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Simulating human origins and evolution

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Abstrak

The development of populations over time, and, on longer timescales, the evolution of species, are both influenced by a complex of interacting, underlying processes. Computer simulation provides a means of experimenting within an idealised framework to allow aspects of these processes and their interactions to be isolated, controlled, and understood. In this book, computer simulation is used to model migration, extinction, fossilisation, interbreeding, selection and non-hereditary effects in the context of human populations and the observed distribution of fossil and current hominoid species. The simulations described enable the visualisation and study of lineages, genetic diversity in populations, character diversity across species and the accuracy of reconstructions, allowing new insights into human evolution and the origins of humankind for graduate students and researchers in the fields of physical anthropology, human evolution, and human genetics.