

Does degeneration or genetic conflict shape gene content on UV sex chromosomes?

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1 **Abstract**

2 Studies of sex chromosomes have played a central role in understanding the consequences of
3 suppressed recombination and sex-specific inheritance among several genomic phenomena.
4 However, we argue that these efforts will benefit from a more rigorous examination of haploid
5 UV sex chromosome systems, in which both the female-limited (U) and male-limited (V)
6 experience suppressed recombination and sex-limited inheritance, and both are transcriptionally
7 active in the haploid and diploid states. We review the life cycle differences that generate UV
8 sex chromosomes and genomic data showing that ancient UV systems have evolved
9 independently in many eukaryotic groups, but gene movement on and off the sex
10 chromosomes, and potentially degeneration continue to shape the current gene content of the U
11 and V chromosomes. Although both theory and empirical data show that the evolution of UV sex
12 chromosomes is shaped by many of the same processes that govern diploid sex chromosome
13 systems, we highlight how the symmetrical inheritance between the UV chromosomes provide
14 an important test of sex-limited inheritance in shaping genome architecture. We conclude by
15 examining how genetic conflict (over sexual dimorphism, transmission-ratio distortion, or parent-
16 offspring conflict) may drive gene gain on UV sex chromosomes, and highlight the role of
17 breeding system in governing the action of these processes. Collectively these observations
18 demonstrate the potential for evolutionary genomic analyses of varied UV sex chromosome
19 systems, combined with natural history studies, to understand how genetic conflict shapes sex
20 chromosome gene content.

21 **Introduction**

22 On this 50th anniversary of the International Association of Bryology, we look back another five
23 decades to the very beginnings of genetics and a remarkable period of discovery in bryology.
24 During this time, the first sex chromosomes documented in plants were found in the
25 liverwort *Sphaerocarpus donellii* (Allen 1917) and (Heitz 1928) coined the now ubiquitous term
26 "heterochromatin" for the dark-staining, heteromorphic sex chromosomes in mosses (reviewed
27 in (Reski 1998; Anderson 2000; Berger 2019)). More recent work on sex chromosomes has led
28 to key discoveries regarding fundamental genetic processes such as recombination and gene
29 dosage (Muller 1932; Begun & Aquadro 1992). However, nearly all this subsequent foundational
30 work has focused on species with XY and ZW sex chromosomes like in Dipterans,
31 Lepidopterans, Mammals, Birds, and few seed plants, diverse organisms that nevertheless do
32 not reflect the complete diversity of sex chromosomes. Many bryophytes and algae possess UV
33 sex chromosomes, which are shaped by distinct evolutionary processes (reviewed in (Bachtrog
34 *et al.* 2011; McDaniel & Perroud 2012; Renner *et al.* 2017; Coelho *et al.* 2018). Only in the past
35 few years have researchers brought new experimental tools to observations first made more
36 than a century ago to explore the untapped potential of comparative genomic analyses among
37 haploid-dioecious organisms.

38 The purpose of this review is to highlight the novel insights into genome evolution that
39 can be gained by studying UV sex chromosomes. We first present the two-locus model for the
40 evolution of sex chromosomes in the context of a UV system. Next we describe how the
41 symmetry of U and V sex chromosome transmission alters established expectations for several
42 central molecular population genetic parameters, including recombination, effective population
43 size, dosage, and the accumulation of deleterious mutations, relative to XY or ZW chromosome
44 systems. In the third section, we focus on one of the key unanswered questions in sex
45 chromosome evolution - what are the roles of various forms of genetic conflict, like sexual
46 dimorphism, sex-ratio bias, and parent-offspring conflict, in driving differences in the evolution of

47 sex chromosome gene content? We conclude by highlighting how this framework provides a
48 clear motivation for combining bryophyte genomics with systematic natural history observations
49 and classical genetic analysis.

50

51 **The evolution of UV sex chromosomes from a hermaphroditic ancestor**

52 All eukaryotes alternate between haploid and diploid stages in their life cycle. Meiosis reduces
53 the genome to a haploid state, while fertilization restores it to diploid. Fertilization, of course,
54 results from the fusion of two gametes, typically called sperm and egg in anisogamous species.
55 In species with separate males and females, the segregation of a chromosome pair often
56 determines sex. Where in the life-cycle sexual differentiation occurs varies among lineages
57 [BOX 1]. In organisms with dioecy in the diploid stage, the sex chromosomes are referred to as
58 either XY or ZW, depending on which sex is heterogametic, while in haploid systems the sex
59 chromosomes are always UV (Fig.1) (Bachtrog *et al.* 2011). The sex chromosome systems
60 share much in common with one another, but the differences among them can shed light on
61 important evolutionary processes.

62 Sex chromosomes are widely believed to evolve from ordinary autosomes, and may first
63 evolve in concert with dioecy. The evolution of genetically-determined dioecy from a
64 hermaphroditic ancestor requires linked male and female-sterility mutations (Westergaard 1958;
65 Charlesworth & Charlesworth 1978) (but see (Akagi *et al.* 2014; Müller *et al.* 2020) for
66 alternative routes). In the standard diploid formulation of this model, a recessive, male-sterility
67 mutation (i.e., one that renders a hermaphrodite effectively a female) can increase in frequency
68 in a hermaphroditic population when inbred offspring are only half as fit as outbred offspring.
69 That is, if inbreeding is deleterious, male sterility may be favored because the increase in
70 maternal fitness compensates for the loss of fitness through paternity. This produces a
71 gynodioecious population containing females and hermaphrodites (Fig. 2A). Such populations

72 are widely known in angiosperms (Dufayé *et al.* 2014; Renner 2014), but to our knowledge have
73 not been experimentally verified in bryophytes.

