

RACE, GENETICS, AND IQ

The Funding of Scientific Racism

Wickliffe Draper and the Pioneer Fund

William H. Tucker

Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2002

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286 pp.

Intelligence, Race, and Genetics

Conversations with Arthur R. Jensen

Frank Miele

Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002

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243 pp.

Reviewed by Kevin Lamb

Nothing stirs the ire of egalitarians more than discussions of genetic-based racial differences in intelligence. Just raising the point in a conversation during a coffee break at the office or over a backyard barbeque with neighbors can stoke inflamed passions and scornful fury, enraging even the most sedated egalitarian. The implications of genetic influences give credence to the idea that people (individuals, races, and sexes) are actually *different*, and that these differences are reflected in human nature, which completely undermines the entire *raison d'être* of egalitarianism.

Racial egalitarians generally adopt two approaches when confronting hereditarian arguments: Contest the empirical data by directly challenging the validity of behavioral genetic methodology, and undermine the credibility of researchers by leveling the charge of "racism." Nearly a decade after the publication of Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's bestseller *The Bell Curve*, egalitarian critics of IQ research have aggressively tried to undermine both the empirical foundation of behavioral genetic studies and the efforts of

researchers to pursue further analysis of the IQ gap between blacks and whites as measured by the most reliably administered IQ tests.¹ Often, however, strident egalitarian critics simply sidestep empirical validity issues by “exposing” the alleged hidden political motivations of researchers who persist in probing the relationship between IQ, genetics, and racial differences.

Two recently published books highlight the contrast between a skeptically objective examination of the genetic hypothesis of racial disparities in intelligence and a neo-Marxian screed that presumably passes for social science scholarship. No two books could be more different in content and tone—one carefully probes the complex scientific frontier surrounding the empirical findings on intelligence, race, and genetics, while the other rakes the muck of innuendo and hearsay rumor in a flimsy attempt to undermine the credibility of leading IQ researchers by questioning the motives and objectives that inspired their scientific pursuits.

The title of William H. Tucker’s *The Funding of Scientific Racism* reveals a great deal about the ideological lens with which the author views research that investigates the genetic foundation of racial differences in intelligence. A foretaste of the author’s objectives is evident in his acknowledgments, where Tucker recognizes Barry Mehler as “the director and founder of the Institute for the Study of Academic Racism at Ferris State University,” who “generously opened both his files and his home to me,” and Keith Hurt, “who shared his encyclopedic knowledge of right-wing activists, as well as the transcripts of his interviews with a number of important sources of information.” (Tucker’s previous book, *The Science and Politics of Racial Research*, received the Ralph J. Bunche Award, which gives some indication of the author’s own ideological ax-grinding.) That a book purporting to expose the political bias of its subjects would rely upon the efforts of Marxist mudslingers like Mehler and Hurt—in effect employing witch doctors as witch hunters—brings the concept of *chutzpah* to new heights.

From beginning to end, Tucker’s ideological narrative, a spin-off from his previous book, is part heuristic depiction (“racism” is the “hidden” motive for studying racial differences) and part an extended diatribe that traffics in gossip and innuendo. He aims to spin a tale of political intrigue and conspiracy, revealing a plot of deception on the part of Tucker’s protagonists—scientific “racists” who seek to dismantle the civil rights of American blacks. Private correspondence and manuscripts from no fewer than eighteen archival repositories were combed through in search of comments, no matter how flippant or trivial, that might be used—regardless of context—to depict anti-egalitarian activists and researchers as “racists.”

Tucker’s primary focus is the research activities of the Pioneer Fund, a corporation founded in the late 1930s by five distinguished individuals: Wickliffe P. Draper, Harry H. Laughlin, Frederick H. Osborn, John M. Harlan, and Malcolm Donald, for the primary purpose of providing research grants

into the study of human nature, heredity, and eugenics. The research interests of these founders reflected a prevalent view of human nature that has shifted over the years—one that remains at odds with the contemporary ideological prism of radical egalitarianism, which considers race as strictly a “social construct” rather than a biological concept. What is missing from Tucker’s account is any real sense of what the Pioneer founders and grantees were actually like as persons. Most were accomplished Americans, some independently wealthy, others highly educated with distinguished careers—departmental chairmen in academe, a Nobel prize-winning scientist, a Guggenheim fellow, a former U.S. Supreme Court justice, Royal Society fellows, members of leading scientific academies and societies, and some of the most recognized authorities in the behavioral and life sciences.

