

1 **Sex-specific effects of mitochondrial haplotype on metabolic rate in *Drosophila***
2 ***melanogaster* support predictions of the Mother's Curse hypothesis**

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12 ***Short running title:*** Mitochondrial haplotype affects metabolic rate

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26 **Abstract**

27 Evolutionary theory proposes that maternal inheritance of mitochondria will facilitate the
28 accumulation of mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) mutations that are harmful to males but benign
29 or beneficial to females. Furthermore, mtDNA haplotypes sampled from across a given species
30 distribution are expected to differ in the number and identity of these “male-harming”
31 mutations they accumulate. Consequently, it is predicted that the genetic variation that
32 delineates distinct mtDNA haplotypes of a given species should confer larger phenotypic
33 effects on males than females (reflecting mtDNA mutations that are male-harming, but female-
34 benign), or sexually antagonistic effects (reflecting mutations that are male-harming, but
35 female-benefitting). These predictions have received support from recent work examining
36 mitochondrial haplotypic effects on adult life history traits in *Drosophila melanogaster*. Here,
37 we explore whether similar signatures of male-bias or sexual antagonism extend to a key
38 physiological trait - metabolic rate. We measured the effects of mitochondrial haplotypes on
39 the amount of carbon dioxide produced by individual flies, controlling for mass and activity,
40 across 13 strains of *D. melanogaster* that differed only in their mtDNA haplotype. The effects
41 of mtDNA haplotype on metabolic rate were larger in males than females. Furthermore, we
42 observed a negative intersexual correlation across the haplotypes for metabolic rate. Finally,
43 we uncovered a male-specific negative correlation, across haplotypes, between metabolic rate
44 and longevity. These results are consistent with the hypothesis that maternal mitochondrial
45 inheritance has led to the accumulation of a sex-specific genetic load within the mitochondrial
46 genome, which affects metabolic rate and that may have consequences for the evolution of sex-
47 differences in life history.

48

49 **Keywords:** mitochondrial DNA; pleiotropy; rate of living; sex specific selective sieve; sexual
50 conflict; sexually antagonistic selection

51 **Background**

52 Mitochondrial genes encode products that are key to the regulation of oxidative
53 phosphorylation. Given the pivotal importance of oxidative phosphorylation in the conversion
54 of chemical energy in eukaryotes, it was traditionally assumed that intense purifying selection
55 would prevent the accumulation of non-neutral (i.e. functional) genetic variants within the
56 coding sequence of the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA). This assumption has, however, been
57 challenged over the past two decades by studies harnessing experimental designs able to
58 partition mitochondrial from nuclear genetic contributions to phenotypic expression [1-4].
59 These studies have generally shown that mtDNA haplotypes routinely harbour functional
60 polymorphisms that affect the expression of physiological and life history traits [5, 6].
61 Furthermore, several studies have reported that levels of mitochondrial genetic variation
62 underpinning phenotypic expression are often sex-specific, with the general pattern seemingly
63 one of male-bias (whereby mtDNA haplotypes confer greater effects on phenotypic expression
64 in males than in females) [7, 8].

65 Observations of male-bias in the degree to which divergent mtDNA haplotypes affect
66 phenotypic trait expression are intriguing because they are consistent with an evolutionary
67 hypothesis known as *Mother's Curse*. This hypothesis predicts that maternal inheritance of the
68 mitochondria will render natural selection ineffective at purging mtDNA mutations that are
69 male-biased in their phenotypic effects [9, 10]. An emerging theoretical framework predicts
70 two possible manifestations of this process, which have been described as a *weak* and *strong*
71 form of the Mother's Curse hypothesis [7, 11]. The 'weak' form of the hypothesis is derived
72 from the original theory established by Frank and Hurst in 1996, who used a population genetic
73 model to demonstrate that male-harming mtDNA mutations could be maintained within a
74 population under the mutation-selection balance when these same mutations were benign or
75 only slightly deleterious in effect in females [10]. Under this weak form, accumulation of

76 ‘male-harming, but female-benign’ mutations would lead to a male-biased genetic load
77 accumulating within the mitochondrial haplotypes of different populations. Furthermore, the
78 identity, number and severity of the male-harming mutations would be expected to differ across
79 haplotypes of different populations, given that each is evolving along its own independent
80 trajectory. Thus, under the weak form of the hypothesis, it is predicted that the genetic variation
81 that delineates distinct mitochondrial haplotypes (across the natural distribution of any given
82 species of eukaryote) will confer greater effects on phenotypic expression in males than in
83 females [8, 12, 13].

84 Yet, the maternal inheritance of mitochondria could, in theory, also facilitate the
85 accumulation of mutations that are male harming, but directly beneficial to female fitness.
86 Because these mutations would directly augment the fitness of females, if any such mutations
87 were to appear within the mtDNA sequence, they would be expected to be under strong positive
88 selection and thus quickly accumulate in frequency within populations [13-15]. This
89 encapsulates the strong form of the Mother’s Curse hypothesis [7, 11]. Furthermore, if these
90 mutations formed an appreciable component of the genetic architecture of the mitochondrial
91 genome, the outcome would be a negative intersexual genetic correlation for fitness across
92 haplotypes; i.e., the haplotypes that confer the highest fitness in females would confer the
93 lowest fitness in males [7, 16].

94 Ultimately, the evolutionary significance of the Mother’s Curse hypothesis hinges on
95 the capacity by which mutations, exhibiting sex-specific effects on the phenotype, can accrue
96 within the mtDNA sequence. Several studies have now documented evidence for the presence
97 of mutations conferring male-specific effects on components of adult life history– reproductive
98 outcomes in vinegar flies (*Drosophila melanogaster*), mice (*Mus musculus*), chicken (*Gallus*
99 *domesticus*), brown hares (*Lepus europaeus*) and humans [8, 16-23], and longevity [12, 24]
100 and certain mitochondrial bioenergetic traits in vinegar flies [25, 26]. Other studies, however,

101 while reporting sex-differences in effects of mtDNA haplotype on various traits, failed to find
102 consistent male-biases in the direction of these effects, with some reporting patterns of female
103 bias in effects of mtDNA haplotype [27-32].

104 Notwithstanding, evidence for the widespread existence of mtDNA mutations with sex-
105 specific effects on life history trait expression is noteworthy, since it supports the contention
106 that genetic variation that accumulates within the mitochondrial genome could play a role in
107 the dynamics of evolutionary conflict between the sexes and the expression of genetic trade-
108 offs between life history traits [11]. Combined, these studies also raise the question of how just
109 a small amount of sequence variation within a genome that is diminutive in size in comparison
110 to its nuclear counterpart, can exert such broad-scale effects on the expression of components
111 of adult life history, and mediate patterns of inter-sexual pleiotropy. In this regard, our
112 understanding of the proximate basis underpinning the link between mitochondrial genotype
113 and life history phenotype remains rudimentary [33].