74 In a diploid gynodioecious population, a dominant, female suppressor (i.e., a proto-Y
75 chromosome) can increase in frequency, provided that a) it has compensatory effects on male
76 fitness and b) its inheritance is negatively correlated with the male-sterility mutation (now the
77 proto-X chromosome). The fixation of both mutations produces a fully dioecious population with
78 an XY sex chromosome system (Fig. 2A). The conditions under which a female-sterility
79 mutation evolves first, leading to an androdioecious population, are more restrictive. In this case
80 dioecy occurs following the evolution of a dominant, male suppressor (i.e., a proto-W
81 chromosome; Fig. 2A). Recombination between the sterility factors produces some individuals
82 that have both male and female-sterility factors. Because these individuals cannot contribute to
83 subsequent generations, these circumstances favor the evolution of suppressed recombination
84 between the sterility loci, completing the transformation of an autosome into a sex chromosome.

85 We should point out two important differences between the diploid and haploid
86 formulations of the two-locus model. First, both the androdioecy and gynodioecy pathways lead
87 to the evolution of UV sex chromosomes (Fig. 2B). Like diploid systems, we expect that
88 gynodioecious mating systems should be more frequent than androdioecious systems, but we
89 know of no rigorous evaluation of the frequencies of such systems in any haploid mating
90 species. Second, because the sexes are haploid, dioecy in a UV system can evolve without a
91 dominant male or female suppressor, because dominance is irrelevant in a haploid system.
92 Given that the evolution of a UV system does not depend on the occurrence of rare dominant
93 mutations, unlike both XY and ZW systems, UV systems might evolve more readily than their
94 diploid counterparts (McDaniel *et al.* 2013; Villarreal & Renner 2013; Laenen *et al.* 2016).
95 Interestingly, most UV systems that have been studied to date are quite old (Ahmed *et al.* 2014;
96 Bowman *et al.* 2017; Carey *et al.* 2020). This is of course not to say that they have been static -
97 these data do not preclude turnover events in which a new chromosome “captures” the sex-

98 determining locus, or the formation of neo-sex chromosomes through translocations (Vicoso
99 2019) - but they do suggest these lineages have experienced a long, uninterrupted history of
100 dioecy.

101

102 **Symmetry in sex chromosome transmission alters evolutionary patterns**

103 The fundamental differences between XY/ZW and UV sex chromosomes stem from the
104 symmetrical transmission of U and V compared to the asymmetry of X and Y or Z and W (Table
105 1). The most obvious implications of symmetry in transition are in the expected amount of
106 segregating variation on the sex chromosomes. In diploid systems, each mated pair has three
107 copies of an X or Z chromosome compared to four copies of each autosome and only one Y or
108 W. Thus, the baseline expected effective population size (N_e) for a X or Z-linked locus is $\frac{3}{4}$ of an
109 autosome and a Y or W-linked locus is $\frac{1}{4}$ (Bachtrog *et al.* 2011). In haploid-dioecious systems,
110 each mated pair has one U and one V for every two autosomes so both the U and the V
111 chromosomes are expected to have $\frac{1}{2} N_e$ of an autosome (McDaniel *et al.* 2013). Thus, in UV
112 systems males and females may have similar amounts of sex-linked genetic variation on which
113 selection can act, while in diploid systems the sexes are expected to have different amounts.
114 We should point out that demographic realities, including differential variance in reproductive
115 success between the sexes (Charlesworth 2009), for example due to deviations from an equal
116 ratio of males to females, or variance in female reproductive output (Bengtsson & Cronberg
117 2009), may dramatically alter the patterns of N_e in sex chromosomes relative to the autosomal
118 expectation.

119 Regions of suppressed recombination, like sex chromosomes, also generally have lower
120 than expected levels of diversity due to selective sweeps and background selection, which
121 remove variation across these linked regions (reviewed in (Sayres 2018)). In XY/ZW systems,
122 suppressed recombination is confined to the male-specific Y or the female-specific W
123 chromosomes. In contrast, in UV systems, suppressed recombination is present on both the

124 female-specific U and male-specific V chromosome (Table 1). Thus, both the male and female-
125 specific chromosomes are expected to experience an equivalent decrease in nucleotide
126 diversity as consequence of suppressed recombination, barring differences in mutation rate or
127 the strength of selection between the sexes. In addition to reduced genetic variation,
128 suppressed recombination can cause genes on the non-recombining chromosome to respond
129 slower to selection (positive or negative) (Comeron *et al.* 2008; Hough *et al.* 2017).
130 Consequently, such regions may show decreased codon bias (relative to autosomes) and an
131 increase in transposable element (TE) abundance, which in UV systems, is expected to affect
132 both equally, in contrast to the asymmetry in diploid systems (Table 1).

133 The decreased response to selection in non-recombining regions can promote the
134 accumulation of deleterious mutations and loss of functional genes, a process referred to as
135 degeneration (Charlesworth & Charlesworth 2000). In addition, because Y and W chromosomes
136 are always heterozygous with the X and Z, respectively, recessive deleterious mutations are
137 sheltered from purifying selection. In UV sex chromosomes, because the diploids are always UV
138 (not UU or VV; Fig. 1&2) the exposure to selection is symmetrical between the male and female
139 chromosome (Immler & Otto 2015). Indeed, since the sex chromosomes are both expressed in
140 haploids, UV sex chromosomes overall should degenerate slower than either Y or W
141 chromosomes (Table 1) (Immler & Otto 2015). Of course, a haploid-expressed gene could
142 degenerate on one of the sex chromosomes – for example, a gene specifically involved in
143 sperm production which is incorporated into the UV non-recombining region is likely to
144 experience strong purifying selection in males where its function is critical, but weak purifying
145 selection on the female U chromosome if its function may be superfluous (Table 1).
146 Nevertheless, we have no a priori reason to expect that the U or V sex chromosome should
147 degenerate more than the other. The sparse data for UV systems largely support these
148 predictions. [BOX 2]

