINT: We know that there are genes that can influence the sex ratio so this is not explained by some mathematical or biological fact which guarantees that the probability of any particular child is male is $1/2$.

2) Read Chapter 10. The social interaction between two birds who have parasites on their heads can be characterized by Evolutionary Game Theory. Dawkins calls the two strategies 'sucker' and 'cheat' (here we imagine they just meet once and play - so 'grudger' is not a possible strategy). Is either strategy altruistic? Why? Which of these strategies, if either, is an ESS? Explain why.

3) After reading the chapters, 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.