

TEDx talk in Vienna

1—Title: The evolutionary genetics of 'honor' killings

2—Topic: see above Relevant to "inequality"

3—A contradiction within evolutionary logic is found in so-called 'honor killings'. Why would the parents of a grown child kill that child, whom they have invested in for years, with both resources and love? Evidence suggests predominance in some Muslim and Hindu areas, but near-complete absence from major swaths of the world such as China.

In the Muslim case repeated first cousin marriages elevate degrees of relatedness in the family so that parents are related to their children by nearly 1 but likewise to their nephews/nieces and cousins by nearly the same amount. This increases the degree to which harm to them by their child could have large genetic costs to their parents and helps explain Muslim 'honor' killings.

Hindus practice a more complex system of inbreeding. Within-caste mating is promoted but within SUB-caste mating is not. That they have practiced endogamy for at least 100 generations has now been well established genetically. This has presumably led to competition between village sub-groups, where strong interactions may favor sub-group 'honor'.

Additional cases with a different logic—such as lynchings in the United States—will also be analyzed (the honor of Southern white women).