

Scientific Racism and North American Psychology FREE

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Summary

The use of psychological concepts and data to promote ideas of an enduring racial hierarchy dates from the late 1800s and has continued to the present. The history of scientific racism in psychology is intertwined with broader debates, anxieties, and political issues in American society. With the rise of intelligence testing, joined with ideas of eugenic progress and dysgenic reproduction, psychological concepts and data came to play an important role in naturalizing racial inequality. Although racial comparisons were not the primary concern of most early mental testing, results were employed to justify beliefs regarding Black “educability” and the dangers of Southern and Eastern European immigration. Mainstream American psychology became increasingly liberal and anti-racist in the late 1930s and after World War II. However, scientific racism did not disappear and underwent renewal during the civil rights era and again during the 1970s and 1990s, Intelligence test scores were a primary weapon in attempts to preserve segregated schools and later to justify economic inequality. In the case of Henry Garrett, Arthur Jensen, and Philippe Rushton, their work included active, public promotion of their ideas of enduring racial differences, and involvement with publications and groups under control of racial extremists and neo-Nazis. Despite 100 years of strong critiques of scientific racism, a small but active group of psychologists helped revive vicious 19th-century claims regarding Black intelligence, brain size, morality, criminality, and sexuality, presented as detached scientific facts. These new claims were used in popular campaigns that aimed to eliminate government programs, promote racial separation, and increase immigration restriction. This troubling history raises important ethical questions for the discipline.

Keywords: history of psychology, scientific racism, racial differences, intelligence testing, eugenics, immigration, civil rights

Subjects: History and Systems of Psychology

Introduction

Since the 1930s, American psychologists have played an important role in exploring the nature of prejudice and in the fight against racial injustice (e.g., Pettigrew, 2011). However, psychologists have also played a major role in the promotion of “scientific racism,” defined

here as the use of scientific concepts and data to create and justify ideas of an enduring, biologically based racial hierarchy. This practice became part of American psychology in the early 1900s and has persisted to the present. The term “scientific racism” is problematic given that the term “racism” only came into wide use in the 1930s, and earlier terms, such as “racialism,” had overlapping but not identical meaning. Although “racism” remains a contested term, its use is no longer limited to the feelings and biases of individuals. Contemporary scholars now emphasize the manifestation of racism in discursive practices, institutional arrangements, and power inequities (e.g., Salter & Adams, 2010; Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). Beginning in the 1990s, historians provided an understanding of how psychological science could embody, enshrine, and promote racism (e.g., Guthrie, 1998; Jackson, 2001b, 2005; Mehler, 1997; Richards, 2012; Tucker, 1994, 2002, 2008; Winston, 2004). This work has illuminated the ways in which scientific discourse in psychology has been used to support racial discrimination while maintaining the appearance of political and ideological neutrality.

Two issues complicate the place of psychology in this history. First, the creation of scientific racism has always been a multidisciplinary project, involving first philosophers and anatomists, then physicians, statisticians, anthropologists, political scientists, psychologists, and geneticists (see Marks, 2008). Separating out the role of psychologists is challenging and potentially misleading. Second, scientific racism has taken on differing forms and trajectories in Germany, Britain, France, South Africa, and North and South America., often intertwined with the complex and varied history of eugenics (see Bashford & Levine, 2010). However, actors from different nations provided support and collaboration, such as the influence of American scientists on Nazi eugenic policies (Kühl, 1994). Although the dangers of an “USA-centric” approach are considerable, examination of scientific racism and psychology outside North America is beyond the scope of this essay. The 20th-century course of scientific racism in North American psychology was closely related to the development and deployment of intelligence testing. Historically, racial comparisons of intelligence test scores have not been as prominent in the psychology communities of other countries (Richards, 2004).

The trajectory of scientific racism in psychology is intertwined with broader debates, anxieties, and political issues of American society. The “Negro education debates” of the early 1900s, the immigration debates of the 1920s, the resistance to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, the poverty and early education debates of the 1970s and 1980s, fears of urban crime, and social decay have all provided the context for the deployment of racial comparisons carried out by American psychologists.

Prehistory of Scientific Racism in Psychology

Prior to the development of academic psychology in America, a “proto-scientific racism” was already an important feature of anatomy, medicine, and ethnology. Racial theories in the period from the late 1700s to the mid-1880s were highly varied and closely tied to the political and theological positions of their times, especially the 19th-century debates over monogenist versus polygenist human origins, universal salvation, the reversibility of skin color under varied climates, and the abolition of slavery (Dain, 2002). Using the Enlightenment-era racial typologies of Linnaeus and Blumenbach, the categories of Caucasians, Mongolians, Americans (i.e., Native Americans) and Africans were sometimes arranged along a “scale of nature,”

often but not always identified with alleged moral and intellectual differences. In the mid-1800s, the “American School” of ethnology, as developed by physician Samuel Morton and surgeon Josiah Nott, produced an increasingly rigid set of racial categories, with an explicit hierarchy and a belief in races as separate acts of creation (Jackson & Weidman, 2004). Morton’s claim that Africans had smaller cranial volume than Caucasians, based on filling the skulls in his collection with pepper seed (later lead shot), encouraged the belief that cranial capacity was strongly associated with intellectual capacity and the ability to create “advanced civilization,” a theme that would be revived in psychology in the 1980s. Morton’s work was still the subject of critiques and defense 150 years later (Gould, 1981; Weisberg & Paul, 2016). His craniometry emerged in the founding years of the American Statistical Society, when fraudulent 1840 census data on alleged rates of insanity among slaves versus free Blacks were used to argue that slavery was beneficial to their health, an assertion that resulted in intense debates (Deutsch, 1944).

Most White Americans needed no evidence for the inferiority of Africans; the conclusion seemed as self-evident as it was to zoologist Louis Agassiz when he reported his revulsion upon encountering Black Americans in 1846 (Gould, 1981). Although scientific and pseudoscientific ideas such as “drapetomania” (the pathological urge of slaves to escape the “protection” of the owner) were employed in the justification of slavery, it was often the case that scientists might oppose slavery but maintain a rigid racial hierarchy or support “repatriation” of Black Americans to Africa (Jackson & Winston, 2009).

