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[Elizabeth Liddle](#): Upright BiPed: until you actually read, and comment on, my operational definitions, however...

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**29 July 2011**

## [The selfish gene: Darwinism is so self-referential now that it sheds light only on itself.](#)

### News

From “Bacterial Spite: When Kamikaze-Like Behavior Is a Good Strategy” (*ScienceDaily* July 28, 2011), we [learn](#):

Spite evolves in close quarters, according to research led by Fredrik Inglis of the University of Oxford and ETH, Zurich. Inglis and his team studied a bacterial species in which individuals sometimes explode, releasing a toxin into the environment that is deadly to competing bacteria.

[ ... ]

Inglis and his team had previously developed a mathematical model showing that such spite is quite likely to evolve in bacterial colonies that are clonal, meaning individuals share the same genes. The model shows that if a few individuals sacrifice themselves to take out competitors, they increase the chances that their genes (albeit in other individuals) will be passed to the next generation. Lab experiments performed by Inglis and his team support the model.

So it couldn't just be an outcome of the stress caused by crowded conditions? It has to be a strategy of a mind-like “Natural Selection.”

What if the exploding bac and its crowdmates didn't share many genes? Would it behave differently? Do we know?

If rats under crowded conditions [eat their offspring](#), is that another instance of spreading their selfish genes in nearby rats?

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0

One Response

[1](#)

Mung

07/29/2011

4:43 pm

Aren't our models wonderful?

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