

SDS COMMENT

An Answer to Racism

STOP RACIST THEORISTS IN THEIR TRACKS!

The following ad appeared in the July, 1972 issue of the "American Psychologist," official journal of the American Psychological Association, as well as in several other publications. We are reprinting it here, together with our reply, because we think it's tremendously significant. It is an attempt to escalate the current campaign to give racist psychological theories new legitimacy.

For over a year, student protest has been building up against the theories of men like Richard Herrnstein, Arthur Jensen, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Edward C. Banfield, Urie Bronfenbrenner and other social scientists who claim that black people are genetically or culturally inferior to whites. SDS members along with thousands of other students, black and white, angrily confronted Herrnstein in Iowa City and Bronfenbrenner at Mass. Inst. of Tech. Movements to ban racist textbooks like Banfield's *The Unheavenly City* sprang up on many campuses. At Southern University a student boycott of his classes forced the dismissal of William Knapp, a psychology professor and American Nazi Party member who taught Jensen's theories of black genetic inferiority. At the same time, countless scientific articles by educators, psychologists, geneticists, mathematicians, economists, sociologists and many others exposed the fact that there isn't a scrap of scientific validity to any of these racist theories.

The initial reaction of Jensen, Herrnstein, et al. was to retreat, complaining that they had been misunderstood and that radicals were "persecuting" them. However, these claims always seemed rather ludicrous, since those doing the complaining were heavily funded by the government, and received solid support from their university administrators--administrators who frequently took disciplinary action against any student who dared to so much as criticize a racist teacher in class!

Now the racist theorists are going on the offensive. In their ad, they drop their former reliance on the argument that their teachings should be tolerated because of academic freedom. Instead, they maintain that the theory of black genetic inferiority is right, and that all teachers have a "scholarly duty" to teach this theory. In other words, they want to make racism the core curriculum of a college education!

Moreover, the ad is calculated to serve as a warning to those who might question racist theories. Its signers include 8 department chairmen or research institute directors; 2 editors of professional journals; the Chief of Laboratories of the National Institute of Mental Health, the largest source of funds for psychology research in the U.S.; a Dean, an Assistant Provost, and a Vice-Chancellor. Junior faculty members with no job security may well think twice before going against what such men tell them is their "scholarly duty."

This ad is an escalation in the attempt to spread scientific racism. We need to oppose it now, before these professors are able to carry out their plan to line up "faculty senates, ... professional and learned societies, ... the American Association of University Professors, ... the American Civil Liberties Union, ... the University Centers for Rational Alternatives, ... presidents and boards of trustees, ... departments of science, and ... the editors of scholarly journals" on their side.

The so-called scientists know that their theories don't stay dormant in the books they're bound in. At the end of their ad they say: "We so urge because as scientists we believe that human problems may best be remedied by increased human knowledge, ...". This is where such racist government legislation and practice such as the Tallmadge Amendment (forced labor program for welfare mothers), lobotomies on prisoners, plans for smashing ghetto and student rebellions, etc., originate.



Struggle at Southern University, La. -- it began with a successful fight to fire a teacher who pushed Jensen's theories.

This racism is something which affects all of us, white people as well as black. Racism is the main way in which the government keeps workers and students from uniting to get rid of war, unemployment and other things that oppress us all. A recent flier distributed by Harvard-Radcliffe SDS expressed this well:

When white people accept racist lies, they isolate themselves from those who fight hardest against oppression and end up siding with the government and big business against them. The recent incident in Canarsie, N.Y., where white parents attacked black children being bussed to a previously all-white school is a tragic example. These parents thought the main problem with their school was the black students in it. This led them not only to join in racist persecution, but kept them from joining in any attempt to actually improve the lousy and overcrowded schools.

Divide and conquer -- that means pit your enemies against each other, and let them defeat themselves. That was Hitler's strategy in Germany. Nixon with his talk about an end to "permissiveness" is just giving us more of the same.