In the late 1800s, scientific racism in Europe and America took on new dimensions made possible by drawing on evolutionary thinking. Darwin’s name would be invoked despite his conflicting but, for his time, nuanced statements on race (see Shields & Bhatia, 2009). Herbert Spencer’s version of evolution, with its upward trajectory and its notions that “savage” races and women, represented earlier stages of evolution, was more readily suited to justify a racial hierarchy, patriarchal social structure, and the continuation of colonial subjugation. The mystical racial ideas of Comte Arthur de Gobineau and others, although outside of contemporary scientific discourse, provided a foundation for the superiority of the imaginary Aryan race, later conceived as the Teutonic or Nordic race. These ideas took root in America when economist William Z. Ripley (1899) set down the argument for three European races: Teutonic, Alpine, and Mediterranean, using craniometry and the cephalic index of skull shape.

Ripley’s racial categories were taken up by lawyer and eugenicist Madison Grant (1916) in *The Passing of the Great Race*. Grant organized opposition to immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, especially Italians and Jews. He believed their continued influx to the United States would result in interbreeding with and outbreeding of the “great” Nordic race. The challenge of cold winters eliminated defectives and created the Nordics, with superior industry, energy, forethought, and virility, according to Grant (Spiro, 2009). The idea of “cold winters” and natural selection as the source of White European superiority provided a new version of 18th-century ideas that climate *directly* affected “national character” through anatomy as described in Montesquieu’s (1750) *Spirit of the Laws*. Grant’s version would be revived by Philippe Rushton in the 1990s. Although psychologists were attracted to his circle, Grant did not need data from psychologists, as Nordic history and cultural achievements were sufficient evidence. Great cultural achievements by Renaissance Italians or ancient Egyptians were evidence that they must have had Nordic blood.

Mental Testing, Educability, Eugenics, and Immigration

Before the *Passing of the Great Race* and the publication of the Binet-Simon tests, the quantitative study of mental abilities was already underway in the 1890s. American Psychologist James McKeen Cattell, inspired by his contact with Francis Galton, used reaction time, sensory acuity, and memory as “mental tests.” In the *Psychological Review*, R. Meade Bache (1895) argued from the work of Herbert Spencer that faster reaction times or “automatic movements” should characterize the “lower races.” Although Bache was not a psychologist, he used data obtained through psychologist Lightner Witmer, to compare “Whites,” Africans,” and “Indians” in the first empirical paper on race differences in a psychology journal. Bache claimed that Whites were indeed slowest, and explained the faster reaction times of Native Americans than Africans as due to the mixture of “white blood” in the “negroes.” Despite Bache’s assertion, Witmer student Albert Lewis reported no racial differences on the same measures, possibly from the same data set (McReynolds, 1997). Reaction time would prove to be a highly flexible discursive resource; faster times could be interpreted either as a sign of “primitive” or “advanced” racial development. As Richards (2012) has shown, not all early racial comparisons aimed to establish a racial hierarchy. For example, leading Columbia University psychologist Robert S. Woodworth and his assistant Frank Bruner collected data at the 1904 St. Louis Purchase Exposition on Ainu from Japan, “Pigmies” from the Congo, and a variety of Native American groups who were on exhibit at the Fair. Woodworth compared these groups with White visitors for muscular strength, speed, accuracy, vision, and hearing as well as a Seguin Form Board performance. But Woodworth (1910) later noted that comparisons of “negro” and “white” brain weights “partakes not a little of the ludicrous” (p. 172) and criticized the popular notion that innate differences between groups could be inferred from cultural differences or achievements.

The “race psychology” studies from 1910 to the 1930s were informed and inspired by three concerns. First, the “Negro education debates” that had begun at the end of the Civil War gave scientists a potential role in justifying the brutal restriction of educational opportunities. These restrictions intensified and hardened under the “Jim Crow” segregation laws and the Supreme Court *Plessy vs. Ferguson* “separate but equal” decision in 1896. With leadership from G. Stanley Hall, White psychologists took up the question of the alleged limits of Black “educability.” Second, the growth of the eugenics movement in the United States, through the efforts of biologist Charles B. Davenport, founder of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor and tireless promoter of eugenics in America, made the assessment of the quality of different racial “stocks” a vital question for many, but certainly not all, eugenicists. Third, eugenic themes were joined to the rising concerns over immigration raised by Grant, the Galton Society that he founded, and the Immigration Restriction League of prominent lawyer Prescott F. Hall.

By the early 1900s, the use of reaction time to index intelligence or make racial comparisons had not fared well, and the critique of craniometry by anthropologist Franz Boas was particularly effective (Baker, 1998). In France, Alfred Binet had also abandoned craniometry, and his new tests were aimed neither at racial comparisons nor at confirming Galton’s hereditarian position. With the translation and modification of the Binet-Simon test by Henry Goddard of the Vineland School and Lewis Terman of Stanford University, American psychology and American society entered a new era for the “measure of merit” in a wide

range of contexts (Carson, 2007). Justifying a racial hierarchy was not the main goal of most early mental testing, but for those who hoped white superiority could still be based on science, the tests were a powerful tool by which 18th- and 19th-century conceptions of Black inferiority could be made “objective” in a new way. Unlike 19th-century versions in which *all* Africans were viewed as inherently inferior to White Europeans, a new scientific racism based on mental testing allowed for discussions of distribution and overlap in the manner introduced by Galton (1869). In *Hereditary Genius*, Galton discussed “the comparative worth of different races” and concluded from their record of “achievements” (as judged by White authors) and his own travels that the “Negro” distribution of mental faculties overlapped with that of the Anglo-Saxon race but that the average of the Negro race was two grades lower, an assertion made without any measure of intelligence. In America, the use of overlapping distributions rather than rigid racial categories made the implicit ideology less obvious and would later be used to deny charges of racism by asserting, as did Vernon (1979), that racism only applied to claims that all members of one race were inferior to another.

