

# **PSYC 2530: Intelligence testing**

A short history of early cognitive  
testing

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Last compiled 03/29/22

# **Reminders from last class**

Reading for today was chapter 4 [Intelligence testing](#) from the textbook.

# Roadmap

1 The intelligence test race

2 Binet-Simon Test

3 Mental testing and Eugenics

4 Critical responses

# **What is intelligence?**

**knows what  
that means**

**more I think  
about it...**



# Questions to consider

1. What is intelligence?
2. What are intelligence tests and what do they measure?
3. How have these tests been used in society?
4. Reasonable people have diverging opinions about the above questions
5. This class explores the historical context and development of IQ tests

# The intelligence test race

- The eugenics movement desired “scientific” tests that could convincingly measure individual differences in mental ability
- A eugenics goal was to develop mental tests, test whole segments of society, then deploy positive and negative eugenic social policies on people depending on their test results
- Psychologists committed to the eugenics movement “race” to develop suitable mental tests

## **Turn of the century (1900)**

Psychologists around the world are developing tests to measure people on numerous dimensions (mental, physical, health, etc.)

National governments (UK, Germany, France, USA) are beginning to use, or consider using tests in conjunction with social policy and decision-making.

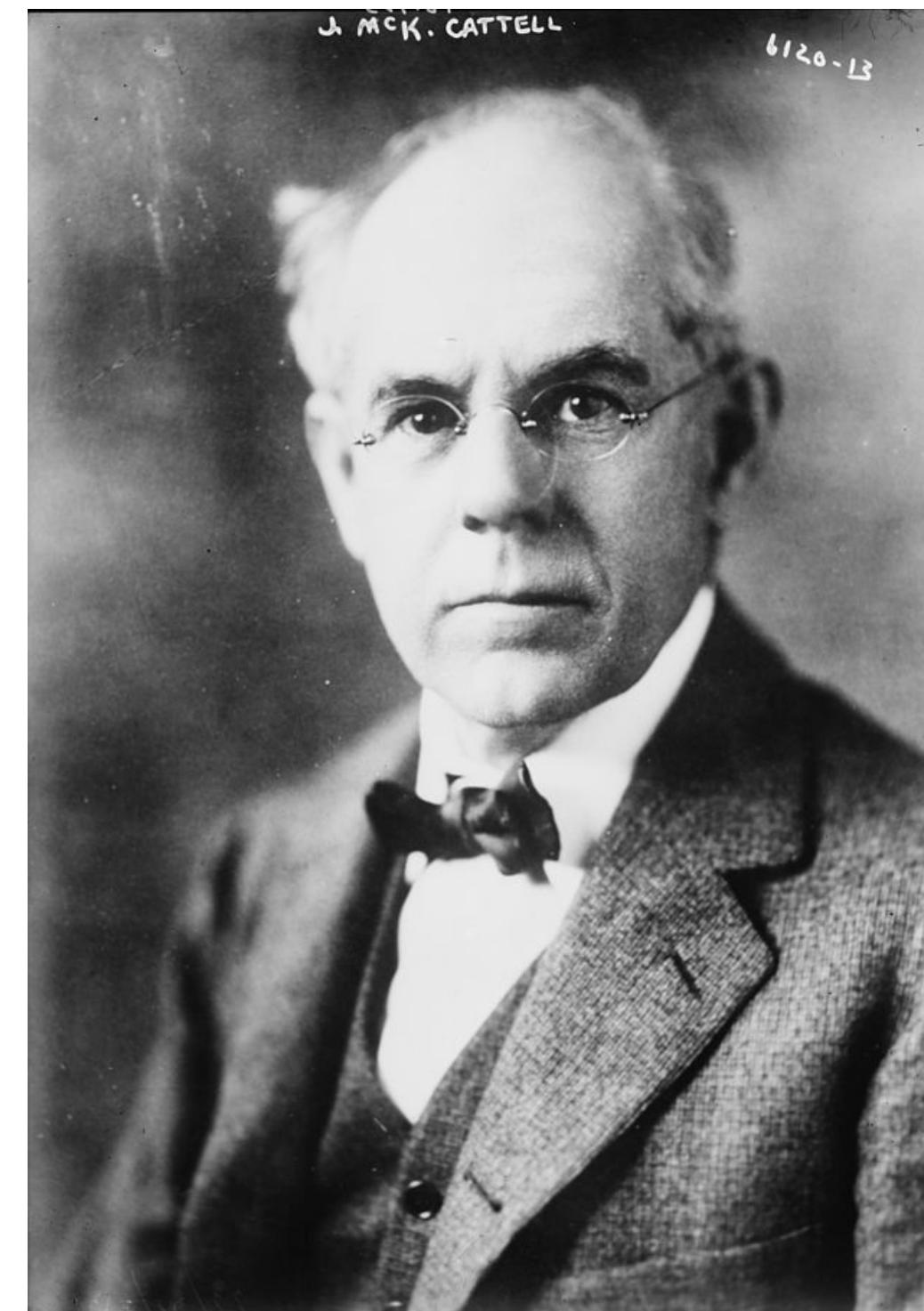
# James McKeen Cattell (1860-1944)