149 The lack of degeneration on UV sex chromosomes influences the potential for dosage
150 compensation, a common feature of XY/ZW systems. In diploid systems, the homogametic sex
151 has two copies of either an X or Z, and therefore two copies of sex-linked genes to express. The
152 heterogametic sex, in contrast, may have only one gene copy if the Y or W-linked copies have
153 been lost. The gene expression imbalance for X or Z-linked genes that lack a Y or W homolog,
154 due to degeneration, can cause developmental problems or a variety of genetic disorders. Such
155 problems are averted by various forms of dosage compensation, in which one copy of many X-
156 linked genes is silenced in females or the expression of X-linked genes is doubled in males. In
157 contrast, the sex chromosome composition of all life stages is balanced in the UV system - the
158 haploids are either U or V, and the diploids are homogeneous (Fig. 1). If only sex-specific genes
159 are lost on U and V chromosomes, and these genes are not expressed in the unsexed diploid
160 phase, then dosage compensation is unlikely to evolve. While dosage compensation in diploid
161 sex chromosomes is highly variable, and even may be absent or incomplete (reviewed in (Mank
162 2013)), there is no expectation for any such compensation in haploid systems.

163

164 **The role of genetic conflict in the expansion of UV chromosome systems**

165 The population genetic processes that we have discussed so far suggest that sex chromosome
166 evolution follows a well-circumscribed path. This view masks the diversity in sex chromosome
167 size and gene content that is found among, and even within, many lineages of eukaryotes (Bull
168 1983; Tree of Sex Consortium 2014; Furman *et al.* 2020). Clearly degeneration may not play a
169 major role in the evolution of gene content on UV chromosomes, suggesting that other factors,
170 potentially related to life history, may explain variation in sex chromosome size. We should point
171 out that we are focusing only on the non-recombining, sex-limited portions of the sex
172 chromosomes, which may be flanked by pseudoautosomal regions that also vary in size, and
173 experience a host of related but distinct evolutionary processes (Otto *et al.* 2011).

174 Surveying the UV species that have been studied so far (Box 2), the proportion of the
175 genome residing on the sex chromosomes ranges from >1% in the brown algae *Ectocarpus*,
176 ~1% in the green algae *Volvox*, ~2% in the liverwort *Marchantia*, and as high as 30% of the
177 genome size in the moss *Ceratodon* (Ferris *et al.* 2010; Ahmed *et al.* 2014; Bowman *et al.* 2017;
178 Carey *et al.* 2020). It is possible that the variation in UV sex chromosome size is simply a
179 consequence of different patterns of degeneration, like the accumulation of TEs. However,
180 based on the data currently available, each of these UV pairs shows a similar proportion of
181 shared versus sex-specific genes (~½ in *Ectocarpus*, *Volvox*, and *Ceratodon*; ~¼ in *Marchantia*;
182 Box 2). If degeneration were the cause of gene number variation, older UV systems should
183 have a greater proportion of sex-specific genes. Instead, the similar proportion of shared genes
184 suggests that a U chromosome that currently possesses more genes overall, for example from
185 *Ceratodon*, also lost more homologs that it used to share with the V, meaning that degeneration
186 does not explain the lower gene number in *Marchantia* or *Ectocarpus*. Instead, the size of the
187 sex-limited portion of the U and V chromosomes within a species shows a remarkable
188 correspondence with potential for new mutations to have different fitness effects in males and
189 females, based on the life history of each species (Fig. 3).

190 If we consider the fate of a new mutation that increases the fitness of females more than
191 males (i.e., a sexually antagonistic allele), that mutation has a greater chance of increasing in
192 frequency if it is tightly linked to a U or W chromosome compared to an autosome (Rice 1987).
193 Conversely, a male-beneficial allele is more likely to fix in a population if it is linked to a V or Y
194 chromosome. Mutations that tighten the linkage between sexually antagonistic alleles and the
195 sex-determining region, such as chromosomal inversions, translocations, or expansions of
196 heterochromatin, also have a greater chance of fixing. Despite the intuitive appeal of this
197 mechanism to explain the evolution of sex linkage, the forces that drive the expansion of regions
198 of suppressed recombination on sex chromosomes remain poorly understood (Ironsides 2010). If
199 sexual antagonism is a major force driving the evolution of non-recombining sex chromosomes,

200 then species that experience more sexual antagonism should have more gene-rich sex
201 chromosomes.

202 Three major forms of genetic conflict can potentially shape the evolution of genes on UV
203 sex chromosomes, including sexual dimorphism, parent-offspring conflict, and meiotic sex-ratio
204 distortion. Some evidence supports the action of each of these forms of conflict in species with
205 UV systems. The prevalence of conflict is predicted to covary with the breeding system and
206 genetic diversity, both of which vary considerably among bryophyte species (Eppley *et al.*
207 2007). Although work on genetic conflict in UV systems is in its infancy, it is clear the forms of
208 conflict may act synergistically, through both increasing outbreeding levels and altering linkage
209 patterns on the sex chromosomes. Here we specifically explore how the prevalence of genetic
210 conflict may drive variation in sex chromosome content in bryophytes and other UV systems.

211

212 *Sexual dimorphism:* Perhaps the most obvious reason for sex chromosomes to grow relates to
213 their role in sexual dimorphism. Males and females achieve fitness through different strategies
214 (Bateman 1948; Robert 1972; Lessells & Parker 1999; Chapman 2006). Certainly, genes
215 related to sex-limited functions like sperm or egg production are likely candidates for genes that
216 could evolve sex linkage, although the number of genes that are directly involved in gamete
217 production may be relatively modest and is probably similar among organisms. Nevertheless,
218 anisogamy can generate selection for sexual dimorphism for a variety of additional traits
219 between the sexes (Parker & Others 1979; Bonduriansky *et al.* 2008).