Tucker’s narrative begins with an examination of the writings and activities of Earnest Sevier Cox and his connection with Pioneer’s main benefactor and first director, Wickliffe Draper. Cox’s most noted work is *White America*,² a self-published book that warned of the societal dangers of racial miscegenation and argued for a historical record of cultural and social decay as typified by racially hybrid societies in Latin America and South Africa. Tucker then turns to Madison Grant and Lothrop Stoddard, whose popular works exemplified an anti-egalitarian perspective that dominated the first three decades of twentieth century America. He tries to portray Cox, Grant, Stoddard, and such other leading scholars of the period as Charles Davenport and Harry Laughlin, as sinister plotters in a “racist” and “anti-Semitic” scheme to undermine the status of blacks and Jews in American society. The author’s failure to supply historical context glosses over a seismic ideological shift in the social sciences over the last century that has been well documented in Carl Degler’s *In Search of Human Nature* and Ullica Segerstråle’s *Defenders of the Truth*.³ This historical void enables Tucker to misleadingly depict his principal characters as a malign and monolithic entity.

Other conspirators include assorted “neo-Nazis,” “segregationists,” and garden-variety “racists” whom the author strives to link—no matter how remotely—to Pioneer Fund directors or grant recipients. Tucker is also at pains to weave a web of conspiratorial intrigue and subversion implicating several researchers who received grants from the Fund. Their goal, according to Tucker, was to give saliency to the idea of racial separation and legitimacy to suppressing the rights of blacks. He fails however, to establish that these researchers cooperated with one another in any meaningful way. Flippant remarks and trivial comments are lifted out of context from private correspondence, and in one case the surviving mother of a deceased researcher affiliated with Pioneer-sponsored academics is questioned about her late son’s attitudes and political views in order to scandalize the slightest derogatory observation.

Tucker's selective manipulation of the factual record stands out in his brief mention of the "Cyril Burt scandal." Glossing over the details and various twists in the course of the literature that deals with the scandal, Tucker notes that it was Shockley's inquiries about Burt's research on twins that "helped to prove that Burt's study had been fraudulent." Tucker simply accepts the accusations leveled against the eminent British psychologist as if there were little doubt about Burt's guilt. In the research notes that cover this brief passage, readers are advised of Leon Kamin's book, *The Science and Politics of IQ*, and N. J. Mackintosh's *Cyril Burt: Fraud or Framed?*, but no reference is made to Robert Joynson's *The Burt Affair* or Ronald Fletcher's *Science, Ideology and the Media*.⁴ The reader is left with a misleading impression that Burt was actually guilty as accused, since the two major books that have all but exonerated Burt's alleged misdeeds are nowhere to be found. A fair and balanced assessment of the literature on the Burt scandal would conclude that the "evidence" fails to substantiate any of the claims that Burt conscientiously fudged his findings on identical twins—findings that have been corroborated by a growing body of evidence.

Such a simplistic narrative reflects a dogmatic mindset: the egalitarian social critic as true believer. In his 1985 book *Alien Powers*, Kenneth Minogue masterfully described the dynamics behind the "ideological revelation"—a pseudo-intellectual Marxian dogma—in which "ideologies neither fit, nor aspire to fit, the academic world."

It is the essence of the ideological challenge that it insists upon its own comprehensiveness. Indeed the main function of the dialectic is to act as a glue which prevents ideology from dissolving into a set of proposals and a collection of accounts of the real world, each of which might be criticized according to the appropriate criteria of judgment. Ideology, however, denies that the conditions relevant to judging a proposal are different from those appropriate to criticizing theories; it similarly rejects the discipline of disciplinary boundaries. Academics of an ideological bent in universities are, of course, forced to take some account of these distinctions, but the pure ideological position is an insistence upon its own seamless unity. Just as the only ideological solution to any particular problem is the total revolution which solves all problems, so also no practical or academic issue can be isolated from the structure of domination.⁵

So it is with Tucker's work—one that purports to expose "clandestine activities" which reveal the goals of the Fund as "the preservation of white supremacy and white racial purity from the threat posed by blacks and undesirable immigrants, especially Jews." Such a discovery, according to Tucker, shows that the Fund uses science as a vehicle against civil rights. The scheme that Tucker purportedly unravels ranks with some of the great conspiracy theories of the modern age—the Illuminati, Freemasonry, and the Protocols of Zion. True enough, any sophisticated reader can conclude that some research endeavors which have received the support of the Pioneer Fund have over the years effectively challenged the empirical basis upon which the

civil rights agenda of radical egalitarians rests: the literal notion of racial equality. What is missing from this warped account is a balanced perspective of the *quality* and *variety* of research projects that Pioneer has supported over the years, and which are documented in Richard Lynn's official history of the Fund.⁶