Founding Editor of  
Psychological Review (1894)

APA president (1895)

Bought the journal [Science](#),  
edited it for many years

Removed from position at  
Columbia for expressing  
opposition to American  
involvement in World War I



# Cattell as Galton's acolyte

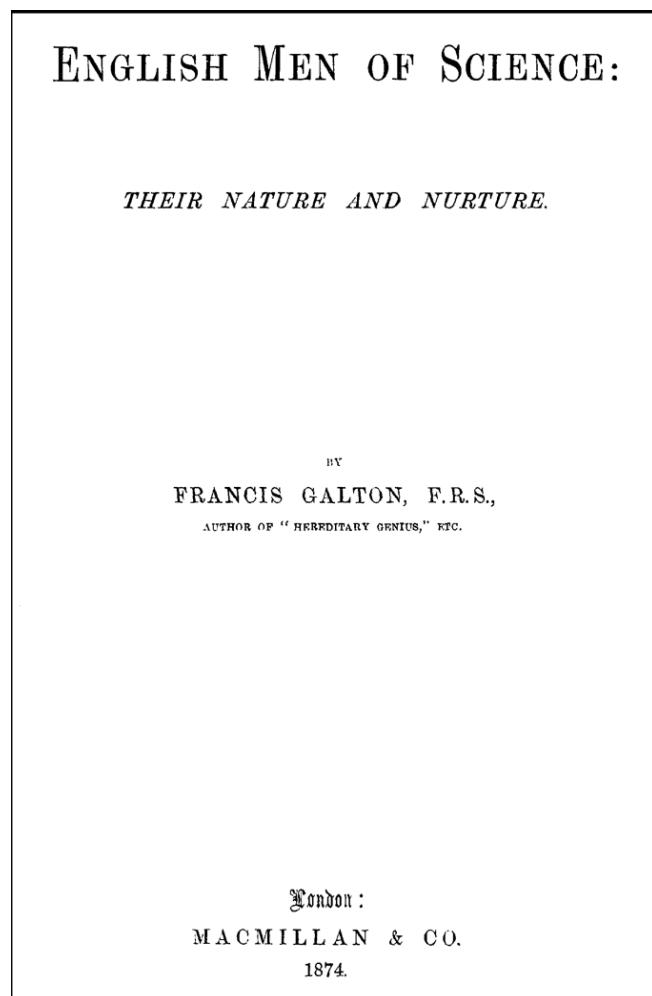
Cattell visited Galton in UK, popularized Galton's psychological and eugenics mission in the USA

- Conducted research in the style of Galton, motivated by eugenics
- Attempted to develop mental tests to measure individual differences in human quality