220 The ubiquity of sexual dimorphism suggests selection frequently favors different trait
221 optima in males and females. For example, females of the moss *C. purpureus* produce
222 abundant volatile organic compounds (VOCs) while males produce much less (Rosenstiel *et al.*
223 2012). Remarkably, the female VOCs attract moss sperm-dispersing microarthropods (mites and
224 springtails) in laboratory choice experiments, suggesting that VOC production is part of a scent-
225 based fertilization syndrome analogous to flowering plant-pollinator mutualisms (Rosenstiel *et*

226 *al.* 2012; Shortlidge *et al.* 2020). Co-cultivating mosses and arthropods can increase both the
227 number of genotypes that reproduce and the overall number of sporophytes produced
228 (Cronberg *et al.* 2006; Shortlidge *et al.* 2020). The fact that males have lower VOC production,
229 however, suggests that scent production may be costly. Thus, a mutation that increases VOC
230 production may be beneficial for females, but deleterious for males. This sexual antagonism can
231 be resolved by evolving either sex-linkage (i.e., moving the genes for VOC production to the sex
232 chromosome, where they can evolve to their sex-specific optima) or sex-biased gene
233 expression, where the genes that control VOC production may be expressed in different ways in
234 males and females (Vicoso & Charlesworth 2006; Ellegren & Parsch 2007). Sex-biased gene
235 expression is very common in animals, but the relative importance of differential autosomal
236 gene expression compared to sex linkage in UV systems is unknown. Although in *C. purpureus*,
237 the abundant sex-linked genes are clearly important between the sexes (Carey *et al.* 2020).

238 Sexual dimorphism is found in a wide variety of other traits in bryophytes, suggesting
239 that sexually antagonistic selection may drive the evolution of sex linkage. For example, leaf
240 size and juvenile growth in *C. purpureus* are sexually dimorphic (McDaniel 2009) as are life
241 history traits in the liverwort *M. introflexa* (McLetchie & Puterbaugh 2000; Fuselier 2008) and the
242 brown algae *Ectocarpus* (Lipinska *et al.* 2015). The links between such trait variation and either
243 male or female fitness are less clear than for VOC production, but it remains a reasonable
244 hypothesis that more dimorphic species, or species with stronger male–male competition or
245 female-mate choice, may possess more sex-linked genes. We should point out that the
246 relationship between dimorphism and sex chromosome gene content may not be entirely
247 straight-forward – for example, several species of mosses, like the genera *Dicranum* and
248 *Homalothecium*, possess an extreme form of sexual dimorphism in which dwarf males grow
249 epiphytically on more typical sized females (Hedenäs & Bisang 2011; Rosengren & Cronberg
250 2014), a form of sexual dimorphism that may actually decrease male-male competition. Detailed

251 studies relating the breeding system of a species to levels of sexual conflict are fertile areas for
252 research in bryophyte biology.

253

254 *Parent-offspring conflict over nutrient allocation*: The fact that males and females differ in the
255 amount of resources they allocate to reproduction also sets the stage for genomic conflict
256 (Arnqvist & Rowe 2005). Theory suggests conflict is particularly likely for species that provision
257 offspring through vivipary (Zeh & Zeh 2000). In embryophytes (i.e., land plants), the embryo is
258 retained on the haploid, female gametophyte and water and nutrients are provided for a time
259 through specialized transfer cells analogous to a placenta. The males, in contrast, have no role
260 in providing for offspring after fertilization. A better provisioned embryo (sporophyte) is likely to
261 make more and healthier spores, increasing the fitness of both the male and female. However,
262 in species where the female can reproduce more than once, the allocation to one sporophyte
263 may come at the expense of other sibling sporophytes (Stark *et al.* 2009). Therefore, female
264 fitness is maximized by equal allocation to several offspring by modulating the transfer of
265 nutrients across the placenta (Haig 2013). In contrast, a male may not mate with the same
266 female again (nor any other female), so male fitness increases with every additional viable
267 spore that an offspring sporophyte produces. Thus, paternal genes in the embryo are expected
268 to evolve to extract as much of the female's resources as possible to promote spore production
269 (Haig 2013). Consistent with this, studies in *Funaria hygrometrica* showed the maternal calyptra
270 tissue that covers the offspring sporophyte, controls its growth (Bopp 1957; Budke 2019).
271 Moreover, spore production in experimental crosses in *C. purpureus* suggest the genetic
272 variation necessary for parent-offspring conflict is found in this species (Shortlidge *et al.* 2020).
273 The same female crossed to two different males produced sporophytes that varied in spore
274 production, suggesting the paternal genotype influences the transfer of nutrients across the
275 placenta (Shortlidge *et al.* 2020). Interestingly, the difference between the interests of the
276 maternal and paternal contributions becomes more intense as the levels of outbreeding

277 increase (Haig 2010), again highlighting the importance of the breeding system for shaping
278 genetic conflict.

279 We expect that sex chromosomes may be enriched in genes that influence the flow of
280 nutrients across the placenta from mother to offspring. In XY systems, only the degenerate Y
281 chromosome shows sex-limited inheritance, potentially minimizing its role in parent-offspring
282 conflict. However, autosomal genes that influence maternal transfer may have parent-of-origin
283 effects depending upon whether they are transferred from the mother or father, an observation
284 termed genomic imprinting (Reik & Walter 2001). What is striking about UV systems is the
285 unusual pattern of inheritance of the sex chromosomes accomplishes what other systems do by
286 genomic imprinting. Because the U and V chromosomes do not recombine, their interests
287 diverge considerably in the developing UV-heterozygous embryo, providing a highly-favorable
288 environment for the fixation of diploid-acting, sexually antagonistic alleles that influence the flow
289 of nutrients from the maternal (U) gametophyte to the offspring (UV) sporophyte. The U-linked
290 maternal genes within the embryo are genetically identical to its mother, and therefore share a
291 common interest, but the V-linked paternal genes in the embryo may have different interests
292 regarding the amount of offspring provisioning (Haig & Wilczek 2006). Formal tests linking
293 parent-offspring conflict to the expansion of UV sex chromosomes will likely involve a
294 combination of placental transcriptomics, classical genetics, and transgenic approaches.