114 Recent studies suggest that mitochondrial genetic variation could regulate life history
115 functioning, at least in part, through modifications to patterns of gene expression both within
116 the mitochondrial [34, 35] and nuclear transcriptomes [13, 36]. Moreover, life history theory
117 predicts that physiological traits, such as metabolic rate, will underpin energy allocation
118 patterns across various components of life history and are thus, candidate mediators of
119 pleiotropic trade-offs between life history traits [37, 38]. Accordingly, we predict that
120 previously-reported mitochondrial genotypic effects on adult life history are likely to be
121 mediated by mitochondrial genotypic regulation of metabolic rate. If so, mitochondrial
122 genotypic effects on the metabolic rate could plausibly shape the entire organismal life history,
123 with mitochondrial genetic variation potentially mediating trade-offs between metabolic rate
124 and longevity, or other key components of life history, such as fertility, in each sex.

125 However, evidence for this prediction remains limited. Many previous studies
126 examining the capacity for mitochondrial genotypic regulation of physiology have considered
127 only one or other of the sexes, or pooled both sexes in their analyses [39-44], precluding
128 inferences of sex-specificity. Some studies have, however, tested for effects in both sexes. For
129 example, Aw *et al.*, (2017) screened for sex biases in effects on mitochondrial function
130 (oxidative phosphorylation (OXPHOS) functioning measured from complex I activity, mtDNA
131 copy number, maximum reactive oxygen species production, and superoxide dismutase
132 activity) across two mtDNA haplotypes in *D. melanogaster*, reporting a male-bias in effects on
133 three of the four traits measured. Yet, other studies have not revealed consistent signatures of
134 male-bias in the magnitude of mitochondrial genetic effects on physiological traits [26, 27, 30,
135 45]. For example, in one recent study, Wolff *et al.* [26] observed male-biases in levels of
136 mitochondrial genetic variation for mitochondrial quantity, but not for respiratory rate of the
137 individual OXPHOS complexes, across a panel of thirteen mitochondrial haplotypes of *D.*
138 *melanogaster*. In another study, Novičić *et al.* (2015) reported that as much as 20% of the
139 variation in whole-organism metabolic rate (measured as CO₂ production), across adult *D.*
140 *subobscura* could be mapped to genetic variation across three mtDNA haplotypes. Yet,
141 although these mitochondrial genetic effects exhibited some degree of sex-specificity, the
142 general pattern was not one of clear male-bias [45].

143 Thus, it currently remains unclear whether mitochondrial haplotypic variation affects
144 the expression of metabolic rate in a pattern similar to previously-reported effects on longevity
145 and reproductive success [12, 16]; and if so, whether such mitochondrial effects on metabolic
146 rate are involved in sex-specific trade-offs between physiology and life history phenotypes. To
147 address this question, we screened for effects of mitochondrial haplotypic variation on the
148 metabolic rate (measured by indirect calorimetry as CO₂ production, [46]) of each sex, across
149 a panel of thirteen genetic strains in *D. melanogaster*, which differ only in their mtDNA

150 haplotype and which have been previously used to study sex-specific patterns of mitochondrial
151 variation mediating the expression of life history phenotypes [12, 16]. We tested whether
152 signatures of mitochondrial genetic variation were consistent with predictions of the weak
153 (male-biases in size of effect across haplotypes) or strong (negative intersexual correlation
154 across haplotypes) forms of the Mother's Curse hypothesis. We then leveraged trait means for
155 longevity from Camus *et al.*, (2012) and reproductive fitness from Camus and Dowling (2018)
156 of each sex-by-haplotype combination, to test whether mitochondrial variation for metabolic
157 rate is involved in sex-specific trade-offs between physiology and life history phenotypes.

158

159 **Methods**

160 **Mitochondrial panel**

161 To statistically partition mitochondrial haplotype effects from those of the nuclear
162 genetic background, it is necessary to place a set of mtDNA haplotypes alongside a
163 standardized (controlled) nuclear background. Furthermore, it is expected that the
164 accumulation of male-harming mutations within the mitochondrial genome will place selection
165 on the standing nuclear variation in the populations in which these mtDNA mutations
166 accumulate, for counteradaptations that offset the effects of these mitochondrial mutations [14].
167 Thus, uncovering the phenotypic effects associated with these mutations requires that mtDNA
168 haplotypes are placed alongside an evolutionary novel nuclear background that lacks the
169 requisite counteradaptations required to offset the negative effects of these mutations [7].

170 We utilised a panel of thirteen strains of *D. melanogaster*, each of which is
171 characterised by a distinct and naturally-occurring mtDNA haplotype, placed alongside an
172 isogenic nuclear background w¹¹¹⁸ (Bloomington stock number: 5905) [12, 47]. The strains are
173 labelled according to the location from which the mtDNA haplotypes were initially collected
174 (**ALS** - Alstonville, Australia; **BAR** - Barcelona, Spain; **BRO** - Brownsville, USA; **DAH** -

175 Dahomey, Benin, **MAD** - Madang, Papua New Guinea; **MYS** - Mysore, India; **HAW** -
176 Hawai'i, USA, **ISR** - Israel; **JAP** - Japan; **ORE** - Oregon, USA; **PUE** - Puerto Montt, Chile;
177 **SWE** - Sweden and **ZIM** - Zimbabwe) [12]. The strains were obtained from David Clancy in
178 2007, at which point we created a duplicate copy of each, such that each haplotype has been
179 maintained in independent replicate for over a decade. These replicates are denoted as
180 “mitochondrial strain duplicates”. The strain duplicates are maintained by back-crossing five
181 virgin females from each duplicate to five males of the w^{1118} strain. The w^{1118} strain is itself
182 propagated each generation via a solitary full-sibling mating pair. Thus, any new mutations in
183 the nuclear genome that appear in the w^{1118} strain should be quickly purged, or if fixed would
184 be immediately donated to each of the mitochondrial strain duplicates, thereby ensuring the
185 nuclear background of these strains is maintained as nearly-isogenic. Each of the mitochondrial
186 strains and their respective duplicates had undergone at least 80 generations of backcrossing at
187 the time of the respirometry experiments described below. Back-crosses were always
188 conducted at low adult densities (5 pairs), and only eggs produced by parents that were four
189 days old at the time of egg-laying were used to propagate the next generation. All strains were
190 treated with tetracycline hydrochloride (0.3 mg/mL) to eliminate *Wolbachia* infections before
191 their receipt from David Clancy in 2007. We confirmed the absence of *Wolbachia* by screening
192 Illumina sequencing data from each of the strains for the presence of *Wolbachia*-specific reads
193 [48] in Geneious v9.0.4 [49].

