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## FORUM

### On "the Seville Statement on Violence"

*The Seville Statement on Violence was printed in the June 1987 issue of the Human Ethology Newsletter, Vol. 5, no. 2. At the 1986 American Anthropological Association Annual Business Meeting the Statement passed unanimously, and was ratified by mail ballot in 1987, with 1669 in favour and 230 against. Close to 8500 ballots had been mailed to members of the Association and ca. 2200 were returned. In response to the ballot, Robin Fox (University Professor, Rutgers) addressed the following letter to the Anthropology Newsletter. The letter is reprinted here.*

Letter to the *Anthropology Newsletter*,

It disturbs me that the "Seville Statement on Violence" might become official AAA policy without anyone offering a murmur of dissent. It is not that one cannot readily agree with the rather obvious propositions. Indeed, it is a little like being asked to vote in favour of mom and apple pie. But this exercise in self-righteous piety, while leaving its sponsors with a warm glow of moral superiority, does nothing to advance our understanding of the dilemma of human violence. What is more it raises false hope in suggesting that a condemnation of such simplistic notions as "innate aggression causes war" will remove "pessimism" and therefore lead to peace on earth. It isn't pessimism that threatens peace but fanaticism — even the soberly considered kind exemplified by this document. To me, at least, the prospect of being at the mercy of human intelligence and culture, given its record, is far more frightening than being at the mercy of "aggressive instincts", which I think I understand and can handle.

I certainly do not believe that such instincts "cause" war. (See "The Violent Imagination", in P. Marsh and A. Campbell, eds, *Aggression and Violence*, Basic Blackwell, 1982.) But I believe they exist, and that complementary to them are the equally powerful instincts to ritualize aggression. I also believe that in the "normal circumstances" of our species — that proverbial 99% of our existence in the paleolithic — these would be in some kind of healthy balance, as they were and are for other aggressive animals. But I also know that this is no longer the case and that what we now have to fear is something for more terrible than simple aggression.

Except for a few pathological cases, aggression is not a basic motive for action: it is a tool of other more frightening motives. What the supporters of this resolution do not seem to understand is that their own action in drawing up a list of heresies and pushing for their general condemnation tells us more about our dismal prospects for survival than anything they can say about human aggression. Our worst enemy is *fanaticism* (xenophobic or ideological or both) and our capacity for an intelligent *routinization of fanaticism*. Aggression is merely a handmaiden that can be called into play once the heretics are identified and condemned, ostracized and silenced and eventually tortured and burned. It is ironically appropriate that this document should have originated in that sordid center of the Inquisition, Seville. No, I'm afraid that the absolute "scientific" proof that innate aggression is not the cause of our troubles does nothing to alleviate my pessimism, and this declaration and the thoughtless acceptance of it do a lot to deepen my gloom over the prospects for

human survival. The nuclear war they anticipate will certainly not be "caused" by innate aggression, but by mechanisms closer to those that produced this pointless document. It is this that students of human survival should be considering, not shopworn denunciations of ideas that no one ever really held in the first place.

Robin Fox  
Rutgers University

David Adams (Psychology, Wesleyan), Corresponding Secretary of the Seville Statement Support Network, was asked to respond to Dr. Fox's letter and did so by calling attention to his paper (with Sarah Bosch) "The Myth that War is Intrinsic to Human Nature Discourages Action by Peace by Young People".

Precis and excerpts follow, but the reader is directed to Ramirez, Hinde, Groebel (Eds.) *Essays on Violence*. Seville 1987 (the volume produced by the Seville Conference) for the complete paper.

*126 college students answered questions (and 114 completed followup questionnaires a month later) regarding attitudes to peace activity, beliefs concerning human nature and war, feeling of anger about the arms race, and normative attitude about peace activity of family, friends, and school. 40% of the students answered "very much" or "somewhat" to the question "Do you believe that war is intrinsic to human nature? 40% agreed that "there is a war instinct" and 33% that "wars are inevitable because human beings are naturally aggressive". The researchers then examined the history of "peace activity" by students holding these views.*

"As predicted, beliefs about human nature and war proved to be significant correlates of peace activity . . .

"These results support the need for a worldwide educational campaign to dispel the myth that war is instinctive, intrinsic to human nature, or unavoidable because of an alleged biological basis. As shown by the results obtained here, such a myth is widespread and constitutes an important obstacle that interferes with the development of activity or peace . . .

"The data obtained in this study are consistent with similar results obtained in Finland and in a pilot study . . . in the U.S. In all three studies it was found that a student is more likely to believe that he or she can do something about nuclear war if he or she believes that war is not intrinsic to human nature."