The question of Black intelligence and “educability” was taken up by Mayo (1913), Strong (1913), and Ferguson (1916). These comparisons of American Black and White children, usually from segregated schools, provided the appearance of detached, careful reasoning about race. Environmental explanations for the difference in scores were rejected, and the schools were magically treated as equal in educational value in Strong’s (1913) study despite the fact that per pupil expenditure that year in South Carolina was \$14.79 for Whites and \$1.68 for Blacks. White teachers were paid much more than their Black counterparts; student-to-staff ratios were much lower, and White children had substantially longer school terms (Richards, 2012). These early studies illustrate the characteristics of later scientific racism in psychology: extensive data and consideration of possible alternative explanations, with heredity accepted in the end, sometimes reluctantly, as the best explanation of most of the racial differences. As many of these authors did not have the overtly political and hostile views of Madison Grant and the Nordicists, some historians (e.g., Richards, 2012) prefer to see this work as “racialist” rather than “scientific racism.” The position taken here is that the detached discourse made for a more effective form of scientific racism in which the roles of scientist and political advocate are separated, allowing the scientist to claim neutrality and therefore greater authority. The comparisons of Black and White school children continued through the 1920s but declined in American psychology in the 1930s.

Henry Goddard was not concerned with race, but with explaining how feeble-mindedness was hereditary and how pauperism, criminality, and immorality resulted from lack of foresight and planning in those of low intelligence. His contact with Charles B. Davenport provided considerable encouragement to seek the solution in eugenics (Zenderland, 1998). Goddard’s (1917) attempt to identify feeble-mindedness among the immigrants at Ellis Island led to his conclusion that, possibly for environmental reasons or social class differences, Eastern and Southern Europeans showed very high rates of feeble-mindedness. His results were then used by others to promote hereditary explanations and the need for immigration restriction by race to prevent social decay (Tucker, 1994). Lewis Terman also emphasized intelligence as a prerequisite for sexual morality (Hegarty, 2013). Like Galton, Terman focused on the “gifted” end of the distribution, but data from varied groups led Terman to conclude that borderline intelligence “is very, very common among Spanish-Indian and Mexican families of the southwest and also among negroes. Their dullness seems to be racial, or at least inherent in the family stocks from which they come.” He predicted that further research would reveal

“enormously significant racial differences in general intelligence” that could not be eliminated by culture (Terman, 1916, pp. 91–92). Special, segregated classes were needed for these children, emphasizing the concrete and practical rather than abstract learning, so that they might be made efficient workers. Like other early 20th-century supporters of eugenics, Terman believed that because of their lack of foresight and sexual restraint, individuals and groups with lower intelligence were “overbreeding” while those at the high end of intelligence failed to adequately reproduce. By the 1920s, these ideas were intertwined with public discussions over morality, gender, women’s education, domesticity, and family life. The problems of the gifted, morality, crime, sexuality, and racial differences were interrelated issues in Terman’s progressive vision for societal improvement through intelligence testing and eugenic programs (Hegarty, 2013; Winston, 2018).

In 1917, American Psychological Association President Robert Yerkes called for leading psychologists to contribute to the war effort, and organized the mass intelligence testing of approximately 1.7 million army recruits. The goals were to identify those “mentally incompetent” for service and to aid in classification and work assignment. The highly problematic testing conditions for masses of draftees with little or no education and minimal English have been described by Gould (1981) and Tucker (1994). In their detailed report, Yoakum and Yerkes (1920, p. 193), noted only that “the army data on racial differences are meagre,” and lower Negro scores were mentioned only once. Nevertheless, Carl Brigham (1923), fully committed to Ripley’s classification of Nordic, Alpine, and Mediterranean races, analyzed the army data using national origin as a proxy for race. He concluded that the more Nordic blood (i.e., the more Nordic the country of birth), the higher the scores, and that this simple mechanism explained why the recruits born in England, Holland, Scotland, Germany, and Denmark had superior scores to those from Turkey, Greece, Russia, Italy, and Poland, who in turn scored higher than Negroes. He asserted (but quietly repudiated his conclusions seven years later in Brigham, 1930) that the intelligence of American immigrants was declining due to both great influx of inferior races and poorer representatives of those races. Interbreeding would produce a lowering of the higher race, as predicted by Madison Grant. Immigration needed to be both “restrictive and highly selective,” but eliminating immigration would still not address the propagation of “defective strains” and the overall lowering of intelligence. (Brigham, 1923, p. 210). Psychologists Robert M. Yerkes, Lewis Terman, Henry Goddard, Edward Thorndike, Clark Wissler, William McDougall, Carl Seashore, and Carl Brigham were all members of the American Eugenics Society and believed that mental testing had a crucial role to play in eugenic programs. But only Brigham contributed directly to racial research, and their views on racial differences were varied, ranging from McDougall’s (1921) explicit racial hierarchy and support for strict racial segregation to Goddard’s disinterest in race. Brigham’s book, although promoted by Yerkes, came under sharp criticism from a number of his White peers (Stout & Stuart, 1991) as well as Black scholars such as Horace Mann Bond (Guthrie, 1998; Jackson, 2004).

The 1924 Immigration Law, the Reed-Johnson Act, extended the quota system of the Immigration Act of 1917. The result was severe restriction of Eastern and Southern European immigration, including the Jews of Russia, who were accused of a wide range of moral defects as well as Bolshevism. The army testing results played a limited role in the 1924 immigration law debates, although the role of psychological data was substantially more important than argued by Snyderman and Herrnstein (1983). None of the psychologists testified, but Brigham’s work was well known to Congressman Albert Johnson, the author of the 1924 Act, a

close friend of Madison Grant and president of the Eugenics Research Association in 1923. The testimony that helped secure passage of the Act came primarily from eugenicist Harry Laughlin, who, during several presentations to the House Immigration Committee, presented extensive data on diseases, degenerative conditions, and the physical and mental inferiority of recent immigrants. As described by Gelb, Allen, Futterman, and Mehler (1986), Laughlin presented six pages of testimony on the hereditary mental ability of immigrants as revealed through the army tests. An exhibit on the inheritance of mental, moral, and physical traits from the Second International Congress of Eugenics was displayed in the Capital Building for three years. Terman (1924) declared that, through mental testing, psychology “has become the beacon light of the eugenics movement” and “is appealed to by congressmen in the reshaping of national policy on immigration” (p. 106). There is little doubt that the 1924 Act would have passed without any use of psychological test data (Samelson, 1979), but there is also no doubt that the work of psychologists played an important role.