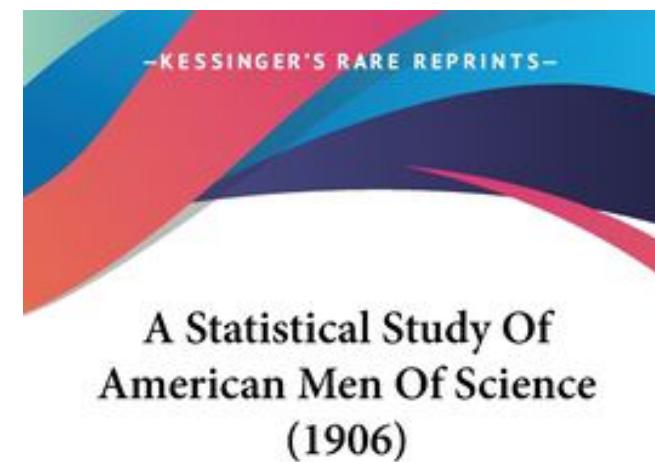
# men of science

Galton and Cattell both tried to demonstrate that “men of science” in England and the US had inherited superior traits

## Galton



## Cattell



# Cattell's mental tests

CATTELL, J. McK. (1890). V.—MENTAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS. *Mind*, os-XV(59), 373–381. <https://doi.org/10/dhngnc>

## V.—MENTAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS.

By Prof. J. McK. CATTELL.

Psychology cannot attain the certainty and exactness of the physical sciences, unless it rests on a foundation of experiment and measurement. A step in this direction could be made by applying a series of mental tests and measurements to a large number of individuals. The results would be of considerable scientific value in discovering the constancy of mental processes, their interdependence, and their variation under different circumstances. Individuals, besides, would find their tests interesting, and, perhaps, useful in regard to training, mode of life or indication of disease. The scientific and practical value of such tests would be much increased should a uniform system be adopted, so that determinations made at different times and places could be compared and combined. With a view to obtaining agreement among those interested, I venture to suggest the following series of tests and measurements, together with methods of making them.<sup>1</sup>

The first series of ten tests is made in the Psychological Laboratory of the University of Pennsylvania on all who present themselves, and the complete series on students of Experimental Psychology. The results will be published when sufficient data have been collected. Meanwhile, I should be glad to have the tests, and the methods of making them, thoroughly discussed.

The following ten tests are proposed :

- I. Dynamometer Pressure.
- II. Rate of Movement.
- III. Sensation-areas.
- IV. Pressure causing Pain.
- V. Least noticeable difference in Weight.
- VI. Reaction-time for Sound.
- VII. Time for naming Colours.
- VIII. Bi-section of a 50 cm. line.
- IX. Judgment of 10 seconds time.
- X. Number of Letters remembered on once Hearing.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Francis Galton, in his Anthropometric Laboratory at South Kensington Museum, already uses some of these tests, and I hope the series here suggested will meet with his approval. It is convenient to follow Mr. Galton in combining tests of body, such as weight, size, colour of eyes, &c., with psychophysical and mental determinations, but these latter alone are the subject of the present discussion. The name (or initials) of the experimentee should be recorded, the nationality (including that of the parents), and the age, sex, occupation and state of health. [See Remark (a) by Mr. Galton below, p. 380. Ed.]

# Testing Columbia students

Cattell, J. M., & Farrand, L. (1896). Physical and mental measurements of the students of Columbia University. Psychological Review, 3(6), 618. <https://doi.org/10/ckms9q>

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J. MCK. CATTELL AND L. FARRAND.

## Laboratory of Psychology of Columbia College, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL TESTS.

Name.....	Date of Birth .....	
Birthplace.....	of father..... of mother.....	
Class.....	Profession of father.....	
Color of eyes.....	of hair.....	
Perception of size.....	Memory for size.....	
Height.....	Weight.....	
Breathing capacity { 1..... 2.....	Size of head..... Right handed?.....	
Strength of hand, right { 1..... 2.....	Left { 1..... 2.....	
Keenness of sight, right eye.....	Left.....	
Keenness of hearing, right ear.....	Left.....	
Reaction-time { 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....	Av. ....	
After-images.....		
Color vision.....	Perception of pitch.....	
Perception of weight 1..... 2..... 3.....	Sensation areas 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....	
Sensitiveness to pain { right hand..... left hand.....	Preference for color.....	
1.....	2.....	3.....
Perception of time.....		
Accuracy of movement.....	Rate of perception and movement.....	
Memory.....		
Imagery.....		
Are you willing to repeat these tests at the end of the Sophomore and Senior years? ..... Do you wish to have a copy of these tests sent you? .....		
Date of measurement .....	Recorded by.....	