194

195 **Experimental design**

196 The experiment was designed to assay the *in vivo* metabolic rate ($\dot{V}CO_2$) of individual
197 adult males and females from each of the thirteen strains. The experiment was conducted over
198 three temporally-separated sampling blocks, each of which was separated by a single
199 generation of fly propagation (fourteen days).

200

201 ***Generating focal flies***

202 All focal flies (i.e. those used in the experiment) were produced by parents and
203 grandparents that were four days of adult age at the time of egg-laying. In the two generations
204 leading up to the assay, all flies were reared under carefully controlled densities (10 pairs of
205 adult flies per vial, and egg numbers per vial reduced to 80), at constant laboratory conditions
206 (25°C). We ensured we had a steady daily supply of standard-aged focal flies for the metabolic
207 rate ($\dot{V}\text{CO}_2$) measurements, by allowing the great-grandparents of the focal flies to lay eggs
208 that produced the grandparental flies over several successive days (five days in sampling blocks
209 one and two, and eight days in block three). Thus, although all focal flies had parents and
210 grandparents of precisely standardised age, they had been produced by great-grandparents that
211 differed in age by up to seven days.

212

213 **Metabolic rate assay**

214 The focal flies were collected under mild CO₂ anaesthesia within six hours of their
215 eclosion into adulthood, thus ensuring their virginity, and then housed in single-sex groups of
216 ten flies per vial. These flies remained in these vials for four days before measurement of their
217 metabolic rate. For any given sampling day, we maintained one vial of ten focal flies per strain
218 duplicate per sex within each block. The use of virgin flies removed any physiological effects
219 on metabolic rate caused by mating *per se* and post-mating inter-sexual harassment.
220 Additionally, the four-day recovery period following collection of the focal flies ensured that
221 impact of CO₂ anaesthesia on the metabolic rate had dissipated by the time of the assay [50].

222 A standard Sable Systems International (SSI, www.sablesys.com, Las Vegas, USA)
223 flow-through CO₂ respirometry system, connected to four LI-COR 7000 infrared CO₂/H₂O gas
224 analysers (LICOR, Lincoln, USA), was used to measure carbon dioxide production as a proxy

225 of metabolic rate ($V\text{CO}_2$) of adult flies. Two identical setups were created, each underpinned
226 by two LI-COR 7000s (SSI, www.sablesys.com, Las Vegas, NV, USA). For each
227 configuration, compressed air was directed through Bev-A-Line tubing to three scrubber
228 columns (silica gel, soda lime, 1/3 Drierite 2/3 soda-lime respectively), where the air was
229 scrubbed of atmospheric CO_2 and water vapour (H_2O) to facilitate a dry, CO_2 free-flow. The
230 airstream was then split using a PVC T-piece to direct the flow to one of two LI-CORs in the
231 set-up, with a flow rate of 25 ml/min using a mass flow controller (Sierra 840 series). Each LI-
232 COR was connected to a MUX2 intelligent multiplexer (Sable Systems), which housed eight
233 $5 \times 65 \text{ mm}^2$ polycarbonate chambers (Trikinetics, Waltham, USA). We placed one focal fly
234 within each chamber, the ends of which were sealed with 5 mm of foam, such that each fly was
235 left with a $5 \times 55 \text{ mm}^2$ maneuverable space. Seven of the chambers contained flies while the
236 eighth chamber remained empty and served as a baseline to account for machine drift
237 throughout the experiment.

238 The MUX2 was interfaced with a computer using a UI-2 universal interface (Sable
239 Systems, NV, USA) and was programmed to sequentially measure each chamber using the
240 software ExpeData (Sable Systems, NV, USA). Each chamber was measured once for 10
241 minutes, with a two-minute pause period between every measurement to allow time for the
242 CO_2 readings to stabilise. The assaying chambers were flushed with a humidified airflow (80%
243 RH) in the pause-period of 2-min between $V\text{CO}_2$ measurements, to reduce potential detrimental
244 effects of desiccation. This was achieved using a LICOR-610 portable dew point generator.
245 The assay was conducted within a light-controlled constant temperature cabinet (Panasonic
246 MLR-352H-PE environmental growth cabinet, Panasonic Healthcare Co., Ltd, Sakata, Japan).
247 The temperature of the cabinet was set to 25°C and was continuously recorded in the baseline
248 chamber using a type-T thermocouple (Omega Engineering Inc., Stamford, USA) attached to
249 a TC-2000 thermocouple meter (Sable Systems).

250 The respirometry assays were run over five consecutive days in blocks one and two,
251 and over eight consecutive days in block three. We ran four “experimental trials” per day at
252 approximately 09h00, 11h30, 14h00 and 16h30. We were able to assay 26 flies per
253 experimental trial, with every possible combination of one mitochondrial strain duplicate × sex
254 represented once per trial. In total, we measured the metabolic rate of 72 focal flies for each
255 combination of mitochondrial strain × sex (36 per strain duplicate), over the three blocks.

256 The mean metabolic rate (VCO_2) data from the 10-min assay for each fly was extracted
257 using ExpeData (Sable Systems). All data were “nearest-neighbour smoothed” to remove noise
258 from the VCO_2 trace, and baseline corrected to account for machine drift over time [51]. We
259 also extracted data on the intensity of activity of each fly from the VCO_2 trace file, which was
260 measured as the cumulative sum of absolute differences in deflection (ADS) of VCO_2 signal
261 [52-54]. In essence, the ADS was calculated by adding the absolute differences between
262 adjacent data points in the VCO_2 trace file [55, 56]. Although ADS is not an absolute
263 quantification of locomotor activity [52], the measure has been used to correct for overall
264 variability in metabolic rate due to the activity intensity of the assayed organism [52-54, 56-
265 58]. Thus, from the VCO_2 traces, high ADS values were indicative of flies being more active
266 during the assay; and *vice versa*, small values of ADS indicative of the flies being less active.
267 The ADS was extracted for each focal fly, and this served as a measure of activity intensity in
268 the subsequent statistical analysis.

