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A System Genetics Analysis Of Energy Metabolism Traits In Drosophila Melanogaster

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A SYSTEM GENETICS ANALYSIS OF ENERGY METABOLISM TRAITS IN

DROSOPHILA MELANOGASTER

by

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A DISSERTATION

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A SYSTEM GENETICS ANALYSIS OF ENERGY METABOLISM TRAITS IN *DROSOPHILA MELANOGASTER*

PATRICIA P JUMBO LUCIONI

GRADUATE PROGRAM: NUTRITION SCIENCES

ABSTRACT

Obesity is emerging as a global public health problem and it has shown to precede and predict the development of type 2 diabetes, a complex disease that has also reached epidemic proportions in the US and worldwide. Despite that obesity-related traits are highly heritable, the genetic basis underlying their natural variation and the loci playing pleiotropic roles among organismal traits have not been fully elucidated. The overall goals of these present studies were: to shed light on the architecture of the genetic coexpression networks regulating variations in obesity-related traits, elucidate the extent to which they are regulated by pleiotropic loci, and identify pleiotropic alleles between metabolism and life-history traits to provide key insights into why different alleles are allowed to persist in natural populations, despite the fact that some of them confer susceptibility to metabolic disorders. Using a wild-derived population of *Drosophila melanogaster* as model system, our results highlighted the relevance of non-metabolic pathways such as immune response, neurogenesis and neuronal function, cell growth, food processing and water balance as key regulators of organismal body weight, metabolic rate and body composition traits. Differential expression of cycling/photoperiodic genes among young adult flies underlies the genetic forces shaping

phenotypic variation in mitochondrial bioenergetic traits. Furthermore, the elucidation of pleiotropic transcriptional modules provided a key insight into the molecular basis of the well established trade-offs between body weight, reproduction, and survival of food deprivation. Our data further indicate that molecular regulation of mitochondrial respiration plays a critical role in mediating life history trade-offs in natural populations. In conclusion, our results confirm that the genetic basis of natural variations in obesityrelated traits involves highly interactive co-regulated transcriptional networks, and identify various pleiotropic loci underlying evolutionarily conserved trade-offs among organismal survival and reproduction which account for the perpetuation of alleles that confer susceptibility to metabolic disorders among individuals from a natural population.

Keywords: obesity-related traits, *Drosophila melanogaster*, genetic networks, lifehistory traits, trade-off, *syndecan*.

DEDICATIONS

To my parents, my husband and my son.

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

Type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) is a complex disease which is characterized by a chronic hyperglycemic status as a consequence of insulin resistance in muscle (causing decreased glucose uptake) and liver (causing increased gluconeogenesis), together with impaired insulin secretion from pancreatic β-cells. The complexity of T2DM results from the interaction of environmental factors with genetic susceptibility factors. Linkage, candidate-gene, and genome-wide association studies have provided important insights into the genetic architecture of T2DM, and have identified potential genetic variants in several genes that confer T2DM risk [4]. Yet, numerous studies have demonstrated that increased fat mass, preferentially in the visceral compartment, is also an important risk factor for insulin resistance [5], and the development of T2DM [6]. According to Ford *et al.* [6], for every kilogram of weight gain, the risk of diabetes increases between 4.5 and 9%. The transition from obesity to diabetes is produced by a progressive defect in insulin secretion coupled with a progressive rise in insulin resistance. The reverse observation after weight loss of 10 kg [7] confirms the role of obesity in the impairment of insulin secretion and in the pathogenesis of insulin resistance.

Overweight and obesity continue to be leading public health concerns in the US. The latest estimates have shown that 17.1% of US children and adolescents are overweight and 32.2% of adults are obese [8]. Obesity has shown to precede and predict the development of T2DM [9] [10]. T2DM comprises 90% of people with diabetes around

the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that more than 180 million people worldwide had diabetes in 2006; and it has been anticipated that this number will double by 2030 [11].

Mitochondrial dysfunction and metabolism.

As mentioned above, skeletal muscle, adipose tissue and liver are the insulinresponsive organs responsible for maintaining normal glucose homeostasis. Dysregulation in any of the processes involved in the modulation of insulin action produces elevation in fasting and postprandial glucose levels. For several decades, it has been proposed that free fatty acids (FFA) play a critical role in the modulation of responsiveness of liver and muscle to insulin. This has been an area of intense research since Randle *et al*.'s [12] 1963 publication on the competition between glucose and fatty acids as oxidative fuel sources in isolated rat heart and diaphragmatic muscle preparations. According to Randle's model, when concentrations of plasma FFA increase, muscle fatty acid uptake is favored and fatty acids compete with glucose for oxidation. The enhanced fatty acid oxidation produces an increase in the acetyl-CoA/CoA ratio that suppresses glucose oxidation even further through activation of pyruvate dehydrogenase kinase, which phosphorylates and inhibits pyruvate dehydrogenase. The inhibition of this enzyme leads to increased cytoplasmic citrate concentrations that consequently inhibit phosphofructokinase resulting in increased concentrations of glucose-6 phosphate; as a consequence, hexokinase is inhibited and, finally, glucose uptake is impaired.

Yet recent studies have postulated that this model provides only a partial explanation of the inhibition by FFA of insulin-stimulated glucose-uptake and oxidation in the muscle. Studies by Shulman and co-workers [13], using nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy, have shown a significant decrease in the intracellular glucose concentration of healthy subjects after a five-hour infusion of lipid/heparin through direct inhibition of glucose transport by fatty acids. In light of these findings, Lowell and Shulman [14] speculate that "any metabolic perturbation that promotes the accumulation of fatty acids in liver and/or muscle and/or any defects in the ability of these organs to metabolize fatty acids might result in insulin resistance". Indeed, recent biochemical evidence supports the idea that insulin resistance in humans arises from defects in mitochondrial fatty acid oxidation in skeletal muscle [14]. Furthermore, several cDNA microarray studies comparing transcriptional differences in skeletal muscle from non-diabetic controls and T2DM patients [15-17] have shown extensive down-regulation of genes involved in mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation (OXPHOS). These findings in humans are also supported by gene-expression analysis in the skeletal muscle of other mammalian models [18]. Interestingly, in the studies conducted by Patti *et al*. [15] and Mootha *et al*. [17] a subset of down-regulated OXPHOS genes is known to be coordinately regulated by *peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma co-activator* (*PGC*)*-1*α and *PGC-1*β*.* Expression of these genes is decreased in muscle tissue from diabetic and pre-diabetic subjects. *PGC-1* α and *PGC-1* β have been shown to regulate glucose and fat oxidation in

muscle and fat tissue [15] as well as gluconeogenesis in liver [17] and glucose-regulated insulin secretion in pancreatic β cells [15]. Overall, these findings strongly suggest that the biochemical network that regulates energy homeostasis is coordinated by genetic elements with regulatory control of pathway genes*.*

Mitochondrial Physiology and Genetics.

Mitochondria are subcellular organelles composed of "a smooth outer membrane surrounding an inner membrane of significantly larger surface area that, in turn, surrounds a protein-rich core, the matrix" [19]. Mitochondria are best known for their role in the production of adenosine triphosphate (ATP) through a process called OXPHOS [19,20]. Carbohydrate oxidation via glycolysis and the tri-carboxylic acid cycle (TCA) and β-oxidation of fats as well as protein metabolism supply reducing equivalents in the form of electrons that travel along the mitochondrial electron transport chain (ETC). The ETC is composed of 5 respiratory complexes initiating with electrons being transferred to either complex I (NADH dehydrogenase or NADH-ubiquinone oxidoreductase) or complex II (succinate dehydrogenase or succinate:ubiquinone oxidoreductase). Complex I is a very large enzyme composed of 43 subunits. It is the point of entry for the majority of reducing equivalents that travel along the ETC. Complex I transfers 2 electrons (e) from NADH to ubiquinone (UQ) and such transferring is associated to the translocation of 4 protons $(H⁺)$ across the membrane [21]. Complex II operates in both the ETC and the TCA cycle oxidizing succinate to fumarate and transferring electrons from succinate to UQ. It is composed of 4 subunits. Unlike

complex I, complex II does not behave as a redox-driven proton pump. Complex III (cytochrome (cyt) bc_1 complex or ubiquinol-cytochrome *c* oxidoreductase) delivers electrons from ubiquinol to cyt *c*. It is composed of 11 subunits, one of which has the capacity to pump protons [20,21]. The overall reaction involves the net oxidation of 1 UQH₂ to UQ, the reduction of two cyt c_1 (i.e. a complex III subunit), the release of $4 \text{ H}^+ \text{s}$ at one side of the membrane and the uptake of $2 H⁺s$ from the other. Cyt c is a water soluble hemoprotein [20] which shuttles electrons from cyt c_1 in complex III to complex IV (cytochrome *c* oxidase; see Figure 1).

Complex IV is composed of 13 subunits and it is hypothesized to be the rate-limiting step of mitochondria bioenergetics $[22]$. At the active site, transfer of 4 es is used to reduce O_2 into two molecules of H_2O given that no reactive oxygen species (ROS) is released. The complete cycle removes $4H⁺s$ from the matrix side involved in the reduction of O_2 to H_2O and additionally 4 more H^+s are pumped across the membrane producing an overall charge movement of $8q+/4$ e⁻ [21]. A reduction in complex IV activity may increase the residence times of electrons upstream in the chain, thereby increasing the probability of electrons leaking to form superoxide anions [23,24]. Finally, complex V (i.e. mitochondrial ATP synthase) is a transmembrane protein composed of 11 subunits. Complex V is functionally reversible with the ability to synthesize ATP from adenosine diphosphate (ADP) and inorganic phosphate (P_i) powered by the OXPHOSmediated proton motive force, coupling respiration to ATP synthesis. This form of respiration is known as 'state 3' respiration and is responsible for producing the ATP that powers multiple cellular reactions in eukaryotes [19]. However, mitochondria can also

use oxygen even in the absence of ADP, which occurs when protons leak back into the matrix via a mechanism that does not involve ATP synthase. This uncouples respiration from OXPHOS. Oxygen utilization in the absence of ADP is referred to as 'state 4' respiration [25]. Nuclear-encoded uncoupling proteins (UCPs) may play a role in augmenting this basal proton leak further rendering the mitochondrial inner membrane leaky for protons, "uncoupling" the ETC from ATP synthesis, and reducing ROS production [26,27].

Mitochondria OXPHOS is under dual genetic control in all eukaryotic cells. A single mitochondrion contains its own genome and protein-synthesizing machinery. Human mtDNA contains 37 genes: 22 encode transfer RNAs (tRNAs), 2 encode ribosomal RNAs (rRNAs), and the remaining 13 genes encode mitochondrial subunits of the ETC [21]. MtDNA consists mostly of coding sequences, has a very high mutation rate [28], and its repair mechanisms are poor [29]. Thus mtDNA replication during normal cellular and organismal aging could propagate mutant mtDNA within cell lineages [30] due to heteroplasmy, leading to bioenergetic defects of different magnitude between organs and individuals. Tissues heavily dependent on OXPHOS, as heart, muscle as well as the renal and endocrine systems are particularly affected [31] such [28]. MtDNA is maternally inherited [32,33]. Thus mitochondrial diseases have shown to be more severe in males than in females [34]. However, later reports have demonstrated the occurrence of paternal inheritance in interspecific crosses among mammalian models [35,36] as well as in *Drosophila* [37]. This biparental inheritance of mtDNA provides further chance for generating heteroplasmy within an individual. However, despite the important contribution of the mitochondrial genome, nuclear genes code for most of the mitochondrial OXPHOS proteins and for the mitochondrial metabolic enzymes [38]. In addition numerous nuclear-encoded factors are required for either the expression of mitochondrial genes (i.e. DNA and RNA polymerases, ribosomal proteins and the mtDNA regulatory factors such as mitochondrial transcription factor A, Tfam) or the assembly of the respiratory complexes [28,38,39].

Resting metabolic rate, mitochondrial proton leak, and obesity.

Changes in body weight are known to result from an imbalance between the energy derived from food and the energy expended in maintaining life and performing physical work. This imbalance is reflected as a change in the amount of energy stored, mainly, as fat. Total daily energy expenditure comprises the resting metabolic rate (RMR), the thermic effect of food, and the caloric cost of physical activity [40]. RMR is the resting energy expenditure at thermoneutrality in the unfed state. It can be further subdivided into the sleeping metabolic rate and the additional energy necessary for wakefulness without physical activity. The thermic effect of food accounts for \sim 10% of the daily energy expenditure and the caloric cost of physical activity is variable depending on the individual's daily activity level. RMR is the component that explains the largest proportion of total daily energy needs in individuals. Assessment of RMR among siblings and monozygotic and dizygotic twins suggests that a good proportion of the interindividual variability in RMR is inherited [41]. This is observed also after adjusting for individual differences in age, sex, and fat-free mass, which represents the major

determinants of RMR [42]. The heritability of RMR is also confirmed by studies in rodents [43] and *Drosophila* [44], which report that ~20-40% of the variability in RMR is explained by gene variants.

Numerous studies suggest that a low resting metabolic rate (RMR), adjusted for fatfree mass, fat mass, age, and sex, is a major risk factor for weight gain in humans [40,45- 49]. However, there is still controversy about the influence of RMR on the development of obesity, with studies reporting that the resting component of organismal energy expenditure does not account for differences in weight gain patterns among individuals [50,51]. Because it is well-known that the influence of particular alleles on quantitative traits is context dependent, often influenced by the genetic background and the history of environmental conditions experienced [52], this discrepancy in findings may be the result of inadequate statistical power due to small sample sizes. Therefore, the use of model systems, such as the fruit fly *D. melanogaster*, which allow one to conduct studies in controlled environments and defined genetic backgrounds, is extremely valuable to address these issues.

Studies in rodents indicate that mitochondrial proton leak in skeletal muscle is a major contributor to RMR [27]. This holds true even when the data is extrapolated from isolated tissues to whole-organism RMR [25]. Up to 20%-25% of whole-body RMR is attributable to the mitochondrial proton leak process [26,53,54]. Coupling efficiency is the proportion of oxygen consumption used to produce ATP and do useful work. Mitochondrial proton leak (i.e. state 4) causes mild uncoupling, lowers mitochondrial efficiency and possibly plays a role in the regulation of ROS production [55]. By

contrast, under ADP-dependent respiration (i.e. state 3) coupling efficiency approaches 90%. Conditions of low coupling efficiency (i.e. increased proton leak) may thus lead to increased substrate oxidation and to reduced energy storage [56]. This is corroborated by the fact that patients with Luft's syndrome (i.e. a rare metabolic syndrome of unknown etiology) have inefficient mitochondria and display high caloric intake, high metabolic rate with profuse sweating, and a low body weight [56]. Therefore, increased RMR resulting from cellular inefficiency to generate ATP may have a potential antiobesity effect by increasing fat and glucose catabolism to meet organismal ATP requirements. In view of these observations, the goal of this project was to show that there is segregating genetic variation for skeletal muscle mitochondrial coupling efficiency among individuals from natural populations and that genetically determined differences in mitochondrial coupling efficiency may underlie some of inter-individual variability in organismal RMR, which in turn affects variation in whole-body energy storage.

Drosophila melanogaster **as a model system for studying the genetic basis of metabolic traits.**

Thoraces of *D. melanogaster* consist primarily of flight muscle, which is an important source of mitochondria, also known as sarcosomes [57]. Each muscle fiber contains relatively enormous, cross-striated, longitudinal columns or fibrils. Adjacent fibrils are separated by a zone of transparent sarcoplasm in which a longitudinal row of sarcosomes is embedded. In the apparent absence of connective tissue sheaths and sarcolemma, muscle fiber readily separates into fibrils liberating a turbid suspension of sarcosomes.

Watanabe and Williams [57] examined the sarcosomes from flies and showed a high titer of cytochrome *a, b* and *c*, an active cytochrome *c* oxidase and catalase, and significant titers of mitochondrial enzymes similar to vertebrate mitochondria. Furthermore, the phosphorylating respiratory chain of insect mitochondria strongly resembles that of mammalian mitochondria. Insect mitochondria have an exceptionally high respiratory and phosphorylative activity with α -glycerophosphate and pyruvate as physiological substrates [58]. However, there is a low rate of oxidation with Krebs-cycle intermediates and glutamate due to the very limited permeability of the mitochondria towards these substrates. Neither FFAs nor their carnitine esters can be oxidized by *Drosophila*. Moreover, one of the most characteristic features of insect tissues is the high concentration of free proline. Although pyruvate or proline alone is not oxidized at significant rates, pyruvate plus proline support high rates of coupled state 3 respiration [59]. This augmented respiratory rate obtained is due to an increase in the rate of pyruvate utilization mediated by proline. Fly mitochondrial respiration is also affected by the same inhibitors and uncouplers that affect mammalian system [58-60]. ATPase activity is inhibited by oligomycin and stimulated with the uncoupling agents 2,4 dinitrophenol and carbonyl cyanide *p*-trifluoromethoxyphenylhydrazone (FCCP) with dissipation of the electrochemical gradient across the inner membrane. In addition, similar to human nuclear-encoded UCPs, four UCP proteins have been identified in *D. melanogaster*: UCP4a, UCP4b, UCP4c and UCP5/BMCP1. Hanak and Jezek [61] identified the first three *D. melanogaster* UCPs as the closest human UCP4 analogs. *D. melanogaster* UCP5/BMCP1 shows a much higher similarity with the vertebrate UCP5

than any other UCP isoform [62]. A previous report showed an increase in respiration rate and a decrease in mitochondrial membrane potential as the result of *D. melanogaster* UCP5 expression in the heterologous yeast system [63].

It has long been established that metabolic pathways have changed little during the course of evolution. Insects capable of only short flights, such as fruit flies and bees, use carbohydrates as the main source of flight energy. High enzymatic activities for carbohydrate oxidation (i.e. trehalase, hexokinase, GPDH) and mitochondrial oxidative enzymes (i.e. cytochrome oxidase) along with high mitochondrial densities support the high rates of aerobic metabolism required to maintain flight [64]. Trehalose is a disaccharide that constitutes the major circulating sugar in these insects [65,66]. It can be stored in relatively high concentration in body fluids. Trehalose concentrations in insect hemoplymph are usually between 1-2% whereas blood glucose in humans is kept around 0.1% [65]. Fat is the other major energy reservoir in an organism. In *D. melanogaster*, fat is stored as triacylglycerol (TAG) in the fat body, which is distributed throughout the organism [67]. Similar to mammals, the fat body constitutes the flies' major energy reserve and it is the functional equivalent of both mammalian liver and white adipose tissue. Comparative sequence analysis shows that *Drosophila* is a good model system for studying energy metabolism traits because it possesses homologues for all of the known mammalian enzymes responsible for the activation, trafficking, and processing of fatty acids through the β-oxidation pathway [68]. Furthermore, the metabolic pathways for carbohydrate oxidation in vertebrate muscle have their counterpart in the insect flight muscle [69]. The insulin signaling pathway is highly conserved in insects particularly in

Drosophila [70]. In *Drosophila, a* group of insulin producing cells located in the brain is the equivalent of the human pancreas*.* Seven insulin–like peptides (Dilps) are recognized (Dilp1-7)*.* The fly insulin-like peptides have been shown to control energy metabolism, growth, reproduction, and longevity similarly to the vertebrate insulin/IGF signaling pathway. Adipokinetic hormone (AKH) is another important metabolic hormone in insects with structural and functional similarities to vertebrate glucagon [71,72]. Insulinand AKH-producing cells comprise a specialized network that controls organismal energy metabolism and growth sharing a common evolutionary ancestry with the ∝- and β-cells of the human pancreas [70].

