

Philosophy 3334 Summer 2021
Reading questions #3

Your answers should be uploaded into Blackboard before class on Mon, Jun 7th.

1) Read Chapter 6.

Dawkins says that the relatedness coefficient (r) between an uncle and their niece or nephew is $1/4$. Explain why.

2) Here is a criticism of kin selection theory: Many organisms cannot tell which other conspecifics they are related to (and they definitely can't tell say first cousin from second cousin). For example, some birds will sit on any egg in their own nest and it seems that they are unable to distinguish their own eggs from invader eggs. But according to kin selection theory, it seems they should sit on their own eggs and not on their non-kin's eggs. Therefore kin selection theory must be wrong and cannot explain why a bird would sit on any eggs at all.

--- Dawkins thinks that this criticism is misguided and not a problem at all for kin selection theory. Why not?

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.