295

296 *Sex-biased transmission ratio distortion*: A final form of sexual antagonism that is common to all
297 dioecious species with chromosomal sex determination is meiotic sex-ratio distortion. The
298 meiotic sex ratio in a wide variety of eukaryotes deviates from the expected 1:1 segregation of
299 males and females (Lyttle 1993). At meiosis, any allele that preferentially transmits itself to the
300 next generation has an immediate benefit, thus selection on these loci can be very strong
301 because such alleles consistently have higher frequency in offspring. In principle, any
302 heterozygous locus could experience biased transmission (Haig 2010). Distorter alleles may

303 bias transmission by a wide variety of mechanisms, but in UV systems distorters generally
304 disable meiotic products carrying the alternate allele. Mutations that result in more female
305 offspring are likely to arise on, or be inherited with the U, while mutations that distort the sex
306 ratio in favor of males will be associated with the V.

307 Most meiotic sex-ratio distorter systems typically consist of multiple distinct genes
308 (Werren & Beukeboom 1998). Distorter systems require a killer locus that halts development or
309 otherwise disables the products of meiosis, and a second locus that protects the distorting
310 chromosome from being disabled (Bravo Núñez *et al.* 2018). Thus, a distorting U chromosome
311 would have a killer allele and an allele at the second locus that disarms the killer, often termed
312 an insensitive-responder allele. The V chromosome, in contrast, would lack the killer and would
313 carry a linked, sensitive-responder allele. Because the killer and insensitive-responder must be
314 inherited together, genomic regions that lack meiotic recombination, like sex chromosomes,
315 may be more likely to evolve distorter systems simply because they contain more genes that
316 can potentially evolve the killing and resistance functions. As a meiotic killer system spreads,
317 one sex could become rare, conditions that favor the evolution of alleles at a third locus that
318 suppress the killer allele, restoring fertility (Tao *et al.* 2007). Although restorer alleles can arise
319 on autosomes, the sex chromosomes are predicted to be hot-spots for the evolution of restorer
320 alleles too (Hall 2004). Thus, because they contain large regions of suppressed recombination
321 that have sex-limited inheritance, sex chromosomes are likely to accumulate multiple genes that
322 influence the outcome of meiosis through either spore killing or fertility restoration.

323 A key difference between diploid and haploid mating systems is the action of a meiotic
324 distorter in haploids most often will result in spore death (Nauta & Hoekstra 1993). Because
325 each spore directly contributes to forming the next generation of gametophytes, unlike sperm
326 which contribute indirectly through fertilization of an egg, spore death causes a loss of fitness.
327 Thus, the evolution of meiotic sex-ratio distorters is likely to be held in check by the fitness cost
328 caused by spore killing, in addition to the reduction in mating opportunity caused by decreasing

329 the frequency of one sex. Nevertheless, several spore killer systems segregate in fungi (e.g.,
330 (Hammond *et al.* 2012)) and variation in spore death in *C. purpureus* has a genetic basis (Shaw
331 & Gaughan 1993; McDaniel *et al.* 2007; Norrell *et al.* 2014). Numerous questions remain
332 regarding the true fitness costs of meiotic sex-ratio distortion in bryophytes (and other
333 organisms), life-history traits that promote the evolution of meiotic distorters, and the potential
334 interactions among different forms of genetic conflict in shaping the gene content of the male
335 and female sex chromosomes.

336

337 **The central role of natural history in evolutionary genomics**

338 In this review, we have argued that the wide variation in sex chromosome size and gene content
339 may be explained by variation in levels of genetic conflict, and further that bryophytes provide
340 the necessary variation to test this hypothesis. In UV systems, suppressed recombination is not
341 confounded with sex-specific mutational biases, sex-specific inheritance, and sexual selection,
342 making bryophytes well-suited for studying how conflicts affect both male and female sex
343 chromosomes. Clearly this effort will be bolstered by sequencing additional bryophyte genomes,
344 and we anticipate that soon we will have a clearer picture of the gene content and evolutionary
345 history of an increasing number of UV sex chromosome systems. In addition, generating sex-
346 linked markers will open numerous research avenues in many previously genetically intractable
347 systems, enabling us to understand many sex-specific demographic phenomena (e.g.,
348 dispersal, growth, mating success, male-male competition, female-mate choice, biased
349 mortality, or N_e), in addition to more effectively designing studies of sexual dimorphism, parent-
350 offspring conflict, and meiotic sex-ratio variation.

351 Equally important, however, is the role that natural history and phylogenetics can play in
352 contextualizing the results of genomic analyses. Life history features relating to patterns of
353 mating in nature, in particular, may be central to modulating the role of genetic conflict in
354 genome evolution. Bryophytes are one of the few terrestrial groups that contain large

355 proportions of both hermaphrodites and species with separate sexes. This circumstance makes
356 bryophytes unusually well-suited for linking sex chromosome history and molecular evolution to
357 patterns of diversification. How often is speciation associated with a change in mating system?
358 Are sex chromosomes more likely than autosomes to be exchanged among distant populations,
359 or more likely to host loci that promote reproductive isolation? Does genetic conflict promote
360 elevated rates of speciation (Crespi & Nosil 2013), or extinction (Price *et al.* 2010; Werren
361 2011), and under what conditions? Critically, bryophytes possess underexplored life history and
362 taxonomic variation that may be used to draw general solutions to key questions regarding the
363 long-term evolution of sex chromosomes across eukaryotes.