Tucker claims that the Pioneer Fund's "favorite issues [are] no longer of any great significance to either the scientific community or the public" and that "very few researchers outside the Pioneer clique are particularly interested in a topic that has so little basic scientific value." This is simply Tucker's way of carefully tiptoeing past the thicket of empirical realities that cannot be addressed by some ideological doctrinaire. The scientific findings that Pioneer has supported have become accepted as valid scientific paradigms—from the ubiquitous presence of the *g* factor to the behavioral genetic foundation of human personality traits. Academic egalitarians have shifted much of their criticism away from disputes over the methodological analysis of empirical data to exposing the motivational aims of researchers, particularly Pioneer Fund recipients.

Egalitarian critics like Tucker have no other recourse but to massage their own ideological passions, taking aim at empirically driven scientists rather than properly evaluating the scientific analysis of solid data, because the prism with which they render their own assessments, as Garrett Hardin once argued, is a filter of folly. Ideological egalitarians intuitively realize that egalitarianism rests on a foundation of intellectual quicksand—void of any empirical validity—and any extended scrutiny of racial disparities in IQ test scores, educational outcomes, or ability-competitive occupations will expose the futility of the dogma of racial equality. The only possible recourse for keeping this flawed grasp of human nature intact is to persist in using deceitful smokescreens, such as the red herring of "racist" motivations, to avoid the fundamental intrinsic realities of racial *inequality*. Such a contemporary *Zeitgeist* reflects a fantasy existence in which genetic-based differences are meaningless. Social or educational policies that recognize the realities of individual and group differences are immediately denounced for their "racial insensitivity."

One must ask: What is it that drives knaves and fools to persist in espousing such a scientifically bankrupt and destitute perspective as egalitarianism, and more notably, launch a vindictive attack on those who seek a true understanding of human nature? Montaigne provides a reasonably sound answer to this question in chapter IV ("How the Soul Vents Its Emotions on False Objects When True Ones Are Lacking") of the first volume of his essays:

A gentleman of our day, who was terribly subject to gout, being urged by his physicians to abstain altogether from salt meats, was wont to reply jocosely that in the paroxysms and torture of the disease, he wanted to have something to lay the blame on; and that storming and cursing at one time about sausage, at another about tongue, and again about ham, he felt greatly relieved. But in all

seriousness, as, when the arm is raised to strike, it annoys us if the blow meets no object but is wasted on the air; and as, to make a view pleasant to the eye, it must not be lost and spread out to the dim horizon, but should have rising ground to limit it within a reasonable distance—

Ventus ut amittit vires, nisi robore densæ
Occurrant silvæ spatio diffusus inani*—

(a) so it would seem that the mind, when disturbed and excited, goes astray of itself, if we do not give it something to lay hold of; and it must always be supplied with some object to seize and work upon. Plutarch says, speaking of those who become attached to monkeys and little dogs, that the affectionate part of us, in this way, for lack of a legitimate object, fashions a false and frivolous one rather than remain useless. And we see that the mind, when most excited, deceives itself, setting up a false and fanciful object, even contrary to its own belief, rather than not act against something. (b) So the anger of wild animals drives them to attack the stone or the spear which has wounded them, and to take vengeance on themselves with their own teeth for the pain they suffer.⁷

*As a wind loses its strength meeting with no opposition from a dense forest, and is dissipated in the void. —Lucan, III, 362.

A SKEPTIC OBJECTIVELY EXAMINES ARTHUR JENSEN'S WORK

The actual story of Arthur R. Jensen's career path and research accomplishments is one that runs counter to the caricature rendered by egalitarian critics. A scientist who has published over four hundred articles and seven books, four of which are among some of the most cited publications in the psychological literature, Jensen has tirelessly pursued an exemplarily productive life as an educator and pioneering researcher in his own field of expertise—differential psychology. Jensen studied under Percival Symonds as a graduate student at Columbia University, then under Hans Eysenck for two years in a postdoctoral program in London. As an educational psychologist and eventually pioneer as a differential psychologist, Jensen spent his career teaching at the University of California at Berkeley. He is the recipient of numerous awards and is ranked among the top one hundred most recognized psychologists among his colleagues.