We do not at present wish to draw any definite conclusions from the results of the tests so far made. It is of some scientific interest to know that students entering college have heads on the average 19.3 cm. long, that 15% have defective hearing, that they have an average reaction-time of 0.174 sec., that they can remember seven numerals heard once, and so on with other records and measurements. These are mere facts, but they are quantitative facts and the basis of science. Our own future work and that of others must proceed in two directions. On the one hand we must study the interrelations of the traits which we define and measure. To what extent are the several traits of body, of the senses and of mind interdependent? How far can we predict one thing from our knowledge of another? What can we learn from the tests of elementary traits regarding the higher intellectual and emotional life? On the other hand we must use our measurements to study the development of the individual and of the race, to disentangle the complex factors of heredity and environment. There is no scientific problem more important than the study of the development of man, and no practical problem more urgent than the application of our knowledge to guide this development.

# **Cattell's tests weren't predictive**

Efforts to predict Columbia students grades (a potential measure of their intelligence) from Cattell's tests were not successful.

# **Binet's Critiques**

As mentioned previously, several other psychologists around the world were attempting to develop their own versions of mental tests

- Alfred Binet was a French Psychologist who critiqued Cattell's tests for lacking face-validity
- Binet argued that Cattell's tests weren't very mentally challenging...

# Roadmap

1 The intelligence test race

2 Binet-Simon Test

3 Mental testing and Eugenics

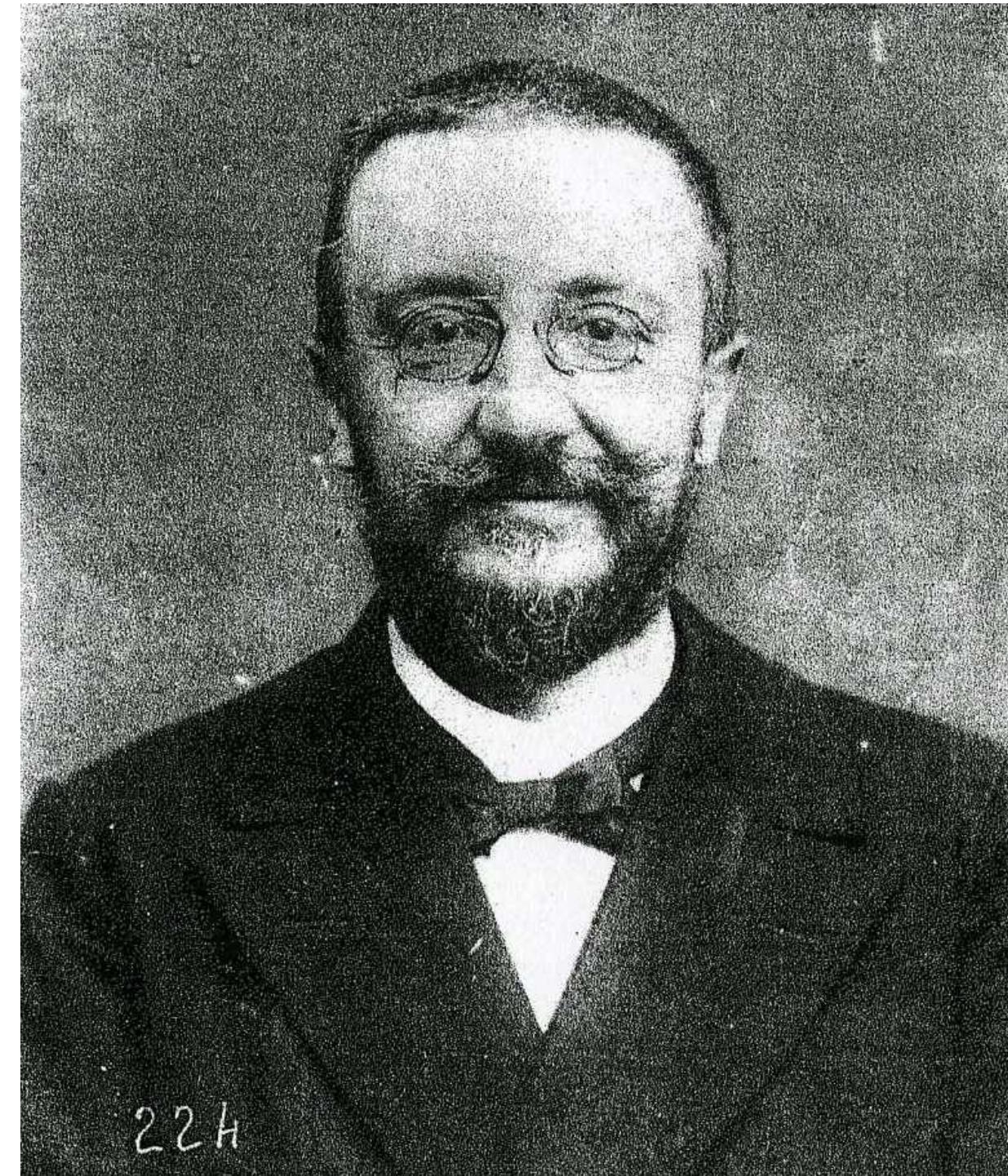
4 Critical responses

# Binet's motivation

The French government was already enacting social policies to institutionalize "unfit" children

Children were being sent-away on the basis of subjective judgments from teacher's and parents.

Binet thought objective mental tests would allow for a more rational decision-policy that could be used to optimize the process.