364

365 **BOX 1: UV sex chromosomes are found in haploid-dioecious life cycles**

366 In animals and vascular plants with genetically-determined separate sexes, sexual
367 differentiation occurs in the diploid stage of the life cycle. Therefore, the karyotypic sex of an
368 individual is determined by the genotype at fertilization. In the XY system, the fusion of Y-
369 bearing sperm with an X-bearing egg produces a male zygote (the heterogametic sex), while
370 the fusion of an X-bearing sperm with an X-bearing egg produces a homogametic, female
371 zygote. In the ZW system, in contrast, the female is the heterogametic sex. In these diploid
372 systems, the non-recombining Y and W chromosomes are sex-specific (i.e., transmitted only
373 through the male or female line, respectively), while the X and Z are shared between both sexes
374 and freely recombine, much like an autosome, in the homogametic sex. In both the XY or ZW
375 systems, sexual differentiation is a diploid phenomenon.

376 In other multicellular lineages, including the Phaeophytes (brown algae), Rhodophytes
377 (red algae), Chlorophytes (Ulvophyceae and Chlorophyceae green algae), and Bryophytes
378 (mosses, liverworts, and hornworts), sex determination occurs in the haploid stage of the life
379 cycle. As such, only one copy of a sex chromosome is present during sex expression, with

380 individuals inheriting the U correlating with females and V with males, and making both the U
381 and V sex-specific (Bachtrog *et al.* 2011). Indeed, since the sexes are already haploid, gametes
382 are produced by mitosis not meiosis (Fig. 1). Fertilization of a U-linked egg and a V-linked
383 sperm produces a zygote that is monomorphic (i.e., non-sexed) and heterozygous at the sex
384 determining factor (homozygous UU or VV sporophytes are not formed in typical matings). In
385 the mature diploid individual, the U and V pair at meiosis and segregate independently into
386 females and males (Bachtrog *et al.* 2011).

387 The U and V chromosomes are in some ways similar to mating-type (MT) loci found in
388 fungi, algae, and other protists (e.g., (Ferris *et al.* 2010; Bazzicalupo *et al.* 2019). In these
389 organisms, however, the gametes bearing alternate MT are not phenotypically distinct from one
390 another (i.e., isogamous) and therefore do not have defined sexes (Fig. 3). Thus, while MT loci
391 provide valuable systems for studying the evolution of suppressed recombination in the absence
392 of anisogamy (Branco *et al.* 2017; Bazzicalupo *et al.* 2019), we restrict our focus here to true UV
393 sex chromosomes.

394 **BOX 2: Genomic analyses of UV systems**

395 A growing number of genomic analyses of UV sex chromosomes systems (reviewed in (Coelho
396 *et al.* 2018)) provide a foundation for comparative analyses between haploid and diploid sex
397 chromosome systems (Table 1). One of the best genomically studied UV systems to date is the
398 brown algae *Ectocarpus sp.* An ancestral-state reconstruction of sexual condition in brown
399 algae found dioecy evolved near the origins of this lineage (Luthringer *et al.* 2014) and
400 molecular evidence indicates *Ectocarpus* and the kelps (Laminariales) may share a common UV
401 system that evolved at least ~80-110 million years ago (MYA) (Lipinska *et al.* 2017) The U and
402 V chromosomes in *Ectocarpus sp.* are relatively small (0.93 and 0.92 megabases (Mb) of the
403 205 Mb genome, respectively) (Ahmed *et al.* 2014). The non-recombining portions of the U and
404 V have similar numbers of genes at 22 and 20, respectively, and share 11 homologous genes

405 (Ahmed *et al.* 2014). Avia *et al.* (2018) found the *Ectocarpus* U and V-linked loci had an N_e
406 about $\frac{1}{2}$ the autosomal average, suggesting these chromosomes experience levels of selection
407 similar to autosomal loci (Avia *et al.* 2018). As a result of suppressed recombination, the sex
408 chromosomes show decreased codon bias (Lipinska *et al.* 2017) and increased TEs relative to
409 autosomes in both sex-determining and pseudoautosomal regions (Ahmed *et al.* 2014;
410 Luthringer *et al.* 2015). Consistent with the effects of degeneration, Lipinska *et al.* (2017) found
411 evidence of gene loss from the ancestral brown algae sex chromosome, in addition to gene gain
412 and gene movement to the autosomes (Lipinska *et al.* 2017).

413 Within the chlorophyte green algae, at least two UV sex chromosome systems evolved
414 independently. Dioecy and MT loci evolved in the ancestor of the volvocine algae, including
415 *Gonium pectorale*, *Volvox carteri*, and *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* at least 200 MYA (Herron *et al.*
416 *al.* 2009; Hamaji *et al.* 2016). Although, strictly speaking, only *Volvox* possess anisogamy and
417 therefore true UV sex chromosomes, we mention the other species because the MT
418 chromosomes and UV sex chromosomes are clearly homologous. The *Volvox* U and V are 1.51
419 and 1.13 of the 131 Mb genome and also have similar numbers of genes at 55 and 60,
420 respectively, 50 of which are homologs between the two (Ferris *et al.* 2010). Consistent with the
421 effects of suppressed recombination, the *Volvox* sex chromosomes have accumulated TEs
422 (Ferris *et al.* 2010) and comparisons between *Gonium*, *Chlamydomonas*, and *Volvox* found
423 evidence for gene loss (Hamaji *et al.* 2016). A second UV sex chromosome evolved in the
424 lineage including *Ulva partita* (Yamazaki *et al.* 2017). The 1.5 Mb *Ulva* U (referred to as MT+)
425 and 1.0 Mb V (referred to as MT-) have some asymmetry in gene numbers with 67 and 46
426 genes, respectively, and share 23 homologs. While the size of the *Ulva partita* genome is
427 currently unknown, the recent *Ulva mutabilis* genome is 98.5 Mb and *U. partita* may be similar
428 (De Clerck *et al.* 2018). The discovery of sex-linked PCR markers in red algae (Guillemin *et al.*
429 2012), suggests that UV sex chromosomes independently evolved in this group too, but
430 genomic analyses are currently lacking.