The Partial Retreat of Scientific Racism

During the 1930s, scientific racism was under increasing attack in anthropology (Baker, 1998; Barkan, 1992) and to a lesser extent in psychology. Ideas of Nordic superiority over other European ethnicities and ideas of Jews as a race lost currency because of association with Nazi ideology, the effect of the Great Depression on hereditary explanations for poverty, and the increasing interest among psychologists in attitudes and prejudice as opposed to racial differences. Samelson (1978) suggested that the influx of Jewish refugee scholars may have played a role in this change, although Jews constituted a very small number of psychologists in the 1930s (Winston, 1996). Some scientific critiques were particularly effective, as when Otto Klineberg (1935) turned World War I army testing data on its head. Blacks from Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois, and Ohio scored slightly higher than the “Nordic” Whites from Mississippi, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Georgia, an effect that could not be explained by “selective migration.” Some researchers, such as Thomas Garth, who had begun his studies of Native Americans with a firm belief in race differences, became skeptics and critics. But the decline of interest in racial studies was not universal. Raymond B. Cattell praised the German efforts to put eugenic principles into practice and continued to warn of the dangers of racial mixing, as did eugenics leader Charles B. Davenport (Richards, 2012; Tucker, 2008). Stanley Porteus, who moved from the Vineland School to the University of Hawaii in 1922, continued to study racial differences in intelligence and other traits through the 1940s and up to his death in 1972. His belief that his maze test was “culture free” and demonstrated the inferiority of Africans was unwavering despite the changes in social and scientific climate (e.g., Porteus, 1965).

Although the critiques by Otto Klineberg (1935), Ashley Montagu (1942), Ruth Benedict (1940), and other students of Franz Boas were effective, psychologists neither abandoned the concept of race, which was already under attack in the 1930s, nor the *possibility* that Blacks were intellectually inferior to Whites. The use of the category of “Nordic” continued in textbook discussions of race in the 1930s and 1940s, but then largely disappeared (Winston, Butzer, & Ferris, 2004). Introductory psychology textbooks gradually came to treat the issue of Black-White differences in intelligence as “unsettled” because of poor data, but did not reject the legitimacy of the question. Richards (2012) demonstrated the decline of racial comparisons in American psychology. However, interest in the “nature versus nurture”

question as originally formulated by Galton remained high. Galton (1883) had suggested the study of twins would provide the key, but he had no means of diagnosing zygosity. A number of studies of identical versus fraternal twins were published during the 1930s and 1940s, including twins reared apart (e.g., Newman Freeman, & Holzinger, 1937; see also Woodworth, 1941). Terman's student and collaborator, Barbara Burks (1928), compared the intelligence test score resemblance of a group of foster children and their foster parents with the resemblance of a group of children to their biological parents, the first of a number of studies hoping to assess nature versus nurture. Although these studies did not address race and offered evidence for the effect of environment as well as heredity, twin and adoption studies would later become an important tool in reviving hereditary interpretations of racial differences in test scores.

The 1920s and early 1930s debates over race and intelligence test scores were carried on almost entirely among White academics. With a handful of exceptions, African Americans remained excluded from leading graduate programs in psychology and nearly all academic positions outside of Black schools (see Guthrie, 1998; Pickren, 2009). After Francis Sumner became the first Black PhD psychologist under G. Stanley Hall at Clark University and after Sumner established a highly successful psychology graduate program at Howard University, a community of Black psychologists began to emerge. Although early critiques of scientific racism came from W. E. B. Du Bois (1920) and Horace Mann Bond, as noted in "Mental Testing, Educability, Eugenics, and Immigration," they tended to appear in the NAACP periodical, *The Crisis* or in the *Journal of Negro Education* published at Howard University, and could easily be ignored by White readers and editors of mainstream psychology journals.

Scientific Racism and the Civil Rights Movement

Henry Garrett (1894–1973), 1946 APA president and Psychology Department executive officer at Columbia University from 1941 to 1955, played a major role in organizing scientific opposition to the growing Civil Rights Movement in the postwar years. Using his credentials and expertise as a psychologist, Garrett worked with and supported racial extremists and neo-Nazi groups in these aims (Tucker, 1994, 2002; Winston, 1998). As a young faculty member at Columbia University, where he had received his PhD, Garrett had an early interest in racial and ethnic differences, but his hereditarian position was often presented in moderate terms, and he was willing to supervise the doctoral dissertation of a Black graduate student, Mamie Phips Clark, who had studied under Sumner at Howard. By 1945, Garrett began to attack arguments from Ashley Montagu and Irving Lorge that racial differences in IQ test scores could have an environmental interpretation or that education and environment could increase IQ. Using a strategy that would become a staple, he argued that Montagu's position was based on ideology and "personal emotions," a coded reference to Montagu's Jewish background, whereas Garrett's own conclusion of ineluctable racial differences was presented as detached, scientific thinking. Garrett testified in the 1952 *Davis v. County School Board* case that preceded *Brown v. Board of Education*, and testified that not only would "equal" separate schools cause no damage but that Negroes needed their own schools to develop what Garrett alleged were their "special talents" in music and athletics, a trope that played to widely held stereotypes and prejudices.

The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954 galvanized Garret and other racial activists: they believed that school integration would inevitably lead to miscegenation and the downfall of the White race. They viewed the influential UNESCO (1951) declarations on race as a danger sign of “equalitarian” thinking. Retiring from Columbia in 1955, Garrett returned to his home state of Virginia and devoted the remaining 18 years of his life to promoting racial segregation with scientific justification, as part of the “massive resistance.” These efforts were supported by money from the Pioneer Fund, created by textile machinery heir Wickliffe Draper, who had begun funding research on race, eugenics, repatriation of Negroes, and the damage of miscegenation since the late 1930s (Kenny, 2002; Lombardo, 2003; Tucker, 2002). Despite repeated denials by subsequent Pioneer Fund presidents, money was channeled to the White Citizens’ Councils and used for explicitly political ends, that is, to resist integration, reverse *Brown*, fight new civil rights legislation, and preserve a segregated society. To revive race science, Garrett provided Draper money to his former student Audrey Shuey for a review of racial comparisons. *The Testing of Negro Intelligence* (Shuey, 1958) became a standard text for the justification of segregation and was cited in later works such as Jensen (1969) despite Shuey’s very obvious exclusion of results that did not support a hereditary interpretation (Pettigrew, 1964). Many psychologists, such as those from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), objected strongly to the work of Garrett and his circle, but their efforts to counter the International Association for the Advancement of Ethnology and Eugenics (IAAEE) literature and activities were limited by both resources and concerns that attempts to end scientific racism would violate a mythologized idea of value neutrality and thereby threaten the scientific legitimacy of psychology (Winston, 2011). Pettigrew’s (1964) outstanding critique of race science was widely cited but did not deter Garrett and his co-workers.