# **Translated to English in 1916**

Kite, E. S. (1916). The development of intelligence in children (The Binet-Simon Scale). Williams & Wilkins Company.

You can read it all [here](#)

# Binet's testing method

Binet created a variety  
puzzle-like tasks

Chose tasks that he thought  
required mental processing

Systematically measured  
how children of different  
ages perform on each tasks

<p><i>Three years</i></p> <p>Show eyes, nose, mouth (p. 184). Name objects in a picture (p. 188). Repeat 2 figures (p. 187). Repeat a sentence of 6 syllables (p. 186). Give last name (p. 194).</p>	<p>Give the number of fingers (p. 209). Copy a written sentence (p. 209). Copy a triangle and a diamond (p. 209). Repeat 5 figures (p. 210). Describe a picture (p. 210). Count 13 single sous (p. 210). Name 4 pieces of money (p. 211).</p>
<p><i>Four years</i></p> <p>Give sex (p. 195). Name key, knife, penny (p. 195). Repeat 3 figures (p. 196). Compare 2 lines (p. 196).</p>	<p><i>Eight years</i></p> <p>Read selection and retain two memories (p. 211). Count 9 sous. (3 single and 3 double) (p. 214). Name four colors (p. 215). Count backward from 20-0 (p. 215). Compare 2 objects from memory (p. 216). Write from dictation (p. 216).</p>
<p><i>Five years</i></p> <p>Compare 2 boxes of different weights (p. 196). Copy a square (p. 198). Repeat a sentence of 10 syllables (p. 186). Count 4 sous (p. 200). Put together two pieces in a "game of patience" (p. 198).</p>	<p><i>Nine years</i></p> <p>Give the date complete (day, month, day of the month, year) (p. 217). Name the days of the week (p. 218). Give definitions superior to use (p. 205). Retain 6 memories after reading (p. 220). Make change, 4 sous from 20 sous (p. 218). Arrange 5 weights in order (p. 220).</p>
<p><i>Six years</i></p> <p>Repeat a sentence of 16 syllables (p. 186). Compare two figures from an esthetic point of view (p. 202). Define by use only, some simple objects (p. 202). Execute 3 simultaneous commissions (p. 205). Give one's age (p. 206). Distinguish morning and evening (p. 206).</p>	<p><i>Ten years</i></p> <p>Name the months (p. 221). Name 9 pieces of money (p. 221). Place 3 words in 2 sentences (p. 222). Answer 3 comprehension questions (p. 224).</p>
<p><i>Seven years</i></p> <p>Indicate omissions in drawings (p. 207).</p>	