The measurement of $CO₂$ production is the most sensitive and accurate method used to investigate the rate of metabolism in small organisms, such as fruit-flies $[73]$. $CO₂$ is produced as a direct by-product of oxidative metabolism, but the ratio of $CO₂$ produced to oxygen consumed varies with the metabolic substrate utilized. In *Drosophila,* carbohydrate is the sole fuel metabolized to provide substrate for the aerobic production of energy during flight $[64,69]$. Therefore, the $CO₂$ production of fed flies is correlated with oxygen consumption and the respiratory quotient is near 1 [64], unless the flies are starved over a 4-hour period and fat starts being consumed concurrently [74]. Genetic differences affecting variation in RMR have been reported in natural populations of *D. melanogaster* [44]. Previous publications have recognized body size as an important variable affecting metabolic rate [75,76]; however, later reports have shown no correlation between these two traits under a wide range of environmental conditions [73]. This is because "the more energy spent on activity, the higher the mass-independent resting metabolic rate". Thus, insects that fly, an energetically demanding behavior, have higher RMRs than species that use energetically less demanding types of locomotion. There is evidence that these higher RMRs among the more active organisms are caused by either larger sizes of those organs that have high metabolic activity or by higher metabolic rates in some or all organs [77]. The small size of *D. melanogaster* makes it impractical to assess the size or metabolic rates of individual organs.

Life history theory and energy allocation.

Life-history theory predicts that the amount of energy available is finite, and energy devoted to one function cannot be devoted to other functions [55]. The way in which organisms allocate their available nutrients to growth and reproduction at different ages has been shown to affect their survival [55]. Both early fecundity and egg-laying rate appear to have an antagonistic relationship with lifespan [78-82]. Early reproduction may result in early cessation of repair, producing fast growth, fast aging, and a short lifespan. Selection for late reproduction may favor investment in repair, delay maturity and aging, and lengthen lifespan [81,83].

Over the past 50 years, ROS, mainly produced by mitochondrial OXPHOS, have also been investigated as putative mediators of the process of aging [84]. This has been confirmed by several reports across different species [85-88]. ROS are endogenously and continuously produced throughout life under normal physiological conditions, leading to deleterious effects on biological macromolecules and irreversible damage, especially in

post-mitotic tissues. Respiratory complex I and III are important ROS generators in the ETC [60].

Under normal conditions, mitochondria are incompletely coupled allowing a natural leak of protons back into the matrix (i.e. state 4). This appears to be a general pathway of ecologically significant energy loss in all aerobes and not an artifact of mitochondrial isolation [30]. So during OXPHOS some of the redox energy is lost as heat. Considering that up to 20%-25% of the RMR may be used to drive this proton leak [25,26,53], its function must be so important that organisms are prepared to pay a very high energetic price to maintain it. It is clearly a thermogenic mechanism because it stimulates respiration without energy conservation [30]. However, it also occurs in ectothermic organisms such as *Drosophila*, so thermogenesis cannot be its primary function. Brand and colleagues [30] have hypothesized that the potential function of the mitochondrial basal proton leak (i.e. state 4) is to decrease the production of superoxide and other ROS to protect against cellular degeneration and aging. These functions seem to be important enough to warrant such high energetic investment. Similarly, other reports have shown that mitochondrial superoxide production has a strong dependence on the magnitude of the proton-motive force across the inner membrane, so it can be strongly decreased by mild uncoupling [60,84]. The proton-motive force would affect ROS generation by altering the redox state of ubiquinone. At high proton-motive force respiration slows, so electrons accumulate on ubiquinone leading to an increase in the steady-state concentration of ubisemiquinone, an important determinant of ROS production. Partial uncoupling by the basal proton leak will tend to lower the proton-motive force leading to

a more oxidized ubiquinone pool and a lower concentration of ubisemiquinone. This proton leak will also increase oxygen consumption rate so it will lower the oxygen tension around the mitochondrion. Therefore, both a reduced concentration of oxygen and ubisemiquinone in mitochondria may lead to a lower rate of mitochondrial ROS production. In this context, one of the objectives of this research project was to elucidate the genetic basis of natural variation in mitochondrial state 4 respiration as a surrogate measure of basal proton leak. These findings may provide a key insight into the identification of candidate genes regulating mitochondrial ROS generation as well as potential therapeutic targets to prevent ROS-mediated cellular degeneration and aging.

Genetics of quantitative traits and gene co-expression network in natural populations.

Mitochondrial bioenergetic and energy metabolism traits are continuous traits. Continuous traits are referred to as quantitative traits and the area of genetics that studies their mode of inheritance is called **quantitative genetics** [89]. The value observed when the character is measured is the phenotypic value of the trait and it may vary among individuals in a population. The amount of variation is measured and expressed as the variance. The phenotypic variance (V_P) is composed of a genotypic component (V_G) and an environmental component (V_E) :

$$
V_p = V_G + V_E
$$

The fraction of the phenotypic variance due to genetic effects is called the "heritability" of the character [89]. In this project, we determined the broad-sense heritability, denoted as H^2 , or the degree of genetic determination of the trait of interest, which is expressed as **Vg/Vp**.

Genome-wide measurements have shown that there is extensive variation in gene expression levels in humans and other organisms and that variation in transcript-specific abundance of many genes has a heritable component [90-97]. The so called "genetical genomics" approach has been used to map loci controlling gene-expression differences that may underlie functional trait variation [98]. This approach integrates trait, expression, and genetic marker data to infer causal associations between gene expression and trait variation [99]. This is accomplished by several levels of analysis. The first step consists of performing a genome-wide scan to map the chromosomal regions controlling the level of expression for each transcript abundance phenotype. The second step consists of reconstructing co-expression network pathways underlying multiple transcript abundance phenotypes to identify transcriptional "modules" of highly interconnected genes [100]. One characteristic of many transcriptional networks in the biological system is a "scale-free" topology, where a small subset of highly linked genes, or "hubs", links the rest of less connected genes to the system [101,102]. The third step concerns the mapping of the transcripts responsible for expression regulation of the gene modules underlying the trait of interest [103].

Recent "genetical genomics" studies in human and animal models have provided strong evidence of the existence of co-expression genetic networks that control energy

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homeostasis [43,104,105]. This indicates that identifying single genes controlling variation in a quantitative trait or conferring susceptibility to a disease has limited utility in uncovering the genetic mechanisms underlying complex diseases, unless the genetic networks associated with the trait or disease are unraveled [99]. In addition, this type of network analysis provides hypotheses about functional relationships among transcripts and provides insight into how variation in the network of co-expressed genes can give rise to variation in the associated traits.

Significant Studies Included

In this dissertation, we used a group of 40 *Drosophila* inbred lines derived from a single natural population in Raleigh, NC, to investigate whether there is considerable segregating variation in energy metabolism and mitochondrial bioenergetic traits among individuals from a single natural population. The overall goals of the present studies were:

- 1. to shed light on the genetic architecture of the co-expression networks regulating variation in organismal obesity-related traits in *D. melanogaster*,
- 2. to elucidate the extent to which body composition and energy metabolism traits are regulated by pleiotropic loci, and
- 3. to identify evolutionary conserved genes with pleiotropic effects on body composition, energy metabolism, and life-history traits to provide key insights into why variation in body composition traits, such as fat mass, and in

mitochondrial traits, such as state 4 respiration rate, are allowed to persist in natural populations.

The following questions and topics were addressed:

-Chapter II: SYSTEMS GENETICS ANALYSES OF BODY WEIGHT AND ENERGY METABOLISM TRAITS IN *DROSOPHILA MELANOGASTER.* The present study aimed to elucidate the genetic architecture of co-regulated transcriptional networks underlying natural variations in *Drosophila* body weight, metabolic rate, and whole-body metabolite pools. The study also assessed whether there were genetic correlations between energy metabolism and life-history traits (such as fitness, starvation resistance, and lifespan) and identified pleiotropic gene-expression modules underlying these correlations.

-Chapter III: IDENTIFICATION OF NUCLEAR-ENCODED GENES REGULATING *DROSOPHILA* **MITOCHONDRIAL RESPIRATION TRAITS THROUGH TRANSCRIPTOME ANALYSIS.** The present study aimed (i) to determine the genetic basis underlying variation in mitochondrial respiration trait in a natural population of *D. melanogaster* and (ii) to investigate genetic correlations between mitochondrial and life-history traits.

-Chapter IV: A ROLE FOR *DROSOPHILA SYNDECAN* **IN THE REGULATION OF WHOLE-BODY ENERGY METABOLISM AND HOMEOSTASIS.** The present study aimed to corroborate the role of *Drosophila syndecan (dSdc)* in mitochondrial function as *dSdc* was identified as one of the candidate genes regulating mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate among a highly interactive network of cycling genes. For this purpose, we used a viable mutant allele of the gene*, SdcBG02774 .*

CHAPTER II:

SYSTEMS GENETICS ANALYSIS OF BODY WEIGHT AND ENERGY METABOLISM TRAITS IN *DROSOPHILA MELANOGASTER*

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Format adapted for dissertation

ABSTRACT

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the US and worldwide. Quantitative genetic analyses in humans and animal models have provided compelling evidence that several genes underlie the genetic architecture of obesity-related traits. However, there has been little focus on documenting the extent to which variation in energy metabolism traits contribute to life history variation and trade-offs in natural populations. Here, we quantified phenotypic variation in body weight, body composition, and energy metabolism traits among 40 wild-derived inbred lines of *Drosophila melanogaster* established from a single natural population in the Raleigh area (NC). These lines were chosen because they were previously screened for whole-genome transcript abundance and life-history traits. Our data confirmed that there is segregating variation in all the traits, with broad-sense heritabilities ranging from 25% to 68%. Regression models identified several hundred candidate genes significantly (*P*<0.01) associated with variation in metabolic phenotypes in both sexes forming modules of biologically meaningful correlated transcripts. Gene ontology analyses revealed that body weight coexpression sub-networks were overall enriched for genes involved in immune response and neuronal development and function. Genes involved in cell growth and metabolism were identified as regulators of body composition traits, while genes associated with food processing and water balance were shown to underlie the basis of natural variation in metabolic rate. Our study also showed that there was a tendency for lines with higher body weight and glycogen reserves to survive starvation better at the expense of reproductive fitness and mating. Several pleiotropic gene-expression modules were identified that provide key insights into the molecular mechanisms underlying the tradeoff between body weight, glycogen storage, and fitness.

INTRODUCTION

Obesity is a condition characterized by an excess of adipose tissue that adversely affects human health [1]. The clinical problem of excessive adipose tissue resides in its strong association with a number of chronic diseases, such as insulin resistance [2,3], type 2 diabetes (T2DM) [4], coronary artery disease [4,5] and stroke [6]. In 2003-2004, 32.2% of the adults in the United States were obese [7]. This estimate represents a significant increase in obesity prevalence over the past 20 years. Similar trends are being observed worldwide [8]. As the rise in the incidence of obesity and related health problems continues, considerable efforts have been made towards a better understanding of the etiology of obesity.

Large twin, adoption, and family studies have firmly established that obesity-related traits, such as body mass index (BMI) and measures of body composition (e.g., fat mass, lean mass, and percentage fat mass), are highly heritable in humans [9-16]. Segregating variation in obesity-related traits has also been observed in natural populations of most other organisms, including invertebrates [17,18]. Yet the genetic architecture of these traits is very complex [19]. This is reflected by the numerous gene-by-gene interactions (e.g. epistasis) reported in a diverse group of organisms [20-27] as well as the extensive genotype-by-environment interactions [24,28-30].

 Furthermore, a growing body of research in humans and animal models has provided strong evidence of the existence of co-expression genetic networks that control body
composition and energy metabolism traits [31-33]. For example, Ghazalpour *et al*. [34] used a "genetical genomics" approach in a segregating population of mice to map gene sets that are differentially perturbed in lean and obese mice. They identified 13 metabolic pathways whose genes are coordinately regulated in association with subcutaneous fatpad mass traits [34]. Interestingly, follow-up studies that compared the human and mouse adipose gene co-expression networks [31] identified a single common module enriched for genes associated to immune response and macrophage activation that co-localize or are in causal relationship to obesity-related traits in both humans [31] and rodent models [33]. These findings are reinforced by a recent study that investigated tissue-to-tissue coexpression (TTC) networks between genes in the hypothalamus, liver, and adipose tissue of obese mice [32]. The study demonstrated a strong cross-tissue communication and identified genes involved in circadian rhythm, energy balance, cellular response to starvation, and immune response as specific to the TTC networks in this obesity model [32].

The link between adiposity and immune function is of particular relevance as previous studies in mammals have shown that molecules, such as leptin and peroxisomeproliferator activated receptors, known to play a pivotal role in metabolism, also play a role in the regulation of the immune response [35]. These molecules have also been shown to play a role in reproduction [36-38], which proposes them as mediators of the physiological trade-off between reproduction and immune function [39]. Organisms partition dietary resources acquired from the environment among growth and development, reproduction, and survivorship [40]. Since these resources are limited, the

way in which they are acquired and partitioned may be critical to the fitness of the individual and often result in trade-offs between demanding physiological functions [41]. Furthermore, the environment poses constant challenges to an organism's survival and fitness. For example, fighting a microbe infection, finding a mate, or surviving a stress require significant energy, and trade-offs are expected between investments in these energetically costly functions and other critical life-history functions involving growth and reproduction [39,42-47].

A number of studies have identified physiological correlates of life-history variation and trade-offs within species [48-51]. Selection studies in *D. melanogaster* have demonstrated that energetic investment in early reproduction, possibly involving lipids [52], may result in early cessation or reduction of somatic maintenance and repair, allowing increased fecundity, but faster rates of aging [44,53]. On the other hand, selection for late reproduction may favor investment in repair, delayed maturity and aging, resistance to environmental stresses, and lengthen lifespan [44,50,53]. Based on these observations and the findings of the systems genetics studies cited above, we hypothesized that the architecture of the genetic networks underlying natural variation in body composition traits may have been shaped by adaptive relationships between fitnessrelated life-history traits and energy metabolic traits, as these ultimately control the amount of available energy that can be invested in these competing demands [50].

To test our hypothesis, we used *D. melanogaster* as a model system. Much of what has been learnt about the evolutionary biology of life-history variation, in particular about the genetic and molecular aspects, comes from studies in *Drosophila*. In addition, in recent years, we have learned that several genetic mechanisms controlling lipid metabolism and energy homeostasis are shared between invertebrates and mammals (reviewed in [54,55]). Thus, insights about the genetics of body weight and energy metabolism traits gained from *Drosophila* may apply also to mammals. In the present study, we quantified genetic variation in wet body weight (BW), triacylglycerol storage (TAG), total protein content (PRO), total glycogen level (GLY), total glycerol level (GLYC), and metabolic rate (MR) in 40 wild-derived lines of *D. melanogaster*. These lines were chosen because they were previously evaluated for several life-history traits, including longevity, resistance to starvation stress, mating behavior, and competitive fitness [56], which allowed us to determine genetic correlations between traits. Such correlations (either positive or negative) would indicate the extent to which these traits are influenced by the same polymorphisms [57] and could reveal genetically based tradeoffs among traits (if negatively correlated). Furthermore, these lines were previously quantified for transcript abundance [56].

Thus, we used this data to establish gene co-expression networks and to identify "modules" of highly-interconnected genes associated with variation in each trait [56]. Several algorithms have been developed to predict coherent transcriptional modules from gene expression profiles, the key difference between these methods and the method used in this study is that the module building algorithm is objective and the number of modules/clusters is self-determined to maximize the genetic correlation within a module [56]. Our network analysis requires that we first regress the transcript levels of each gene that was significantly associated with the trait against the trait value for each line. The

residuals from each regression are then saved. Finally, the procedure calculates the degree to which the residuals from each regression are significantly correlated (or coexpressed) across the 40 lines. Use of residuals is necessary because all genes used in the network analysis are chosen based on their significant association with the trait (and so by default all transcript expression levels should be correlated with each other). Each of the resultant modules is then used to form an interaction network that can be represented as a graphical model in which nodes represent transcripts and edges identify genetic correlations between transcripts exceeding a threshold value [58]. This approach has been highly effective for identifying gene co-expression networks that contribute to variation in *D. melanogaster* life span, starvation resistance, male mating behavior, chill-coma recovery, fitness, and sleep among the 40 wild-type lines of *D. melanogaster* used in this study [56,59]. This provided us with the opportunity to gain invaluable insights into the molecular causes of the adaptive relationships evolved in a natural population between energy metabolism and life-history traits.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Drosophila **stocks.**

The 40 unrelated wild-type inbred lines of *D. melanogaster* were established from a sample of isofemale lines collected in Raleigh, NC and inbred to near-homozygosity by 20 generations of full-sib inbreeding [60]. Insertional mutations and their co-isogenic control lines were obtained from the Berkeley *Drosophila* Gene Disruption Project (http://flypush.imgen.bcm.tmc.edu/pscreen/). Exelixis *PiggyBac* transposon insertional mutations and their co-isogenic w^{1118} control line were obtained from the Bloomington *Drosophila* Stock Center (http://www.flybase.org).

We maintained each stock at constant parental density for at least two generations to minimize environmental effects. To control for larval density, we allowed the parents of the experimental flies to mate for 3 hours to generate egg collections on apple juice/agar medium in laying plates. After 24 hours, we picked groups of 100 first-instar larvae from the surface of the medium and put into replicate vials. To minimize the influence of genetic variation in reproduction on energy metabolism, we performed all the phenotypic assays on virgin flies that were randomly collected from the replicate vials for each line on days 10 to 16 under brief $CO₂$ exposure.

For all assays, we used ten replicate vials per line, with each vial containing a group of 10 single-sexed individuals aged 3-5 days. Due to the size of this experiment, we conducted the phenotypic assays in 5 overlapping blocks, with each block including 2-4 of the 10 replicate vials per line. We reared flies in vials containing 10 ml of standard cornmeal, agar, sugar, and yeast medium at a constant temperature of 25° C, $60-75\%$ relative humidity, and a 12-hr light-dark cycle.