269 Finally, we measured the body mass of each focal fly immediately after the metabolic
270 rate assay, to the nearest 0.0001 mg (Cubis series MSA2.7s-000-DM microbalance, Sartorius
271 AG, Goettingen, Germany).

272

273 **Statistical analyses**

274 *Linear mixed effect modelling of the global data*

275 The data analyses were performed in the R statistical environment (v3.4 [59]), and
276 graphs were plotted in *ggplot2* package [60] in R and GraphPad Prism software v8.1.0. We
277 analysed the mean metabolic rate data using a linear mixed-effect model in the *lme4* package
278 [61] in R. The mean metabolic rate (extracted from VCO₂ trace file) of each focal fly was
279 modelled as the response variable, with mtDNA haplotype (13 levels), sex of the fly (2 levels),
280 time of day of the assay (4 levels), and the higher-order interactions between these factors as
281 fixed effects. Other variables that accounted for the hierarchical structure of the data were
282 included as random effects. These included the mitochondrial strain duplicates (13 strains × 2
283 replicates = 26 levels), experimental blocks (3 levels), assay-day (8 levels; note that this
284 variable was also an indicator of the great grandparental age), assay-day nested within
285 experimental block (18 levels) and experimental trial nested within assay-day and block (70
286 levels). We included body mass and ADS of the individual fly as fixed covariates in the model.
287 A full model was thus built with fixed effects that included factors and covariates; higher-order
288 interactions involving the fixed factors and between fixed factors and covariates; along with
289 random effects that included random factors, higher-order interactions between the random
290 factors, and interactions between fixed and random factors.

291 We then derived a final reduced model by performing a step-wise model reduction
292 process using Log-likelihood ratio tests to assess the change of deviance associated with
293 progressively simplified models, eliminating higher-order interactions that accounted for
294 negligible effects on the metabolic rate. We first simplified the list of random effects using the
295 restricted maximum likelihood estimation method and then the fixed effects component of the
296 model using the maximum likelihood method. Ultimately, once we converged on the ‘final
297 model’, parameter values of fixed effects and their significance were estimated using the Type
298 III Kenward Roger’s method in *lmerTest* package of R [62].

299 We calculated the estimated marginal means (emmeans) of mean metabolic rate
300 (referred as emmeans metabolic rate in Figures) for the final set of higher-order fixed effects
301 interactions associated with statistically significant effects on metabolic rate, using the package
302 *emmeans* [63]. These marginal means provide mean metabolic rate of our key contrasts
303 estimated from the final statistical model, adjusted for variation in body mass and activity
304 (ADS). These estimated marginal means are highly concordant with means calculated
305 following manual correction of mean metabolic rate for body mass (ESM, Manual correction
306 of mean metabolic rate for body mass, Figures S1, S2).

307 Because we identified a statistically significant interaction between mtDNA haplotype
308 and sex on mean metabolic rate, we further probed the nature of this interaction by running two
309 separate models, one for each sex. We followed the same protocol of building a full model with
310 the mean metabolic rate as response variable; all possible fixed, random effects and covariates
311 as described above for the model of the complete dataset but excluding the term ‘sex’ in these
312 models. We then derived a final model for each sex separately by performing the same step-
313 wise model reduction process and parameter estimation procedure as described above.
314 Furthermore, we used these two models to estimate the marginal R-squared values (95%
315 confidence intervals (CI)) for each model using the ‘nsj’ method in the *r2glmm* package [64];
316 and further estimated the effect size attributed by the mtDNA haplotype on mean metabolic
317 rate in each sex separately, using a method to calculate Cohen’s *d* parameter that involved mean
318 and standard deviation estimated from the sex-specific datasets (the formula can be found in
319 option 7 in https://www.psychometrica.de/effect_size.html).

320

321 ***Estimating inter-sexual correlations, across haplotypes, for metabolic rate***

322 We performed a correlation test between the emmeans metabolic rate of male flies and
323 female flies (estimated from the final model of the full dataset – i.e. that containing both sexes

324 – for the fixed effect interaction term ‘sex × haplotype’) across thirteen haplotypes to
325 determine the magnitude and direction of inter-sexual correlation for metabolic rate. From this
326 test, we estimated the Pearson’s correlation coefficient and then 95% confidence intervals for
327 the correlation coefficient through a non-parametric bootstrapping approach in the *boot*
328 package [65] in R. The trait means were resampled with replacement across 10 000 replicates
329 and the confidence intervals of the correlation coefficient were estimated from the bias
330 corrected and accelerated (BC_a) method in the *boot* package.

331

332 *Estimating inter-trait correlations across haplotypes*

333 The full panel of thirteen mtDNA haplotypes used in this study has also been used in
334 earlier studies that have tested effects of mitochondrial haplotype on longevity [12] and
335 components of reproductive success [16] across both sexes. We obtained haplotype-specific
336 trait means for each sex from these earlier studies and combined these with the trait means for
337 emmeans metabolic rate and body mass from our study. We then tested for correlations, across
338 haplotypes, between pair-wise combinations of traits within and between the two sexes. We
339 estimated the Pearson’s correlation coefficient and 95% confidence intervals for the correlation
340 coefficient independently for each pairwise comparison of trait means, through a non-
341 parametric bootstrapping approach in *boot* package [65] in R. In each correlation test, trait
342 means were resampled with replacement across 10 000 replicates and the confidence intervals
343 of the correlation coefficient were estimated from the bias corrected and accelerated (BC_a)
344 method in the *boot* package.

345

346 **Results**

347 *Mitochondrial genetic variation for metabolic rate is male-biased*

348 A significant interaction between mtDNA haplotype and sex on metabolic rate was
349 found (Table 1). This indicates that the identity of the mtDNA haplotype affects metabolic rate,
350 but that the pattern of effects across haplotypes differs across the sexes (Figure 1A-C).
351 Furthermore, analyses of the sex-specific datasets revealed the mtDNA haplotype effect on
352 metabolic rate was significant only in males (Table 2). A male-bias in the magnitude of the
353 mtDNA haplotypic effect was further supported by the examination of standardized effect sizes
354 (marginal R-squared values (95% CI)) estimated from the sex-specific models (R^2_{males} estimate
355 \pm 95% C.I.s = 0.236 [0.292, 0.202], $R^2_{\text{females}} = 0.167$ [0.223, 0.138]; and Cohen's d ($d_{\text{males}} =$
356 0.647 , $d_{\text{females}} = 0.461$).