Jensen gained notoriety when the *Harvard Educational Review* (HER) published his landmark article, "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?," which its editors had solicited for the Winter 1969 issue. In 123 pages, Jensen summarized the findings from the psychological literature on individual and group differences in IQ and the degree to which genetics plays a role in shaping these differences. Jensen's framework for considering these issues was the abysmal failure of compensatory education programs (Head Start) to achieve a lasting measurable increase in the intelligence levels of disadvantaged children. Jensen's article addressed the nature of intelligence, the concept of heritability, social class differences in intelligence, possible dysgenic IQ trends, kinship correlations, and racial differences in IQ. Shortly after its

publication, a wave of publicity and widespread coverage in the mass media engulfed Jensen, including a profile in the *New York Times Magazine* that coined the expression “Jensenism” and two interviews with Mike Wallace on *60 Minutes*. It prompted several replies from critical scholars that were published in subsequent HER issues and led to an eventual monograph that included a rejoinder by Jensen. Over the years, Jensen has received hundreds of requests for reprints of his article. It remains one of the most cited articles in the psychological literature.

Frank Miele’s recent book, *Intelligence, Race, and Genetics: Conversations with Arthur R. Jensen*, explores Jensen’s work in considerable detail. In terms of objectivity, it will likely remain the standard for other such books in the future. It is the first book to cover the full scope and magnitude of Jensen’s writings and explain his scientific outlook to a lay readership. Miele, an editor for *Skeptical* magazine, has put together a concise yet definitive volume that spans Jensen’s career and yet carefully examines Jensen’s major research accomplishments in a clear and succinct manner. Each chapter flushes out the essential highlights of Jensen’s career and major research endeavors: “Jensenism,” the *g* factor in IQ studies, heritability and the nature/nurture paradigm, race and racial differences in intelligence, the *Bell Curve* wars, and science and social policy. It thus covers the full panorama of an interesting iconoclast—a social scientist who pursued unresolved research questions while defying the trends within his own profession.

The image of Jensen that emerges from this informative volume is of a courageously honest, persistent, and thoroughly meticulous scientist. In his most important undertaking—research that culminated with the publication of his 1998 book, *The g Factor*—Jensen has remained several steps ahead of his critics. Anticipating various weak points in his thesis (that *g* is the single ubiquitous factor in the constellation of human abilities), Jensen pursued a range of research projects and independent analyses that would solidify the thesis: measuring reaction times and their relationship to differences in *g* (indicative of an underlying physiological correlation to general mental ability); the full range of biological correlates from body, brain, and head size, electrochemical brain activity, cerebral glucose metabolism as measured by positron emission tomography (PET scans), to nerve conduction velocity; the heritability of *g*; population and demographic differences (race and sex differences); the impact of nutrition, home environment, and other non-biological factors; and theoretical challenges to *g* from multi-intelligence rivals such as Howard Gardner and Robert Sternberg.

By taking a lead in these research areas, Jensen carved out a scientific niche that has earned him the respect of a number of his contemporaries. A 1998 special issue of the journal *Intelligence*, edited by Douglas K. Detterman, and the forthcoming festschrift edited by Helmuth Nyborg testify to the high esteem with which Jensen is viewed by his fellow scientists.⁸ When the American

Psychological Association sponsored a talk by Jensen on the Cyril Burt controversy and research taboos during the APA's centennial convention in Washington, D.C. in August 1992, the large banquet room at the Washington Hilton Hotel was nearly filled to capacity. Several hundred attendees turned out to hear Jensen's enthralling lecture and slide presentation on the latest developments in the Burt affair—a turnout five or ten times the norm for such a lecture.

Miele provides a well-rounded portrait of a complex individual. He describes a man whose personal interests include reading biographies (with particular interest in Bertrand Russell's life and scientific philosophy, and in Mohandas Gandhi and Indian culture) and playing the clarinet while cultivating an intense interest in classical music. Jensen's support for the role of inheritance in intelligence, we learn, was preceded by an initial belief in the efficacy of Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" programs. Needless to say, Jensen comes across as a workaholic, steadfastly devoted to his professional work.

