

THE ETHICS OF RACIAL PRESERVATION

On Genetic Interests

Family, Ethnicity, and Humanity in an Age of Mass Migration

Frank Kemp Salter

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Reviewed by Michael J. Polignano

In *On Genetic Interests* Frank Salter argues that all living things have “genetic interests,” namely, each life form has an interest in passing its genes on to the next generation. Salter then expands upon existing theories of kinship and altruism – most notably W. D. Hamilton’s theory of inclusive fitness.¹ Hamilton’s theory holds that self-sacrificial altruistic behavior towards family and extended family can increase one’s own genetic representation in future generations. In other words, under certain circumstances an animal can protect its genetic interests through altruistic behavior even if that behavior hurts the animal’s own chances of reproductive success. Salter ventures into new territory by applying this concept to ethnic groups (or “ethnies,” the term Salter prefers) whose members share a greater percentage of their genes than randomly chosen people from other ethnic groups. Ethnic kinship thus becomes a natural extension of family kinship.

One does not require extensive genealogical histories to measure kinship between two individuals: kinship can be quantitatively assessed through gene assay data. Salter measures kinship between ethnies using a global genetic assay performed by L. L. Cavalli-Sforza, P. Menozzi, and A. Piazza in the 1980s.² It is worth pointing out that the

¹ “Fitness” is the scientific term for the quantitative genetic contribution of one genotype to the next generation relative to other genotypes of the same species. “Individual fitness” refers to such contribution an individual makes by producing offspring. “Inclusive fitness” refers to such contribution an individual makes not just by producing offspring, but also through behavior that affects others possessing the same genotype.

² This assay did not measure kinship *per se*, but rather “genetic distance.” However, for practical purposes the difference between the two is negligible (see pp. 45–46).

frequently-cited objection that pure races don't exist due to population admixture does not invalidate the concept of ethnic genetic interests (p. 48). As long as average differences in gene frequencies exist between ethnies, distinct ethnic genetic interests exist.

Births and deaths that occur within one's immediate family have a tremendous emotional impact, but the gradual decline of a race due to low birthrates and nonviolent immigration of foreigners does not. Salter gives these losses greater emotional reality by equating them with the loss of specific numbers of children or siblings. Salter explains that these losses are not merely symbolic, nor are they diminished by being spread across an entire ethnic group. The loss applies to every randomly-chosen member of the ethny: "for a native woman it is equivalent to the loss of *her* children and grandchildren, for a native man it is equivalent to the loss of *his* children and grandchildren." The same holds true for every member of the ethny. Accordingly, Salter argues that ethnic genetic interests are much larger than familial genetic interests.

Salter notes that Englishmen and Danes, though the genetic distance between the two populations is not great, are nonetheless distinct. He calculates that if 10,000 Danes were to take the place of 10,000 Englishmen, the loss of genetic interests to the English would be equivalent to losing 167 English children (or siblings). Numerically speaking, the replacement of 10,000 Englishmen with 10,000 Danes is a loss of 10,000 Englishmen. Genetically speaking, it is a loss of only 167, because Danes are genetically similar to the English, so most of the English genes lost are shared by the Danes who replace them. Salter is not claiming that each and every Englishman loses the genetic equivalent of 167 children or siblings, but that the English people as a whole lose this number. Yet each and every Englishman is related to those who are lost. If, however, 10,000 Bantu immigrants replaced 10,000 Englishmen, the genetic equivalent of 10,854 English children or siblings would be lost. How does the loss due to replacement exceed the number of those replaced? Salter explains, "Some ethnies are so different genetically that they amount to negative stores of those distinct genes."

Salter shows that interracial immigration is most damaging to ethnic genetic interests: "It requires only 1.1 African immigrants to depress the European genetic interest by the equivalent of one child (or vice versa). But it takes 59.9 Danish immigrants to have the same ef-

fect on the English population, or 27 Polish immigrants on Germans, or 42 English immigrants on Irish (and all vice versa)." Regarding America, "Americans of European and African descent have lost, and are losing, the equivalent of millions of children due to post-1965 immigration."

Salter also examines the effects of racial intermarriage on genetic interests. He starts with J. P. Rushton's Genetic Similarity Theory ("GST") which states that marriage within one's ethnic group is adaptive because the children that result share more than 50 percent of their parent's distinctive gene varieties (or "alleles"). This is because parents within the same ethny have many distinctive alleles in common. The theory also proposes that parents of the same ethny may treat their children better than parents in mixed marriages, because the biological similarity of parent and child leads to more intimate bonding. Salter then analyzes how much more related a parent will be to his children if he marries within his ethny rather than outside of it. An Englishman who marries an Englishwoman instead of a Danish woman only gains a one percent greater relatedness to his offspring, but would be 92 percent more related to his offspring if the rejected potential spouse were a Bantu. That is to say, marrying within his ethny means his children will carry 92 percent more of his genes than they would if he married a Bantu.