357

358 ***Metabolic rate of males is sensitive to circadian effects***

359 Additionally, the interaction between sex and time of day of the assay affected the mean
360 metabolic rate (Table 1). This circadian variation resulted from high levels of plasticity in
361 metabolic rate across the day in males. In contrast, metabolic rate values in females were
362 largely stable across the four-time periods at which we ran the experiments. These time-
363 dependent sex differences resulted in a sign shift in the direction of sexual dimorphism for
364 metabolic rate between morning (male-biased) and afternoon (female-biased) measurements
365 (Figure 2).

366

367 ***Intersexual correlation for metabolic rate, across haplotypes, is negative***

368 We found a negative correlation between the sexes in metabolic rate across the thirteen
369 mtDNA haplotypes, controlling for body mass and activity (i.e. based on the emmeans of the
370 final model in Table 1, Pearson's correlation coefficient $r_p = -0.64$; bootstrapped 95%
371 confidence intervals = -0.84, -0.31). That is, haplotypes which conferred greater trait means in
372 females conferred lower trait means in male flies (Figure 1D).

373

374 *Intrasexual correlations involving metabolic and life history traits*

375 We observed a negative correlation between emmeans metabolic rate and longevity
376 across the thirteen haplotypes in males (Pearson's correlation coefficient $r_p = -0.63$;
377 bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals = -0.88, -0.021), but not in females ($r_p = -0.38$; 95%
378 CIs = -0.78, 0.26) (Figure 3). The correlation between body mass and longevity was positive
379 in males ($r_p = 0.63$, 95% CIs = -0.03, 0.84) but negative in females ($r_p = -0.70$, 95% CIs = -
380 0.98, 0.09; ESM, Figure S3), but the confidence intervals of each overlapped with zero. We
381 did not observe any signatures of pleiotropy between the metabolic rate or body mass and
382 components of fertility outcomes, in either of the sexes (ESM, Figure S4).

383

384 **Discussion**

385 Here we aimed to determine whether the nucleotide differences that delineate a panel
386 of 13 mtDNA haplotypes in *D. melanogaster* affect the expression of metabolic rate in vinegar
387 flies; whether any such effects are sex-biased, and whether mtDNA haplotypes confer
388 pleiotropic effects across different physiology and life history traits, resulting in genetic
389 correlations across the haplotypes.

390

391 *Sex-specific effects of mtDNA haplotype on metabolic rate*

392 Not all studies that have tested for mtDNA haplotype effects on phenotypic expression
393 have uncovered evidence for a male-bias in the magnitude of effects [27-31]. However, studies
394 that leveraged this same panel of thirteen mtDNA haplotypes, or subsets of haplotypes from
395 the panel, have reported male-biases in the magnitude of haplotype effects on traits such as
396 longevity and survival, patterns of nuclear gene expression, early-life mitochondrial
397 abundance, mtDNA copy number, maximum reactive oxygen species production and activity

398 of key mitochondrial enzymes [12, 13, 24-26]. Our results extend these observations by
399 showing that the haplotype effect on metabolic rate (measured as $\dot{V}CO_2$) is similarly male-
400 biased in effect. These results are consistent with the prediction of the weak form of the
401 Mother's Curse hypothesis, which predicts the accumulation of a pool of male-harming but
402 female neutral mutations within the mtDNA sequence as a consequence of the maternal
403 transmission of mitochondria [7, 10, 11]. Furthermore, the results support the contention that
404 previously reported sex-differences in the magnitude of mitochondrial haplotypic effects on
405 the expression of life history traits might be mediated through the intermediary effects of the
406 mtDNA haplotype on metabolic rate. More generally, the findings suggest that the genetic
407 architecture of metabolic rate is complex. Recent studies have uncovered additive or epistatic
408 contributions of the mtDNA haplotype to this trait [39, 43, 44], and our study adds to these by
409 providing evidence that the mtDNA sequence variants that affect metabolic rate can
410 consistently confer effects that are larger in males than in females.

411

412 *Negative intersexual correlation for metabolic rate across haplotypes*

413 Furthermore, the effects of mtDNA haplotype on metabolic rate differed not only in
414 their magnitude across males and females but also in their rank order. We observed a negative
415 intersexual correlation across the 13 haplotypes for metabolic rate. This result is consistent
416 with the strong form of the Mother's Curse hypothesis, which predicts that mtDNA mutations
417 conferring sexually antagonistic effects – specifically those that are female-beneficial but male-
418 harmful – would be shaped by positive selection as a consequence of maternal transmission of
419 mitochondria. Similar signatures of sexual antagonism in the rank order of effects on a
420 component of juvenile fitness have previously been reported across mtDNA haplotypes in *D.*
421 *melanogaster* [66], while Camus and Dowling (2018) have similarly reported negative
422 intersexual correlations across the same set of haplotypes as we have used here for various

423 components of reproduction. Intriguingly, the haplotypes conferring relatively higher and
424 lower sex-specific reproductive success in the study of Camus and Dowling (2018) do not
425 correspond with those conferring relatively higher and lower metabolic rates in our study
426 (ESM, Figure S4). Furthermore, another difference between the two studies is that Camus and
427 Dowling (2018) uncovered statistically significant mtDNA haplotype effects on most of the
428 reproductive traits they studied, in males and females alike; whereas we did not find evidence
429 for a statistically significant effect of mtDNA haplotype on metabolic rate in females. This
430 raises the important question of whether the negative intersexual correlation we observed for
431 metabolic rate is likely to reflect a true genetic correlation across haplotypes, or whether it is
432 driven by some other confounding source of variances, such as a vial-sharing effect or a
433 phenotypic correlation. Such phenotypic correlations for metabolic rate are possible here, since
434 males and females used in the experiments of a given mitochondrial strain duplicate, within a
435 given block, were collected from the same sets of vials, and thus spent their juvenile
436 development (from egg to eclosion) within these vials prior to being stored separately by sex
437 for four days once adults, prior to the VCO_2 measurements. Indeed, the presence of an
438 intersexual genetic correlation for any given trait depends on there being genetic variation
439 underpinning the trait in each sex, but we have not found support for a haplotype effect in
440 females. Notwithstanding, visual inspection of Figure 1B is suggestive of a possible signature
441 of variation across haplotypes in females, if so, at an effect size that was too small to detect at
442 the sample sizes used in this study. Furthermore, our standardised effect size calculations,
443 presented in the results, suggest the haplotypic effect in females is likely to be smaller than
444 males, but greater than zero. Yet, on this point, we note that the effect sizes for metabolic rate
445 that we have reported here (about a 14% difference between the most different emmeans) could
446 have pervasive effects for organismal life history, given demonstrations of strong relationships
447 between metabolic rate, personalities and both survival and reproductive outcomes [67-70],

448 and the importance of even small variation in metabolic rates or other traits over extended
449 periods (e.g. [71, 72]). Ultimately, further work is required to test whether the intersexual
450 correlations for metabolic rate, observed here, are genetic or phenotypic in origin.

