

## Hyperthesis: a new classification for qualitative scientific concepts that are supported by overwhelming evidence

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### Abstract

Scientific concepts are arranged within a flexible hierarchy and rigidly evaluated via the scientific method. The three main classes for scientific explanations are hypotheses, theories, and laws. Although all scientific concepts are accepted on a provisional basis, the theory of natural selection via differential reproduction<sup>1,2</sup> is the highest regarded concept in the life sciences because so many lines of modern evidence support it. In fact, the revised, neodarwinian theory of natural selection provides the intellectual backdrop for current biological thought and research. Unlike physics, scientific laws are rare in biology because the complexities of living systems are not easily reduced into simple rules or elegant formulas; therefore, qualitative concepts like natural selection will never be replaced by any general, mathematical *Law of Evolution*. Unfortunately, the term "theory" in colloquial English also refers to an unproved idea that is likely wild speculation, false conjecture, or pure fantasy. As a result, many non-scientists, laypeople, and creationists misuse the word "theory" to suggest that natural selection and other valid concepts might be scientifically unsound. Since the theory of natural selection is the keystone principle of biology, there should be no discrepancy between the general public and the scientific community on how important and useful the concept of natural selection actually is. Therefore, I propose the *hyperthesis* (Gr. *hyper*, above + *tithenai*, to put), a new classification for scientific concepts which would currently be ranked as well supported, qualitative theories. Although natural selection via differential reproduction is both the ideal model and best example to illustrate the hyperthesis concept, many other theories in the biological and social sciences easily fit into this schema. Some critics might argue that this new term only adds another layer of complexity to the over-stretched vocabulary of scientists; however, the hyperthesis concept eliminates more confusion for non-scientists than it causes to the established jargon. Also, it should be noted that the term hyperthesis is a logical extension of the hierarchy of scientific concepts (i.e. hypothesis, theory, hyperthesis) currently used by scientists worldwide.

This is an abstract, printed without review.