By 1959, Garrett had formed the IAAEE with the help of biologist Robert Kuttner, political scientist A. James Gregor, economics graduate student Donald Swan, psychologist Frank McGurk, and others. This group was soon expanded internationally to include geneticist and eugenicist R. Ruggles Gates, historian Charles Tansill, and anthropologist Robert Gayre, who became the first editor of their journal, *The Mankind Quarterly*. Soon other psychologists were added to the editorial board: R. Travis Osborne, Stanley Porteus, Herbert Sanborn, and Audrey Shuey. Some members of the board were primarily interested in race mixing in America; some, like Kuttner and Swan, were openly involved in neo-Nazi groups; and some had contributed to the 1930s Nazi race science literature. These scholars from a range of disciplines were united by the view that European civilization had developed only because of the qualities of the northern European gene pool and the belief that these qualities and civilization would vanish without protection from interbreeding (Winston, 1998).

The Mankind Quarterly published a steady stream of articles on racial differences in intelligence, the role of race in decline of civilizations, an implicit defense of apartheid, the negative consequences of school integration, and the naturalness and inevitability of racial disharmony, but also general discussions of ancient civilizations and ethnic groups. Leading Nazi geneticist Otmar von Verschuer, Josef Mengele’s graduate supervisor, was listed as a member of the Advisory Board from 1966 until long after his death. The IAAEE founders reached out to the public, with articles by McGurk (1956) and Garrett (1961) on hereditary racial differences in intelligence appearing in *U.S. News and World Report*. With the help of Pioneer Fund money, Garrett gave public lectures to the White Citizens’ Councils. He and other IAAEE directors gave expert testimony on the damaging effects of integration in the

Stell vs. Savannah Board of Education case that challenged the Brown decision. Judge Frank Scarlett made explicit use of their work in finding for the White parents, a decision overturned on appeal. In a series of pamphlets distributed to hundreds of thousands of teachers, Garrett warned how school integration would destroy White civilization through interbreeding that would lower White IQ. In other publications, Garrett used a narrative originally developed by Mississippi senator Theodore Bilbo (1947) and racial activist Carleton Putnam (see Jackson, 2001a) that racial equality in intelligence and capacity for civilization was an “equalitarian hoax,” a massive fraud perpetrated by Franz Boas and his Jewish students in order to bring about race mixing.

The membership of the “*Mankind Quarterly* circle” overlapped with other far-right and neo-Nazi groups, particularly the Liberty Lobby created by America’s most important publisher and distributor of Holocaust denial and extreme antisemitic literature, Willis Carto (1926–2015). Using the discourse of anticommunism and patriotism during the 1950s, Carto was able to gather support from a wide range of civic and political figures, and not all were aware of Carto’s devotion to Jewish conspiracy theories and Nazi racial ideology. Henry Garrett and other IAAEE directors served the boards of a number of Carto publications. The Liberty Lobby arranged for Garrett to give expert testimony to Congress against new civil rights legislation in 1967. These efforts intersected with those of a second group, the Northern League, founded by Peter Huxley-Blythe and anthropologist Roger Pearson in the 1950s. Created to “save the Nordic race from “annihilation of our kind” by “forces which would mongrelise our race and nation” (Pearson, 1959, p. 2), the League’s members included Hans Günther, one of the most notorious race scientists of the Nazi regime, ex-Waffen SS officer Arthur Erhardt and American E. S. Cox, who campaigned for the return of all Blacks to Africa. After moving to the United States, Pearson joined forces with Carto to promote the dangers of the “culture distorters” (i.e., the Jews), who would destroy the Nordic race if allowed to capture the minds of Nordic children. Garrett and Herbert Sanborn, who had been chair of philosophy and psychology at Vanderbilt University from 1911 to 1942, served as editors of *Western Destiny*, published by Carto and edited by Pearson. As editor of *Mankind Quarterly* starting in 1978, Pearson focused on publishing and republishing material on race. He was able to build new relationships with academics, including noted psychologists Raymond B. Cattell and Hans J. Eysenck, who both served on the Advisory Board and contributed articles to *Mankind Quarterly*. Eysenck was apparently unaware of Pearson’s earlier promotion of Jewish conspiracy theories, which were now only hinted at in Pearson’s discussions of Boas and his students (Tucker, 2002; Winston, 1998).

Although the *Mankind Quarterly* group had minimal effect on the progress of the Civil Rights Movement, their work remained an important source of rhetorical justification and encouragement for racial activists. Physicist William Shockley could draw on their literature to argue that Black White differences in IQ tests and economic success were largely due to heredity, and he received Pioneer Fund money to help promote this view along with his plans for strong eugenic measures (Tucker, 1994). This revival of earlier ideas received more attention in the public arena than in the psychological literature.