# Basic Results 1

TABLE II

*Empirical table of the results obtained in the experiments relative to the intellectual level of Primary School children of Paris, belonging to a mediocre social level. The figures of the table indicate the number of children who for each test have furnished positive, negative, or doubtful results. Example: For the problem of several facts, which is a test of 15 years, 2 children of 10 replied correctly and 19 failed. These crude results need to be interpreted: see text.*

DIFFERENT TESTS	AGE OF THE CHILDREN											
	7 years		8 years		9 years							
	+	-	?	+	-	?	+	-	?	+	-	?
<i>see text.</i>												
<i>Six years</i>												
Right hand, left ear.....	12	4										
Compare 2 faces.....	13	6										
Define by use.....	24	2										
Execute 3 commissions.....	20	6										
Distinguish morning and evening..	16	3										
<i>Seven years</i>												
Indicate omission in picture.....	10	10		7	2							
Copy a diamond.....	22	7		10	0							
Repeat 5 digits.....	15	15		5	5							
Describe a picture.....	23	7		13		2						
Count 13 single sous.....	23	5		9	1							
<i>Eight years</i>												
Count 3 single and 3 double sous..	17	7		37	6		18	0				
Name 4 colors.....	15	10		38	4	1	19	1				
Count from 20 to 0.....	12	13		36	7		27	2				
Compare 2 objects from memory...	18	6	1	34	9		17	1	1			
Suggestion of lines.....												
<i>Nine years</i>												
Give the date.....	20	0		13	5		35	0		17	0	
Define better than by use.....	10	10		18	21	1	37	12		23	12	
Give change from 20 sous.....	3	16		17	23		46	4		29	10	
Place 5 weights in order.....	5	11		11	29		27	24		22	20	
Copy a design from memory.....												
<i>Ten years</i>												
Name the months.....							38	11	44	3	24	2
9 pieces of money.....							40	6	41	6	23	3
Put 3 words into 2 sentences.....							12	33	5	20	25	2
Comprehend 3 easy questions.....							40	9	1	41	6	30
Comprehend 5 difficult questions...							10	37	3	14	32	2

# Quantification problem

Binet had a large number of results from many children on many tests

And, he recognized that “intelligence” was a complex, multi-dimensional, fuzzy concept

He sought a method to distill his measurements into a convenient and simple scale...his solution was mental age.

# **Equating mental ability with Age**

- Age was simple like a ruler, going up in increments of one year at a time.
- Children develop physically and mentally as they grow, and this development is reflected in their age
- Binet assumed that children's mental abilities steadily increased ever year until they became adults.

# Linking Age to mini-test results

*One test signifies nothing, let us emphatically repeat, but five or six tests signify something. And that is so true that one might almost say, 'It matters very little what the tests are so long as they are numerous.' - Binet*

No single mini-test indicates anything about your “mental age”...

# **norm-based comparison**

Binet's measurements had meaning through comparison to empirical norms.

Empirical norms are existing measurements of how other children performed on the test

The large empirical database allowed Binet to assess how anyone performs the mini-tests compared to the groups of children he measured.

# Algorithms for computing mental age

This procedure is the following: *A subject has the intellectual development of the highest age at which he passes all the tests, with the allowance of one failure in the tests for that age.* Thus young Ernest has passed all the tests at nine years, except one; he has also passed all the tests at ten years except one; therefore we attribute to him the mental level of ten years.

But this rule is too strict, and an example will serve to make this clear. Suppose that Jean who is nine years old passes all the tests at nine years except two, and all the tests at ten years except two. Would that place him on the level of eight years? That would be to make him lose the advantage of the tests he has passed. We propose the following compensating rule; *When once the intellectual level of a child is fixed, give him the benefit of an advance of one year every time he passes at least five of the tests beyond his level, and the benefit of an advance of two years if he has passed at least ten above his level.* Thus, Jean aged nine is at the level of eight years, which one expresses by saying that he is -1 (that is, in other words, a year behind). But he has passed 3 tests at nine years and 3 tests at ten years; he has been 6 points in advance of his level; he has gained a year; he is then at the level of nine years, he tests at age, and is marked =.

