

Chapter 6 Questions on Selective Survival

1. What information do wills in England in 1600 typically reveal about the testator? What information that would be of interest is not revealed?
2. How can we be confident most children were named in these English wills?
3. In a Malthusian economy how many living children will a man have on average when he dies? How many did richer testators have around 1600 in England? How many did the poorest testators have?
4. How can we be confident that this is just not a result of poor men leaving children out of their wills (3 reasons)?
5. The wills do not reveal the age of the testator. How can we be confident that the reproductive success of the rich is not just a result of people who live longer getting richer?
6. What do these patterns of surviving children imply about social mobility in pre-industrial England? Is there empirical evidence that these implications actually held?
7. How far back do these patterns seem to extend?
8. Did “survival of the richest” also apply to the English Aristocracy? If not, why?
9. What seems to have determined reproductive success in Yanomame culture?
10. What are two sources of evidence that the reproductive success of the rich extended also to their children?