After laying the scientific groundwork for ethnic genetic interests, Salter discusses their ethical and political implications. He writes, "It is parents' duty to care for their children. Do we have a similar duty to nurture our ethnies? . . . When ethnic competition is high, as is the case in competition between members of different races, failure to show ethnic loyalty is the genetic equivalent of betraying a child or a grandchild." He argues that "it would be prudent for a population to defend its most precious collective interest—distinctive genes carried by the ethny—with the most powerful means at its disposal." Yet to date, "no state yet developed has reliably kept its promise as an adaptive ethnic group strategy."

The biggest threat to ethnic genetic interests are "free riders": those whose genetic fitness is increased as a result of behavior that hurts the genetic interests of the ethny. Such free-riding is most destructive to genetic interests when the free riders are genetically very distinct from the ethny they exploit. In multiracial societies such as America, this happens daily as large immigrant Mexican families receive benefits

from welfare, schools, hospitals, parks, and national infrastructure to which they did not contribute and which their own ethny is unable to maintain. Free-riding can also occur within an ethny. Corporate elites can (and do) benefit themselves at the expense of their ethny by outsourcing production to third-world countries, through philanthropy that mainly benefits members of a different ethny (e.g. Microsoft's largesse to blacks), or by swindling investors and low-level employees of their savings through fraudulent accounting practices (Enron). Wealthy executives are far more likely to act in ways detrimental to their own ethny in multicultural societies than in homogeneous societies, because they have less in common with the average citizen.

What sort of state would best counter these threats and preserve an ethny's genetic interests? Salter comes down firmly on the side of ethnic nationalism. To avoid conflict that risks the common genetic interest through aggressive war and elite free riders, he proposes that nationalism be practiced by every ethny in the world. He calls this "universal nationalism." Under such a system, each state would be based on a scientifically-informed ethnic constitution that makes specific reference to protecting the population's genetic interests. States founded on such a constitution would have common interests: minimizing conflict and free riders. Universal nationalism would preserve ethnic diversity by protecting the genetic interests of every ethny, and would also be in the best interest of humanity as a whole.

In the process, Salter derides left-wing political theory, stating, "The intellectual Left has become largely alienated from mankind as an evolved species." He also states that a "concept nation," that is, a nation founded purely for the sake of a particular ideological concept like "freedom," "democracy," or "equality" rather than the defense of a particular people, "is incapable of principled defense against ethnic replacement."

Salter's defense of self-sacrifice for one's people gives a rational foundation for racial activism. A person who foregoes having children of his own to serve the larger interests of his race — one who lives *or dies* for his race — may serve his genetic interests better than someone who leaves a large family but works against the interests of his race as a whole.

Furthermore, many people who already have children are intimidated from open racial activism because they fear for their children. But Salter shows that our genetic interests are broader than our immediate

families. Thus, from a genetic standpoint, "It would appear to be more adaptive for an Englishman to risk life or property resisting the immigration of two Bantu immigrants to England than his taking the same risk to rescue one of his own children from drowning."

Salter also gives hope to those who are unable to have children of their own: people who are unlucky in love, people unable to have children because of a physical defect like sterility or a psychological aberration like homosexuality, women who ran out their biological clocks pursuing lifestyles that stymie motherhood, and so forth. Such people can still salvage their genetic interests by devoting themselves to the good of their people.

Salter marshals an impressive array of scientific data to support his analysis, and his writing is clearly aimed at readers with some scientific or academic background. However, his book doesn't require specialized knowledge to be understood, and he provides a concise summary of each chapter at its beginning. The book also covers a vast breadth of subject areas—genetics, evolutionary theory, political theory, and ethics, among others—so those not interested in highly technical scientific arguments will still find the book fascinating.

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On Genetic Interests is an immensely impressive book. But it is not without flaws. To my eyes, the greatest flaw of Salter's argument is its genetic conservatism, which is allied with a kind of genetic relativism. According to Salter, life is all about passing on the genes that have been passed on to us. But what if one's gene pool contains a large number of bad traits, such as high incidences of mental retardation, physical deformities, and mental defects? Should we want to pass on those genes? And what if one's gene pool contains a low incidence of valuable traits like physical beauty, bodily health, intelligence, cooperativeness, fellow-feeling, and good cheer? Wouldn't it be better to increase the frequency of valuable traits, even if that means importing genes from outside our ethny?