431 Within the bryophytes, more than half of the approximately 20,000 described species are
432 dioecious. Heteromorphic sex chromosomes have been observed using cytological methods in
433 16 unrelated genera (Allen 1945; Renner *et al.* 2017) and sex-linked molecular markers have
434 been tested in several additional species (McLetchie & Puterbaugh 2000; McDaniel *et al.* 2007;
435 Korpelainen *et al.* 2008; Baughman *et al.* 2017). Ancestral-state reconstructions of sexual
436 condition first showed that bryophyte sex chromosomes may have ancient origins (McDaniel *et*
437 *al.* 2013; Laenen *et al.* 2016) and emerging phylogenomic data support in liverworts they
438 evolved at least 400 MYA and in mosses 300 MYA (Carey *et al.* 2020).

439 To date, the best studied bryophyte UV sex chromosomes are in the liverwort
440 *Marchantia polymorpha*. The 4.37 Mb U chromosome contains 74 genes and the 6 Mb V
441 contains 105 genes, with 20 shared homologs between the U and V, suggesting some
442 asymmetry in size and gene number between the sexes (total genome size 225.8 Mb; (Okada
443 *et al.* 2001; Yamato *et al.* 2007; Bowman *et al.* 2017). The gene density in the U and V-linked
444 regions is ~5x lower than the autosomes, consistent with the accumulation of TEs due to
445 suppressed recombination (Bowman *et al.* 2017; Montgomery *et al.* 2020). The U and V sex
446 chromosomes in the moss *C. purpureus* were each $\frac{1}{3}$ of the genome (~110 Mb of the 360 Mb
447 genome with ~3,400 genes, ~1,800 of which are homologous), consistent with earlier cytological
448 data (Voglmayr 2000; McDaniel *et al.* 2007; Szövényi *et al.* 2015; Carey *et al.* 2020). Moreover,
449 the sex chromosomes showed a greater abundance of repeats and decreased codon bias than
450 the autosomes, suggesting weaker selection due to suppressed recombination (Carey *et al.*
451 2020). In contrast to *Ectocarpus* (Avia *et al.* 2018), sex-linked genes in *C. purpureus* exhibited
452 lower nucleotide diversity than an panel of autosomal loci (McDaniel *et al.* 2013), suggesting
453 they may have experience recent bouts of natural selection.

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460 **Figures and Tables**

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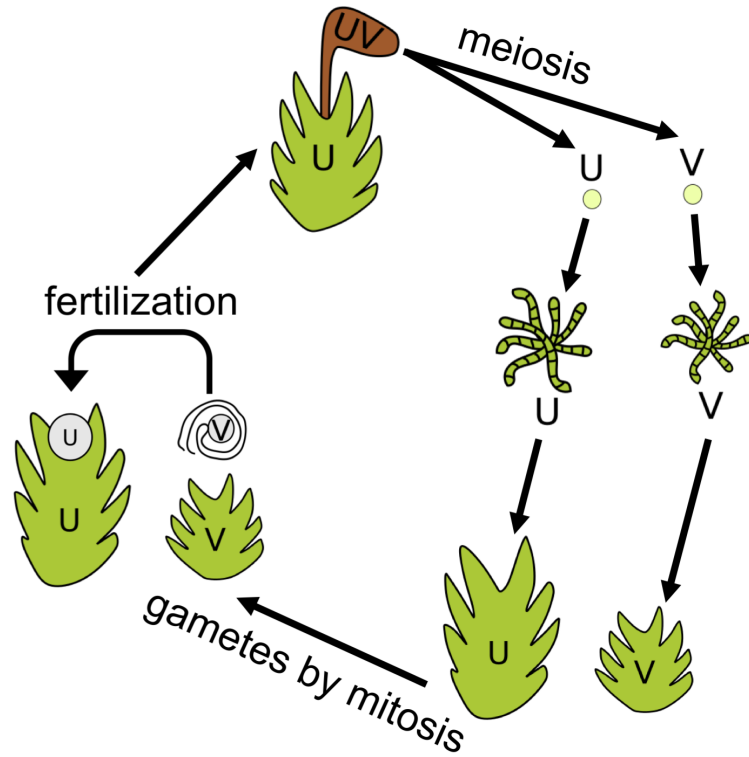
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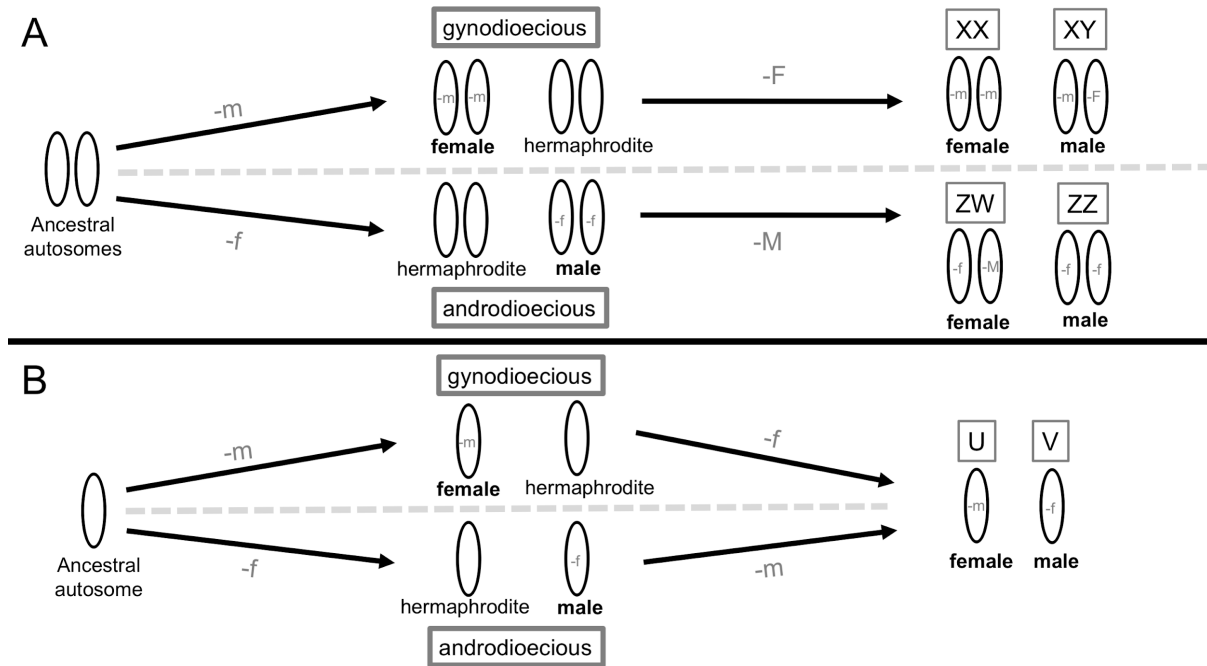
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469 **Figure 1. Life cycle of a dioecious moss.** In mosses, the products of meiosis are haploid
470 spores. For dioecious species, meiosis also segregates the U and V sex chromosomes in
471 females and males, respectively. The spores germinate and produce protonemal filaments,
472 upon which gametophores will develop. Because they are haploid, the mature male and female
473 gametophytes produce gametes by mitosis. A V-containing sperm fuses with a U-containing
474 egg, undergoing fertilization, and a diploid embryo (sporophyte) will develop on the maternal
475 plant. The sporophyte embryo has both U and V sex chromosomes, but is considered a non-
476 sexed stage, and within which the spores are produced.

