

Science AMA Series: I'm Yaniv Erlich, from Columbia University, we analyzed the family tree of 13 million people to understand human longevity and marriage patterns, AMA!

Yaniv-Erlich <sup>1</sup> and r/Science AMAs<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Affiliation not available

April 17, 2023

### **Abstract**

Hi, I am Yaniv Erlich – the Chief Science Officer of MyHeritage and an Associate Professor of Computer Science at Columbia University. We published a paper yesterday in Science describing a family tree of 13 million people by crowd sourcing the hard work of millions of genealogists. This pedigree spans all habitable continents and over 500 hundred years. We used the pedigree to understand the genetics of human longevity and found that genetics explain a smaller role in longevity. Genes account for only 5% on average of the differences in life span between individuals. For comparison, previous studies showed that smoking reduces life expectancy by 10yrs. We also used the data to trace migration patterns in the Western world. We looked at historical patterns of marriages and analyzed how long people had to migrate to find the love of their life and who is the person was (hint: someone in your family). Our data suggests that technological advancements did not change consanguineous marriages but rather cultural changes such as social taboos. Ask me anything!

[REDDIT](#)

# Science AMA Series: I'm Yaniv Erlich, from Columbia University, we analyzed the family tree of 13 million people to understand human longevity and marriage patterns, AMA!

YANIV-ERLICH [R/SCIENCE](#)

Hi, I am Yaniv Erlich – the Chief Science Officer of MyHeritage and an Associate Professor of Computer Science at Columbia University. We published [a paper yesterday in Science](#) describing a family tree of 13 million people by crowd sourcing the hard work of millions of genealogists. This pedigree spans all habitable continents and over 500 hundred years. We used the pedigree to understand the genetics of human longevity and found that genetics explain a smaller role in longevity. Genes account for only 5% on average of the differences in life span between individuals. For comparison, previous studies showed that smoking reduces life expectancy by 10yrs. We also used the data to trace migration patterns in the Western world. We looked at historical patterns of marriages and analyzed how long people had to migrate to find the love of their life and who is the person was (hint: someone in your family). Our data suggests that technological advancements did not change consanguineous marriages but rather cultural changes such as social taboos. Ask me anything!

---

[READ REVIEWS](#)

[WRITE A REVIEW](#)

#### CORRESPONDENCE:

##### DATE RECEIVED:

March 03, 2018

##### DOI:

10.15200/winn.151999.95088

##### ARCHIVED:

March 02, 2018

##### CITATION:

Yaniv-Erlich , r/Science ,  
Science AMA Series: I'm Yaniv  
Erlich, from Columbia  
University, we analyzed the  
family tree of 13 million people  
to understand human longevity  
and marriage patterns, AMA!,  
*The Winnower*  
5:e151999.95088 , 2018 , DOI:  
[10.15200/winn.151999.95088](#)

© et al. This article is  
distributed under the terms of  
the [Creative Commons](#)  
[Attribution 4.0 International](#)  
[License](#), which permits  
unrestricted use, distribution,

and redistribution in any medium, provided that the original author and source are credited.

