RNA Virus Adaptation (Or Not) To Environmental Change



Paul E. Turner Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Yale University Microbiology Graduate Program, Yale School of Medicine

Viruses Often Encounter Environmental Change





Vector Biology



Ecosystems

Wasik and Turner 2013 Ann Rev Microbiol Goldhill and Turner 2014 Curr Opin Virol



Outline

- Phage experiments
- Phage therapy

Phage Experiments

Power of experimental evolution using RNA phages

Rapid evolution

- High mutation rates
- Large population sizes
- Short generation times
- Small genome sizes
- Indefinite freezer storage (fossil record)

Traditional visualization of phage growth (fitness)





phage plaques



Novel methods for studying phage fitness



Liquid-handling robot



Microplate reader



Inferred phage growth



Bacterial growth curves

Novel methods for measuring phage fitness

Phage too small to count directly. Measure phage fitness by tracking host?



Traditional method:

Grow two strains on one plate and count plaques.

Problems: Time consuming, Small sample size

New method:

Measure growth curves of infected hosts in liquid. Strong host growth (time of max OD; longer extinction time) means lower phage fitness

High throughput measures of phage fitness



Simulations show that peak time correlates with growth rate



Empirical results show similar correlation

Turner et al. 2012 J Microbiol Meth

Experimental Evolution of Phage $\phi 6$

Model: segmented RNA phage phi-6







Turner & Chao 1999 *Nature* Turner et al. 1999 *J Virology* Montville et al. 2005 *PLoS Biology* McBride et al. 2008 *BMC Evol Biol*

Does co-infection accelerate adaptation in an RNA virus?

Phage populations evolved at low vs. high MOI on *P. syringae* for 250 generations

Co-infecting viruses became LESS fit than ancestor, but only at low MOI (Turner and Chao 1998 *Genetics*)



Evolution of 'cheating' is possible in viruses



Payoff Matrix from evolutionary game theory



$(1-c) < (1-s_1)$ Mixed equilibrium (mixed ESS)





 $(1-c) > (1-s_1)$ Prisoner's dilemma (cheating as pure ESS)







Turner and Chao 1999 Nature



Turner and Chao 1999 Nature

Initial frequency of defector phage

Using host growth curves to study evolved cheater phage





Does mutated M segment alone, cause fitness cost at low MOI?

segment M membrane proteins including host specificity gene 3. pac sequence at 5' end.

4063 bp gene 10 gene 6 gene 3 gene 13

Evidence that a cheater RNA segment can evolve in phi-6



Low MOI (clonal infection) environment

Arnold, Goldhill et al. (unpublished)

Evidence that a cheater RNA segment can evolve in phi-6





Arnold, Goldhill et al. (unpublished)

Evidence that a cheater RNA segment can evolve in phi-6











Arnold, Goldhill et al. (unpublished)

What is the cheating mechanism?





Greater packaging affinity of mutated M segment is likely cheater mechanism

Mindich 2004 Virus Research, Turner & Chao 2003 Am Nat

Natural selection can be driven by differential reproduction and survival





Life-history theory predicts that survival and reproduction cannot be simultaneously maximized.

Phage Survival Assay



% Survivors = $(N_1/N_0) * 100$

Phi-6 reaction norm following 5-min heat-shock



Typical lab environment: 25°C

McBride et al. 2008, BMC Evol Biol

Can phage survival adaptively improve?





Daniel Goldhill



Rob McBride (Sapphire Energy)



Brandon Ogbunugafor (Harvard)



Results: phenotypic adaptation (thermotolerance)



Dessau, Goldhill et al. 2012 PLoS Genetics

How does thermotolerance evolve in phi-6?

- 3 thermotolerance evolution studies
- Robust vs. Brittle clones evolved at 45°C (McBride et al. 2008)
- Robust vs. Brittle populations evolved at 45°C (Goldhill et al. submitted)
- Wild type clones evolved at 50°C

(Dessau, Goldhill et al. 2012)

S segment: P5 lysin gene mutation G2238U transversion V→F



segment L	L polymerase and packaging functions. pac sequence at 5' end.			
6374 bp				
	gene 14 gene 7	gene 2	gene 4	gene 1
segment M	membrane proteins includ	ling host specificity	gene 3. <i>pac</i> seque	nce at 5' end.
4063 bp	gene 10 gene 6	gene 3	gene 13	
segment S nucleocapsid shell P8, ns protein P12, membrane protein P9, lysin P5. pac sequence at 5' end. 2948 bp gene 8 gene 9 gene 12 gene 5				

How does thermotolerance evolve in phi-6?







Cvirkaite-Krupovic et al 2010 J Gen Virol

Comparing wild-type and 'thermotolerant' P5 lysin enzymes

- Structure
 - X-ray crystallography
- Stability
 - Circular Dichroism
- Activity
 - Enzyme assay



Structure of P5 protein and region affected by mutation

Dessau, Goldhill et al. 2012 PLoS Genetics

Comparing wild-type and 'thermotolerant' P5 lysin enzymes

- Structure
 - X-ray crystallography
- Stability
 - Circular Dichroism
- Activity
 - Enzyme assay

Phenylalanine fills a hydrophobic pocket stabilizing the protein





Dessau, Goldhill et al. 2012 PLoS Genetics



Is thermotolerance costly?





Is thermotolerance costly?



Thermotolerant mutants form 'bull's-eye' plaques at 25°C *Antagonistically pleiotropic allele*

Reproduction at 25°C







V207F causes 'life-history' tradeoff between survival and reproduction

Dessau, Goldhill et al. 2012 PLoS Genetics

50

Viruses' Life History: Towards a Mechanistic Basis of a Trade-Off between Survival and Reproduction among Phages

Marianne De Paepe, François Taddei^{*}

Laboratoire de Genetique Moleculaire, Evolutive et Medicale, University of Paris 5, INSERM, Paris, France



de Paepe and Taddei 2006 (PLoS Biol)

What causes bull's-eye plaque phenotypes?



V207F trades off reproduction for survival



Do cystovirus populations harbor variability for life-history strategies? (phage phi-12 plaques)

What causes bull's-eye plaque phenotypes?

[Time lapse video of bull's-eye plaque formation]

Vesicular Stomatitis Virus

- (-)ssRNA virus
- ~11 kb genome
- Arbovirus







How should transmission time select for survival?



Transmission challenge:

24 hr vs. 48 hr

Experimental design:



Wasik, Bhushan et al. *Evolution* (in press) (see also: Elena 2001 *Infect Genet Evol*)



100

generations 25 passages 4 gens/passage baby hamster kidney (BHK) cells





Brian Wasik (Cornell U)



Ambika Bhushan (Harvard Med)

Survival trades-off with reproduction in VSV evolution



Wasik, Bhushan et al. *Evolution* (in press)

Effects of temperature on survival of Dengue virus and of Sindbis virus







Effects of transmission time on survival of Rotavirus and of Hepatitis C Virus (Ogbunugafor, Hartl)











Conclusions / Future Work

- Phages play by same evolutionary rules as other systems.
- Classic life-history trade-off between survival and reproduction (inability to maximize both).
- Can compensatory mutations overcome this constraint? Long-term (140 day) experimental evolution suggests YES. BUT, <u>contingent</u> on first thermotolerance mutation that fixes in population – otherwise population is fated to <u>extinction</u>.
- Phage therapy efforts may benefit from evolutionary thinking

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Mentors

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