It will further be noticed that in our new scale there are exactly five tests for each age. We have thus introduced more regularity into our tests. The preceding scale published in 1908 contained sometimes five, sometimes six, sometimes seven. The modifications which we have adopted present, among other advantages, that of permitting a more rapid application and one arriving nearer the intellectual level. Here is the rule to follow: take for point of departure, the age at which all the tests are passed; and beyond this age, count as many fifths of a year as there are tests passed. Example: a child of eight years passes all the tests of six years, 2 of seven years, 3 of eight years, 2 of nine years, 1 of ten years; he has therefore the level of six years plus the benefit of eight tests or eight-fifths years, or a year and three-fifths, equaling a level of seven years and three-fifths, or more simply 7.6. This calculation permits the appreciation of the intellectual level by means of a fraction. But it must be well understood that this fraction is so delicate an appreciation, that it does not merit absolute confidence, because it varies appreciably from one examination to another.

# Correlating mental age with school performance

TABLE IV

*This table shows the relation between the intellectual level and the scholastic level*

	CHILDREN BE-HIND IN SCHOOL INSTRUCTION	CHILDREN REGULAR IN SCHOOL INSTRUCTION	CHILDREN ADVANCED IN SCHOOL INSTRUCTION
Intelligence above the average.....	1	16	7
Average intelligence.....,.....	9	33	5
Intelligence below the average.....	14	16	0

# **meaning of modern IQ?**

Binet's scale was in "mental" years

Modern "intelligence tests" use a standardized scale, often termed IQ or intelligence quotient

Binet died in 1911, and his strategy for mental testing was quickly adopted by American psychologists for the purposes of the eugenics movement.