MR measurements

We measured MR as $CO₂$ production using a flow-through respirometry system (Qubit System Research, Kingston, Ontario, Canada) and a modification of the method described in Van Voorhies *et al.* [61]. Briefly, a pump is used to push air through a $CO₂$ scrubber therefore providing $CO₂$ -free air to the system. The airstream is saturated with $H₂O$ by passing through a series of gas syringes filled with sterile $H₂O$ and cotton wool. Pressure in the line is controlled by a precision pressure regulator that sets the input pressure to the 4-channel mass flow meter/controller where the flow is divided into 4 gas streams and provided to the sample chambers. The flow rate entering the chamber was 50ml/min. After leaving the sample chambers, air enriched in $CO₂$ enters into the 4channel gas switcher that directs the flow to either the analysis system or to waste (vented). For the determination of $CO₂$, sample air was pulled through a drying column to remove H_2O , a mass flow meter, and then the CO_2 analyzer that has a range of 0-2000 ppm $CO₂$ with a resolution of better than 1 ppm. We measured $CO₂$ for 10 minutes/chamber with a 30 second flush period between measurements. The amount of CO2 produced by each group of flies was calculated using C950 Data Acquisition software (Qubit System Research, Kingston, Ontario, Canada).

BW and metabolite measurements

We first starved the flies for one hour under non-dehydrating conditions to reduce the food-derived TAG and GLY present in the gut. We then weighed each group of flies to 0.1 mg accuracy with an analytical balance and stored them at -70° C. Finally, we homogenized each group and measured TAG, GLYC, and PRO using the protocol described in De Luca *et al*. [62]. GLY was measured from the same homogenates using a modification of the protocol described in Clark *et al*. [17]. Briefly, aliquots of 1.67 µl of homogenate were added to $250 \mu l$ of a reagent containing 0.1 U/ml of amyloglucosidase, 5 U/ml of glucose oxidase, 1 U/ml of peroxidase, 0.04 mg/ml of O-dianisidine dihydrochloride. After 30-minute incubation period at 37° C, OD₅₄₀ was measured. Concentration of glycogen was determined from glucose and glycogen standards run with each replicate. Each sample was assayed twice and the mean used in the analysis. Previous studies showed that this protocol accurately reflects glycogen concentration and that endogenous glucose present in the flies contributes only negligibly to the results [17].

Quantitative genetic analyses

All statistical analyses were performed using SAS version 9.1. We used two-way ANOVA to partition variation in each trait among the inbred lines according to the model, $Y = \mu + L + S + LxS + E$, where μ is the overall mean; *L* and *S* are the main effects of Line (Random) and Sex (Fixed); *LxS* is the random effect of sex-by-line interaction; and *E* is the within-vial error variance. Reduced models by sex were also run. Broad-sense heritabilities (H^2) were computed as $H^2 = (\sigma_L^2 + \sigma_{SL}^2)/(\sigma_L^2 + \sigma_{SL}^2 + \sigma_E^2)$ for the analyses pooled across sexes, where σ_L^2 , σ_{SL}^2 , and σ_E^2 are the among line, sex-by-line and within line variance components, respectively. H^2 values by sex were also computed as $H^2 = (\sigma_L^2)/(\sigma_L^2 + \sigma_E^2)$ [57]. Cross-sex genetic correlations (r_{MF}) were also estimated as $r_G = cov_{\varphi} \otimes r_{\varphi} \otimes \varphi$, where $cov_{\varphi} \otimes r_{\varphi}$ is the covariance of lines means between females and

males, and σ_{γ} and σ_{β} are the square roots of the among line variance components for males and females. Genetic correlations between phenotypic traits were calculated as *rGT* $= cov_{G12} / (\sigma_{G1} \sigma_{G2})$, where cov_{G12} is the covariance between traits among line means from the joint analysis, and σ_{GI} and σ_{G2} are the square roots of the variances among lines from the analyses of each trait separately. The coefficients of genetic (CV_G) and environmental (*CV*_{*E*}) variances were calculated as $CV_G = 100\sigma_G/\mu$ and $CV_E = 100\sigma_E/\mu$, respectively, where σ_G and σ_E are the square roots of the line and within line variance components, respectively. Differences in metabolic traits between *P{GT1}*, *PiggyBac* transposon insert lines and their co-isogenic controls were assessed using the same ANOVA models described above.

Transcript-phenotype associations

We used regression models ($Y = +S + T + S \times T + \epsilon$, where *S* denotes sex and *T* the trait covariate) to identify transcripts significantly $(P < 0.01)$ associated with organismal phenotypic variation in both sexes. Modules of co-expressed transcripts associated with variation in each metabolic trait were constructed using the residuals from regression models $(Y = \mu + S + E + SxE + \varepsilon$, where E is the covariate median log₂ expression level) to compute the genetic correlations between transcripts significantly associated with each phenotype.

Transcriptional modules

Transcripts significantly associated with metabolic phenotypes across the 40 wildderived inbred lines were organized into statistically correlated transcriptional modules as described previously [56]. The correlation between all pairs of significant transcripts *i*

and *j* was computed and the absolute correlation values $|r_{ii}|$ were transformed to define edge weights $e^{\frac{|r_{ij}| - 1}{\sigma^2}}$ in a graph of genes indexed by the free parameter σ . The clustering $P =$ ${V_1, ..., V_k}$ and the value of σ that jointly maximize the modularity function:

$$
Q(P, \sigma) = \sum_{c=1}^{k} \left[\frac{A_{\sigma}(V_c, V_c)}{A_{\sigma}(V, V)} - \left(\frac{A_{\sigma}(V_c, V)}{A_{\sigma}(V, V)} \right)^2 \right]
$$

were determined, where $A_n(X, Y)$ denotes the total edge weight in the graph indexed by σ that connects any vertex in set *X* to a vertex in set *Y*. The optimal partition $P = \{V_1, ..., V_k\}$ defines *k* transcriptional modules V_1, \ldots, V_k at which the genetic correlation within a module is maximal.

Pleiotropic modules

Transcriptional modules common to more than one metabolic trait as well as to the other phenotypes were identified by considering pairs of traits and comparing the lists of significant transcripts for each module from the first phenotype to each module from the second across the 40 inbred lines. Fischer's Exact Test was used to quantify the extent that the overlap between two modules exceeded chance expectation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Natural variation in body weight and energy metabolism traits

We observed significant genetic variation among the lines for all the organismal traits analyzed ($P \le 0.01$), with H^2 ranging from 25% to 68% in the combined sex analyses (Table 1 and Figure 1A-F). These estimates are in general agreement with those determined by several clinical studies in humans [9-15,63,64] as well as various reports on mammalian [65-67] and non-mammalian models [67,68]. We also found that all traits exhibited significant sex-by-line interactions (Table 1). These results, however, are most likely caused by differences in one sex in one line for most of the traits. Indeed, the genetic correlation coefficients across sexes among lines, $r_{MF}(\pm SEM)$, were very high for BW (0.94±0.05; *P* <0.0001), TAG (0.72±0.11; *P* <0.0001), PRO (0.72 ±0.11; *P* <0.0001) and GLYC $(0.97\pm0.04; P \le 0.0001)$ indicating that the same loci affect these traits in the two sexes. Moderate values were observed for GLY (0.44±0.14; *P*=0.0032) and MR $(0.39\pm0.15; P = 0.0116).$

Next, we tested whether there were significant genetic correlations between the traits. We did not find any significant correlation using all data pooled across sexes (Table 2A). On the other hand, when we analyzed the data stratified by sex we observed positive correlations significant at $P < 0.05$ between PRO and BW, GLYC, and TAG only in females (Table 2B). These results are in perfect agreement with previous findings by Wang and co-workers [69] who reported that protein and lipid abundance were highly

correlated with body weight in females from a set of *Drosophila* recombinant inbred lines derived from a natural population, but not in males.

Positive correlations were also found between MR and TAG in females (Table 2B) and between BW, GLY, and MR in males (Table 2B). However, it is possible that the sex-specificity of some of the correlations detected by our analysis may be the result of inadequate statistical power due to small sample size. Indeed, a marginally significant correlation between BW and GLY was also detected in females $(P = 0.06;$ Table 2B). Laboratory selection studies in *D. melanogaster* have shown that both female and male adult flies selected for resistance to desiccation and starvation stresses are significantly heavier than unselected controls [48]. Desiccation-selected flies also have increased whole-body water content and elevated glycogen content [48]. Glycogen binds 3-5 times its own mass in water [70], and therefore the increase in glycogen storage has been suggested as a mechanism of increasing intracellular water [48]. Insects and other terrestrial arthropods are susceptible to water loss because of their small size and variation in desiccation resistance has been documented for populations of *D. melanogaster* [71,72]. In addition, a positive correlation between body size and desiccation tolerance in natural populations of *D. melanogaster* has been previously reported [72,73]. We therefore speculate that the genetic correlation between BW and GLY identified in our study may reflect the influence of body mass and water balance on desiccation resistance in the wild.

One interesting finding of our study is that there is a tendency for male flies from lines that have higher BW to have higher MR (Table 2B). The association between body

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mass and metabolic rate in *Drosophila melanogaster* has been extensively studied by Van Voorhies *et al*. [61]. They compared wet or dry body mass and metabolic rate in male flies from different laboratory lines at different ages and over different metabolic sampling periods and found no correlation between the traits [61]. A possible explanation for these conflicting findings lies in the origin of the flies used in the two studies. While Van Voorhies *et al*. used primarily flies from laboratory lines [61], the *Drosophila* lines tested in our study were established from a natural population. The patterns of correlations that have evolved under laboratory conditions, in which abiotic factors such as temperature and humidity are usually constant, are not always identical to those that have differentiated in wild populations. In support of this idea, studies of desiccation resistance and water balance in natural populations of *Drosophila* have shown a positive correlation between metabolic rates and water-loss rates, both of which were found to be positively correlated with body mass [73]. The relationship between body mass, metabolic rate, and water loss is explained by the fact that a reduction in metabolic rates can help the fly to conserve water by reducing the need for gas exchange. Hence, the genetic correlation between BW and MR observed in our study could be the result of the phenotypic integration between these traits and water-loss rate. Consistent with this hypothesis, as indicated below, we found that several genes regulating variation in MR are expressed in the Malpighian tubules (Figure 3E). Insect Malpighian tubules represent the functional equivalent of the mammalian kidney [74]. They play a crucial role in organismal survival due to the fact that, as indicated above, insects are highly susceptible to water loss particularly under dehydrating environmental conditions [75].

Quantitative trait transcripts (QTTs) regulating natural variation in body weight and energy metabolism traits

In order to identify candidate genes responsible for variation in BW and energy metabolism traits among the 40 *Drosophila* inbred lines, we searched for significant correlations between transcript abundance (QTTs) and variation in each trait. At a *P*value of 0.01, we found 275, 125, 130, 298, 389, and 93 transcripts associated with natural variation in BW, TAG, GLY, PRO, GLYC, and MR, respectively (see **Supplementary Table 1**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with each of the body composition and energy metabolism traits).

To independently validate the finding that the genes identified by our analysis affect the trait, we tested for phenotypic differences between homozygous mutants of candidate genes and their controls. We chose to focus on candidate genes associated with variation in TAG, GLY, and GLYC for which homozygous *P-element* and *PiggyBac* mutations have been generated in an isogenic background (see **Supplementary Table 2**: Effects of *P[GT1]* and *PiggyBac* transposon insertional mutations in candidate genes affecting TAG, GLY, and GLYC).

We selected six genes affecting TAG, *dead-box-1* (*Ddx1*); *RhoGAP71E*, *rutabaga* (*rut*), *sugarless* (*sgl*), *SIRT7*, and *GXIVsPLA2*. We found that all the mutations affected the trait at least in one sex (Figure 4; see **Supplementary Table 2**: Effects of *P[GT1]* and *PiggyBac* transposon insertional mutations in candidate genes affecting TAG, GLY, and GLYC). *Ddx1* codes for an evolutionarily conserved protein with a pivotal role in the control of cell growth and division [76]. *rut* encodes a Ca^{2+}/c almodulin-responsive

adenylyl cyclase involved in learning and memory. Interestingly, screening of *P*-element insert lines of *Drosophila* identified *Ddx1* as a potential candidate gene regulating variations in odor-guided behavior, while a single mutation in *rut* has been reported to influence food choice behavior [77]. In most organisms, olfactory behavior is an essential trait required for food localization [78]; and feeding behavior is an important component of organismal energy balance. *Sgl* codes for a homologue of mammalian *UDP-glucose dehydrogenase* and is essential for proteoglycan synthesis. *P*-element insertions within the *sgl* coding region have previously shown to significantly impact fly energy stores [79]. *SIRT7* is a member of the Sirtuins histone deacetylase enzyme family. Its mammalian ortholog has been previously suggested as an important regulator of organismal cell growth in accord with energy status [80]. *SIRT7* NAD⁺-dependency establishes the link to fat accumulation as fatty acid esterification to triglyceride is determined by the cellular NADH/NAD⁺ ratio [81]. *RhoGAP71E* and *GXIVsPLA2* represent novel candidate genes affecting variation in fat storage in *Drosophila*. *RhoGAP71E* encodes a protein that belongs to the group of RhoGAPs proteins. They are evolutionarily conserved regulators of RhoGTPases [82], which have been shown to modulate several cellular processes (i.e. cell growth and division, cell dynamics, membrane trafficking, gene transcription and apoptosis) in response to environmental cues [83]. *GXIVsPLA2* encodes an enzyme involved in phospholipid metabolism [84].

We selected five genes affecting GLY, β *amyloid protein precursor-like* (*Appl*), *Calbindin 53E (Cbp53E)*, *transferrin 1* (*Tsf1*), *sevenless* (*sev*), and *junctophilin* (*jp*). We found that, except for *transferrin 1,* all the mutations affected the trait at least in one sex

(Figure 4; see **Supplementary Table 2**: Effects of *P[GT1]* and *PiggyBac* transposon insertional mutations in candidate genes affecting TAG, GLY, and GLYC). *Drosophila Appl* is a pan-neural protein involved in axonal growth and synapse formation [85] with a pivotal role in the pathogenesis of neurodegenerative diseases [86] and behavioral defects in flies [87]. *Cbp53E* is a calcium-binding protein that modulates the activation of many intracellular effector proteins. Neuronal development and function underlie the basis of food-related behaviors in *Drosophila* [88] and hence differential expression of neuronalrelated genes (such as *Appl* and *Cbp53E)* may impact feeding behaviour and subsequently, organismal energy balance. *Sev* encodes a tyrosine kinase receptor required for photoreceptor fate specification in the developing eye [89]. Interestingly, components of the *sev* signaling pathway have been linked to the regulation of glucose and lipid homeostasis via insulin signaling [90]. *jp encode*s a protein that belongs to a novel group of highly conserved transmembrane proteins mediating optimal ionic signaling among excitable cells [91]. These proteins have not been previously linked to glycogen storage.

We selected seven genes affecting GLYC, *b4GalNAcTA*, *CG10133*, *CG5946*, *CG8920*, *Gliotactin* (gli), *Glutamate dehydrogenase* (*Gdh*), and *tweety (tty*). Glycerol is an important intermediate in carbohydrate and lipid metabolism. We found that, except for *CG5946,* all the mutations affected the trait at least in one sex (Figure 4; see **Supplementary Table 2**: Effects of *P[GT1]* and *PiggyBac* transposon insertional mutations in candidate genes affecting TAG, GLY, and GLYC). *Drosophila b4GalNAcTA* is implicated in glucosamine metabolism. Previous quantitative genetic analysis reported *b4GalNAcTA* as a candidate gene regulating variations in 24-hr sleep

time [79]. Interestingly, sleep disorders in *Drosophila* have been linked to increased adiposity accompanied by coordinated transcriptional changes in genes involved in lipid metabolism [92]. *CG10133* and *CG8920* are involved in phospholipase A2 activity, mitochondrial electron transport function and nucleic acid binding, respectively [93]. Mitochondrial function has been shown to regulate glucose and lipid homeostasis in mammalian [94] and non-mammalian models [95-97]. *Drosophila gli* is a transmembrane protein transiently expressed in peripheral glia in which loss of function has been implicated in defects in axonal guidance and synaptogenesis [98]. *Gdh* codes for a nuclear-encoded mitochondrial enzyme with a pivotal role in metabolism as it has been linked to differential utilization of metabolite pools for energy production [99,100]. *Tty* encodes a highly conserved calcium-activated chloride channel associated to flight behavioral abnormalities [101].

Transcriptional networks associated to body weight and energy metabolism traits

Previously, Ayroles *et al.* showed that the *Drosophila* transcriptome is characterized by high rates of correlation between transcripts [56], we therefore sought to use a weighted gene co-expression network procedure [56] to identify "modules" of highlyinterconnected genes associated with variation in each trait. This type of network analysis provides hypotheses about functional relationships among transcripts and provides insight into how variation in the network of co-expressed genes can give rise to variation in the associated traits. We identified 13 modules of correlated transcripts associated with BW, 5 with TAG, 9 with GLY, 18 with PRO, 13 with GLYC, and 6 with MR (Figure 2 and **Supplementary Table 1**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with each of the body composition and energy metabolism traits). To determine the biological significance of the genes in these network modules, we used gene ontology categories [102], tissue-specific expression [103], and published protein-protein interactions or shared domains.

Body Weight. We found that several of the QTTs associated with variation in BW are enriched for genes encoding antimicrobial peptides, infection-induced proteins, as well as proteins involved in microbial recognition, phagocytosis, melanization and signaling (modules 1, 2, 4, 5, and 13) (Fig. 3A; **Supplementary Table 3**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). These genes are predominantly expressed in the fat body, gut, and carcass of the adult fly (Fig. 3C). While the fat body is recognized as the major immune-responsive tissue responsible for the synthesis and secretion of antimicrobial peptides in response to a pathogenic challenge, the gut and carcass possess the ability to fight infection via local production of reactive oxygen species and antimicrobial peptides as the main barrier epithelia in constant contact with exogenous microorganisms [104].

 The remaining BW modules are enriched for genes involved in chemical stimulus and behavior (modules 7 and 11); organismal development, sensory perception and transduction (module 10). Reports on the genetic basis of rare monogenic forms of obesity in humans [105] and single-gene approaches in mammalian models [106-108] have long suggested a strong involvement of the central nervous system in body weight regulation [109]. Recently, tissue-to-tissue co-expression networks have highlighted the role of the hypothalamus as the controlling tissue in organismal energy balance [32].

