


The Threat from Evolutionary Theory

1. Evolutionary Theory's Challenge
2. 3 Confusions that Scientists Make in Extending their Theories to Philosophy

Evolutionary Theory's Challenge

1. Our genes are selfish.
2. We are partially determined by our genes.
3. Therefore, we are selfish.




Selfish Genes: the genes that people now have can be traced to what enabled people to be the most fit for survival and reproduction (Re. Origins).

Selfish People: people only do things that suit them to survival and reproduction (Re. Natures).

The Limits of Science

1. Scientists are seen as authorities and people are likely to be swayed.
2. But scientists are not experts in critical thinking, philosophy, and ethics.
3. However, people are often:
 - (a) unequipped with the skills to critically analyze and evaluate them
 - (b) lack confidence to disagree with authorities in a culture that encourages obedience.



Milgram's Experiment

3 Confusions that Scientists Make in Extending their Theories to Philosophy

1. Origins and Nature are Not the Same Thing.
2. Evolution Cannot Explain Everything.
3. The Properties of Certain Parts of Things Don't Necessarily Imply Properties of the Whole.

Origins and Nature are Not the Same Thing.

"It is one thing to explain how we come to be as we are. It is a different thing to say that we are different from what we think we are" (p. 38).

1. Not all (or even most) behaviors directly promote survival or reproduction (ex. birth control).
2. Many people sacrifice their own welfare and even their own lives to help other people.

The Properties of Certain Parts of Things Don't Necessarily Imply Properties of the Whole.

Gene Selfishness \nrightarrow Human Selfishness

Selfish people are actually **less** likely to survive and reproduce than unselfish people. Why?

Discussion Question:
Survival and the Group



Survivor 2004

How does *your* group influence
your survival?