

Human Diversity: The Biology of Gender, Race, and Class Charles Murray

Murray is magnanimous in victory

He has marshaled facts that absolutely crush the environmentalist argument against the differences in race, sex and social class. He graciously extends his hand to those who vilified him over the past quarter century.

He underestimates his foes. The facts were substantially on his side when he wrote "The Bell Curve." The science certainly supported Arthur Jensen in 1969 and Philippe Rushton in 1996.

The fact of the matter is that facts don't matter in this argument. It is a question of who has the moral high ground. A better explanation of the battle afoot is given by Christopher Caldwell in "The Age of Entitlement." [[ASIN:B07THQW1R2 The Age of Entitlement – America since the Sixties]]

In his generosity, Murray tips the scale in favor of women in assessing the science of the age. Other researchers find it more evenly balanced between male and female. In his generosity, he imputes the best of motives to Stephen Jay Gould, Richard Lewontin and Ashley Montagu. They certainly impugned his motives, and he would be right to be suspect of theirs.

Murray is re-fighting Vietnam. He is introducing faster fighters and bigger bombs into a guerrilla war. The battle will be fought for the hearts and minds of the college peasantry. As long as they have a moral commitment to the equality of the sexes and races, Murray's "hate facts" will gain no traction.

A five-star effort. The science is impressive, but it is not the central issue that Murray supposes. This is a moral battle.

Now a note on the science:

The greatest advances have been made in the field of genomics. We have learned how to sequence the human genome quickly and cheaply. Hand-in-hand with these techniques, we have vastly greater computer power at our disposal and improved techniques for statistical analysis.

These have enabled genome wide assessments (GWAs) to examine massive databases of genomic data from large numbers of people. The numbers are vast –

hundreds of thousands of people, thousands of genes, more properly called single nucleotide polymorphisms, or SNPs - "snips"

Instead of looking for "the gene for" a certain condition, they now comb the genome for correlations between people's actual genomes and their phenotypes – measurable human characteristics. Robert Plomin, who spent a career doing this, describes the process well in his book [\[\[ASIN:B07TD7DMJB Blueprint: How DNA Makes Us Who We Are \(The MIT Press\) \]\]](#). It turns out that most human traits, especially intelligence, are governed by literally thousands of genes each of which makes a tiny contribution.

They evolved a clever technique to determine the age of mutations that led to these "snips." Since genetic material tends to be transmitted from parent to child in blocks, long strings of DNA, favorable genes tend to carry along fellow travelers. However, since the way the blocks are formed changes from generation to generation, the number of fellow travelers diminishes as a factor of the time since the split.

What they have determined is that the human genome has evolved much more rapidly than anybody could imagine. This is set scientists to work looking for reasons why. Murray notes that there are a great many snips that seem to confer no benefit at a given point in time. However, as the environment changes they make can't come into play. Thus there is a constant reservoir of variety waiting to be tapped, one which allows rapid change.

Scientists have been able to analyze DNA from humanoid fossils tens and even hundreds of thousands of years old. They were able to construct the genome of that Neanderthal, from which they deduced that modern European populations carry something like 2% Neanderthal genes. Likewise, Asians and Polynesians seem to carry Denisovan genes from an extinct people living in Asia.

Scientists have also improved their ability to look inside the living brain. Richard Haier describes this well in [\[\[ASIN:B01N2PFJPO The neuroscience of Intelligence\]\]](#). We have progressed from autopsies and blurry x-rays to the ability to look at chemical activity in the living brain in real time. This enables scientists to accurately compare the way different brains function. And they do function differently. The differences between men and women are striking, and the differences among people of different levels of intelligence very measurable.

In closing, let me repeat that the battle was long ago won on the battlefield of science. The fight is to convince the public. The enemies are strong. Two recent books describe

this battle. Matt Tiabbi describes how it plays out in politics in [[ASIN:B07NJFS98Z Hate Inc.: Why Today's Media Makes Us Despise One Another]]. Douglas Murray describes how it works in media: [[ASIN:B07SLLRFDY The Madness of Crowds: Gender, Race and Identity]].

It may be that the truth will set us free, but not until we can convince people of the truth. Murray has taken step one – to set forth irrefutable truths.