Furthermore, recent genome-wide association studies in humans have mapped body weight-associated loci near genes that are highly expressed in the brain, particularly in the hypothalamus, and are involved in neuronal development and activity [110,111]. Consistent with the data in mammals [32], BW module 10 is enriched for genes involved in neuronal development, such as *nightblind (cac), inebriated (ine), soxneuro (SoxN), erect wing (ewg)* and *reverse polarity (repo),* and genes that are expressed in the adult brain and thoracicoabdominal ganglion (Fig. 3B-C), the equivalent of mammalian central and peripheral nervous systems.

BW module 10 is also enriched for genes associated with sensory perception and transduction (**Supplementary Table 3**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). In mammals, the central nervous system (CNS) integrates information regarding nutrient status and organismal energy stores with cognitive, visual, olfactory and taste stimuli to elicit appropriate behavioral responses in relation to feeding [109]. Anatomically, various parts of the CNS in insects have shown to be connected to neuroendocrine organs and the enteric nervous system innervating their feeding apparatus [112]. Interestingly, the neuropeptide gene *hug*, one of the hub genes in module 10 (Figure 3B), is highly expressed in the subesophageal ganglion, a region involved in feeding and taste response [113]. These neurons have been shown to project axons to the ring gland, the central neuroendocrine organ in *Drosophila*, which produces adipokinetic hormone (AKH) and receive inputs from *Drosophila* insulin-like peptides-secreting cells. Both insulin- and AKH-producing cells comprise a specialized network that controls

organismal energy metabolism and growth and hence body weight, sharing a common evolutionary ancestry with the α - and β -cells of the human pancreas [114]. Further experiments have suggested that *hug* neurons integrate chemosensory and nutrient signals to determine feeding behavior in *D. melanogaster* [112].

Triacylglycerol storage. QTTs associated with variation in TAG storage are enriched for genes that mediate response to stress (modules 1 and 4) and cell growth (module 4; **Supplementary Table 3**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). Remarkably, five of the hub genes in module 4, *debcl*, *Sce*, *viaf*, *Sirt7*, and *Srp54*, (Fig 3D), have human orthologs, *BOK*, *RING1*, *Pdcl3*, *SIRT7*, and *SFRS12*, respectively, whose transcript abundance has been shown to regulate obesity in mice [32].

Total glycogen level. QTTs associated with variation in GLY are enriched for genes implicated in multicellular organismal development (module 6 and 7), cell communication, signal transduction and synapsis (module 7), and mitochondrial genome maintenance and replication (module 9; **Supplementary Table 3**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). Interestingly, *puckered*, the most highly connected gene in module 6, encodes a *Drosophila* mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) phosphatase, an important negative regulator of one of the MAPK pathways, the Jun N-terminal kinase (JNK) signaling pathway (see **Supplementary Table 1**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with each of the body composition and energy metabolism traits). MAPK signaling cascades induce coordinated transcriptional changes

in response to environmental cues. Studies in *Drosophila* [115], *Caenorhabditis elegans* [116] and mammalian models [117] suggest antagonistic relationships between JNK and the insulin signaling pathway. Mutations in the JNK signaling cascade induce significant reduction in glycogen stores with rapid depletion of metabolite reservoirs upon starvation [118]. Thus, *puckered*-mediated differential activation of the JNK pathway would be expected to have a regulatory effect on whole-body glycogen pools.

The inclusion of signal transduction genes as hub genes in module 7 (Figure 5A), particularly those associated with acetylcholine receptor signaling and metabolism (*AchR protein of Drosophila, muscarinic receptor, acetylcholinesterase, choline acetyltransferase*), highlights the role of the central nervous system in the regulation of organismal energy homeostasis. Acetylcholine has been shown to play a pivotal role in olfactory learning in *Drosophila* [119]. Olfactory learning provides the basis of feeding motivation in insects as it derives from previous dietary experience [120].

Total protein content. QTTs associated with variation in PRO are enriched for genes involved in gene expression and RNA metabolism (module 3 and 4), cellular metabolism and tissue development (module 7) and immune response (module 13) (**Supplementary Table 3**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). Coordinated transcriptional changes via three main signaling cascades, the insulin/insulin growth factor 1, the target of rapamycin (TOR) and the MAPK pathways, play a pivotal role in the body-wide control of protein synthesis [121]. Interestingly, module 7 includes *Tif-IA* as a hub gene (Figure 5B). *Tif-IA* is a nutrient sensitive molecule previously identified as a downstream target of TOR in the yeast [122], *Drosophila* [123] and mammalian systems [124], which is involved in the control of ribosomal biogenesis, translational machinery, and cell growth. We also identified *nemo* in module 7 as a QTT associated with variation in whole-body protein. Gene ontology analysis describes a mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) activity for *nemo*. Furthermore, there is evidence associating *mitochondrial transcription factor A*, a QTT in module 4, to mitochondrial biogenesis/function [125]. Similarly, *scribble*, a QTT in module 13, has been linked to olfactory behavior [126]. These findings highlight the biological relevance of the modular components comprising our protein co-expression network as mitochondrial bioenergetics and olfaction have also shown to play a pivotal role in organismal energy homeostasis and feeding behavior [120,127,128].

Total glycerol level. QTTs associated with variation in GLYC are enriched for genes involved in cellular redox homeostasis (module 5), gene expression and RNA metabolism (module 6), cellular organization and biogenesis (module 7), protein metabolism (module 8) and neuronal development and behavior (module 12) (**Supplementary Table** 3: Overrepresentation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). The maintenance of cellular redox homeostasis (module 5) in *Drosophila* when facing an immune challenge has shown to trigger acute coordinated proteomic changes in Gpdh levels as a result of increasing energy demand that shuts down normal biosynthetic processes, such as those involved in glycerol metabolism [129]. Interestingly, *Gpdh,* the ortholog of mammalian *glycerol-3 phosphate dehydrogenase,* is included in module 12, and has been previously shown as

an evolutionarily conserved enzymatic component involved in *Drosophila* glycerol metabolism pathways [130].

Metabolic rate. **QTTs** associated with variation in MR are enriched for genes mediating proteolysis (modules 1 and 2) and carbohydrate metabolism (module 5 and 6; **Supplementary Table 3**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). It is interesting to note that modules of correlated transcripts associated with MR are enriched for genes that are mainly expressed in the midgut and Malpighian tubule (Figure 3E). The midgut is the site for carbohydrate and protein digestion [131]. Food processing entails a metabolic cost that can increase metabolic rates between two and fourfold with a subsequent decline that can be either rapid or prolonged depending on the species [132,133]. Data on lepidopteran caterpillars suggest that the feeding-induced increase in oxygen consumption rates is long-lasting [134]. Similar to insects, mammalian [135] and non-mammalian vertebrates [136] display a post-prandial increase in metabolic rate mainly attributable to the energy requirements for protein and lipid synthesis, along with those of temporary nutrient storage (i.e. fat and glycogen) derived from food ingestion. Overall, these observations and our findings suggest that meal size and composition are important regulators of the duration of the effect of food processing on metabolic rate.

Genetic correlations between energy metabolism and life-history traits

Since the Raleigh lines were previously evaluated for several life-history traits [56], we next asked whether there were genetic correlations between energy metabolism and life-history traits. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 3A-C. We observed a clear trade-off between BW and reproductive fitness (Table 3A). A similar trade-off was observed between GLY and reproductive fitness and between PRO and time to initiate copulation (Table 2A). Such trade-offs evolve as a consequence of the limited nature of internal energy reserves and their differential allocation [50]. As previously proposed, "an increment of resources allocated to one trait necessitates a decrement of resources to another trait" [137]. Indeed, diversion of energy flow, particularly of fatty acids and amino acids, towards reproductive processes has been shown to determine high-fecundity phenotypes at the expense of somatic reserves as shown by artificial selection studies in insects [138,139]. Similarly, carbohydrates play a pivotal role in reproductive success [140]. As periodic episodes of food shortage are ubiquitous in nature, geneticallydetermined physiological adaptations are expected to evolve towards greater resistance to starvation [49] at the expense of reproductive fitness. Indeed, previous data published on these 40 lines indicated that those lines that are resistant to food deprivation tend to have reduced competitive fitness [56]. Several selection experiments in *Drosophila* have shown that an increase in energy reserves, in particular lipid stores, seems to be a mechanism underlying evolution of greater starvation resistance. Yet the relationship between fat reserves and starvation appears to be a consequence of laboratory selection since no correlation was found among isofemale strains derived from wild populations [141]. Consistent with these findings, we found a tendency for lines in which flies are heavier and have higher levels of GLY to display higher resistance to starvation (Table 2). Yet no correlation was observed between TAG and starvation resistance.

We then analyzed the data stratified by gender as sexual dimorphism among body weight and energy metabolism traits is well recognized across different species [18,142,143]. BW is positively correlated to copulation latency in females but not in males (Table 3B-C), which is in good agreement with previous reports suggesting that reproductive traits are strongly dependent on female body size but not or much less on male body size [144-146]. Similar to the combined sex analysis, whole-body protein was positively correlated to copulation latency and glycogen storage was positively correlated (at a significant p -value < 0.05) to starvation survival in both sexes (Table 3B-C).

In males, there was also a tendency for lines with lower MR to live longer (Table 2C). Several reports have highlighted the existence of a negative correlation between longevity and metabolic rate in mammalian [147,148] and non-mammalian models [149,150]. These findings underlie the basis of the oxidative-stress theory of aging [151,152] by which increased by-products derived from higher rates of aerobic metabolism are hypothesized to induce organismal cumulative damage and hence early mortality. Recent studies have challenged the validity of this theory [153,154]. This discrepancy in findings may stem from undisclosed gender-specific allelic effects on quantitative traits as shown by our data.

To gain insight into the molecular basis of the observed genetic correlations, we tested whether there was overlap of common genes between modules for the energy metabolism traits and life-history traits. We found substantial modular pleiotropy between BW and other life-history traits (Table 4). Pleiotropic modules between BW, starvation resistance, and fitness traits were enriched for genes involved in immune

response (BW module 2 and 4; see **Supplementary Table 1**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with each of the body composition and energy metabolism traits), as well as in lipid and protein metabolism (BW module 8; see **Supplementary Table 1**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with each of the body composition and energy metabolism traits). *molting defective* is one of the genes with pleiotropic effects on BW, reproductive fitness, and starvation resistance. Interestingly, *molting defective* is involved in the biosynthesis of ecdysone [155], previously suggested as an important hormonal modulator of organismal post-embryonic development, oogenesis, and reproduction [50,156] and linked to a positive regulation of cellular and humoral innate immunity in *D. melanogaster* [157-159]. A recent report has shown that insect cell culture display increased expression of *diptericin, cecropin* and *attacin* (three other genes with pleiotropic effects on energy metabolism and life-history traits) under pre-treatment with 20-hydroxy-ecdysone and upon immune stimulation [160]. Differential expression of *molting defective* may impact organismal body size (and hence BW) as *molting defective* mutants have shown to display developmental arrest [155]. Furthermore, its transcriptional defect may affect the biosynthesis of ecdysone with subsequent changes in the *Drosophila* immune response.

Among the genes with pleiotropic effects on GLY and reproductive fitness, we identified two photosensory opsins, *Rh4* and *Rh6*. Feeding behavior displays a 24hr circadian rhythm under the control of peripheral clocks in metabolic tissues but is also influenced by light [161]. Indeed, disruption of this circadian organization of feeding rhythms has been reported to alter glycogen storage in *Drosophila* [161]. In agreement

with our findings, a wide range of reproductive behaviors in *Drosophila* (i.e. sexual receptivity, oviposition, mating, courtship, and locomotion) are also under circadian regulation [162,163].

CONCLUSION

The orchestrated expression of highly complex co-expression networks underlies the basis of phenotypic variation in metabolism traits among young adult flies with significant impact on reproduction and starvation resistance. Our gene ontology enrichment profiles highlight the relevance of signaling pathways non-directly related to energy metabolism, as regulators of natural variations in obesity-related traits. Indeed, genes involved in immune response, neuronal development and function, cell growth and cell metabolism were identified as regulators of organismal energy balance. Several of these genes have also been identified as exerting pleiotropic roles among energy metabolism and fitness traits setting the basis of existent life-history trade-offs.

Trait ^a	Mean $(\pm SE)$	${\sigma_{\!L}}^{2\mathrm{b}}$	$\sigma_{\!S\!L}^{\rm 2c}$	${\sigma_{\!G}}^{2{\rm d}}$	${\sigma_E}^{2{\rm e}}$	$\sigma_P^{\rm 2f}$	H^{2g}	CV_G^h	CV_E^i
BW (mg/fly)	0.75 (± 0.01)	$0.02***$	$0.01***$	0.03	0.09	0.12	0.25	23.09	40.00
TAG (ug/fly)	6.27 (± 0.04)	$0.42***$	$0.18^{\ast\ast\ast\ast}$	0.60	0.64	1.24	0.48	12.35	12.76
GLY (ug/fly)	6.02 (± 0.14)	$30.37***$	$31.23***$	61.60	43.42	105.02	0.59	130.37	109.46
GLYC (ug/fly)	4.11 (± 0.11)	$0.23***$	$0.01***$	0.24	0.13	0.37	0.65	11.92	8.77
PRO (ug/fly)	64.35 (± 1.14)	$219.21***$ 来。	$88.39***$	307.6	144.39	451.99	0.68	27.25	18.67
MR (m ₁ CC ₂ /fly)	3.80 (± 0.03)	$0.12***$	$0.14***$	0.26	0.36	0.62	0.42	13.42	15.79

Table 1. Quantitative genetics analyses of body composition and energy metabolism traits for 40 wild-derived inbred lines of *D. melanogaster*. Estimates of genetic variance for the combined sex analyses

^aBW: body weight; TAG: triacylglycerol storage; PRO: total proteins; MR: metabolic rate; GLYC: glycerol levels. ^bAmong line variance component. ^c Sex by line interaction variance component. ^d Total genetic variance ($\sigma_L^2 + \sigma_{SL}^2$). ^e Variance within replicates or lines. ^f Total phenotypic variance $(\sigma_G^2 + \sigma_E^2)$. *g* Broad-sense heritability $(\sigma_G^2 / \sigma_P^2)$. **h** Coefficient of genetic variation (100 σ_G /Mean). ⁱ Coefficient of environmental variation (100 σ ^{*E*}/Mean). $^*P \le 0.05$; $^{**}P < 0.01$; $^{***}P < 0.001$; $^{***}P < 0.0001$.

Table 2 - Genetic correlations between body weight and energy metabolism traits. (A) Genetics correlations averaged across sexes. (B) Genetic correlations for females (above the diagonal) and males (below the diagonal).

A

BW: body weight; TAG: triacylglycerol; GLY: glycogen levels; PRO: total proteins; GLYC: glycerol levels; MR: metabolic rate. $^{*}P \le 0.05$; $^{**}P \le 0.01$.

A					
	FT	CL	SR	LS	
BW	$-0.48 \pm 0.14**$	0.21 ± 0.16	$0.52 \pm 0.14***$	0.01 ± 0.16	
TAG	-0.14 ± 0.16	0.08 ± 0.16	0.12 ± 0.16	-0.15 ± 0.16	
GLY	$-0.38 + 0.15**$	0.08 ± 0.16	0.29 ± 0.15	0.17 ± 0.16	
PRO	-0.17 ± 0.16	$0.43 \pm 0.15**$	0.26 ± 0.16	0.13 ± 0.16	
GLYC	0.05 ± 0.16	0.22 ± 0.16	0.06 ± 0.16	-0.07 ± 0.16	
MR	0.14 ± 0.16	-0.11 ± 0.16	-0.04 ± 0.16	-0.26 ± 0.16	

Table 3 - Genetic correlations between energy metabolism and life-history traits averaged across sexes (A) for females (B), and for males (C).

BW: body weight; TAG: triacylglycerol; GLY: glycogen levels; PRO: total proteins; GLYC: glycerol levels; MR: metabolic rate; FT: competitive fitness; CL: copulation latency; SR: starvation resistance; LS: lifespan. $^{*}P \le 0.05$; $^{**}P \le 0.01$; $^{***}P \le 0.001$; $^{***}P$ < 0.0001 .

Energy Metabolism Trait	Module	Life-history trait	Module	p -value
BW	5	FT	$\overline{2}$	2.80E-04
BW	$\overline{2}$	FT	6	3.05E-08
BW	$\overline{4}$	FT	11	1.09E-06
BW	8	FT	15	6.92E-13
BW	10	FT	17	7.18E-11
BW	3	FT	18	8.50E-04
BW	13	FT	19	1.03E-04
BW	7	FT	20	3.46E-05
BW	$\overline{2}$	SR	$\overline{2}$	3.81E-05
BW	$\overline{4}$	SR	$\overline{4}$	7.22E-05
BW	τ	SR	8	4.04E-03
$\rm BW$	8	SR	9	3.21E-04
BW	8	CL	$8\,$	4.76E-03
BW	10	GLY	$\overline{7}$	1.40E-03
GLY	$\overline{2}$	FT	14	4.33E-03
GLY	$\overline{7}$	FT	17	2.03E-05
PRO	13	FT	15	5.00E-04
PRO	7	CL	3	2.07E-04
PRO	15	CL	6	1.84E-09
PRO	17	CL	8	1.90E-03
PRO	15	SR	$\overline{7}$	4.08E-06
PRO	13	SR	9	3.95E-03

Table 4. Modular pleiotropy between energy metabolism and life-history traits

BW: body weight; GLY: glycogen levels; PRO: total proteins; FT: competitive fitness; CL: copulation latency; SR: starvation resistance.

Figure 1. **Variation in body weight and energy metabolism traits in** *D. melanogaster***.**

Distribution of BW (panel A), TAG (panel B), GLY (panel C), PRO (panel D), GLYC (panel E), and MR (panel F) among the 40 Raleigh wild-type inbred lines. Data represent means \pm SEM for $n = 10$ independent replicates. The blue and pink bars in panels A-F depict females and males, respectively.

Figure 2. QTTs and transcriptional networks associated to variation in body weight and energy metabolism traits. (A) Clustering of the 275 transcripts significantly associated with variation in BW into 13 modules. The color scale bar indicates the value of the correlation. (B) Clustering of the 125 transcripts significantly associated with variation in TAG into 5 modules. (C) Clustering of the 130 transcripts significantly associated with variation in GLY into 9 modules. (D) Clustering of the 298 transcripts significantly associated with variation in PRO into 18 modules. (E) Clustering of the 389 transcripts significantly associated with variation in GLYC into 13 modules. (F) Clustering of the 93 transcripts significantly associated with variation in MR into 6 modules.

