

Problem Set #3

Ch. #3, problems 1-3 and 7-9

And the following:

1. Natural selection is sometimes called the survival of the fittest. A common semantic argument against the validity of natural selection is that the argument is circular, because it identifies those that survive as the fittest, reducing survival of the fittest to "survival of the survivors". What is the conceptual flaw in the circularity argument?
2. Often we are interested in the evolution of continuous characters which are affected by multiple genes. We are usually ignorant of what these genes are for most traits of interest. How is it possible to study the evolution of traits whose precise genetic basis is unknown?