

EVOLUTION BY THE NUMBERS

THE ORIGINS OF MATHEMATICAL ARGUMENT IN BIOLOGY

JAMES WYNN

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In *EVOLUTION BY THE NUMBERS: THE ORIGINS OF MATHEMATICAL ARGUMENT IN BIOLOGY*, James Wynn examines the confluence of science, mathematics, and rhetoric in the development of theories of evolution and heredity in the nineteenth century. *EVOLUTION BY THE NUMBERS* shows how mathematical warrants become accepted sources for argument in the biological sciences and explores the importance of rhetorical strategies in persuading biologists to accept mathematical arguments.

EVOLUTION BY THE NUMBERS: THE ORIGINS OF MATHEMATICAL ARGUMENT IN BIOLOGY is an important addition to the growing corpus of work treating the historical and mathematical concerns behind the rhetoric of science. By tracing the genesis of the mathematical hegemony in biology through a rhetorical lens, Wynn has contributed to our understanding of how past debates in the scientific community have helped establish the dominant epistemology of contemporary society. More than that, it supplies an intriguing and little-known narrative starring some of the biggest names in biological naturalism, unveiling for the reader one of the many significant dramas of scientific history. Wynn has managed to activate the imagination of both the scholar and the interested layperson in an area of inquiry that is too often seen as remote, restrictive, and esoteric.

—David J. Tietge, author of *Rational Rhetoric: The Role of Science in Popular Discourse* and *Flash Effect: Science and the Rhetorical Origins of Cold War America*

JAMES WYNN is Associate Professor of English at Carnegie Mellon University. He has published articles in *Rhetorica*, *Written Communication*, and *19th Century Prose*. His recent interests have been in rhetoric, science, mathematics, and public policy with a focus on nuclear power. He is a founder and current director of the Pittsburgh Consortium for Rhetoric and Discourse Studies.

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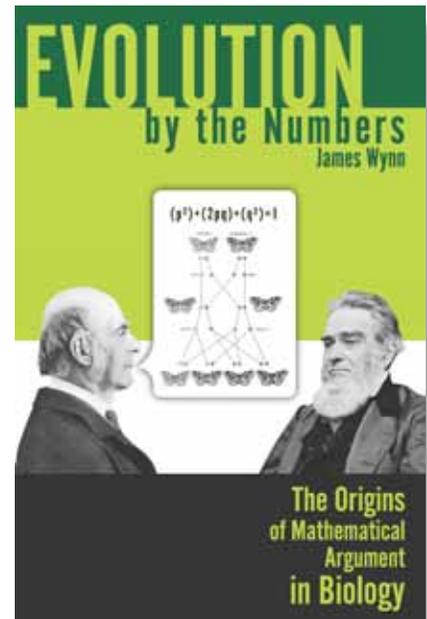
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