Figure 3. Genetic networks underlying variation in BW, TAG and MR. (A) Network of correlated ($|r|20.5$) transcripts for BW module 2 (light blue nodes), 4 (green nodes) and 13 (yellow nodes). Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Nodes shown as round rectangles represent hub genes involved in responses to microbial infection in *Drosophila.* Dashed lines between nodes represent correlation of $|r| = 0.4$ -<0.5. (B) Network of correlated ($|r| \ge 0.6$) transcripts for body weight module 10. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Nodes shown as pink represent hub genes associated with neurogenesis in *Drosophila*. (C) Distribution of tissue-specific expression of QTTs in module 2, 4, 13 and 10. Module 2, 4 and 13 are enriched for QTTs involved in immune response and predominately expressed in immune-responsive tissues: midgut, fat body and carcass. Module 10 is enriched for transcripts mainly expressed in brain and thoracicoabdominal ganglion. (D) Network of correlated ($|r| \ge 0.5$) transcripts for TAG module 4. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Nodes shown as pink represent those genes previously identified as "hub" genes in multi-tissue co-expression networks [32]. (D) Distribution of tissue-specific expression of all QTTs comprising the MR co-expression network. QTTs are overall predominately expressed in the midgut.

Modules 2, 4 and 13

Module 4

Figure 4. **Effects of** *P[GT1]* **and** *PiggyBac* **transposon insertional mutations in candidate genes affecting variation in TAG, GLY, and GLYC**. Mutational effects are given as deviations from the co-isogenic control line. Pink and blue bars represent females and males, respectively. Mutations in all genes shown have significant effects in one or both sexes (see **Supplementary Table 3**: Effects of *P[GT1]* and *PiggyBac* transposon insertional mutations in candidate genes affecting TAG, GLY, and GLYC). Error bars, S.E.M. (A) TAG. (B) GLYC. (C) GLY.

Figure 5. Genetic networks underlying variation in GLY and PRO. (A) Network of correlated ($|r| \ge 0.5$) transcripts for GLY module 7. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Nodes shown as pink are involved in acetylcholine receptor signaling and metabolism. Nodes shown as light-blue represent those candidate genes for which homozygous mutants were tested*.* Dashed lines between nodes represent correlation of $|r| = 0.4$ -<0.5. (B) Network of correlated ($|r| \ge 0.8$) transcripts for total proteins module 7. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Node shown as pink (*TifIA*) represents a TOR-regulated gene.

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CHAPTER III:

IDENTIFICATION OF NUCLEAR-ENCODED GENES REGULATING *DROSOPHILA* **MITOCHONDRIAL RESPIRATION TRAITS THROUGH TRANSCRIPTOME ANALYSIS**

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ABSTRACT

Obesity is the major contributor to the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases such as insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM). T2DM is a complex disease that adversely affects human morbidity and mortality. Recent genetic evidence provides strong support that T2DM in humans may develop from downregulation of mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation (OXPHOS). Furthermore, alteration of mitochondrial function has emerged as a key factor in the development of diabetic complications. Despite the extensive research into mitochondrial pathology, we have no understanding of the genetic basis of mitochondrial respiration traits in natural populations. Here, we quantified variation in mitochondrial respiration traits [ADP-stimulated state 3 respiration, non-ADP-stimulated state 4 respiration (a surrogate of basal proton leak), and mitochondrial ATP synthesis efficiency (ADP/O ratio)] among 40 wild-type inbred lines of *Drosophila melanogaster*. We chose these lines because they were previously evaluated for variation in nuclear genome-wide transcription abundance and several energy metabolism and lifehistory traits. This allowed us to identify nuclear-encoded genes regulating *Drosophila* mitochondrial respiration traits and to investigate genetic correlations between these traits. We showed a genetic component of variance for all mitochondrial respiration traits, with broad-sense heritabilities ranging from 14% to 23%. Notably, we did not observe significant genetic correlations between mitochondrial state 3 and state 4 respiration traits, suggesting that these traits have different genetic properties. On the other hand, a

negative correlation was found between ADP/O and state 4 in males, which is consistent with the contribution of proton leak to mitochondrial efficiency. We used a gene coexpression network analysis to identify nuclear-encoded genes and pathways affecting natural variation in mitochondrial respiration rates. We found that 293, 105, and 19 quantitative trait transcripts (QTTs) underlie differences in mitochondrial state 3, state 4, and ADP/O ratio, respectively. Regression analysis showed that genes regulating mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate are involved in sensory perception and signal transduction, and mitochondrial state 4 respiration network comprises genes engaged in reproduction and cell replication. The analysis of genetic correlations revealed positive correlations between state 3 respiration rate and total glycogen levels and between ADP/O ratio and total protein levels. A positive correlation was also observed between state 4 respiration rate and starvation resistance. That is, higher mitochondrial proton leak improves the ability of the organism to survive starvation stress. Finally, we found a negative correlation between state 4 respiration and copulation latency, suggesting a trade-off between proton leak and reproduction. These results strongly indicate that molecular regulation of mitochondrial respiration play a critical role in mediating life history trade-offs in natural populations.

INTRODUCTION

Obesity and overweight both pose a major risk for the development of chronic diseases such as insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM). T2DM and its complications have imposed a substantial economic burden on individuals, families, health systems and countries as it has reached epidemic proportions in the US and worldwide [1] [2]. T2DM is a complex disease characterized by chronic hyperglycemia as a consequence of insulin resistance in skeletal muscle (causing decreased glucose uptake) and liver (causing increased gluconeogenesis), together with defects in insulin secretion from pancreatic β-cells. The complexity of T2DM results from the interaction of environmental factors with genetic susceptibility factors [3]. Recent genetic evidence strongly supports the idea that insulin resistance in humans develops from downregulation of mitochondrial oxidative phosphorylation (OXPHOS) [4-9]. In addition, mitochondrial cytopathy has been linked to defects in lipid metabolism [10] and abnormal fat accumulation, preferentially in the visceral compartment, which is an important risk factor for insulin resistance [11] and the development of T2DM [12].

The oxidation of metabolic fuels is an essential process regulating energy balance in aerobic organisms. Oxidation takes place in mitochondria, where the electrochemical proton gradient is used to convert ADP into ATP via OXPHOS for use in cellular processes [13]. In normal mitochondria, electrons from reducing equivalents (electron donors) derived from substrate oxidation

n fuel into complexes I and II of the mitochondrial electron transport chain and travel through complexes III and IV to reduce oxygen (electron acceptor) to water. Coupled to electron transport, protons are pumped across the mitochondrial inner membrane (Figure 1). The proton-motive force established by proton pumping drives protons back through complex V, also known as the ATP synthase, forming ATP from ADP and inorganic phosphate.

In a perfectly coupled system, protons only re-enter the mitochondrial matrix through ATP synthase in the presence of ADP. This form of respiration is classified as 'state 3' $(i.e. O₂$ is consumed only in the presence of substrate and ADP). However, mitochondria also use oxygen in the absence of ADP, which occurs when protons leak back into the matrix via a mechanism that does not involve ATP synthase. This proton leak *uncouples* respiration from OXPHOS. 'State 4' respiration rate represents a surrogate measure of mitochondrial basal proton leak. Electrons flowing through complex I and III can also escape redox transfer to produce reactive oxygen species (ROS). Strong evidence exists that mitochondrial ROS production plays a key role in the pathogenesis of T2DM and its complications through modification of various cellular events in many tissues, including kidney, pancreatic β cells, and liver [14].

Despite the extensive research into mitochondrial pathology, little is known about the genetic and molecular mechanisms underlying variation in mitochondrial respiration traits in natural populations. Several fundamental questions remain to be resolved: is there considerable segregating variation in mitochondrial bioenergetic traits in natural populations? Do genetically based differences in mitochondrial respiration in skeletal

muscle underlie some of the inter-individual variability in organismal energy metabolism? What role does molecular regulation of mitochondrial respiration play in mediating life history trade-offs? In this context, the goal of the present study was to investigate the genetic basis of mitochondrial state 3 respiration, state 4 respiration, and mitochondrial efficiency (ADP/O ratio) using 40 wild-type inbred lines of *D. melanogaster* recently established from a single natural population in Raleigh, NC [15]. *D. melanogaster* was used as a model because of the strong resemblance of the phosphorylating respiratory chain of insect mitochondria to that of mammalian mitochondria [16]. Exceptionally high respiratory and phosphorylative activities have been reported in insects using pyruvate plus proline (feeding into complex I) or αglycerophosphate (feeding into complex III) as physiological substrates [16]. The mitochondrial OXPHOS in insects is affected by the same inhibitors and uncouplers affecting the mammalian system [16-18]. Furthermore, we chose these lines because they were previously evaluated for variation in nuclear genome-wide transcription abundance and several energy metabolism and life-history traits. This allowed us to identify nuclearencoded genes regulating differences in mitochondrial respiration traits among *Drosophila* lines, and to investigate genetic correlations between all these traits.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Drosophila **stocks**

The 40 unrelated wild-type inbred lines of *D. melanogaster* were established from a sample of isofemale lines collected in Raleigh, NC and inbred to near-homozygosity by 20 generations of full-sib mating [15]. Each stock was maintained at constant parental density for at least two generations to minimize environmental effects. To control for larval density, we allowed the parents of the experimental flies to mate for 3 hours to lay eggs on apple juice/agar medium in laying plates. After 24 hours, we picked groups of 100 first-instar larvae from the surface of the medium and placed them into replicate vials. To minimize the influence of genetic variation in reproduction on energy metabolism, we performed all the phenotypic assays on virgin flies that were randomly collected from the replicate vials for each line on days 10 to 16 under brief $CO₂$ exposure. For mitochondrial function assays, we used seven replicate vials per line, with each vial containing a group of 20 single-sexed individuals aged 3-5 days. Due to the size of this experiment, we conducted the phenotypic assays in 14 overlapping blocks. We reared flies in vials containing 10 ml of standard cornmeal, agar, molasses, and yeast medium at a constant temperature of 25°C, 60–75% relative humidity, and a 12-hr light-dark cycle.

Mitochondrial respiration rate assay

Live flies were anesthetized on ice and thoraces were severed. Briefly, thoraces were placed into 200 µl of ice-cold isolation buffer [250 mM sucrose, 5 mM Tris-HCl, 2 mM EGTA, 1% (w/v) bovine serum albumin (BSA), pH 7.4 at 4° C; [18]) supplemented with

protease inhibitors (leupeptin 1mg/ml, aprotinin 1mg/ml and pepstatin 1mg/ml) in a 1.5 ml Eppendorf tube. The samples were pounded gently 126 times over a 2 minute period, using a motorized micromortar. Mashed flies were filtered through a 5 micron nylon mesh, and the volume was raised to 400 µl by washing the nylon membrane with additional isolation buffer. After a cycle of low-speed centrifugation followed by centrifugation of the filtered solution for 10 min at 3000x*g*, at 4°C, the pellet was resuspended in 100 µl of isolation buffer. Protein concentrations in the mitochondrial fractions were determined using a Lowry assay.

Mitochondrial respiration assays were performed using a polarographic oxygen sensor (Oroboros oxygraph, OROBOROS® INSTRUMENTS**,** Innsbruck, Austria) in 0.1 mg/ml of freshly isolated mitochondria incubated in respiration medium (120 mM KCl, 5 mM KH_2PO_4 , 3 mM Hepes, 1 mM EGTA, 1 mM $MgCl_2$, and 0.2% BSA, pH 7.2; [18]). Oxygen consumption rates were measured at 25° C, previously shown as the optimum temperature for such experiments [19]. As implemented by Miwa *et al*., we measured state 3 and state 4 respiration rates [18] using NAD⁺-linked substrates pyruvate 5 mM/proline 5 mM to feed electrons to mitochondrial complex I, along with ADP 400 μ M to elicit ADP-dependent state 3 and ADP-independent state 4 respiration once ADP is exhausted. The concentrations of substrates were chosen to achieve maximal state 3 respiration rates. Respiratory control ratio was obtained as state 3/state 4. ADP/O ratio was calculated from the amount of oxygen consumed after a 400 μ M load of ADP. All assays were performed within 3 hours of mitochondrial isolation. Data was analyzed using the software *DatLab* Version 4.1.0.8.

Quantitative genetic analyses

We used two-way ANOVA to partition variation in each trait among the inbred lines according to the model, $Y = \mu + L + S + LxS + E$, where μ is the overall mean; *L* and *S* are the main effects of Line (Random) and Sex (Fixed); *LxS* is the random effect of sexby-line interaction; and *E* is the within-vial error variance. Reduced models by sex were also run. Broad-sense heritabilities (H^2) were computed as $H^2 = (\sigma_L^2 + \sigma_{SL}^2)/(\sigma_L^2 + \sigma_{SL}^2 +$ $\sigma_{\rm E}^{2}$) for the analyses pooled across sexes, where $\sigma_{\rm L}^{2}$, $\sigma_{\rm SL}^{2}$, and $\sigma_{\rm E}^{2}$ are the among line, sexby-line and within line variance components, respectively. H^2 values by sex were also computed as $H^2 = (\sigma_L^2)/(\sigma_L^2 + \sigma_E^2)$ [20]. Cross-sex genetic correlations (r_{MF}) were also estimated as $r_{MF} = cov \circ \frac{\partial v}{\partial \varphi}$, where $cov \circ \varphi$ is the covariance of lines means between females and males, and σ_{φ} and σ_{φ} are the square roots of the among line variance components for males and females. Genetic correlations between phenotypic traits were calculated as $r_{GT} = cov_{GI2}/(\sigma_{GI}\sigma_{G2})$, where cov_{GI2} is the covariance between traits among line means from the joint analysis, and σ_{G1} and σ_{G2} are the square roots of the variances among lines from the analyses of each trait separately. The coefficients of genetic (*CVG*) and environmental (CV_E) variances were calculated as $CV_G = 100\sigma_G/\mu$ and $CV_E =$ 100 σ _E/ μ , respectively, where σ _G and σ _E are the square roots of the line and within line variance components, respectively. All statistical analyses were performed using SAS version 9.1.

Transcript-phenotype associations

Regression models $(Y = \mu + S + T + SxT + \varepsilon$, where *T* denotes the trait covariate) were used to identify transcripts significantly associated (*P*<0.01) with variation in each mitochondrial respiratory trait in both sexes [21]. Modules of co-expressed transcripts associated with variation in each metabolic trait were constructed using the residuals from regression models $(Y = \mu + S + E + SxE + \varepsilon$, where E is the covariate median log₂ expression level) to compute the genetic correlations between transcripts significantly associated with each phenotype.

Transcriptional modules

Transcripts significantly associated with metabolic phenotypes across the 40 wildderived inbred lines were organized into statistically correlated transcriptional modules as described previously [21]. The correlation between all pairs of significant transcripts *i* and *j* was computed and the absolute correlation values $|r_{ii}|$ were transformed to define edge weights $e^{\frac{|r_{ij}| - 1}{\sigma^2}}$ in a graph of genes indexed by the free parameter σ . The clustering *P* $= \{V_1, \ldots, V_k\}$ and the value of σ that jointly maximize the modularity function:

$$
Q(P, \sigma) = \sum_{c=1}^{k} \left[\frac{A_{\sigma}(V_c, V_c)}{A_{\sigma}(V, V)} - \left(\frac{A_{\sigma}(V_c, V)}{A_{\sigma}(V, V)} \right)^2 \right]
$$

were determined, where $A_n(X, Y)$ denotes the total edge weight in the graph indexed by σ that connects any vertex in set *X* to a vertex in set *Y*. The optimal partition $P = \{V_1, ..., V_k\}$ defines *k* transcriptional modules V_1, \ldots, V_k at which the genetic correlation within a module is maximal.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Natural variation in mitochondrial respiration traits

Using ANOVA, we found a significant genetic component of variance for mitochondrial state 3 and state 4 respiration rates. No significant sex or interaction effects were observed for these traits. In contrast, there was significant variation between females and males for ADP/O ratio $(P = 0.0012)$, with females displaying higher mitochondrial efficiency than males (Figure 2C). However, this difference was not constant across lines; the sex-by-line interaction term was highly significant $(P < 0.0001)$; Table 1), suggesting that the loci that control ADP/O ratio have different effects in males and females. The heritability (H^2) estimates for the mitochondrial respiration traits ranged from 14% to 43% (Figure 2A-D and Table 1). The genetic correlation coefficients across sexes among lines, r_{MF} (\pm SEM), were very high for mitochondrial state 3 (0.91 \pm 0.07, *P* (0.0001) , mitochondrial state 4 (0.64 \pm 0.12; *P* (0.0001) and RCR (0.67 \pm 0.12; *P* \leq 0.0001), but non-significant for ADP/O ratio (-0.12 \pm 0.79, *P* = 0.21), further supporting the existence of loci with sex-specific effects affecting variation in this last trait.

Despite evidence of the existence of a genetic component underlying inter-individual variations in mitochondrial bioenergetics [22-28], ours is the first study reporting heritability estimates for mitochondrial traits. Interestingly, compared to the estimates previously reported for other energy metabolism traits (*Jumbo-Lucioni et al*, manuscript in preparation), heritability for mitochondrial bioenergetic traits, particularly mitochondrial state 3 and state 4 respiration rates, are low $(H^2 = 0.14-0.20)$. It has been

previously reported that traits with low heritability tend to be closely correlated to fitness as fitness-related traits display greater environmental sensitivity and are thus less heritable [29,30]. Evolutionary changes in fitness-related traits are a consequence of fitness response to natural selection as "the 'character' that natural selection selects for is fitness" [20]. Paradoxically, phenotypic variation in these fitness-related traits simultaneously introduces further variation in fitness. Analogously, phenotypic differences in mitochondrial bioenergetic traits have shown to impact fitness (i.e. reproduction and survival) in populations of *Drosophila* [28,31,32].

We also identified sex-specific effects on mitochondrial efficiency (i.e. ADP/O ratio) (Table 1) under pyruvate plus proline-stimulated respiration. Sexual dimorphism in energy metabolism traits is well recognized across different species [33-35]. Consistent with our findings, a previous report in *Drosophila simulans* showed higher mitochondrial efficiency for female flies under pyruvate plus proline-induced respiration [31]. Our results are also in good agreement with findings in mammals showing that female rodents possess a higher mitochondrial capacity and efficiency for substrate oxidation across several tissues [36-40]. Furthermore, clinical studies [41,42] have reported genderspecific variations for mitochondrial traits, with female sex steroids proposed as the modulators of mitochondrial biogenesis and function. Attempts to provide an explanation for the mechanisms underlying the sexual dimorphism in mitochondrial bioenergetic traits focused on the way evolution selects and optimizes certain genes for each sex. Throughout evolution, genes from the mitochondrial genome and X chromosome spend relatively more time under selection in females due to their asymmetric inheritance [4345] and are therefore expected to be better optimized for function in females compared to males [45]. Since females usually engage in more energetically demanding behaviors than males to attain reproductive success, it has been proposed that sexual differences may have arisen as an evolutionary adaptation to such differences in energetic demands [46].

