Announcement of the Fulker Award for a paper published in Behavior Genetics, Volume 49, 2019.

The Fulker Award was established by the Behavior Genetics Association in memory of David Fulker, a past President the Association and Executive Editor of the journal, who died in 1998 (Hewitt, 1998). The award is for ‘a particularly meritorious paper’ published in the journal during the preceding year. The annual prize is $1000 ‘and a nice bottle of wine’ (given only when the recipient is present at the Association’s annual meeting.)

Volume 49 included 40 rigorously peer reviewed papers on human and animal behavior genetics, including methodological and empirical studies as well as reviews. To select the paper for the Fulker award, I solicit nominations from the journal’s Associate Editors and follow their advice closely.

Nominations from the Associate Editors spanned all of the types of papers we publish. Among the papers nominated were Susan Harbison and colleagues’ report of a GWAS of circadian behavior in Drosophila, Gunn-Helen Moen and colleagues’ study of power to detect maternal and offspring effects in association studies, and the entire special issue on Genetics and Human Agency conceived and edited by Eric Turhkeimer. Also nominated were Sarah Lukowski et al’s analysis of different dimensions of math anxiety, Brittany Mitchell and colleagues’ multivariate genetic analysis of vitamin D concentrations and related phenotypes, Alejandro Arias-Vasquez and colleagues’ consideration of the STXBP5-AS1 gene in adult ADHD, and Joelle Pasman et al’s review of polygenic gene-environment interaction in tabacco, alcohol, and cannabis use. Each of these is an outstanding contribution to behavior genetics and deserves to be widely read and cited.

However, this year’s winner is an empirical analysis of an evolutionary mechanism in Drosophila paulistorum, specifically the role of bacterial infection in reproductive isolation among its subspecies. Research on the mechanisms of speciation has a very long history in behavior genetics, going back to the work of Theodosius Dobzhansky, the very first President of the Behavior Genetics Association, and for whom our association’s most prestigious award is named. Dobzhansky’s student, Lee Ehrman, directly addressed the topic in her dissertation on ‘The genetics of hybrid sterility in Drosophila paulistorum (Columbia University, 1959). Prof. Ehrman is herself both a recipient of the Dobzhansky Award and a Past President of our association. We might also note that David Fulker’s very first paper was a study of Drosophila behavior, published in Science in 1966.

Thus it seems fitting that this year’s Fulker Award goes to Daniela Schneider, Lee Ehrman, Tobias Engl, Martin Kaltenporth, Aurelie Hua-Van, Arnaud Le Rouzic, and Wolfgang Miller for their paper titled:

‘Symbiont-driven male mating success in the neotropical Drosophila paulistorum superspecies’.


John K. Hewitt
Editor-in-Chief

REFERENCES