Jensen, Poverty, and Early Education

Arthur Jensen's (1969) famous article in the *Harvard Education Review* marked a new development in scientific racism. Jensen's prose was measured, and he enjoyed wide respect among his colleagues. Despite the recency of early education initiatives, Jensen's very first sentence was that "compensatory education has been tried and has apparently failed" (p. 2). The work appeared in the context of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, President Johnson's War on Poverty, the Great Society campaign, and the Head Start program, amid intense political debates on government, cities, minorities, and inequality. While allowing a role for environment, Jensen revived early 20th-century arguments that poverty and socioeconomic status (SES) differences, as well as racial differences in IQ test scores, were partly due to heredity and that his earlier conclusion that severe socioeconomic disadvantages explained the differences was incorrect. Not only were Black children said to have lower average IQ, they were alleged to have a difference in the *kind* of intelligence: their deficiency was alleged to be in abstract thought and not in memorization. By implication, they required a different kind of educational experience in order to realize this limited potential, and by implication they would be less likely to be successful in higher education and professional careers. Jensen revived early 20th-century eugenic fears by arguing that the higher birthrates of those who were poor and/or Black posed a serious dysgenic threat to America. Interviewed by the *New York Times* just after the publication of the article, Jensen was even more forthcoming on his explanation of racial differences. He declared, without evidence, that "there are intelligence genes, which are found in populations in different proportions, somewhat like the distribution of blood types. The number of intelligence genes seems to be lower, overall, in the Black population than in the white" (quoted in Edson, 1969). *The Harvard Educational Review* article produced an enormous body of criticism and defense, including a set of commentaries published with the original article.

Jensen continued to publish the same conclusions until his death in 2012, avoiding any endorsement of racial segregation and the open abhorrence of race mixing of the Garret circle. With strong financial support from the Pioneer Fund (Tucker, 2002), Jensen was able to publish and speak widely despite heckling, demonstrations, and threats, primarily from student groups. His later work (e.g., Jensen, 1980) was instrumental in convincing many psychologists that IQ tests were not biased against Black Americans, a conclusion reached through a highly technical analysis of item difficulties, test-criterion correlations, and "g" loadings from factor analysis. Jensen used his failure to find statistical measures of bias to support his arguments against cultural and in favor of a partial hereditary explanation for racial test score differences. The many critics, including geneticists (e.g., Lewontin, 1970), who noted that within-group heritability had no bearing on between-group heritability, had little effect on Jensen and his supporters. Nor did the accumulated evidence of the effects of culture and schooling on standardized test scores (e.g., see Nisbett, 2009) deter him. Jensen received substantial support from his former post-doctoral supervisor, Hans J. Eysenck, who now entered the "IQ wars" through numerous books, articles, and speaking engagements (e.g., Eysenck, 1971). Eysenck, Jensen, and their supporters rejected all charges of racism, arguing that they were only presenting scientific facts, while their critics, such as Leon Kamin (1974) and Stephen J. Gould (1981), were said to be ideologically motivated, possibly by Marxism. The 1970s and 1980s "IQ wars" were characterized by charges and denials of "ideological bias" on both sides. Despite the claim of scientific detachment, work by Jensen

and Eysenck was enthusiastically embraced by right-wing and neo-Nazi groups, especially in Britain. One National Front leader made specific reference to Jensen (1969) as inspiring a revival and reaffirmation of the group's belief in White superiority (Billig, 1979, p. 9). Both Jensen and Eysenck gave interviews to right-wing and neo-fascist publications, and both appeared as contributors or supporters of the European sister publications of the *Mankind Quarterly*, *Nouvelle Ecole* in France and *Neue Anthropologie* in Germany, which was closely affiliated with leading German neo-Nazis. The meaning of this participation has been the subject of some debate (Buchanan, 2010; Winston, 1998), particularly given Eysenck's view of himself as firmly anti-Nazi, but these activities cannot be seen as politically neutral. Jensen (1969) did not shy away from encouraging political conclusions, by asking rhetorically: "Is there a danger that current welfare policies, unaided by eugenic foresight, could lead to the genetic enslavement of a substantial segment of our population?" (p. 95). He gave congressional testimony on educational policy and argued that affirmative action was based on a scientifically disproven idea and must be rejected (Tucker, 1994). Jensen's case illustrates how it is not meaningful or helpful to ask whether these academics were themselves "racists," as some critics charged, but instead to ask how their work aided and supported racism.

Although Jensen was very public in his views, Raymond B. Cattell, a founder of multivariate personality research, carried on a much more private campaign for his eugenic program during the 1970s and 1980s. Starting in the 1930s, Cattell developed a eugenic approach to science and morality that he called "Beyondism," in which moral choices would be guided by eugenic principles rather than by religious considerations (Mehler, 1997; Tucker, 2008). Although he ceased to praise Nazi eugenics as he had done in the 1930s, Cattell's postwar eugenic writings continued to argue into the 1980s that racial "crossing" would result in offspring with intelligence "halfway between the two groups" (Cattell, 1987, p. 203). He maintained that humans should split into non-interbreeding races that might eventually lose the ability to interbreed and become separate species. He emphasized inherited differences in personality traits as well as intelligence, and argued that the economic success and failures of racial groups and nations depended heavily on these differences.

Cattell's (1987) *Beyondism* drew on his mainstream work on personality and intelligence, and it is not possible to clearly divide his work into the "scientific" and the "political." He published nine articles in *Mankind Quarterly* and served on its advisory board from 1980 until his death in 1998. Scott Townsend Publishers, created by anthropologist Roger Pearson (see "Scientific Racism and the Civil Rights Movement"), published two of Cattell's books on eugenics and national IQ differences, and he acknowledged the help of Pearson and other racial extremists. Cattell's eugenic work was relatively unknown to psychologists until the American Psychological Foundation (APF), an arm of the American Psychological Association (APA), decided to present Cattell with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1997. Three scholars (including the present author) who were familiar with Cattell's writings on race and eugenics wrote to the APF to ask that his "achievements" in eugenics be carefully considered given the strong anti-racist stance of the APA. The controversy that erupted over this award, which was put on hold, has been described in detail by Tucker (2008).

The discussions surrounding Jensen, intelligence, poverty, and race lost salience during the 1980s, when the Reagan-era policies of reducing social welfare programs and eliminating affirmative action may have rendered a scientific justification using IQ scores unnecessary. The famous case of *Larry P. v. Riles*, in which the courts found that the use of IQ tests resulted in the overrepresentation Black children in special education classes, led to the banning of IQ

tests for placement in California during the 1980s. Much public and professional discussion regarding test bias arose from this case (Frisby & Henry, 2016). Robert Sternberg's triarchic theory of intelligence (1985) and Howard Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligences provided alternatives to the traditional "Spearman's g" approach to intelligence, on which Jensen's work rested. However, public interest in race and intelligence was revived in the 1990s by the publication of Herrnstein and Murray's (1994) *The Bell Curve* and the work of Canadian psychologist J. Philippe Rushton.