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## MINI COMMUNICATIONS

The objective of this section is short empirical or theoretical papers which inform and would benefit from the input of peers. If readers wish to comment, write directly to the author(s).

### Genetic Similarity theory: Beyond Kin Selection?

by: J. Philippe Rushton, Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario N6A 5C2, Canada.

Kinship was the basis of seminal work by Hamilton (1964) providing a solution to the question of how altruism could

evolve. The answer proposed was that individuals behave so as to maximize their inclusive fitness, rather than only their individual fitness by increasing the production of offspring by both themselves and their relatives, a process now known as kin selection. This formulation provided a conceptual breakthrough, redirecting the unit of analysis from the individual organism to his or her genes, for it is these which survive and are passed on.

While the idea of kin selection is not new (Hamilton, 1964) and is considered central to sociobiological theorizing, only recently has it been applied to human relationships. This delay may be due in part to the theory's focus on altruism between relatives, an emphasis of limited applicability to humans where altruism is frequently directed to non-kin and is often explained by empathy, reciprocity, social rules, and other proximate mechanisms, although twin studies have shown that human altruism and social preferences are genetically mediated (Rushton, Littlefield & Lumsden, 1986).

Building on the work of Hamilton (1964), Dawkins (1976), and Thiessen and Gregg (1980), and adopting the mechanistic viewpoint of the selfish gene, Rushton, Russell and Wells (1984) explicitly extended the kin selection theory of altruism to the human case by arguing that if a gene can ensure its own survival by acting so as to bring about the reproduction of family members with whom it shares copies, then it can also do so by benefiting *any* organism in which copies of itself are to be found. Rather than only protecting kin at the expense of strangers, organisms are postulated to detect other genetically similar organisms and to exhibit altruistic behaviour toward these "strangers", as well as toward its own relatives. This is the crux of genetic similarity theory. Thus kin recognition would be but one form of genetic similarity detection.

If humans do detect and prefer those who are genetically similar, it should be possible to demonstrate this within interpersonal relationships. With respect to both friendships and marriages it is known that partners resemble each other in such characteristics as age, ethnic background, socio-economic status, physical attractiveness, religion, social attitudes, level of education, family size, intelligence (IQ), and personality (see reviews by Rushton, Russell & Wells, 1985; Thiessen & Gregg, 1980). Correlations tend to be higher for opinions, attitudes, and values (0.40 to 0.70) and lower for personality traits and personal habits (0.02 to 0.30). Less well known is the fact that partners also tend to resemble each other on socially undesirable traits including criminality, alcoholism and psychiatric disorders. Advantages thought to accrue to optimising similarity in personal relations include altruism, cooperation, communication and trust.

To examine whether such assortment is mediated genetically, my co-workers and I carried out blood tests and differential heritability analyses. Using blood antigens we estimated genetic distance across 10 blood loci with 7 polymorphic marker systems (ABO, Rhesus (Rh), P, MNSs, Duffy (Fy), Kidd (Jk), and HLA) over 6 chromosomes and found that both male friendship dyads and sexually interacting couples share more genetic markers than do randomly generated pairs from the same samples (Rushton, 1988; Rushton & Chan, 1988). These results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentage of genetic similarity based on 10 blood loci in six types of human relationships. Source: Rushton, 1988; Rushton & Chan 1988).

| Relationship  | Number of Pairs | Mean $\pm$ SE | Stand. Deviation | Range |
|---|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-------|
| Mother-offspring  | 100             | 73 $\pm$ 1    | 9                | 50-88 |
| Sexually interacting adults in which male is father of produced child | 799             | 52 $\pm$ 1    | 12               | 17-90 |
| Sexually interacting adults in which male is excluded from paternity  | 187             | 44 $\pm$ 1    | 12               | 15-74 |
| Randomly paired male-female dyads                                     | 200             | 43 $\pm$ 1    | 14               | 11-81 |
| Male friendship dyads   | 76              | 54 $\pm$ 1    | 12               | 22-80 |
| Random male pairs   | 76              | 48 $\pm$ 1    | 11               | 22-72 |

We also found that the epigenetic rules inclining people to choose each other on the basis of similarity may be particularly fine-tuned, inclining individuals to assort on the more genetically influenced of sets of homogeneous characteristics. Partner similarity has been found to be most marked on the more heritable of sets of homogeneous traits over a variety of anthropometric, cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal attributes in both male friendship dyads (Rowe & Osgood, 1984; Rushton & Chan, 1988), and marriage partnerships (Rushton & Nicholson, 1988; Rushton & Russell, 1985; Russell, Wells & Rushton, 1985). Consider the one study carried out independently of ourselves. Rowe and Osgood (1984) examined delinquency in 530 teenaged twins and found that not only was antisocial behaviour itself about 50% heritable but that the correlation of 0.56 between the delinquency of self and the delinquency of friends was genetically mediated. That is, genetically disposed delinquent students were also genetically inclined to seek each other out.