451

452 *Negative correlation between metabolic rate and lifespan, across haplotypes, is limited to*
453 *males*

454 Metabolic rate has been routinely proposed as a major currency on which the expression
455 of life history traits and trade-offs depends [38, 73, 74]. Given the products of the mitochondrial
456 genome are all involved in encoding core components of OXPHOS respiration, metabolic rate
457 has also been viewed as a nexus trait linking mitochondrial bioenergetics to life history function
458 [26, 27, 75]. Yet, very few studies to date have empirically explored whether mitochondrial
459 genotypic effects on components of life history are underpinned by effects on the metabolic
460 rate [44, 70, 76, 77], and thus the mechanistic factors that link mitochondrial genotype to life
461 history phenotype remain unclear. Furthermore, previous studies to test for effects of mtDNA
462 haplotype variation on physiological traits have generally confined their tests to one sex only
463 [43, 44], with only few exceptions [26, 27, 30, 45]. Thus, the capacity by which the mtDNA
464 haplotype can confer sex differences in organismal physiology remains elusive.

465 Here, we identified a negative correlation across haplotypes for metabolic rate and
466 longevity in males, which suggests a possible male-specific genetic trade-off between the
467 optimal expression of these traits. Indeed, a negative correlation between these two traits is the
468 key prediction of the “rate of living” hypothesis [78-82], which contends that organisms
469 exhibiting high metabolic rates should have shorter lifespans. Despite its widespread appeal,
470 little evidence exists for this prediction at either an interspecific or intraspecific scale [76, 80,
471 83]. Our observation of a male-specific negative mitochondrial correlation between metabolic
472 rate and longevity is striking because it suggests that genetic variation might accumulate within

473 the mitochondrial genome in a manner consistent with the rate of living hypothesis, albeit with
474 a twist. Maternal inheritance of the mitochondrial genome will, in theory, render selection
475 efficient at removing the pool of mutations that reduce female metabolic rate and longevity,
476 but less efficient in removing the pool of mutations that exert male-specific effects on each of
477 these two traits. The male-specificity of the mitochondrial correlation between metabolic rate
478 and longevity would, therefore, suggest that any mtDNA mutations that underpin this
479 correlation are likely to be non-adaptive, accumulating under a selection shadow, and therefore,
480 not associated with fitness benefits to males. This contention is supported by the lack of a
481 positive genetic correlation, across haplotypes, between metabolic rate and reproductive fitness
482 in males (ESM, Figure S4).

483

484 *Sex- and circadian contexts of metabolic rate expression in vinegar flies*

485 Our study also provided new insights into the magnitude and context-dependency of
486 sexual dimorphism in the metabolic rate of *D. melanogaster*. The mean mass- and activity-
487 adjusted metabolic rate (i.e., emmeans of the final model in Table 1) across the haplotypes was
488 generally higher in females than in males (females: mean = 1.89, SD = 0.04; males: mean =
489 1.84, SD = 0.07). However, the magnitude of the sex difference in metabolic rate changed
490 across the day due to high levels of time-mediated plasticity in metabolic rate in males. The
491 existing literature confirms that sexual dimorphism in the expression of metabolic rate in
492 vinegar flies is context-dependent [84, 85]. In this regard, the genotype of flies, number of flies
493 assayed in the respirometer (single fly vs group of flies), type of respirometry setup (open vs
494 flow-through), mating status of the focal flies (virgins vs mated), age of the focal fly (young vs
495 old), and the type of assaying area (confined vs unconfined) have all been shown to influence
496 patterns of sexual dimorphism in metabolic rate of vinegar flies [84]. Notwithstanding, while
497 circadian effects are known to affect mating behaviours of male and female *Drosophila* and

498 moths [86-88], as far as we are aware, this is the first study to report sex differences that depend
499 on circadian effects; a result that potentially has design implications when it comes to planning
500 and implementation of experiments aimed at testing for sex differences in physiology.

501

502 ***Mitochondrial genetic effects should be tested across broader contexts***

503 The panel of haplotypes used here provides an excellent toolkit in which to examine
504 the role of mitochondrial haplotypic variation in driving sex differences in trait expression and
505 life history trade-offs. The panel consists of thirteen haplotypes that represent the entire global
506 distribution of *D. melanogaster*, and that therefore capture much of the mitochondrial genetic
507 variation present in the species [48]. Thus, inferences from this panel are likely to be robust to
508 the effects of sampling error. Furthermore, because the nuclear background in which the
509 haplotypes are expressed is completely isogenic, and each of the haplotypes is replicated across
510 independent duplicates, the panel offers a powerful means to unambiguously partition true
511 mitochondrial haplotypic effects from effects of cryptic and residual nuclear variation or other
512 sources of environmental variance [7]. However, like any resource – the panel comes with its
513 limitations – namely the approach of replicating our strains within a solitary nuclear
514 background (w^{1118}) carries a caveat. From a theoretic standpoint, mitochondrial genes must
515 work in intimate coordination with nuclear genes to encode key processes such as OXPHOS,
516 and thus it is likely that mitochondrial haplotypic effects on the phenotype will be at least in
517 part shaped by epistatic mitochondrial-nuclear interactions [89, 90]. Yet, while a recent meta-
518 analysis across animal and plant kingdoms suggested that effect sizes associated with cyto
519 (mitochondrial and/or chloroplast)-nuclear epistasis are generally larger than those associated
520 with additive cytoplasmic effects, the additive effect size is nonetheless moderate to large [6].
521 This suggests that the sex-differences in mitochondrial effects we have uncovered here are
522 likely to extend across more than just the one nuclear background used here. Nonetheless, our

523 study and previous studies conducted to date on this panel of flies should, at this stage, be seen
524 as providing proof-of-concept for the weak and strong forms of Mother's Curse hypothesis. It
525 is important that future studies screen patterns of sex-specific mitochondrial genetic effects on
526 physiology and life history traits, across a range of nuclear genetic backgrounds to determine
527 whether patterns of male-bias or sexual antagonism are upheld across a broad array of nuclear
528 genotypes. Further studies would also benefit by testing whether the key predictions of the
529 Mother's Curse hypothesis are upheld when mtDNA haplotypes are all sourced from the one-
530 and-the-same natural population.