The Revival of Scientific Racism in the 1990s

The Bell Curve was described by its promoters as primarily concerned with social class and stratification, but race occupied a full chapter (14), and issues of racial differences recur throughout the book. With a bibliography that drew on Jensen's work and from *Mankind Quarterly*, Herrnstein and Murray (1994) asserted that economic and racial inequality, as well as crime, divorce, "children out of wedlock," and other social ills were greatly, but not solely, the result of largely unchangeable hereditary differences in intelligence. They argued that alleged higher breeding rate of lower IQ groups and immigrants posed a great threat to America, despite substantial evidence of the "Flynn Effect" that overall intelligence was rising, not falling. As historian Leila Zenderland (1997) noted:

It is a rare experience to read a late-twentieth-century book that invokes so many of the concepts of the early twentieth century so faithfully, and which can thus warn contemporary Americans so unabashedly about the dangers to their society from the "dysgenic pressures" of fertility differentials among women of different classes, or from the immigration to American shores of inferior populations (p. 136).

For Herrnstein and Murray, these old concerns had new meaning and importance in the late 20th century. They argued that the sexual revolution made it more difficult than it was in the 1950s for those with low intelligence to "follow a moral compass" (p. 544), marry, and avoid "illegitimacy." The belief that sexual control and conformity to sexual norms were closely intertwined with intelligence had survived from Terman to Herrnstein and Murray (see Hegarty, 2013).

The Bell Curve was met with severe criticism on grounds of distorted use of suspect sources, misrepresentation of heredity and heritability, disregard or minimization of racism, and promotion of libertarian social policies under a pseudoscientific guise (e.g., Fischer et al., 1996). The public furor allowed Murray (Herrnstein died before publication), Jensen, and others to claim heroic status for breaking a "taboo" on discussion of race, a claim belied by the access of racial researchers to a variety of journals and publishers, the wide distribution of the book, and frequent coverage of race differences in textbooks (Winston, Butzer, & Ferris, 2004). The American Psychological Association responded to the public controversy by forming a task force to report on the state of knowledge on intelligence, heredity, and racial differences. Their report (Neisser et al., 1996) concluded that the available evidence did not support a hereditary interpretation of racial differences in intelligence test scores. By implication, the APA committee left the question open as one that *might* be answered empirically and did not question the scientific meaningfulness of racial categories.

The Bell Curve also drew on the work of Canadian psychologist J. Philippe Rushton (1943–2012). Initially involved in altruism research, Rushton shifted his interest to hereditary and evolutionary explanations of individual differences after post-doctoral work with Arthur Jensen and Hans Eysenck in the early 1980s (Nyborg, 2013). Starting in the mid-1980s, he described evolved differences in “Negroid,” “Mongoloid” and “Caucasoid” races, racial categories that harkened back to those of Samuel Morton. Rushton (1995) later changed his racial group names to “Black,” “Oriental,” and “White” without explanation. For publication, he had frequent access to the journal founded and edited by Eysenck, *Personality and Individual Differences*, as well as other mainstream journals, despite repeated claims that discussions of race were taboo. His view of evolved racial differences was not widely known until a heavily publicized paper given at the 1989 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Here, and in over 100 papers and books up until his death in 2012, Rushton presented his summary of previous data on race, including studies from the early 1900s. He asserted that compared to Whites, Blacks showed smaller brains, fewer cortical neurons, lower IQ, lower “cultural achievements,” higher aggressiveness, less cautiousness, higher impulsivity, lower “law abidingness,” lower mental health, lower “administrative capacity,” higher hormone levels (specifically testosterone), larger genitals, greater frequency of intercourse, more permissive (sexual) attitudes, and higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases (e.g., Rushton, 1995, p. 5). “Orientals” were listed as superior to Whites on these variables, although with much smaller differences in brain size and IQ, and these differences received much less attention in Rushton’s work than the alleged Black-White differences.

The average IQ in sub-Saharan Africa was said to be 75, based on the work of Richard Lynn from Ireland, another Pioneer Fund grantee. Rushton’s evolutionary theory claimed that White Europeans had faced cold, challenging winters that selected for larger brains and higher intelligence. African American IQ was claimed to average 85 because of their racial mixture, a view that was popular in the early 1900s and later used by Garrett and Cattell. Rushton argued that the differences in social behavior were based on differences in evolved reproductive strategies called *r/k*, which implied that compared to Whites, Blacks had *evolved* to have larger numbers of children but care for them poorly. These claims would resonate with White fears regarding welfare and crime, and the belief that the welfare state promoted social decay (Winston, 2018). Rushton and Bogaert (1989) put it bluntly in their abstract: “populations of African ancestry are inclined to a greater frequency of uninhibited disorders such as rape and unintended pregnancy and to more sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS” (p. 1211). In contrast to Terman’s emphasis on intelligence as the primary underpinning for morality, Rushton foregrounded unsupported claims of the dangers of Black sexuality. The image of the Black rapist that had fueled American racism and inspired thousands of lynchings since the 1800s, an image popularized on screen in the 1915 film *Birth of a Nation* and in the 1988 presidential campaign “Willie Horton” television ads, was thus put in modern scientific form.

Rushton’s work was heavily criticized by psychologists, evolutionary biologists, anthropologists, and geneticists for severe scientific inadequacies, fundamental errors, inappropriate conceptualization of race, inappropriate statistical comparisons, misuse of sources, and serious logical errors and flaws (e.g., Cain & Vanderwolf, 1990; Fish, 2002; Gabor & Roberts, 1990; Lieberman, 1991; Peters, 1993; Weizmann, Weiner, Wiesenthal, & Ziegler, 1990; Zuckerman & Brody, 1988). Rushton was permitted a reply in nearly all

journals. With over \$1 million in from the Pioneer Fund (Rushton served as president of the fund from 2002 until 2012), he carried out new studies of personality and intelligence, generally using existing data sets.