For these reasons, SDS along with many other groups and individuals is building campaigns spanning the U.S. and Canada to expose and discard racist theoreticians and condemn and destroy the practices they've wrought.

For these reasons SDS, in addition, is collecting signatures on an ad of our own to answer the Herrnstein-Jensen ad. This ad, too, is reprinted below. Please sign it and send it in, with as many signatures and money to pay for its publication as you can get, to the International Headquarters of SDS, P.O. Box 423, Prudential Center, Boston, Massachusetts 02199.

c April 5, 1972

THEIR AD RACIST AD PUBLISHED IN JULY '72 ISSUE OF "AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST"

The following ad and reply is very serious. It comes out of a history of the last year -- of sharpening fights against these ideologists. The main aspect of their defense of theories has been to avoid any debate -- cancelling controversial speaking engagements, for instance -- and maintaining that they are being persecuted. Now, however, they are trying to take up the counter-attack. The ad they are writing is very clear on this : they should be defended because they are right.

SDS and others have published exhaustive materials about these racists. We will soon issue a pamphlet including some of the best of this work.

COMMENT

Behavior and Heredity

The posthumous Thorndike Award article by Burt (1972) draws psychological attention again to the great influence played by heredity in important human behaviors. Recently, to emphasize such influence has required considerable courage, for it has brought psychologists and other scientists under extreme personal and professional abuse at Harvard, Berkeley, Stanford, Connecticut, Illinois, and elsewhere. Yet such influences are well documented. To assert their importance and validity, and to call for free and unencumbered research, the 50 scientists listed below have signed the following document, and submit it to the APA:

Background: The history of civilization shows many periods when scientific research or teaching was censured, punished, or suppressed for nonscientific reasons, usually for seeming to contradict some religious or political belief. Well-known scientist victims include: Galileo, in orthodox Italy; Darwin, in Victorian England; Einstein, in Hitler's Germany; and Mendelian biologists, in Stalin's Russia.

Today, a similar suppression, censure, punishment, and defamation are being applied against scientists who emphasize the role of heredity in human behavior. Published positions are often misquoted and misrepresented; emotional appeals replace scientific reasoning; arguments are directed against the man rather than against the evidence (e.g., a scientist is called "fascist," and his arguments are ignored).

A large number of attacks come from nonscientists, or even antiscientists, among the political militants on campus. Other attackers include academics committed to environmentalism in their explanation of almost all human differences. And a large number of scientists, who have studied the evidence and are persuaded of the great role played by heredity in human behavior, are silent, neither expressing their beliefs clearly in public, nor rallying strongly to the defense of their more outspoken colleagues.

The results are seen in the present academy: it is virtually heresy to express a hereditarian view, or to recommend further study of the biological bases of behavior. A kind of orthodox environmentalism dominates the liberal academy, and strongly inhibits teachers, researchers, and scholars from turning to biological explanations or efforts.

Resolution: Now, therefore, we the undersigned scientists from a variety of fields, declare the following beliefs and principles:

1. We have investigated much evidence concerning the possible role of inheritance in human abilities and behaviors, and we believe such hereditary influences are very strong.
2. We wish strongly to encourage research into the biological hereditary bases of behavior, as a major complement to the environmental efforts at explanation.
3. We strongly defend the right, and emphasize the scholarly duty, of the teacher to discuss hereditary influences on behavior, in appropriate settings and with responsible scholarship.
4. We deplore the evasion of hereditary reasoning in current textbooks, and the failure to give responsible weight to heredity in disciplines such as sociology, social psychology, social anthropology, educational psychology, psychological measurement, and many others.
5. We call upon liberal academics—upon faculty senates, upon professional and learned societies, upon the American Association of University Professors, upon the American Civil Liberties Union, upon the University Centers for Rational Alternatives, upon presidents and boards of trustees, upon departments of science, and upon the editors of scholarly journals—to insist upon the openness of social science to the well-grounded claims of biobehavioral reasoning, and to protect vigilantly any qualified faculty members who responsibly teach, research, or publish concerning such reasoning.