Genetic correlations between mitochondrial respiration traits

Next, we tested whether there were significant genetic correlations between traits. There was no significant correlation between state 3 and state 4 respiration rates for both males and females (data not shown), which indicate that different loci regulate interindividual variability in these traits. In contrast, there was a tendency for males from those lines that have higher state 4 respiration rate to have lower mitochondrial efficiency (e.g. ADP/O ratio) (Table 2C). State 4 is the respiration rate in the presence of carbon substrates (i.e. pyruvate plus proline) but in the absence of ADP and it is usually attributed to mitochondrial basal proton leak [47]. These proton leak events decrease the energy available to drive ATP synthesis thus reducing mitochondrial efficiency [48]. Our findings of a negative correlation between state 4 and mitochondrial efficiency in males but not in females may arise from differences in genetic architecture between male and females as a result of the different energetic demands between sexes.

Quantitative trait transcripts (QTTs) regulating natural variation in mitochondrial respiration traits

Previously, Ayroles *et al.* identified 10,096 genetically variable transcripts (quantitative trait transcripts or QTTs) in these lines [21]. We therefore used regression of the mitochondrial traits on transcript abundance to identify nuclear-encoded genes that might mediate mitochondrial respiration traits. At a significance level of 0.01, we detected 293, 105, and 19 QTTs associated with variations in mitochondrial state 3, state 4, and ADP/O ratio, respectively (**Supplementary Table 4**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with mitochondrial bioenergetic traits).

The small number of nuclear-encoded genes associated with variations in mitochondrial ADP/O ratio highlights the potential role of mitochondrial-encoded and/or nucleo-mitochondrial interacting alleles in controlling inter-individual variability in this mitochondrial trait. Analyses of the relevance of mito-nuclear interactions and mtDNA variations in mitochondrial bioenergetics have been performed at the between-population level. A previous report has demonstrated differences in various surrogate markers of mitochondrial efficiency among sympatric *D. simulans* hosting distinct mtDNA haplogroups [26]. Western hemisphere populations of *D. melanogaster* have been reported to be the least diverse with a single dominant haplotype (i.e. haplotype $#7$) [49] as opposed to *D. simulans*. However, non-neutral genetic variation in mtDNA is also expected at the within-population level in *Drosophila melanogaster* as the mutation rate of this genome is generally high and the influence of natural selection (to decrease genetic variation) is reduced compared to the nuclear genome [50,51]. Likewise, withinpopulation differences in mito-nuclear interactions are expected to evolve as mtDNA variations have shown to trigger adaptive responses from the nuclear genome. These events set the basis of mito-nuclear co-evolution [51,55]. Various experiments in mammalian [52,53] and non-mammalian [54] models highlight the role of mito-nuclear

co-adaptation in maintaining optimal respiratory chain function. Therefore, one can hypothesize that the number of genes influencing variations not only in mitochondrial efficiency but in all the mitochondrial bioenergetic traits may actually be bigger.

Transcriptional networks associated to mitochondrial bioenergetic traits

As mitochondrial abundance, morphology and function have been shown to be coordinately regulated to meet cell-specific energetic, metabolic and signaling demands, [56,57] individual variations in mitochondrial bioenergetics are expected to involve a complex process of individual-specific changes in the coordinated transcription of several genes [57]. To address this idea, we used a gene network analysis to provide insight into how variation in these QTTs can give rise to variation in mitochondrial respiration traits in our population of flies.

We identified 20 modules of correlated transcripts associated with mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate, 8 with mitochondrial state 4 and 2 with ADP/O ratio(Figure 4A-B and **Supplementary Table 4**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with mitochondrial bioenergetic traits). To determine the biological significance of the genes in these network modules, we used gene ontology categories [58], tissue-specific expression [59], and published protein-protein interactions or shared domains.

Mitochondrial State 3 Respiration Rate. Gene ontology analysis revealed that 30% of the QTTs associated with variations in mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate are mainly enriched for genes involved in sensory perception and signal transduction (Figure 2A). These alleles are significantly clustered in modules 10, 13, 16, 18 and 20 (**Supplementary Table 5**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG
Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). Among them, module 10 displays the highest degree of transcriptional connectivity, which highlights its essentiality across the whole network as highly connected genes have been shown to play a pivotal role "in organizing the behavior of biological networks" [60]. Indeed, as shown in Figure 5A, the expression of "hub" genes in module 10 is highly correlated to the expression of other "hub" genes throughout the network (Figure 5A).

Gene ontology analysis showed that module 10 is particularly enriched for loci linked to photoreception (**Supplementary Table 5**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits, Figure 5A), which are mainly expressed in *Drosophila* eye and head (Figure 5B). This module includes two photosensory opsins, *rhodopsin 4 (Rh4)* and *6 (Rh6). Rh6* belongs to a structurally related group of extraocular photoreceptors [61] located close to *Drosophila* compound eye and optic lobe. Similar to *Rh4, Rh6* transcription is under circadian control [62,63] as its function has been implicated in the light-mediated signaling for the entrainment of circadian rhythms and timing of photoperiodic responses independent of visual imaging [64,65]. These findings are further strengthened by anatomical evidence of axonal projections from *Rh6*-containing photoreceptors to *Drosophila* circadian pacemaker center in the brain [65].

Furthermore*, Rh6* is the *Drosophila* ortholog of mammalian melanopsin, a photopigment found in the retina which has shown to substantially mediate circadian signaling [67]. While *Rh6* ectopic expression has shown to fully restore light response in mutant flies, heterologous expression of human melanopsin has shown to similarly rescue

photoreception in mammalian neuronal cells [66,67]. Besides melanopsin, other retinal photoreceptors or photopigments have been suggested to contribute to the transduction of the photic stimuli to the circadian system. Such redundancy in photoreception has also been demonstrated in plants [68], flies [69] and other vertebrates [70]. Previous studies have suggested that melanopsin and circadian rhythm are both mediators of light signaling effects on sleep and brain activity during wakefulness [72]. Both vertebrates and invertebrates display a circadian organization of sleep and activity with similar responses to exogenous modulators [71]. Analogous to melanopsin, *Rh6* is highly correlated with genes mostly involved in sensory perception and transduction (i.e. modules 13, 16, 18 and 20; Fig. 5A) which is in good agreement with the activation of sensory systems that characterizes wakefulness [73].

Thus, light-mediated circadian signaling via such photosensory opsins coordinates the daily rhythm of organismal physiology and behavior [72,74]. Out-of-phase light exposure has been shown to alter the temporal organization of behavior in *D. melanogaster* [75,76]. Mammalian models have shown a similar response [77-80]. Interestingly, module 17 in the mitochondrial state 3 co-expression network is enriched for genes involved in circadian rhythm and behavior (Figure 5C). The behavioral component specifically includes reproduction, olfaction, locomotion, learning and memory (**Supplementary Table 5**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits).

Indeed, there is extensive evidence of circadian modulation of a wide range of organismal behaviors in *Drosophila,* such as sexual receptivity, oviposition, mating,

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courtship, locomotion [76,81], olfactory learning and memory [82,83]. Long-term memory formation has shown to be clock-controlled in many invertebrate [82,84,85] and vertebrate model systems [86-88]. Similarly, a recent report has highlighted a comparable role for the central clock in short-term memory formation in *Drosophila* via axonal projections from *Drosophila* central oscillator in the brain to the vicinity of the mushroom bodies, the brain centers for associative (i.e. olfactory) learning and memory in *Drosophila* [83]. Similar to the suprachiasmatic nuclei in mammals [67,89], a group of ventral lateral neurons in the brain have been identified as the central clock regulators of behavioral rhythmicity in *Drosophila melanogaster* [69,89,90]. Interestingly, QTTs in module 17 are predominately expressed in *Drosophila* brain (Figure 5B) which further strengthens the validity of our findings. Furthermore, a similar central oscillatory control has been described for locomotion [91,92] and reproductive behaviors [93] in *Drosophila*.

However, QTTs in module 17 are not exclusively brain-specific (Figure 4B). In *Drosophila*, besides a central clock, peripheral circadian oscillators have also been identified [94]. Although previous reports have suggested diffusible hormonal signals as mediators of the central control of peripheral oscillators [95,96], there is also strong evidence of the existence of independent photoreceptive clocks throughout the fly body [97-99]. Later reports have suggested that a wide range of sexual reproductive behaviors and locomotion are controlled by multiple oscillators [76,81]. Likewise, it has been shown that olfactory behavior in insects displays circadian-dependent rhythm under the control of self-contained peripheral clocks in the olfactory receptor neurons [99,100].

Such clocks are thought to share common pathways supporting a multi-oscillatory organization of the circadian system [76].

Therefore, the body-wide distribution of circadian clocks may account for the impact of circadian regulation on almost every aspect of organismal life. Circadian clocks have been shown to govern the rhythmic expression of hundreds of transcripts that are involved in diverse cellular functions including developmental timing, physiology, and biochemistry [62,101-107]. Previous studies have shown that mRNA translation is a critical event in the light entrainment process of circadian oscillators [111]. TOR is an evolutionarily conserved serine-threonine kinase, which coordinates cell growth in accordance with nutrient quantity and quality via the activation of the cellular mRNA translation machinery [108-110]. Interestingly, this nutrient sensitive pathway has shown to be under photic regulation [111]. Brief light exposure has been shown to trigger TOR activation in mammalian species dependent on the light-induced activation of the mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) signaling pathway [111]. Similar to mammals, MAPK also plays a crucial role in circadian output in *Drosophila* [112] as well as in other vertebrate models [113-119]. Although there are no reports in flies about lightinduced activation of TOR pathway via MAPK signaling, there is evidence of TOR dependency on MAPK for complete activation [120].

Increasing evidence highlights TOR signaling as crucial for a wide range of critical biological functions [121-123]. Indeed, TOR has been proposed as a sensor not only of cellular energy status, but also of mitochondrial activity [124]. Interestingly, a previous mammalian report has shown that down-regulation of the TOR/S6K signaling pathway is

linked to coordinated transcriptional changes of genes involved in mitochondrial electron transport and mitochondrial biogenesis via up-regulation of peroxisome proliferatorcoactivator-1 (*PGC1*α) [125]. Physical interaction [126], modulation of TOR activity via mitochondrial ROS production [127], modulation of mitochondrial bioenergetics (i.e. oxygen consumption, oxidative capacity, membrane potential) dependent on TOR stimulation and TOR-mediated regulation of glycolytic versus oxidative (i.e. mitochondrial) metabolism [121,128] have been suggested as potential mechanisms underlying the molecular basis linking TOR and mitochondrial function. Consistent with these observations, we have identified *RPS6-p70-protein kinase* (*RPS6K*, **Supplementary Table 4**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with mitochondrial bioenergetic traits), one of TOR downstream molecular targets, as one of the hub genes in mitochondrial state 3 module 18 (Figure 5C). Interestingly, *RPS6K* expression highly correlates with the expression of various hub genes within the network, such as *syndecan* in module 19 (Figure 5C). *Syndecan* is a type-I transmembrane protein involved in cell-matrix adhesion, migration, neuronal development, inflammation, and feeding behavior [129,130], which are physiological processes with known impact on energy homeostasis.

Analogous to the crucial role of MAPK signaling in the light-dependent TOR activation, MAPK has also been shown to play a pivotal role in modulating other circadian output pathways. We identified downstream targets of MAPK signaling pathway in our mitochondrial state 3 co-expression networks*. Neurofibromin 1 (Nf1)*, a "hub" gene in mitochondrial state 3 module 17 (Figure 4C), is highly conserved between

humans and flies, and has been linked to the circadian control of locomotor activity [112], learning and memory [131] and overall growth in *Drosophila* [132] via a MAPKdependent signaling pathway [112]. Furthermore, *cAMP-dependent protein kinase 1 (PKa-C1),* has been suggested to interact or be a downstream target of *Nf1* [132]. In agreement with these findings, we identified *PKa-C1* and *Nf1* as two hub genes within module 17, and our genetic network data shows that the expression of *PKa-C1* is highly correlated with *Nf1* transcript levels (Figure 5C). S*yndecan* expression is also coregulated by expression of hub genes in module 17.

Mitochondrial State 4 Respiration Rate. Gene ontology analysis revealed that 30% of the QTTs associated with variations in mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate are mainly enriched for genes involved in reproduction and cell replication (Figure 3B), significantly clustered in modules 1 and 4 (**Supplementary Table 5**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits). Module 1 may play a key role in organizing the behavior of this mitochondrial bioenergetic network as it displays the highest degree of transcriptional connectivity within the network. It is particularly enriched for genes involved in eggshell formation. *Drosophila* eggshell is an extracellular structure laid during late oogenesis between the oocyte and the overlying follicle cells targeted towards a wide variety of functions spanning from egg fertilization to larva hatching during late embryogenesis [133]. Interestingly, a well-defined temporal organization of transcriptional, anabolic, cleavage and transport events of various proteins and molecular targets is relevant for *Drosophila* eggshell assembly. Thus, a time-dependent transcription of most of the QTTs

in module 1: *chorion protein 16* and *19, chorion protein a at 7F (i.e. CG33962), CG13083* and *CG13084* (the latter two are putative chorion genes)*,* has been implicated in eggshell biogenesis. In agreement with our findings, previous reports have suggested that certain stages of oogenesis are under circadian control via self-contained autonomous ovarian clocks [98].

Furthermore, several QTTs regulating variation in mitochondrial state 4 outside module 1 (i.e. *CG32397, longitudinals lacking, Usf, CG7408* and *nop5* in module 4; *CG30427* and *odorant binding protein 99b* in module 5; *CG13067* and *CG31304* in module 6; *no receptor potential A, Mec2* and *CG17124* in module 7; *huntingtin, CG32556, CG11142, CG9953, CG11357* and *Cyp4d21* in module 8) represent clock- or sleep-regulated alleles [62,73,134]. Interestingly, among these genes, *nop5* previously shown to be differentially expressed in a fly model of human insomnia [73], is a highly conserved size-control gene implicated in ribosomal biogenesis [135]. Characterization of this gene in yeast has shown that it is a transcriptional target of *Sfp1,* a downstream effector of the TOR pathway [136]. Interestingly, *slimfast*, another QTT in module 4, has also been shown to be under TOR regulation in *Drosophila* [137]. Although an ortholog of *Sfp1* has not been described in flies, TOR pathway is evolutionarily conserved in all eukaryotes [138] and has been previously shown to be under photic regulation [111]. Thus, our findings highlight the non-visual effects of light as an exogenous signal coordinating the temporal rhythms of organismal physiology in *Drosophila* and mammals [72,139,140]. In addition, the identification of genes involved in ribosomal biogenesis

suggest a key role for nutrient-sensitive cell size- and/or cell growth-controlling genes in determining variations in mitochondrial bioenergetic traits.

Huntingtin expression, a hub gene in module 8, has also been shown to be under sleep regulation [73]. *Huntingtin* encodes a protein of unknown function involved in the pathogenesis of Huntington's disease. *Huntingtin* has been previously suggested to regulate the transcription of *PGC1*α, a transcriptional coactivator that regulates mitochondrial biogenesis and respiration [141]. Such findings propose *PGC1*α as a molecular mediator of Huntington's disease with a potential role in the pathogenesis of other neurodegenerative diseases. *PGC1*α has been previously shown to be under TORdependent transcriptional regulation [142], which supports the relevance of this nutrient sensitive pathway as mediator of the circadian output pathways regulating organismal metabolism and energy homeostasis.

Mitochondrial ADP/O Ratio. Only two modules comprise the mitochondrial ADP/O ratio co-expression network (**Supplementary Table 4**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with mitochondrial bioenergetic traits). Gene ontology enrichment analysis suggests that ADP/O ratio network alleles are primarily involved in muscle development, display a predominant membrane location and are mainly devoted to oxidoreductase activities (Figure 3C, **Supplementary Table 5**: Over-representation of Gene Ontology Categories, KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits).

Genetic correlations between energy metabolism and life-history traits

All forty Raleigh inbred lines were previously screened for body weight, metabolic rate and total levels of protein, triacylglycerol, glycerol, and glycogen (*Jumbo-Lucioni et al,* manuscript in preparation), as well as for several life-history traits (i.e. copulation latency, competitive fitness, starvation resistance, and chill-coma recovery) [21]. Thus, we sought to determine whether there were significant genetic correlations between mitochondrial, energy metabolism, and life-history traits. Identification of significant correlation would give us information on why genetic variation in loci mediating mitochondrial respiration is preserved in natural populations.

In the combined sex analyses, there was a tendency for those lines that have a higher mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate and coupling (i.e. respiratory control ratio= state 3/state 4) to store more glycogen, and for those lines that have a greater mitochondrial efficiency (i.e. ADP/O ratio) to have higher total proteins (Table 2A). These findings highlight the central role of mitochondrial function in organismal energy homeostasis. Highly coupled mitochondrial respiration (i.e. high respiratory control ratio, RCR) allows for a higher level of metabolic efficiency and favors energy storage [143]. Factors that adversely impact mitochondrial coupling and efficiency in eukaryotes have been shown to have a deleterious impact on energy conservation [144]. Glycogen represents the major fuel source of flight energy, which can be quickly mobilized to meet skeletal muscle metabolic requirements [145].

Several of the QTTs identified in our study that have pleiotropic effects on both mitochondrial state 3 (particularly clustered in module 20) and glycogen storage are differentially expressed in a fly model of human insomnia [73]. Sleep displays a circadian organization in both vertebrate and invertebrate models but sleep behavioral modifications also provide timing information to the central clock [71]. A recent report has suggested that the regulation of feeding behavior and metabolism in *Drosophila* requires a complex circadian network of transcriptional events involving input signaling from central and peripheral clocks that couple to maintain whole-body energy homeostasis [146]. Disruption of this multi-level circadian regulatory system has been shown to adversely impact food consumption and glycogen storage in *Drosophila* [146]. Based on these observations and our findings, we propose that differential expression of circadian-regulated alleles (as a result of differential clock signal transduction) induces variations in mitochondrial bioenergetic function leading to concomitant changes in organismal metabolite reserves.

We further observed that those inbred lines displaying higher mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate tended to be more resistant to starvation (Table 2A). We identified *Nop5* as one of the genes with pleiotropic effects on both mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate and starvation resistance. *Nop5* has been previously shown to be differentially expressed in a fly model of human insomnia [73] and has been identified as a downstream target of the TOR pathway [136]. As previously discussed, downregulation of this nutrient sensitive pathway triggers coordinated transcriptional changes of genes involved in mitochondrial electron transport and mitochondrial biogenesis via up-regulation of mammalian *PGC1*α [125]. Up-regulation of *PGC1*α has been associated to increased mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate in muscle cells [147,148]. A homolog of *PGC-1*, C*G9809*, has been described for *D. melanogaster* [142].