531

532 **Conclusions**

533 In summary, our study uncovers sex-specific effects of the mtDNA haplotype on
534 metabolic rate, showing a male-bias consistent with the prediction of the weak form of
535 Mother's Curse hypothesis. Furthermore, we have presented evidence for a negative
536 intersexual correlation for metabolic rate across haplotypes. This correlation is consistent with
537 the key prediction of the strong form of the Mother's Curse hypothesis, which predicts that
538 maternal inheritance of mitochondria has enabled mutations to accrue that augment female
539 fitness and are therefore shaped under positive selection but at the expense of male fitness.
540 Future research should now explore whether the signatures of male-bias, and sexual
541 antagonism, detected across haplotypes in our study, are upheld, across a broader range of
542 nuclear genetic and environmental contexts, and whether they can be similarly detected in
543 studies of other metazoan species.

544

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558

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560

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563

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814 **Tables**

815 **Table 1:** Results from the *lmer* model of the full dataset, which included metabolic rate of both
816 sexes. In this model, haplotype and sex were modelled as fixed effects, and centred body mass
817 and ADS as fixed covariates. The final model was derived by sequentially eliminating non-
818 significant higher-order interaction terms across both fixed and random effects using log-
819 likelihood ratio tests, retaining only the final list of fixed and random effects, and any higher-
820 order interactions that were statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. In this table, the random effects

821 – Trial[Day[Block]] denotes “experimental trial nested within day nested within block” and
 822 Day[Block] denotes “experimental day nested within block”.

823

<i>Fixed effects</i>	<i>Sum sq</i>	<i>Mean sq</i>	<i>NumDF</i>	<i>DenDF</i>	<i>F value</i>	<i>P - value</i>
Haplotype	1.250	0.104	12	13.05	0.782	0.662
Sex	0.282	0.282	1	1701.41	2.115	0.146
Time of assay	4.365	1.455	3	50.33	10.913	<0.0001
Body mass	17.728	17.728	1	1531.64	132.982	<0.0001
ADS	11.605	11.605	1	1740.55	87.05	<0.0001
Haplotype × Sex	3.997	0.333	12	1696.57	2.499	0.0029
Sex × time of assay	3.755	1.252	3	1699.49	9.389	<0.0001
Sex × ADS	5.114	5.114	1	1769.22	38.358	<0.0001
<i>Random effects</i>	<i>Variance</i>	<i>p-value</i>				
Strain duplicate	0	1				
Day[Block]	0.0035	<0.0001				
Trial[Day[Block]]	3.59e-11	1				
Residual	0.133					

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825 **Table 2:** Results from sex-specific *lmer* models. Here, haplotype was modelled as a fixed
 826 effect. The centred body mass and ADS were retained as covariates in the final model. The
 827 final model was derived by sequentially eliminating non-significant higher-order interaction
 828 terms across both fixed and random effects using log-likelihood ratio test.

829 ***Male-specific lmer model***

<i>Fixed effects</i>	<i>Sum sq</i>	<i>Mean sq</i>	<i>NumDF</i>	<i>DenDF</i>	<i>F value</i>	<i>P - value</i>
Haplotype	4.102	0.342	12	822.07	2.0354	0.019
Time of assay	7.236	2.412	3	51.1	14.360	<0.0001
Body mass	3.843	3.843	1	612.2	22.88	<0.0001
ADS	20.099	20.099	1	883.51	119.67	<0.0001
<i>Random effects</i>	<i>Variance</i>					
Day[Block]	0.0073					

Trial[Day[Block]]	4.93e-09
Residual	0.168

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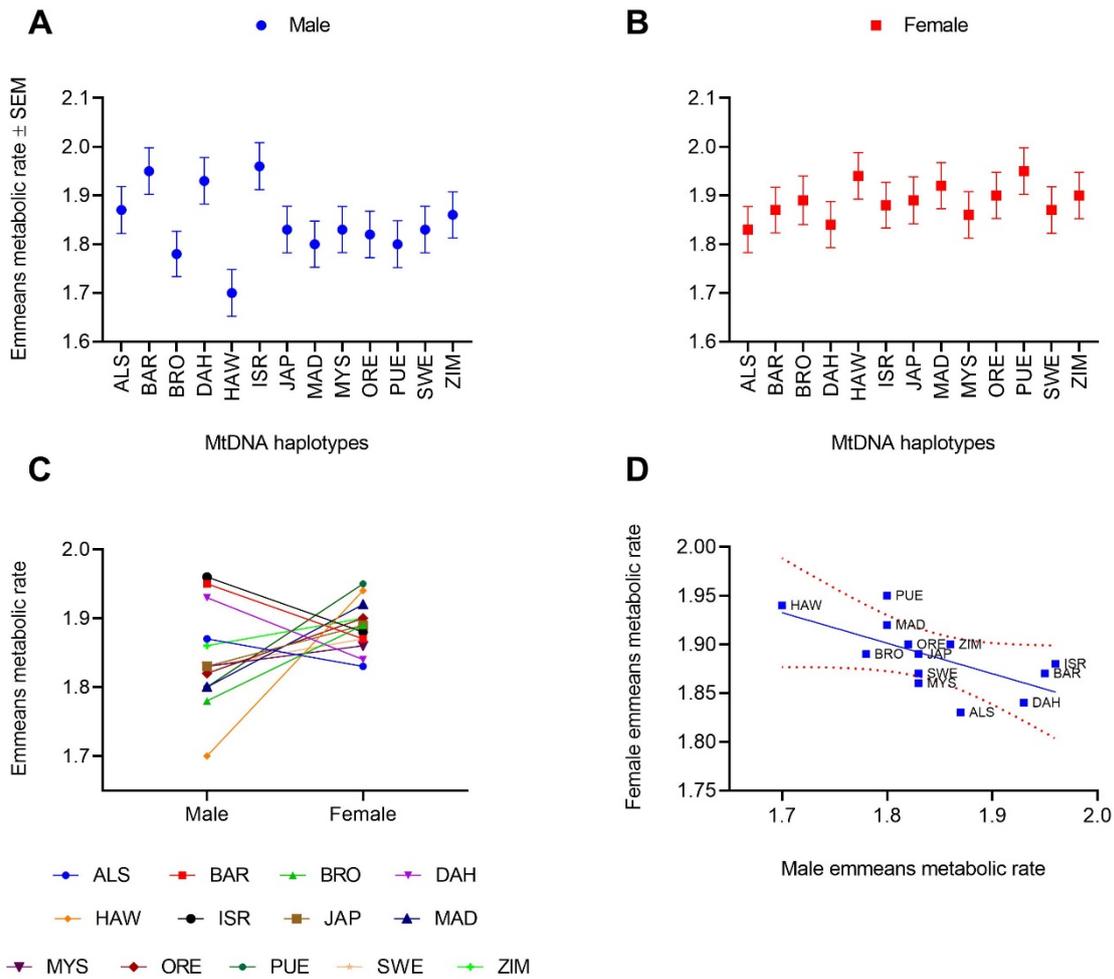
831 ***Female-specific lmer model***