We so urge because as scientists we believe that human problems may best be remedied by increased human knowledge, and that such increases in knowledge lead much more probably to the enhancement of human happiness than to the opposite.

Signed:

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DAVID ZEAMAN
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REFERENCE

BURT, C. Inheritance of general intelligence. *American Psychologist*, 1972, 27, 175-190.


ELLIS B. PAGE
University of Connecticut

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST • JULY 1972 • 663

OUR REPLY: ➔

INAUGURATION DAY

DEMO
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JAN. 20



SdS
P.O.
423
Fru. Ctr.
Boston, Mass.

OUR REPLY

RESOLUTION ON SCIENTIFIC RESOLUTION ON PSEUDO-SCIENTIFIC THEORIES REGARDING RACISM AND GENOCIDE

BACKGROUND: The history of civilization shows many periods when pseudo-scientific research was publicized, lauded and encouraged for exploitative reasons, invariably for the justification of slavery, genocide, and imperialism.

Well known exponents of racist ideology were Arthur Gobineau who in 1850 justified French colonial rule over North Africa in his "Essay on the Inequality of Human Races"; Herbert Spencer who in support of English colonialism concocted the theory of "Social Darwinism"; Houston Stewart Chamberlain in the 1890's who wrote about "Aryan superiority"; Alfred Rosenberg, whose book "Race and Race History" served as a leading theoretical justification for the murder and oppression of the "racially impure" in Nazi Germany.

Today, a similar publicity and encouragement are being given to racist professors who argue that the existence of social problems such as poverty and unemployment are not the result of the malfunctioning of a cut-throat economy but rather result from inherent deficiencies within the victims.

These racist theories have nothing to do with science, whatsoever. Herrnstein (who claims that "unemployment runs in the genes") published his notorious article "IQ" without having done any previous work in the field of human intelligence. A Harvard professor stated that if Herrnstein submitted his original paper on IQ to him for a freshman statistics course, he would have flunked him. The rebuttal from many scientists against the genetic theory of Jensen et al. somehow has failed to achieve the publicity and endorsement of the government and the mass media which has been given to Jensenism.

Some people support the publication and teaching of genetic inferiority on the basis of academic freedom. However, academic freedom doesn't cover libel or slander, and neither should it protect crimes such as racism. Its teachings and practices.

These racists try to portray themselves as persecuted for their courage in putting forward what they believe, and what is right. But it doesn't take much courage when the U. S. government is on your side! Most of the signers of this ad are either the recipients of lavish government grants or government advisors and strategists themselves. One, David Rosenthal, is the Chief of Laboratories for the National Institute of Mental Health, the main funder of research in psychology. Arthur Jensen, most well known for his theories of black inferiority, is an advisor to school systems from Berkeley, California to Richmond, Virginia.

On the other side, people who challenge racism have been attacked. For example, organizations like SDS have been banned on many campuses all over the country. Individual students, faculty, and workers have been fired from their jobs and persecuted by the courts for their anti-racist views and actions. The latest attack is the resolution published next to this, reprinted from the "American Psychologist".

The results of racism can be seen in wage differentials, police brutality of minorities, imprisonment of politically active minorities (e.g., Ruchell Magee and Billy Dean Smith), the war, and much more subtly, in attempts to rally professors and scientists to support the racist resolution that appeared in the "American Psychologist".

RESOLUTION: Now, therefore, we the undersigned declare the following beliefs and principles:

1. We have seen much evidence concerning the crime of racism and we believe its influences to be disastrous for everyone.
2. We wish people to challenge the theory and practices of racism.
3. We strongly condemn the attempt to present virulent racism under the disguise of scholarly, "scientific" research.
4. We protest the presentation of a "hereditary reasoning" which attempts to account for the effects of slavery, bigotry and genocide.
5. We call upon workers, students and faculty to demand the establishment of a society which attacks racism and inequality rather than encouraging its "scientific" rationalization.

NAME

ADDRESS

Clip and Mail To: SDS, P.O. BOX 423, Prudential Center, Boston, Mass. 02199