Most animals face periods of food shortage and are thus expected to evolutionarily develop genetic-based physiological adaptations towards greater resistance to starvation [149]. Translational regulation allows an organism to rapidly respond to environmental cues such as food scarcity, as it regulates protein expression from existing cellular mRNAs [150]. Protein translation is highly dependent on TOR signaling as TOR activation up-regulates translation via the release of eukaryotic translation initiation factor (eIF) 4E from eIF4E-binding protein (BP)-mediated repression. Genome-wide transcriptional analysis has shown that *eIF4EBP* is up-regulated under starvation conditions [151]. Later reports have highlighted *eIF4EBP* as a key nutrient-sensitive gatekeeper of translational events [142] and provide evidence that expression of *Drosophila eIF4EBP* and its binding to eIF4E are essential for survival to starvation stress [150]. Thus, down-regulation of TOR signaling may underlie the transcriptional events leading to enhanced mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate accompanied by concomitant improvement in resistance to starvation stress via *eIF4EBP-*mediated translational repression.

Additionally, those lines with higher mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate tended to initiate copulation faster. Genes with pleiotropic effects on both mitochondrial state 4 and copulation latency are mainly clustered in state 4 co-expression network module 6 (**Supplementary Table 4**: Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with mitochondrial bioenergetic traits) and involve genes differentially expressed during *Drosophila* metamorphosis (i.e. *syntaxin interacting protein 2*, [152]), and tissue morphogenesis .(i.e. *brachyenteron*, [153]). Organismal body shape and size have been

shown to have a strong genetic component and nutrient sensitive pathways such as TOR play a pivotal role during organismal development since nutrition modifies developmental timing [110]. Interestingly, inhibition of TOR signaling in the prothoracic gland, a tissue responsible for the hormonal production required for larva-to-pupa transition, prolongs larva development and increases *Drosophila* adult weight by as much as 25% [110]. Along with TOR-associated changes in *PGC1* expression (as discussed above), TOR-induced changes in body size may confer fitness advantages. Consistent with this idea, previous studies in *D. simulans* provide evidence that females mate faster with larger males under different environmental conditions [154].

 Since sexual dimorphism in mitochondrial bionergetic traits is well recognized across different species [31,36-38], we then analyzed the data stratified by sexes. In females, mitochondrial respiratory coupling (i.e. respiratory control ratio) and mitochondrial efficiency (i.e. ADP/O ratio) were correlated to both glycogen and total proteins, respectively, in a similar way as in the combined sex analysis (Table 2A-B). In addition, there was a tendency for females from lines that have a higher mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate to have lower total glycerol levels (Table 2B). Glycerol is a key precursor for the synthesis of phospholipids, one of the major classes of membrane lipids in all biological membranes [155]. A decrease or absence of cardiolipin, a phospholipid exclusively located in the inner mitochondrial membrane, has a deleterious impact on mitochondrial OXPHOS through a decrease in mitochondrial coupling [156,157]. Such uncoupling effect is attributed to an increase in mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate [157].

Likewise in males, we found that those lines that have higher mitochondrial efficiency, mitochondrial state 3 and 4 respiration rates tended to have a higher resistance to food deprivation, and those that have higher oxygen consumption rates at mitochondrial state 3 and 4 tended to take longer to recover from chill-coma (Table 2C). In agreement with our findings, studies using *D. simulans* have suggested that variations in mitochondrial bioenergetics confer differential resistance to starvation and chill-coma recovery time [28,158]. Energy metabolism genes are central to temperature tolerance and climatic adaptation [56,159] as well as to resistance to nutrient deprivation [160].

CONCLUSIONS

By constructing gene co-expression networks we provided evidence that nuclearencoded genes involved in processes regulated by photoperiod and circadian clocks are key players of the molecular network underlying phenotypic variation in mitochondrial respiration traits in a natural population of *D. melanogaster*. Moreover, our data corroborate the pivotal role of the evolutionary conserved TOR signaling pathway in mediating the effect of cycling/photoperiodic genes on mitochondrial respiration. These results add to a growing body of evidences showing a link between molecular controls of circadian rhythm and energy metabolism traits [161-166] as disruption of biological rhythms has been repeatedly linked to obesity, insulin resistance, T2DM and cardiovascular disease. Thus, differential regulation of the temporal organization of organismal physiology and behavior via differential expression of circadian-regulated genes may underlie inter-individual variations in obesity-related traits that confer

susceptibility to metabolic disease. Our findings identify such alleles which become immediate candidates for targeted pharmacological treatment.

One limitation of this study is that we specifically focused on determining the extent to which nuclear genes influence mitochondrial respiration traits. Although we identified several nuclear-encoded genes regulating variation in state 3 and state 4 mitochondrial respiration rate, it is clear from our findings that variability in mitochondrial efficiency (e.g. ADP/O ratio) among the Raleigh inbred lines may be mostly explained by variation in the mitochondrial genome and/or genetic interaction between nuclear and mitochondrial alleles (i.e. intergenomic epistasis). This limitation will soon be overcome by the completion of the sequencing of the whole mtDNA genome of the 40 Raleigh lines.

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Table 1. Quantitative genetics of organismal mitochondrial traits for 40 wild-derived inbred lines. Estimates of genetic variance for all sexes combined.

Trait ^a	Mean	$\sigma L^{\rm 2b}$	$\sigma_{\!SL}^{\!\!-2c}$	${\sigma_{\!G}}^{2\mathrm{d}}$	${\sigma_E}^{2{\rm e}}$	σ_P^{2f}	H^{2g}	CV_G^h	CV_E^e
	$(\pm SE)$								
ST ₃	1848.93	39960.7****	5122.4	45083.1	178195.6	223278.7	0.20	11.48	22.83
(pmol/sec/mg) protein)	(± 26.06)								
ST ₄	237.33	484.48***	52.29	536.77	3458.8	3995.57	0.14	9.76	24.78
(pmol/sec/mg protein)	(± 3.01)								
P/O	2.67	-0.003	$0.075***$	0.072	0.097	0.169	0.43	10.05	11.67
RCR	(± 0.01) 8.41	$1.78***$	0.33	2.11	6.95	9.06	0.23	17.27	31.35
	(± 0.15)								

^a ST3: mitochondrial state 3 respiration; ST4: mitochondrial state 4 respiration; PO: ADP/O ratio; RCR: respiratory control ratio (state 3/state 4); **^b** Among line variance component.**^c** Sex by line interaction variance component. **^d** Total genetic variance (^σ*L*2 *+*σ*SL*²); **^e** Variance within replicates. ^f Total phenotypic variance $(\sigma_G^2 + \sigma_E^2)$. ^g Broad-sense heritability $(\sigma_G^2 / \sigma_P^2)$. *h* Coefficient of genetic

variation (100^σ*G /*Mean). **ⁱ** Coefficient of environmental variation (100^σ*E/*Mean). Asterisks indicate *P*-values: **P*≤0.05; ***P*<0.01; ****P*<0.001; *****P*<0.0001.

Table 2. Genetic correlations among organismal mitochondrial, metabolism, and life history traits for 40 wild-derived inbred lines. (A) Genetic correlations averaged across sexes. (B) Genetic correlations for female flies. (C) Genetic correlations for male flies. **A**

Trait^a	GLY	PRO	SR^b	CL^b
ST ₃	0.35 ± 0.15	-0.29 ± 0.15	0.24 ± 0.15	-0.08 ± 0.16
ST ₄	-0.10 ± 0.16	-0.12 ± 0.16	0.40 ± 0.15	$-0.33 \pm 0.15^*$
P _O	-0.09 ± 0.16	$0.70{\pm}0.11^{***}$	0.18 ± 0.16	0.17 ± 0.16
RCR	0.35 ± 0.15	-0.16 ± 0.16	-0.06 ± 0.16	0.08 ± 0.16

B

Trait	SR^b	CC ^b	PO
ST3	0.31 ± 0.15	$0.32{\pm}0.15$	-0.20 ± 0.15
ST4	0.63 ± 0.12 ****	0.34 ± 0.15	-0.40 ± 0.14
PO ₁	0.37 ± 0.15	0.05 ± 0.16	$\overline{}$

^a ST3: mitochondrial state 3 respiration; ST4: mitochondrial state 4 respiration; PO: ADP/O ratio; RCR: respiratory control ratio (state 3/state 4); GLY: glycogen storage; GLYC: total glycerol; CL: copulation latency; FT: competitive fitness; SR: starvation stress resistance. **^b** Data from *Ayroles et al,* Nature Genetics 2009. Asterisks indicate *P*-values: **P*≤0.05; ***P*<0.01; ****P*<0.001; *****P*<0.0001

Figure 1. Mitochondrial electron transport chain showing the five respiratory complexes and the proton leak across the inner mitochondrial membrane (adapted from *Zeviani and Lamantea, Science and Medicine 2005*).

Figure 2. **Variation in organismal mitochondrial bioenergetic traits among 40 wildderived inbred lines.** Distribution of line means for mitochondrial state 3 (Panel A) and state 4 (Panel B) respiration rates in pmol/second/mg protein, ADP/O (Panel C), respiratory control (Panel D) ratios for females (pink bars) and males (blue bars). Data represent means \pm SEM for $n = 7$ independent replicates.

Figure 3. Gene ontology enrichment analysis of co-expression genetic networks. Gene ontology biological processes, cellular components and molecular functions for mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate (Panel A), mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate (Panel B), and mitochondrial ADP/O ratio (Panel C). According to the Gene Ontology Consortium website (http://www.geneontology.org/index.shtml): a biological process represents a series of events (not equivalent to a pathway) accomplished by one or more ordered assemblies of molecular functions; a cellular component is a component of a cell, (i.e. a part of some larger structure) which may be an anatomical structure (e.g. rough endoplasmic reticulum or nucleus) or a gene product group (e.g. ribosome, proteasome or a protein dimer), and molecular function describes activities, such as catalytic or binding activities, occurring at the molecular level.

Molecular Functions

Figure 4. Genetic networks underlying variation in mitochondrial bioenergetic traits. (A) Clustering of the 293 transcripts significantly associated with variation in mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate into 20 modules. (B) Clustering of the 105 transcripts significantly associated with variation in mitochondrial state 4 respiration rate into 8 modules. Clusterings are represented as heatmaps with a color scale spanning from red (positive correlation), green (no correlation) to blue (negative correlation).

Figure 5. Genetic networks underlying variation in mitochondrial state 3 and 4 respiration rates. (A) Interaction network ($|r| \ge 0.5$) for mitochondrial state 3 module 10 enriched for genes involved in photoreception. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Module 10 "hub" genes (white) highly interact with other "hub" genes in module 7 (green), 8 (red), 11 (yellow), 15 (gray), 16 (blue), 19 (purple), 20 (light-blue). Nodes shown as bold represent those genes previously identified as circadian- or sleep-regulated [62,73]. (B) Tissue-specific expression of transcripts comprising module 10 and 17 in the mitochondrial state 3 coexpression network. (C) Interaction network ($|r| \ge 0.6$) for mitochondrial state 3 module 17 enriched for genes involved in circadian rhythm and organismal behavior. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Module 17 hub genes (white) highly interact with other hub genes in module 5 (orange), 6 (pink), 7 (green), 9 (red), 11 (yellow), 12 (brown), 14 (dark green), 16 (blue), 18 (gray), 19 (purple), 20 (light-blue). Nodes shown as bold represent those genes previously identified as circadian- or sleep-regulated [62,73]. (D) Interaction network ($|r| \ge 0.5$) for mitochondrial state 4 module 4. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Nodes shown as white represent the hub genes from module 4. Module 4 hub genes highly interact with other hub genes in module 1 (blue), 2 (green), 3 (yellow), 6 (red) and 7 (light-blue). Nodes shown as bold represent those genes previously identified as circadian- or sleep-regulated [62,73].

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 $\left(\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{c}}\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{c}}\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{s}}\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{3}}\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{46}}\right)$ cdc2rk CG1138 cdc2ri $\left[\frac{1}{2}$ SP1173 CG5285 hth Usf fs(1)Ya .
CG740 $Rnrl.$ zpg CG15737 $\left($ CG10399 $\right)$ Atg7 **CG850 CG4009** 64371 CG598 norp/ dec-1 Tgt

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CHAPTER IV:

A ROLE FOR *DROSOPHILA SYNDECAN* **IN THE REGULATION OF WHOLE-BODY ENERGY METABOLISM AND SLEEP**

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ABSTRACT

Syndecans are a family of type-I transmembrane proteins involved in cell-matrix adhesion, migration, neuronal development, inflammation, and feeding behavior. Our recent analysis of gene co-expression networks was the first to identify *Drosophila syndecan* (*dSdc)* as one of the quantitative trait transcripts regulating mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate among a highly interactive network of cycling/photoperiodic genes. Previous reports have linked *syndecan* expression to circadian rhythm in mammals and recent evidence has suggested a role for *dSdc* in sleep, a circadian-regulated behavior. Thus, we sought to independently verify the effect of the *dSdc* gene on mitochondrial respiration and sleep by measuring these traits in flies that were homozygous for the insertional mutation $Sdc^{BG02774}$ and non-mutant flies from the co-isogenic control line. As predicted, flies homozygous for the *dSdc* mutation displayed significantly lower mitochondrial ADP-stimulated (state 3) respiration, with no effect on mitochondrial ADP-independent (state 4) respiration. They also slept longer compared with homozygous wild-type flies. Moreover, real time-quantitative PCR (RT-qPCR) experiments showed a significant reduction in the mRNA levels of the *Drosophila* homolog of *PGC-1* (*CG9809*), an important co-activator of mitochondrial biogenesis and function, in *SdcBG02774* flies compared to controls. These results strongly confirm a central role for a member of the syndecan family in the control of mitochondrial respiration and sleep in *Drosophila*.

INTRODUCTION

The *Drosophila syndecan* (*dSdc*) gene encodes a member of the *syndecan (SDC)* gene family [1], a group of type-I transmembrane proteins present on the surface of all adherent cells. While *Drosophila* appears to have only one syndecan protein ubiquitously distributed [2], mammals have four syndecan proteins encoded by four separate genes. Three of these genes, *SDC1*, *SDC2*, and *SDC3*, are expressed in a tissue-specific manner, whereas the fourth, *SDC4,* is expressed in a variety of cell types [3]. Despite apparent duplication and divergent evolution of *Drosophila* single gene to four distinct genes in mammals, syndecan protein structure is evolutionarily conserved. It comprises a core protein composed of an extracellular domain (ectodomain), a single hydrophobic membrane-spanning domain, and a short intracellular domain. The ectodomain provides attachment sites for heparan sulphate polysaccharide chains that mediate interactions with extracellular matrix (ECM) components [4], heparan-sulfate growth factors [5], cell adhesion molecules [6], lipases [7], chemokines, cytokines and their receptors [8], and pathogens [9]. As a result, syndecans function as co-receptors modulating signal transduction pathways initiated by growth factors and are involved in cell proliferation, adhesion and migration, lipid metabolism, and inflammation [3]. Syndecans have also been shown to play a key role in signal transduction from the ECM to the intracellular space interacting with cytoplasmic proteins via their intracellular domains. This allows them to control focal adhesion, cell spreading, and cytoskeletal organization [3].

To gain insights into the genetic basis of natural variation in mitochondrial respiration traits, we previously used a system genetics approach to identify gene-expression networks underlying variation in mitochondrial state 3 respiration, state 4 respiration, and mitochondrial efficiency (ADP/O ratio) using 40 wild-type inbred lines of *D. melanogaster* (see **Chapter III**: Systems Genetics Analyses of Mitochondrial Bioenergetic Traits in *Drosophila melanogaster*). This study identified *Drosophila Sdc* (*dSdc)* as one of the quantitative transcript traits regulating mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate among a highly interactive network of circadian-regulated genes. A previous report in rodent models described *SDC2* also as a circadian-regulated gene [10]. Moreover, Harbison *et al*. [11] recently reported a significant correlation between genetic variants in the *dSdc* gene and day sleep, a complex trait that displays a circadian organization in both vertebrate and invertebrate model systems [12], in a natural population of *D. melanogaster*.

Attempts to link *SDC* to organismal energy balance are exemplified by previous transgenic and knockout studies in rodent models that have demonstrated a role for syndecans in feeding behavior [13]. Ectopic over-expression of *SDC1* in the mouse hypothalamus leads to hyperphagia and increased levels of leptin, insulin, and glucose [14]. Similarly, genetic disruption of *SDC3*, endogenously expressed in the mouse hypothalamus, leads to decreased sensitivity to food deprivation [15]. Similar to sleep, feeding rhythms are under the control of the coupling action of central and peripheral clocks in metabolic tissues [16]. However, ours is the first study linking differential expression of *SDC* to natural variations in mitochondrial function. Such variations may underlie the predisposition to metabolic diseases such as obesity, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes mellitus which underscores the role of *SDC* as a candidate gene in metabolic disorders.

To independently verify the effect of the *dSdc* gene on mitochondrial respiration rate and sleep, in the present study, we measured these traits in flies homozygous for a hypomorphic mutation of *dSdc* (*SdcBG02774*) and flies homozygous for a wild-type *dSdc* allele (but otherwise genetically identical to the *SdcBG02774* flies).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

*Fly stock***s**

The *SdcBG02774* lines were established by the Berkeley *Drosophila* Gene Disruption (BDGD) Project via *P*-element insertion into the second intron of the *dSdc* gene in the w¹¹¹⁸; Canton S strain [17]. To control for larval density, we allowed the parents of the experimental flies to mate for 3 hours to generate egg collections on apple juice/agar medium in laying plates. After 24 hours, we picked groups of 100 first-instar larvae from the surface of the medium and put them into replicate vials. To minimize the influence of genetic variation in reproduction on energy metabolism, we performed all the phenotypic assays on virgin flies that were randomly collected from the replicate vials for each line on days 10 to 16 under brief $CO₂$ exposure. We reared flies in vials containing 10 ml of standard cornmeal, agar, sugar, and yeast medium at a constant temperature of 25°C, 60– 75% relative humidity, and a 12-hr light-dark cycle.

Mitochondrial respiration rate

After removing wings and legs, we placed 20 live flies into 200µl of ice-cold isolation buffer [250 mM sucrose, 5 mM Tris-HCl, 2 mM EGTA, 1% (w/v) bovine serum albumin (BSA), pH 7.4 at 4°C] supplemented with protease inhibitors (leupeptin 1mg/ml, aprotinin 1mg/ml and pepstatin 1mg/ml) in a 1.5 ml Eppendorf tube. The samples were pounded gently 126 times over a 2 minute period, using a motorized micromortar, and filtered through a 5 µm nylon mesh. We then increased the volume to 400 µl by washing the nylon membrane with additional isolation buffer. After centrifugation of the filtered solution for 10 min at 3000 g, at 4°C, the pellet was re-

suspended in 100µl of isolation buffer. Protein concentrations in the mitochondrial fractions were determined using a Lowry assay. We performed mitochondrial respiration assays using freshly isolated mitochondrial fraction (0.1 mg/ml) by measuring oxygen consumption in a two-chamber polarographic oxygen sensor (Oroboros oxygraph, OROBOROS® INSTRUMENTS**,** Innsbruck, Austria). We measured state 3 and state 4 respiration rates using NAD⁺-linked substrates, pyruvate 5 mM/proline 5 mM to feed electrons to mitochondrial complex I, along with ADP 400 $\Box M$ to elicit ADP-dependent state 3 and ADP-independent state 4 respiration once ADP is exhausted. The concentrations of substrates were chosen to achieve maximal state 3 respiration rates. Respiratory control ratio was obtained as state 3/state 4. All assays were performed within 3 hours of mitochondrial isolation. Data was analyzed using the software *DatLab* Version 4.1.0.8.