<i>Fixed effects</i>	<i>Sum sq</i>	<i>Mean sq</i>	<i>NumDF</i>	<i>DenDF</i>	<i>F value</i>	<i>P - value</i>
Haplotype	1.068	0.089	12	822.41	0.953	0.493
Time of assay	0.2536	0.0845	3	49.89	0.906	0.445
Body mass	12.72	12.72	1	865.17	136.253	<0.0001
ADS	0.309	0.309	1	871.15	3.307	0.069

<i>Random effects</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Day[Block]	0.0045
Trial[Day[Block]]	0.0011
Residual	0.093

832

833 **Figures**



834

835 **Figure 1.** Effects of mtDNA haplotype on the metabolic rate of A. male; and B. female flies.

836 In panels A and B, the estimated marginal means (emmeans) \pm 1 Standard Error of metabolic

837 rate for each mtDNA haplotype-by-sex combination were derived from the final model built

838 on global data, using the *emmeans* package in R. The emmeans accounted for variation

839 attributable to body mass and ADS in the final global model. C. Interaction plot showing

840 variation in emmeans metabolic rate between the sexes, across the thirteen mtDNA haplotypes.

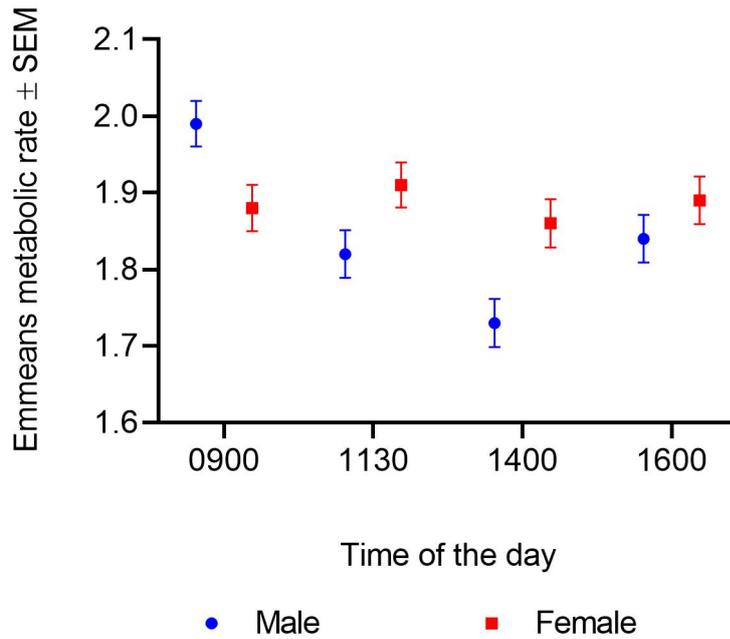
841 D. Negative inter-sexual mitochondrial correlation for emmeans metabolic rate (Pearson's

842 correlation coefficient $r_p = -0.64$, bootstrapped 95% CIs = -0.84, -0.31). The scales in both axes

843 are adjusted across the panels to elucidate the magnitude of variation and relationship between

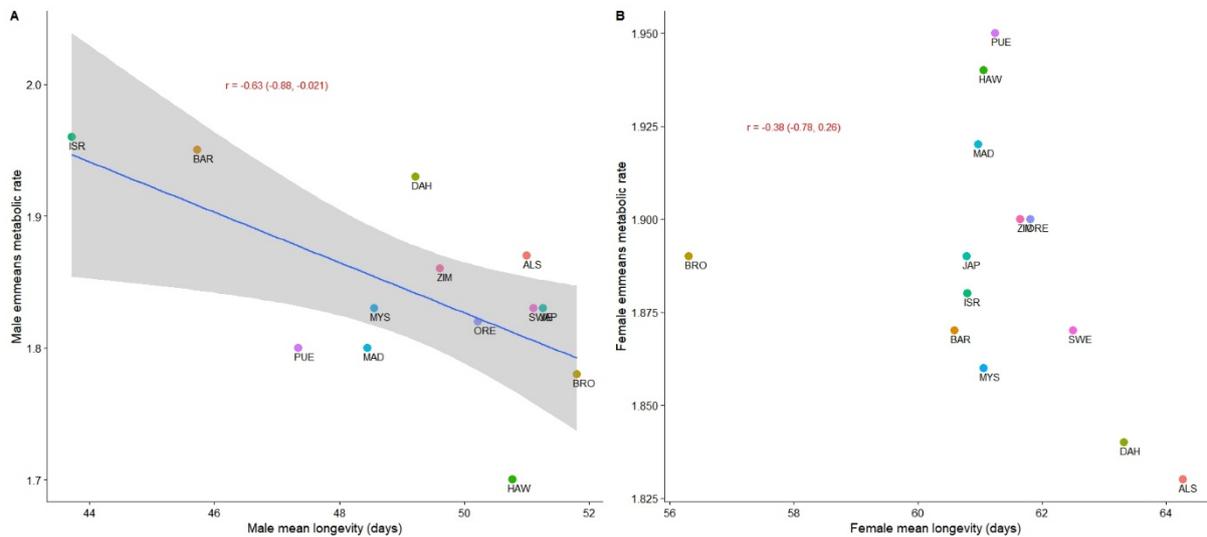
844 the trait means. For annotations of the mtDNA haplotypes, refer to the Methods section.

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Figure 2. Circadian effects on the metabolic rate of each sex. The emmeans metabolic rate (adjusted for body mass and ADS) for each sex-by-time of the day combination was estimated from the model in Table 1 using the *emmeans* package in R.



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Figure 3. Intra-sexual mitochondrial correlation between longevity and emmeans metabolic rate in A) males and B) females. The scales in both axes are adjusted to show the direction of the relationship between the traits in each sex. For annotations of the mtDNA haplotypes, refer

855 to the Methods section. The mean longevity scores for each sex-by-haplotype combination was
856 sourced from Camus *et al.*, (2012).