For instance, to use one of Salter's examples, what if the English population could be improved by sterilizing retarded, deformed, and insane Englishmen and importing Danish genes (if the Danes happen to have a higher incidence of valuable traits)? From Salter's point of view, this simply could not happen. From the gene's perspective (and

thus from the perspective of ethnic genetic interests), “preserving genetic interests” is entirely a matter of preserving current gene frequencies. There are no higher standards—like beauty, intelligence, or mental and physical health—to which we can appeal. There is no point of view we can take on the issue aside from the relative perspective of the English or the Danish gene pool, which would perpetuate themselves to eternity without change.

Salter’s genetic conservatism conflicts with the outlook I recommend: genetic progressivism, also known as eugenics. The eugenicist recognizes that there are objective standards by which we can judge the quality of a gene pool and recommends that we create a better future by increasing the frequency of good genes and decreasing the frequency of bad genes in each successive generation. A eugenicist is not against all immigration, just dysgenic immigration.

There is, however, a limit to my commitment to eugenics. I am all for mixing white subgroups if it really can improve the race. (I hope it can, given that, like most Americans, I am a mixture of different European ethnies—in my case, Irish, French, and Italian.) But if we could improve upon the white race by hybridizing it with a non-white race, I would oppose doing so. Such a hybrid might be objectively superior. But it is a successor race, not my race. And I want my race to survive. So there is a point at which I can embrace Salter’s genetic relativism, since I cannot weigh the question of my own race’s survival “objectively.” In the end, I take my own side, simply because it is mine.

By its nature, Salter’s theory also rejects as “irrational” the assertion that any particular ethny’s genetic interests are more valuable than any others’ by virtue of having greater genetic potential. It is a tenet of Salter’s “universal nationalism” that every ethny should be able to pursue its own genetic perpetuation free of interference from any other ethny, and no claims of genetic superiority should be able to trump this fundamental right to ethnic self-determination. But I disagree. Salter’s viewpoint does not take into account the real-world implications of racial differences.

For instance, if life on Earth were threatened by an approaching asteroid, and the world had five years to save itself, all ethnies would have an overriding common interest in preventing the catastrophe. However, only high-IQ individuals could devise a solution, and ethnies that possessed a greater number of high-IQ individuals would

thus be more valuable to human survival than those that did not. They would be more valuable *even to low-IQ ethnies*. (Even Salter grants that this sort of scenario proves that some groups are genetically superior to others in important respects. But he is loath to admit it because he fears that superior groups will start thinking themselves superior and bossing other groups around.)

Colonialism provides another example. The immigration of blacks into England is a genetic loss to the English. But the colonization of Africa by the English was not a genetic loss to blacks. The English suppressed tribal strife and introduced Western technology, medicine, and social organization that raised black productivity, life expectancy, and populations to levels they never could have attained on their own. Thus the genetic interests of whites are more valuable than the genetic interests of blacks, *even to blacks*, because black genetic interests depend upon white, but not vice-versa.

I deplore the dysgenic effects of colonialism and imperialism, and I deplore exploitation (whether of other humans, of animals, or of the natural environment) for shortsighted, selfish gain. But the world cannot afford Salter's universal, non-interventionist ethnic nationalism either. Left to their own devices, and aided by white medicine and technology, the other races will continue to breed recklessly and despoil the Earth, destroying themselves—and us—as surely as my hypothetical asteroid. If only whites had used the world hegemony they enjoyed until the aftermath of the Second World War wisely: not as an occasion for suicidal altruism or base exploitation, but for the good of all life on Earth. And that good has to be understood not merely as the preservation of life, but its ongoing evolution.

Salter's universal nationalism is just another form of "live and let live" liberalism. But only whites are susceptible to such schemes. Other races will be undeterred in pursuing their ethnic interests at the expense of others. Some, such as the Jews and the Chinese, will even pursue world hegemony. Thus I fear that Salter's universal nationalism, like all forms of unreconstructed liberalism, will only prove a disadvantage to whites. Moralistic abstractions about fairness and rights will not secure our survival if a ruthless, predatory, and amoral race gains the power to make ultimate decisions about the destiny of life on this planet.

We now have the power to direct the course of our own evolution, and the evolution of all life on Earth. This is an awesome power, for

good or evil. All decisions about its use should be made by our conscious minds, and take into account how our genetic interests depend upon the interests of the rest of the ecosystem. They should not be left to our various selfish and self-perpetuating gene pools, regardless of questions of their relative genetic merits. To make conscious decisions about the future of life, however, we need to formulate ethical standards. We need an ethics of racial preservation *and* racial progress. *On Genetic Interests* is an important contribution to the first project and thus is required reading for those who would contribute to the second.

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