Finally, we examined parental preferences between full siblings. Because kin selection theory emphasizes relatives "identical by descent" where all siblings have a .5 coefficient of relationship, differences between full siblings has been overlooked. Because of the genetic similarity theory focus on assortative mating, however, some children are clearly expected to be more similar to one parent than to the other. If a father provided a child with 50% of his genes, 10% of which overlapped with the mother's contribution, and a mother provided the child with 50% of hers, 20% of which overlapped the father's contribution, then the child would be 60% similar to the mother and 70% similar to the father. Family members are expected to favour those who are most similar. An explicit test of this prediction was made in a study of bereavement following the death of a child: Both mothers and fathers, irrespective of the sex of the child, grieved most for children they perceived as resembling their side of the family (Littlefield & Rushton, 1986). Among siblings perceived similarity is correlated with genetic similarity measured by blood tests.

It would appear that people do moderate their behaviour in accord with the genetic similarity of others. The implications of these findings may be far reaching, providing, for example, a biological basis for ethnic nepotism and group selection. Since two individuals within an ethnic group will, on average, be genetically more similar to each other than two from different

groups, people may be expected to prefer their own group over others. This line of argument provides the basis for group selection to occur. Hamilton's (1964) theory of inclusive fitness is generally regarded as an extension of individual selection, not group selection (Dawkins, 1976). Essentially there did not seem to exist a mechanism by which altruistic individuals, other than by benefiting kin, could leave more genes than individuals who cheated. With the genetic similarity theory view that genes can maximize their replication by benefiting any organism in which copies of themselves are to be found, a process is provided by which group selection may operate (Rushton, 1987).

Benefiting genetically similar others has been greatly enhanced through culture. through the use of language, law, religious imagery, and patriotic nationalism replete with kin terminology, ideological commitment enormously extends altruistic behaviour. Indeed recent analyses suggest that evolution under culturally driven group selection, including migration, war and genocide may account for the greatest amount of change in human gene frequencies (Ammerman & Cavalli-Sforza, 1984; Wilson, 1983). The human propensity for deontological action may be guided by epigenetic rules which lead people to those cultural choices which maximally increase their genetic fitness (Lumsden & Wilson, 1981; Rushton, Littlefield & Lumsden, 1986). If genetic similarity theory is correct, these choices will most likely benefit genetically similar others.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Dear Editor:

I am writing in connection with Dr. G. Schubert's review of *Ostracism: a Social and biological Phenomenon in the Human Ethology Newsletter* of December, 1987.

Dr. Schubert, in his usual agreeable style, claims that he has heard me describe the drowning of Nikkie, a male chimpanzee, as a "suicide". Yet I have never publicly discussed the incident, neither in Nairobi nor elsewhere, for the simple reason that it happened long after I had left Arnhem Zoo (I concluded my studies in 1981; Nikkie died in 1984). In addition, I have always viewed his death as the unintended result of an escape attempt.

It was a journalist who came up with the suicide idea ("Primate King Throws Himself off the Rock", shouted his article) without any support from ethologists involved with the chimpanzee project, who, of course, expressed strong reservations regarding this interpretation. Unfortunately, the sensationalistic story has found a willing ear in the media, and Dr. Schubert's uncaring remarks further ensure that it will stay alive.

Frans de Waal, Ph.D.  
Madison, Wisconsin.

### The unheralded majority: Contemporary women as mothers.

Lexington, M.A.: Lexington Books, 1985, 170 pages, by Lydia N. O'Donnell.

Reviewed by William T. Bailey.

Psychology Department, Tulane University.

### The not un-common mother

Researchers in many areas of "social change" have tended to focus on the uncommon — Supermoms, Superdads, and children in center-based daycare, for instance. All of these are statistically — and socially, unusual cases. There is relatively less published about the "average" father, mother, or child. One frequently gets the impression from reading the current literature — popular and professional, that most young children are growing up in one-parent (female) families or, failing that, are parented by gender-role neutral fathers and supermoms. Some few are, most aren't, and Lydia O'Donnell's book on the contemporary mother demonstrates once again that "the more things change, the more they stay the same."

As she very cogently notes, "Media headlines and our tendency to focus on what is changing and novel rather than on