The book's only shortcoming is the lack of space devoted to certain secondary and tangential issues. More space could have been devoted to teasing out the relationship between Jensen's own research interests and career path as an educational psychologist to specific educational policies that Jensen must have pondered to a considerable degree. Despite the turmoil that engulfed Raymond Cattell's nomination and subsequent withdrawal for the APA's Life Time Achievement Award a few years ago, the subject never comes up, nor is Cattell's work ever touched on. Jensen knew Cattell reasonably well and most likely would have had some interesting thoughts about Cattell's wide range of research interests, including his controversial philosophical beliefs as articulated in two separate but related books on his "beyondism" ideas. The issue of political correctness surfaces from time to time, but only incidentally. Jensen mentions that he submitted *The g Factor* to eight different publishers before it was accepted. Miele could have pressed Jensen further about his views on these and other issues, including his collegial relationship with Nobel physics laureate and race researcher William Shockley, and Jensen's thoughts about Shockley's own research endeavors. Miele barely skims the surface of Jensen's interests in eugenics, which could have been expanded into a separate chapter.

Still, Miele is to be commended for an otherwise thorough and comprehensive review of Jensen's major contributions to the psychology of individual and group differences in general mental ability. If there is one aspect of Jensen's life (both professional work and personal pursuits) that emerges from Miele's book, it is that the caricature of Jensen (promoted by Tucker and other critics) as a man consumed by "racist" objectives could not be further from the truth. Jensen states unequivocally that he has never supported segregationist policies; believes that people should be treated as equals before the law; accepts the idea of equal opportunity (provided that academic standards of excellence apply even-handedly to everyone); and believes that the variation in

IQ within families is as important as the differences that exist between blacks and whites in terms of understanding the latent problems in educational policies. His overarching goal is to pursue the truth wherever it leads and to let the truth win out, rather than to advance politically correct fallacies. The irony is that it is Jensen's staunchest critics who have persisted in grinding an ideological ax and, in the process, have tossed any regard for the truth to the four winds.

Kevin Lamb is the Editor of The Occidental Quarterly and Race, Genetics & Society: Glayde Whitney on the Scientific and Social Policy Implications of Racial Differences (Scott-Townsend, 2002).

END NOTES

1. Several books that attempt to directly or indirectly challenge the thesis of Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1994) have been published since late 1994, including *The Bell Curve Wars: Race, Intelligence, and the Future of America*, ed. Steven Fraser (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1995), *The Bell Curve Debate: History, Documents, Opinions*, ed. Russell Jacoby and Naomi Glauberman (New York, NY: Times Books, 1995), *Intelligence, Genes, & Success: Scientists Respond to the Bell Curve*, ed. Bernie Devlin et al. (New York, NY: Copernicus, 1997), *Inequality by Design: Cracking the Bell Curve Myth*, C. S. Fischer et al. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), *The Rising Curve: Long-Term Gains in IQ and Related Measures*, ed. Ulric Neisser (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1998), *Race and Intelligence: Separating Science from Myth*, ed. Jefferson M. Fish (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002). Although this body of criticism ranges from the serious to the absurd, most of it falls into the category of social and political commentary and fails to credibly refute Herrnstein and Murray's analysis of the data presented in their study. For a detailed scrutiny of the issues raised in the criticisms of *The Bell Curve*, readers should consult the special issue of *Intelligence* 24, no. 1 (January-February 1997), ed. Linda Gottfredson.
2. Earnest Sevier Cox, *White America* (Richmond, VA: White America Society, 1923).
3. Carl N. Degler, *In Search of Human Nature: The Decline and Revival of Darwinism in American Social Thought* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1991), and Ullica Segerstråle, *Defenders of the Truth: The Battle for Science in the Sociobiology Debate and Beyond* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000).
4. Robert B. Joynson, *The Burt Affair* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1989), and Ronald Fletcher, *Science, Ideology and the Media: The Cyril Burt Scandal* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1991).
5. Kenneth Minogue, *Alien Powers: A Pure Theory of Ideology* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 227.
6. Richard Lynn, *The Science of Human Diversity: A History of the Pioneer Fund* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001). Lynn's balanced description of the Pioneer Fund researchers leaves little doubt that these grantees rank among the elite of distinguished scholars in a number of professional disciplines. See also Louis Andrews'

- review in *The Occidental Quarterly* 2:1 (Spring 2002), 73-79, or <http://theoccidentalquarterly.com/>. For a thorough critique of recent criticisms leveled against the Pioneer Fund, see J. Philippe Rushton's "Commentary on the Pioneer Fund and the Scientific Study of Human Differences," *Albany Law Review* 66 (2002), 207-262.
7. *The Essays of Montaigne*, trans. George B. Ives (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925), vol. 1, 25.
8. *Intelligence* 26 (no. 3, 1998) and Helmuth Nyborg, ed. *The Scientific Study of General Intelligence: Tribute to Arthur R. Jensen* (New York, NY: Pergamon, 2003).