

RACE AND INTELLIGENCE AN ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS

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In principle I find Lynn's arguments very convincing, although the evidence is inevitably circumstantial and does not admit of conclusive experimental proof. Most of the alternative non-genetic arguments have been shown to be incapable of accounting for the observed differences, but of course there may be other alternatives not yet seriously considered. If I suggest one such argument it is more in the hope that it may lead to well-controlled empirical studies than that it will persuade readers in its present form, even though there is good evidence to support the major premise.

Lynn himself mentions malnutrition as a possible cause of IQ differences, only to dismiss it rather casually; this is odd in view of the use he has made of the argument himself in another connection (Lynn, 1990). He dismisses malnutrition on the basis that there are few differences in height between blacks and Caucasoids, but this makes the unwarranted assumption that malnutrition can be simply defined in terms of insufficiency of calories. The well-known Dutch famine experiment (Stein et al., 1972) is subject to the same criticism. There is considerable evidence that even apparently well-fed, middle class whites may suffer from specific vitamin and mineral deficiencies, that these may lower IQ score significantly, and that dietary supplementation may increase IQ markedly. Earlier studies from Harrell, Woodyard and Cates (1955), or more recently Benton and Roberts (1988) and Schoenthaler (1991) have reported along these lines, and a recent large-scale study by the Dietary Research Foundation, well-controlled and analyzed, has shown that responders to the supplementation, as compared with controls, showed an average increase in IQ of 11 points! This, and several relevant studies, has been published recently as a separate issue of *Personality and Individual Differences* (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1991).

If we assume that blacks in the US and in the UK have a less well-balanced diet than whites, and that African blacks have an even worse diet, then much or even all of the observed IQ difference may be due to

nutritional deficiencies. The same cause may be responsible for the differences in IQ between blacks in the North and in the South observed after the First World War. The difference between hunters (Caucasoid) and fruit-gatherers (Negroid) in pre-historical times may also be relevant in providing the former with a more balanced diet. I do not want to extend the discussion unduly in suggesting further ways in which such a theory might account for many of the findings on which Lynn bases his argument; this is hardly the place for such a presentation.

Nevertheless, it may be useful to point to ways of testing some of the consequences which would seem to follow from my hypothesis. It would seem that Negroid children should benefit significantly more from dietary supplementation than Caucasoid, and Caucasoid slightly more than Mongoloid. Equally, determination of vitamin and mineral deficiencies should find these more plentiful in Negroid than in Caucasoid, and in Caucasoid than in Mongoloid children. African blacks should come out worst, and benefit most. These suggestions are easily testable and findings should be of obvious social and scientific importance. Whether the final results would suggest that nutritional deficiencies of this kind account wholly or only in part (if at all) for existing differences in IQ between races is impossible to predict; only empirical evidence will enable us to assess the value of this alternative theory.

Lynn might argue that dietary imbalance is merely a consequence rather than a cause of IQ differences. This is a complex issue, particularly as vitamin and mineral deficiencies have also been shown to be largely responsible for anti-social and aggressive behavior (Schoenthaler, 1991). Given that slavery was probably accompanied by an unbalanced diet, the combination of low IQ and anti-social behavior would have been set which is so characteristic of the (largely black) underclass in modern USA. The major question is the extent to which this trend can be reversed. If it can be reversed completely, then clearly the argument for a *genetic* explanation is weakened. The most likely outcome, of course, will be a partial elimination of the differential, particularly if we remember that a large proportion of Caucasoid children (and not only deprived children) will benefit from supplementation. Clearly much new evidence is urgently required before the last word can be said on this whole issue.

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CLIMATE AND INTELLIGENCE

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Lynn is not the first to argue that the benefits of intelligence were greatest for those populations living in cold climates during the Ice Ages (for an early exposition see Huntington 1924, Chapter IV).¹ It is common to argue that the impetus for the enlargement of the brain size "during the era of *Homo erectus* was due to an expansion out of the tropics and into cool regions where ingenuity and flexibility of behavior were more necessary for survival" (Campbell 1976, p. 324). More recently, Calvin (1991) has argued that human intelligence was strongly selected for in cold areas during the Ice Ages, although without recognizing that this hypothesis had implications for the geographical distribution of intelligence. If conditions in the colder regions were such that there was strong selection for intelligence as to lead to the emergence of a new species (*Homo sapiens*), it is plausible that this selection for intelligence would also have led to a cline for intelligence in which intelligence increased as one moved toward the frigid regions.²

Physical anthropologists (Coon 1965, 1982, Krantz 1980) have examined the distribution of many traits and found that clines existed in which they varied with either climate (body size and shape, nose shape, hair type) or latitude (skin color). The characteristics for which clines in skin color and other external characteristics are argued to exist are the characteristics traditionally used to delimit one race from another. Thus the existence of a cline for intelligence such that intelligence increased with winter temperature would explain the racial variations in intelligence.

¹ This slightly simplifies Huntington's theory since he felt the extreme cold of the Arctic regions or Siberia was not conducive to mental development and he attached high weight to the selection that occurred as populations migrated into the areas vacated by the retreating glaciers.

² Although in the current paper Lynn argues that Caucasians have roughly the same intelligence regardless of where they live, in an earlier (Lynn 1978), he reported that the Caucasoid people inhabiting the southerly latitudes from Spain through the Middle East to India scored lower than those with origin in Northwest Europe, evidence that clines in intelligence roughly parallel those in climate.