Sleep and waking activity

These experiments were performed under similar laboratory conditions at North Carolina State University, NC. Adult virgins were maintained at 30 flies to a single-sex vial to ensure that each line was exposed to identical levels of social interaction [18] and had equal access to food. Sleep parameters for each fly were measured with the *Drosophila* Activity Monitoring System (Trikinetics, Waltham, MA), which counts the number of times a given fly crosses an infrared beam during a specified time interval. Here, we used one-minute intervals to record activity counts. Seven continuous days of sleep and activity were recorded for each experimental block. Sleep was defined as any period 5 minutes or longer without an activity count [19]. An in-house C^{++} program was used to calculate duration of sleep in minutes, numbers of sleep bouts, average sleep bout duration in minutes, and the number of activity counts per waking minute (waking activity).

Quantitative RT-PCR

Total RNA was isolated using the TriPure RNA isolation kit (Roche). Isolated RNA was then used to make cDNA, using the First Strand Synthesis kit (InvitrogenTM, CA, US). We performed RT-qPCR using a Syber Green Master mix and 50 ng total of cDNA per reaction and run in a Stratagene Mx3000P® qPCR machine. *Drosophila ribosomal protein 49* (*rp49*) mRNA levels were used to normalized *dSdc* and *CG9809* mRNA data.

RESULTS

Homozygous SdcBG02774 flies have reduced mitochondrial function

To verify the effect of the *dSdc* gene on mitochondrial bioenergetics, we used a viable mutant allele of the gene, $Sdc^{BG02774}$. $Sdc^{BG02774}$ is a mutant generated in the w^{1118} ; *Canton S (B)* [*CS (B)*] background strain by the insertion of a *p[GT1]*-element in the second intron of *dSdc* (Figure 1A). We examined the effects of this *P*-element insertion on *dSdc* transcription in adult flies by performing RT-qPCR experiments using RNA isolated from three body parts (head, thorax, and abdomen). We found that the overall expression of *dSdc* is significantly reduced in the three body parts of *SdcBG02774* flies(Figure 1B).

We next assessed respiration rates of *SdcBG02774* mitochondria and *CS (B)* mitochondria during metabolism of the NADH-linked complex I substrates, pyruvate and proline. Because no differences were observed between male and female flies in respiration rates, we pooled male and female data for statistical analysis. We found that the ADP-dependent state 3 respiration rate was reduced by approximately 15% in *SdcBG02774* compared with the controls (Figure 2A). No difference was observed in ADPindependent state 4 respiration rate (Figure 2B). Thus, these data indicate that *dSdc* is essential for normal mitochondrial function and energy metabolism, which is in good agreement with our previous data proposing *dSdc* as a candidate gene regulating variations in mitochondrial state 3, but not state 4 respiration rates (see **Chapter III**: Systems Genetics Analyses of Mitochondrial Bioenergetic Traits in *Drosophila melanogaster*).

In mammals, PGC-1 α and PGC-1 β play a pivotal role in the control of energy homeostasis [20,21]. In addition, they play an essential role regulating mitochondria physiology and biogenesis [22] which may then become potential routes by which mitochondrial function is regulated. We therefore compared the transcript levels of the *Drosophila* homolog of *PGC-1* gene, *CG9809* [23]*,* in the whole-body of *SdcBG02774*and control flies. As predicted, we found that mRNA levels of *CG9809* were reduced by 36% in *SdcBG02774* female flies and by 65% in *SdcBG02774* flies relative to controls (Figure 2C).

dSdc plays a role in sleep behavior

We next assessed the effect of the *dSdc* mutation on a circadian-regulated behavior, such as sleep as it was identified as one of the quantitative trait transcripts regulating mitochondrial state 3 respiration among a highly interactive network of cycling genes. Therefore, we investigated the sleep-wake cycle in $Sdc^{BG02774}$ and CS (B) flies over the course of a 24 h day. We found that sleep was increased by 32% during night-time and by 76% during daytime in *SdcBG02774* female flies compared to controls (Figure 3A). A 17% increase in daytime sleep was also observed in males (Figure 3B). This increased sleep length is due largely to increases in the average duration of sleep bouts rather than their number (data not shown).

DISCUSSION

In this study, we confirmed the role of *dSdc* as a candidate gene regulating variations in pyruvate plus proline-induced state 3 respiration rate. Our system genetics analyses of mitochondrial bioenergetic traits in 40 inbred lines of *D melanogaster* (*Jumbo et al*, manuscript in preparation; see **Chapter III**) provide key insights into the potential mechanisms underlying our findings. Indeed, our previous analysis showed that the expression of the *dSdc,* among various other genes, is highly correlated to *RPS6-p70 protein kinase* transcript abundance (Figure 4), a downstream effector of the target of rapamycin (TOR) signaling pathway. Activation of TOR signaling pathway in mammals is associated with transcriptional repression of $PGC-1\alpha$ and mitochondrial dysfunction [24]. PGC-1 α is the master regulator of mitochondrial biogenesis and function. Consistent with these observations, we found that the *SdcBG02774* flies were also characterized by a reduced expression of the *Drosophila* homolog of *PGC-1* (*CG9809*).

Further analysis of the mitochondrial state 3 co-regulated transcriptional network revealed other potential molecular mechanisms underlying *dSdc*-mediated regulation of mitochondrial function. Indeed, we found a high correlation between *dSdc* and *pyruvate dehydrogenase kinase* (*Pdk*) transcript levels (Figure 4; **Supplementary Table 4**). As in mammals, *Pdk* plays a critical role in the regulation of oxidative glucose metabolism in *Drosophila* [25]. *Pdk* phosphorylates and inhibits pyruvate dehydrogenase. This inhibition leads to suppression of glucose oxidation [26]. Thus, variations in the metabolism of pyruvate, the respiratory substrate used in our *ex-vivo* mitochondrial respiration experiments, may affect the availability of reducing equivalents feeding into

the mitochondrial electron transport chain. In this context, it will be important to elucidate the transcriptional co-expression networks associated to variations in mitochondrial bioenergetics using other physiological substrates such as α glycerophosphate. This substrate has been shown to be rapidly oxidizable, to elicit extremely high respiratory and phosphorylative activities in *Drosophila* mitochondria [27], and to have no dependence on *Pdk* for its metabolism.

If there is previous independent evidence suggesting that *SDC* expression is under circadian regulation [10] and is linked to sleep regulation [28], we tested sleep behavior in our *dSdc* mutants. Here, we corroborated that *dSdc* affects sleep, confirming the finding of a recent study that reported significant correlations between two genetic variants in the *dSdc* gene and day sleep in 40 wild-derived *Drosophila* lines [28]. Although sleep displays a circadian organization, sleep behavioral modifications have been shown to provide timing information to the central clock [29]. Misalignment among central and peripheral clocks derived from sleep disorders may underlie the deleterious impact of jetlag and shift work on organismal health. Disruption of biological rhythms associated to shift work has been repeatedly linked to obesity, insulin resistance and cardiovascular disease [30-36]. *Drosophila* replicates clinical findings in humans. Indeed, a fly model of human insomnia exhibits increased adiposity accompanied by a differential expression of genes involved in lipid metabolism [37]. Previous microarray analyses of fly heads revealed three genes with predicted functions in lipid metabolism that increased expression during sleep [38]. Furthermore, *P*-element insertions in metabolic pathway genes impacted sleep duration and bout number [39]. Like these recent studies, our results demonstrate a molecular link between energy metabolism and

sleep. Though the nature of that link has yet to be elucidated, we speculate that the increased sleep in *SdcBG02774* mutants in combination with reduced mitochondrial respiration may be indicative of a strategy to conserve energy, an idea long postulated as a possible function of sleep [40].

Attempts to provide an explanation to our findings may derive from a previous study by Reizes et al. [41] who recently suggested that the involvement of *SDC* in feeding behavior, another circadian-regulated trait, may be linked to the role of syndecans in neuronal development and synaptic organization in the hypothalamus. Since *dSdc* has been reported to participate in normal axon guidance and neuronal development via regulation of the Slit/Robo signaling [42], it is possible that improper wiring of the central nervous system might be responsible for sleep disorders (and differences in feeding behavior) in the *dSdc* mutant as a result of the disruption of the circadian output pathways. Even though this hypothesis needs to be tested in future studies, evidence supports the existence of high signaling trafficking between central and peripheral oscillators [43]. Such multi-oscillatory organization may have been evolved to an even more complex circadian system in mammals, which underscores the relevance of studying neuronal development and organization in the control of behavior and physiology in *Drosophila*.

Figure 1. *Drosophila syndecan* **gene and** *SdcBG0277***⁴** . (A) Schematic representation of *dSdc* gene region on the second chromosome at cytological position 57E1-57E6. The *dSdc* gene contains seven exons, which generate three alternatively spliced transcripts: *Sdc*-RA, *Sdc*-RB, and *Sdc*-RC (NCBI accession no. AE013599.4). The isoform, *Sdc*-RA, has a unique exon located between exon four and five of the isoforms *Sdc*-RB and *Sdc*-RC. Moreover, *Sdc*-RA differs in the length of its first intron and second exon compared to *Sdc*-RB. Exons of the *dSdc* gene are represented by red boxes. Untranslated regions are represented by black boxes. The location of the *p[GT1]* insertion site that creates the *SdcBG0277*⁴ mutation is indicated with an arrowhead. (B) Insertion of *p[GT1]*-element in the $dSdc$ of the *CS* (*B*) strain (*Sdc^{BG02774}*) results in a significant reduction of the expression of $dSdc$ gene. $dSdc$ mRNA levels analyzed by RT-qPCR on cDNA ($n = 6$) using primers that encompass a common region of alternative transcripts. RNAs were extracted from three body parts of homozygous *SdcBG0277*⁴ and control, *CS (B)*, flies. Levels of *dSdc* mRNA were normalized to *Drosophila ribosomal protein49* (*rp49*) mRNA levels. Statistical significance was determined by two-tailed Student's *t* test with unequal variance. In all panels, error bars represent SEM. ** $P < 0.01$, *** $P < 0.001$, **** $P < 0.0001$.

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Figure 2. Mitochondrial respiration rates and *CG9809* **mRNA levels in whole body of** *SdcBG02774* **and** *CS (B)* **flies**. (A and B) Whole-fly mitochondrial respiration rates were assayed by measuring oxygen consumption rate in a polarographic oxygen sensor. State 3 and 4 respiration rates were measured with NADH-linked substrates, a mixture of pyruvate 5mM/proline 5mM. Values represent average of female and male pooled data of twenty independent replicates. Statistical significance was determined by two-tailed Student's *t* test with unequal variance. In all panels, error bars represent SEM. * *P* < 0.05, ** $P < 0.01$, *** $P < 0.001$. (C) Gene expression levels were measured by RT-qPCR on cDNA produced using mRNA extracted from the whole body of $Sdc^{BG02774}$ and $CS(B)$ flies ($n = 6$). CG9809 mRNA levels were normalized to $rp49$. Statistical significance was determined by two-tailed Student's *t* test with unequal variance.

Figure 3. Sleep behavior in $Sdc^{BG02774}$ **and** *CS (B)* **flies. (A-B) sleep parameters were** measured counting the number of times a given fly crosses an infrared beam during a one-minute interval. Sleep was defined as any period 5 minutes or longer without an activity count. In (A) and (B) values represent average hours of sleep in female and male flies, respectively, of two independent replicates of 16 flies. Statistical significance was determined by Wilcoxon T-test. In all panels, error bars represent SEM. **P* < 0.05, ** *P* $< 0.01,$ *** $P < 0.001,$ **** $P < 0.0001$.

Figure 4. Interaction network (|r|≥**0.6) for mitochondrial state 3 module 17** enriched for genes involved in circadian rhythm and organismal behavior. Each node represents a gene and each edge a significant correlation between a pair of genes. Module 17 hub genes (white) highly interact with other hub genes in module 5 (orange), 6 (pink), 7 (green), 9 (red), 11 (yellow), 12 (brown), 14 (dark green), 16 (blue), 18 (gray), 19 (purple), 20 (light-blue). Nodes shown as bold represent those genes previously identified as circadian- or sleep-regulated [62,73]. Interaction between *dSdc, Pdk* and *RPS6-p70 protein kinase* is highlighted.

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CHAPTER V:

CONCLUSION

As complex trait disorders, both obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) respond to the action and interaction of environmental and genetic susceptibility factors. Quantitative genetic analyses in humans and animal models have provided compelling evidence that multiple genes underlie the genetic architecture of obesity [103-105] and other complex diseases, including T2DM [4]. Despite the fact that obesity-related traits are highly heritable, the genetic basis underlying their natural variation and the loci playing pleiotropic roles among organismal traits have not been fully elucidated.

The overall goals of these present studies were: to shed light on the architecture of the genetic co-expression networks regulating variations in obesity-related traits, elucidate the extent to which they are regulated by pleiotropic loci, and identify pleiotropic alleles between metabolism and life-history traits to provide key insights into why different alleles are allowed to persist in natural populations, despite the fact that some of them confer susceptibility to metabolic disorders.

The findings of Chapter II confirmed the high heritability of energy metabolism traits and highlighted the relevance of genes involved in non-metabolic pathways, such as in immune response, neurogenesis and neuronal function, cell growth, food processing and water balance, as key regulators of organismal energy balance. The use of mutant stocks to independently test some of the candidate genes affecting total glycerol, triacylglycerol and glycogen storage corroborated the validity of the methodological approach used in

the study. Furthermore, the elucidation of pleiotropic transcriptional modules provided a key insight into the molecular basis of the well established trade-offs between body weight, reproduction, and survival of food deprivation.

Our second study (**Chapter III**) showed that similar to body weight, metabolic rate and body composition traits, there is segregating variation in mitochondrial respiration rates in this population of *D. melanogaster*. Ours is the first study reporting heritability for mitochondrial bioenergetic traits. The gene-co-expression network analysis revealed that highly complex and interactive nuclear-encoded transcriptional networks underlie natural variations in mitochondrial state 3 and 4 respiration rates. On the other hand, only a few nuclear-encoded genes were identified to affect variation in mitochondrial ADP/O ratio (i.e. efficiency), highlighting the relevance of mitochondrial-encoded genes and mito-nuclear interactions as key players influencing mitochondrial efficiency. Analysis of pleiotropic loci between mitochondria bioenergetic and body composition traits suggests a coordinated regulation between mitochondrial function and energy balance. In addition, the data from this study strongly indicate that molecular regulation of mitochondrial respiration plays a critical role in mediating life history trade-offs in natural populations, and underscore the relevance of the target of rapamycin signaling pathway as the key regulator of mitochondrial function.

In our last study we intended to independently verify the effect of the *dSdc* gene on mitochondrial respiration rate and circadian-regulated behaviors such as sleep. We corroborated the role of *dSdc* as a candidate gene regulating variations in mitochondrial state 3 respiration rate. Indeed, flies homozygous for the *dSdc* mutation displayed significantly lower mitochondrial ADP-stimulated (state 3) respiration. Our data further

confirmed changes in sleep, a circadian-regulated behavior known to impact organismal energy balance.

In conclusion, our results confirm that the genetic basis of natural variation in body weight and energy metabolism traits involves highly interactive co-regulated transcriptional networks, and identify several pleiotropic alleles underlying evolutionarily conserved trade-offs among obesity-related and organismal life-history traits. Such tradeoffs establish inter-individual differences in survival and reproduction and underlie the basis for the perpetuation of alleles that confer susceptibility to metabolic disorders among individuals from a natural population.

Future directions

Our study sheds light on the genetic architecture of body weight and energy metabolism traits and identifies several candidate genes and genetic networks affecting these traits. Identification of these new alleles will likely provide new models for human obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus that can be further tested in other populations. Furthermore, the completion of the sequencing of the whole mtDNA genome of the 40 Raleigh lines currently underway will elucidate the extent to which variations in mitochondrial genome and mitonuclear interactions contribute to differences in mitochondrial respiration traits and subsequently in other metabolic traits. Additionally, the completion of the sequencing of the whole nuclear genome of these 40 lines will provide further insight into the potential genetic variants underlying variations in obesity-related traits and having pleiotropic effects on body composition, energy metabolism and life-history traits. If the impact of some environmental variables on body weight regulation manifests itself only on certain genotypes, the identification of disease risk alleles will allow targeting efforts

towards recognition and counseling of susceptible individuals to prevent obesity at a public health level. Finally, further studies are warranted on the molecular and genetic mechanisms underlying the role of *Drosophila syndecan* gene on organismal energy balance.

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APPENDIX A SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE 1

Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with each of the body composition and energy metabolism traits. The *p*-values are from the regression analyses. Degree = the average correlation of a transcript with all other transcripts in its module. Avge Degree = the average correlation of all transcripts in the module.

APPENDIX B

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE 2

Effects of *P[GT1]* and *PiggyBac* transposon insertional mutations in candidate genes affecting triacylglycerol storage and total glycerol. Measurements given as deviations from the co-isogenic control line (Canton S A, B or F or *w1118*). *a* is one half of the difference between the homozygous mutant and the control line. *P*-values are from analyses of variance comparing the mutant lines to their control.

APPENDIX C

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE 3

Over-representation of Gene Ontology (GO) Categories (BP= biological processes; CC= cellular component; MF= molecular function), KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with quantitative traits. Count $=$ the number of genes in the annotation category. $%$ $=$ the number of genes in the annotation category/total number of significant genes. The *P* value is from a modified Fisher exact test for enrichment of genes in an annotation category.

APPENDIX D

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE 4

Analysis of modules of correlated transcripts associated with each of the mitochondrial bioenergetic traits.The P-values statistics are from the regression analyses. Degree = the average correlation of a transcript with all other transcripts in its module. Average Degree $=$ the average correlation of all transcripts in the module.

APPENDIX E

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE 5

Over-representation of Gene Ontology (GO) Categories (BP=Biological Processes; CC= Cellular Component; MF= Molecular Function), KEGG Pathways and Keywords for transcripts associated with mitochondrial quantitative traits. Count = the number of genes in the annotation category. $% =$ the number of genes in the annotation category/total number of significant genes. The *P* value is from a modified Fisher exact test for enrichment of genes in an annotation category.