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478

479 **Figure 2. Two-locus model for the evolution of XY, ZW, and UV sex chromosomes.** For
 480 diploid sex chromosomes (A) that originate from an ancestral pair of autosomes, a recessive
 481 male-sterility mutation (-m) first evolves, making a gynodioecious population (females and
 482 hermaphrodites). From the gynodioecious population a dominant female-sterility mutation (-F)
 483 arises making males. Once recombination is suppressed between these sex-determining loci,
 484 sex chromosomes are formed. This pathway leads to an XY sex chromosome system. If from
 485 an ancestral autosomal pair, a recessive female-sterility mutation (-f) evolves first, making an
 486 androdioecious population, followed by a dominant male-sterility mutation (-M), the result is a
 487 ZW sex chromosome system. In contrast in haploid sex chromosome evolution (B), if a male or
 488 female-sterility mutation evolves first, followed by sterility mutation of the opposite sex, the result
 489 is always a UV sex chromosome.

490

491 **Table 1. Comparison of XY, ZW, and UV characteristics.**

Characteristic	X	Y	Z	W	U	V
Inheritance pattern	M and F	M	M and F	F	F	M
Hemizygoty	M	M	F	F	diploid phase	diploid phase
Expected N_e , relative to autosomes	3/4	1/4	3/4	1/4	1/2	1/2
Suppressed recombination	NA	Yes	NA	Yes	Yes	Yes
TE content, relative to autosomes	similar	higher	similar	higher	higher	higher
Gene density, relative to autosomes	similar	lower	similar	lower	lower	lower
Gene-content bias	NA, F, or M-biased	M-biased	NA, F, or M-biased	F-biased	F-biased	M-biased

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493 Males (M); females (F); Effective population size (N_e); Transposable elements (TE)

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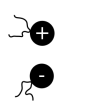
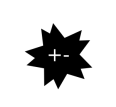
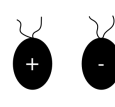
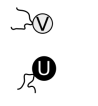



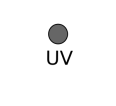
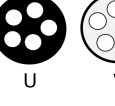

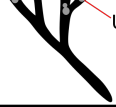


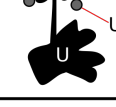
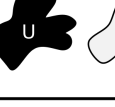



	Species	Gametes	Diploid	Haploid
Level of genomic conflict	<i>Chlamydomonas reinhardtii</i>			
	<i>Ectocarpus sp.</i>			
	<i>Volvox carteri</i>			
	<i>Gracilaria chilensis</i>			
	<i>Marchantia polymorpha</i>			
	<i>Ceratodon purpureus</i>			

Figure 3. Predicted intensity of genomic conflict among UV systems. The level of genomic conflict is lower in mating-type loci because they do not have separate sexes, and therefore lack sexual dimorphism and parent-offspring conflict, although the mating type loci could experience transmission-ratio distortion. Across UV systems, the level of genomic conflict increases as the number or intensity of conflicts increases. Sexual dimorphism tends to be limited in algae and is but may be obvious in bryophytes. Parent-offspring conflict requires a nutritional dependence between the embryo and the maternal plant, which is absent in some algae but lengthy in some mosses. Transmission ratio distortion is possible in all systems, although distorter systems may be more frequent in outbreeding species. We should note that this graphic is simply meant to illustrate a hypothesis, and that each of these groups is likely to be highly heterogeneous for the forms of conflict that we have depicted.

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