

Dysoc/NIMBioS Webinar Series on Cultural Evolution  
Questions from *Modeling the dynamics of cultural diversification*  
with Bernard Koch and Erik Gjesfjeld, November 3, 2020

1. It seems to me that your definition of culture is lacking in that it doesn't seem to include overall idea systems that prescribe culturally appropriate behavior.
2. A place where there seems to have been a loss of diversity is in auto colors. Most today are black, white, silver or grey, with occasional blue or red.
3. How about reproduction of ideas?
4. Do lineages make up a cultural form, or are they the material and social manifestations of the cultural form as it exists in (has been indoctrinated into) individual minds?
5. Is there a difference between the way you think about "lineages" and the way other cultural evolutionary theorists (e.g. Morin) think about "traditions"? How are those concepts similar and/or different?
6. Erik & Bernard, in your study, which model of automobile changed the least / stayed stable the longest? (Like, say, sharks in biology) & does that mean its (that car's) cultural evolutionary niche stayed stable/viable? (or... were there other causal factors?)
7. I wonder whether we can (or should) distinguish between cultural microevolution vs macroevolution in this case. Diversification, origination, and extinction can be applied to analyze both cultural variants within a population, as well as examine lineages and different cultures (as 'species')?
8. How do you ensure the material cultural traits are mainly transmitted vertically and the evolutionary biology framework is applicable to these data?
9. Louca and Pennell (2020)'s simulation showed we cannot estimate extinction and diversification rates in phylogenies, and there is an infinite number of different sets of these two parameters that are equally good at describing any particular outcome. What do you think of these findings?
10. Would this analysis generalize to other fads, fashion trends?
11. Does this provide a predictive model?
12. How might someone working in the history of ideas operationalize studying the growth and death of ideas? Must the study of ideas always be proxied through concrete material culture?
13. The color changes are not properties of the individual lineages, they are general trends... how to fit it in the model?