Critiques and student protests at Western University did not deter Rushton from presenting his work to a wider audience and appearing on TV and radio. With Pioneer Fund financing, he was able to send out thousands of unsolicited copies of an abridged version of his 1995 *Race, Evolution, and Behavior* to academics across North America (Tucker, 2002). During the 1990s, the abridged version was also featured and sold on the websites of racial extremists and neo-Nazis, such as the National Alliance and National Vanguard, although these groups were sometimes displeased by the apparent assertion of Asian superiority.

Of particular concern was the participation of Rushton and other psychologists in the meetings of the *American Renaissance*, a group dedicated to reestablishing a segregated America (Tucker, 2002). As noted by Cronshaw, Hamilton, Onyura, and Winston (2006), Rushton was a featured speaker at the biennial conferences of the American Renaissance in 1996, 1998, 2000, and 2002, where he presented his analysis of racial differences in crime and intelligence and his theory of the biological basis for nationalism and ethnocentrism. At the 1996 meeting, Rushton ended his talk by stating “any country with large black populations will have large problems,” and received a standing ovation (Brown, 1996, p. 8). On the American Renaissance website, the work of Rushton, Jensen, and Lynn was discussed and admired. The American Renaissance online archives contained dozens of articles about the dangers of Black crime, the rape of White women by Black men, the denial of rights of White people, the dangers of non-White immigration, the assertion that ex-slaves thought life better under slavery, and the reality of immutable race differences. According to some of the American Renaissance authors, the solution is clear: forced separation of the races in North America, either by dividing the country or removing non-Whites. Rushton continued to present his work at the American Renaissance Conferences in 2006 and 2008, as did psychologist Glayde Whitney in 1998 and Richard Lynn, in 2000, 2002, and 2012. Pioneer Fund money has also been used to support the American Renaissance and its founder, Jared Taylor (Tucker, 2002).

Such participation can be difficult to interpret, as speakers at a single conference may not be fully aware of their hosts’ commitments. In this case, Rushton’s involvement with American Renaissance was both long and extensive, and it would be reasonable to assume awareness of their aims. Similarly, the involvement of psychologists with America’s most notorious racial activist and neo-Nazi, David Duke, cannot be dismissed as a case of naiveté. In his autobiography, Duke attributed his racial “awakening” to the work of psychologists such as Jensen. He acknowledged explicit *scientific* help from psychologists Philippe Rushton and Glayde Whitney:

Prof. J. Philippe Rushton lent me a great deal of his time in helping do some final edits and proofreading of the scientific parts of my book, *My Awakening*. Prof. Gayle Whitney, the former President of the Behavior Genetics Association, who has also passed on, was impressed enough by my book to write a brilliant and brave introduction. He paid a steep price for writing it, but he weathered the storm and told me that stepping up and doing it was one of the things he was most proud of in his life.

(Duke, 2013)

The claim that Rushton was acting only as a scientist is not credible given this context. The view that this scientific work was only concerned with “difference” and not “inferiority” is equally untenable. Explicit assistance to those dedicated to violating civil rights and spreading hatred represents a serious ethical problem for universities, for the discipline of psychology, and for the American Psychological Association.

Conclusions

Despite careful, scholarly criticism in every era since the early 1900s, scientific racism in psychology has proven remarkably resilient. Although Arthur Jensen and Philippe Rushton both died in 2012, a small but very active community of researchers continue to pursue questions of race in relation to intelligence, brain size, crime, sexuality, reproduction, and dysgenics, with new work appearing in *Personality and Individual Differences*, *Intelligence*, and other journals. This international community is led by Richard Lynn, who for a number of years served simultaneously on the editorial boards of *Intelligence* and *Mankind Quarterly*, and as president of the Pioneer Fund. His recent book (Lynn, 2015) comparing the intelligence of nations was published by Washington Summit Publishers, the publication arm of the White nationalist organization The National Policy Institute. Lynn’s material is harnessed for stoking contemporary fears of immigration and the changing demographics of America. The interlacing of scientific psychology with racial politics has now lasted over 100 years. The community of race scientists had sufficient funding, access to journals, dedication, and shared understanding to carry on a project that most psychologists had considered moribund by the 1960s. As all scholarly communities do, the race scientists reviewed and praised one another’s work. That they were subject to protests and sometimes threats of violence created a heightened sense of victimhood and mission that may have contributed to their resolve.

Explanations for the persistence of scientific racism are complex and elusive. As societal concerns shifted from immigration to civil rights, to early education, to welfare and urban decay, scientific racism could promise both an explanation and solution to pressing social problems, one that did not blame White people or racism or require the redistribution of wealth. For psychologists, the claims of racial differences in intelligence were imbedded in the larger debates in psychology over heredity and environment and the concept of “intelligence.” A review of the vast historiography on these debates is beyond the scope of this discussion (e.g., see Carson, 2007; Cravens, 1978; Degler, 1991). With the rapid growth of both behavior genetics and evolutionary psychology in the 1990s, genetic sources of human differences were

under renewed discussion as well as renewed criticism. A revived scientific racism was able to attach itself to these new concerns, aided by the desire of many psychologists to appear fully empiricist and open to any question.

In anthropology, 50 years of critique by the Boasians and later by physical anthropologists culminated in the rejection of “race” as a biologically or genetically meaningful scientific term (American Association of Physical Anthropologists, 1996; see also Brace, 2005; Graves, 2003). For the great majority of anthropologists, human variation was along *clines*, continuous gradations along the geographic range of a species, not races. Culturally defined categories of race were historically situated folk taxonomies that varied widely over time and place, and speculation about hereditary group differences could not be scientifically meaningful. But this fundamental critique had little effect in psychology. Richards (2004, 2012) argued that the IQ debate had become “sterile” by the 1970s, with both sides recycling the same arguments, a history that does not speak well for hopes of scientific progress. That the size of the African American brain is still under debate in the 21st century is discouraging for the discipline, but truly alarming for people of color. For psychologists, the admirable defense of academic freedom has generally taken precedence over the harm done by scientific racism. That harm, ranging from construction of the inferior “other” (Teo, 2008) to the encouragement of human rights violations, has yet to be addressed by the broader community of psychologists.

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