

Life-History Evolution, Human

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Abstract

Life-history theory can help us identify the genetic and environmental factors that favored the evolution of the unusual human life-history, which has changed drastically in the last two centuries. We discuss why a quantitative genetic perspective can provide insight into human life-history evolution and review recent studies revealing how quantitative genetic techniques have determined how cultural and environmental changes have altered selection pressures. These studies illustrate the difficulty of predicting evolutionary change in future generations but nevertheless provide a means to study human evolutionary responses to a rapidly changing world, with implications for public health and demographic forecasting.