# Roadmap

1 The intelligence test race

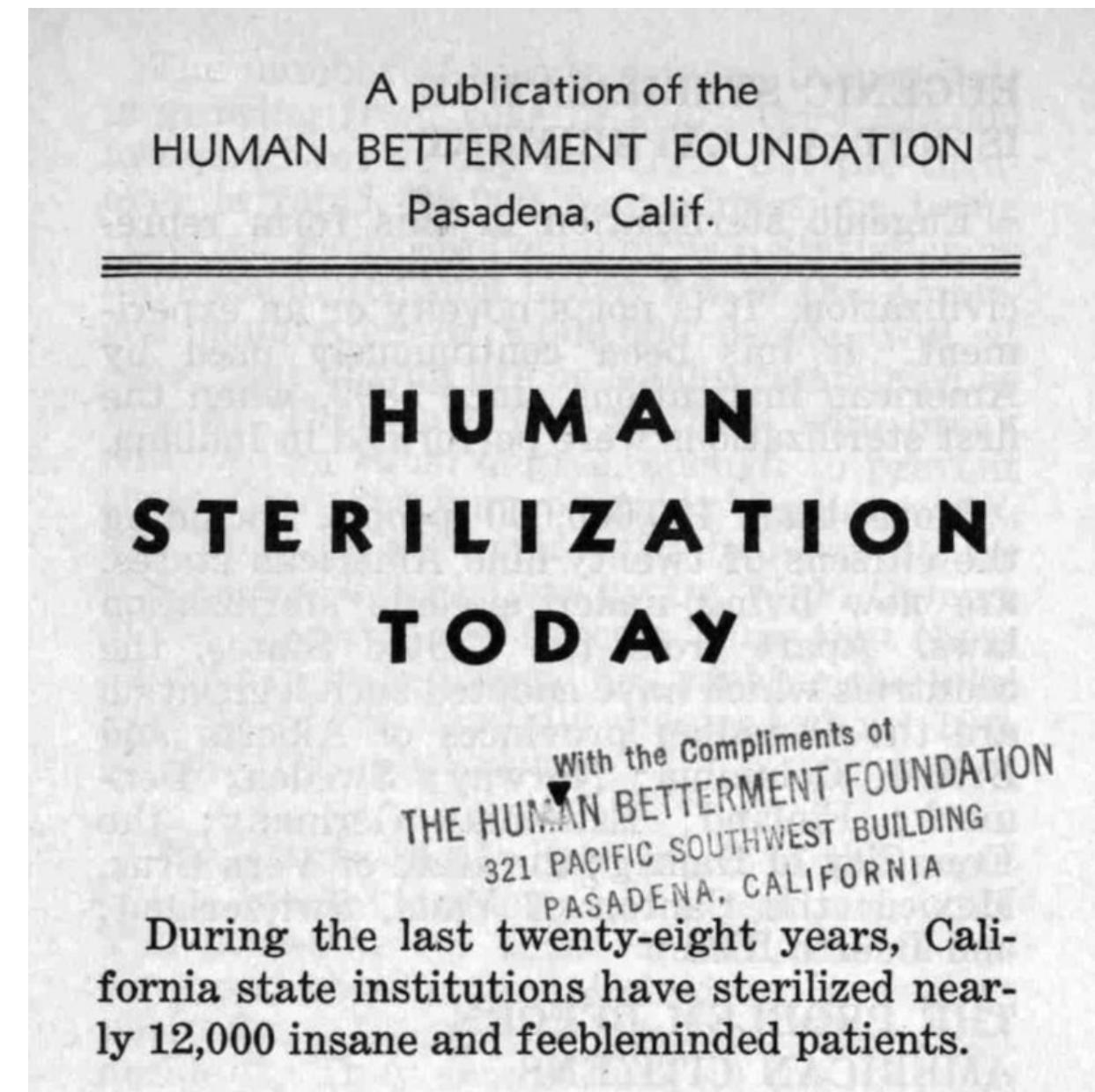
2 Binet-Simon Test

3 Mental testing and Eugenics

4 Critical responses

# Human Betterment Foundation

Human Betterment Foundation was an American Eugenics organization on the west coast



# member List

**WHAT IS THE HUMAN BETTERMENT FOUNDATION?**

The Human Betterment Foundation is a non-profit corporation, organized under the laws of California. Its members, eminent in a wide range of professional and business activities, are as follows (members of the Board of Trustees being marked with an asterisk):

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This organization is not designed to take up original scientific research work, but rather to investigate the results and possibilities for human betterment by a safe, conservative application of the discoveries made by scientists, and to give this information to the public.

Its first major problem is to investigate the possibilities for race betterment by eugenic sterilization, and to publish the results. When the public is familiar with these facts, some other major subject will be substituted. The scope of the Foundation is as broad as its name indicates. It is restricted only to conservative, preventive work for humanity as distinguished from ordinary charity relief work or patchwork. Its goal is the constructive, practical advancement and betterment of human life, character, and citizenship, in such manner as to make for human happiness and progress.

The possibilities of fundamental, constructive, preventive work along these lines are broad. They are limited only by the ability and number of workers.

This Foundation is not designed to perpetuate any name or to be a monument to any individual or family; but to be a center from which effective, constructive work can be carried on by all who feel the importance of such work and are in a position to help either by the contribution of capital or by the contribution of talent. The articles of incorporation leave the future free from undue limitations of organization and policy.

The officers and trustees of this Foundation will be glad to confer with anyone who is interested in the work above outlined, or who may wish to use the opportunity afforded by this organization to realize his own ideals in the promotion of race betterment.

**DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN "BIRTH CONTROL" AND STERILIZATION**

There is a wide difference between sterilization and "birth control" by contraception. Unless this difference is recognized in any study of the subject, no reliable conclusions involving both can be drawn.

Eugenic sterilization, primarily, is applied by the state or with its sanction, to persons who would be likely to produce defective children. It protects such persons, their potential children, the state, and posterity. Such persons do not have the intelligence, the foresight, or the self-control, to handle contraceptives successfully, nor the ability to care for children intelligently. Sterilization is practically irreversible — permanent — and 100% effective. It is the only method of birth control which defectives can use successfully.

Birth control by contraceptive methods is voluntary and applied by the individual for his own purposes. It requires extreme care, intelligence, and a practical biological understanding of the problem. When not applied under definite instructions from a competent,

# Lewis Terman

American Psychologist  
(1877-1956) at Stanford  
University

APA president (1923)

Eugenics leader and  
advocate

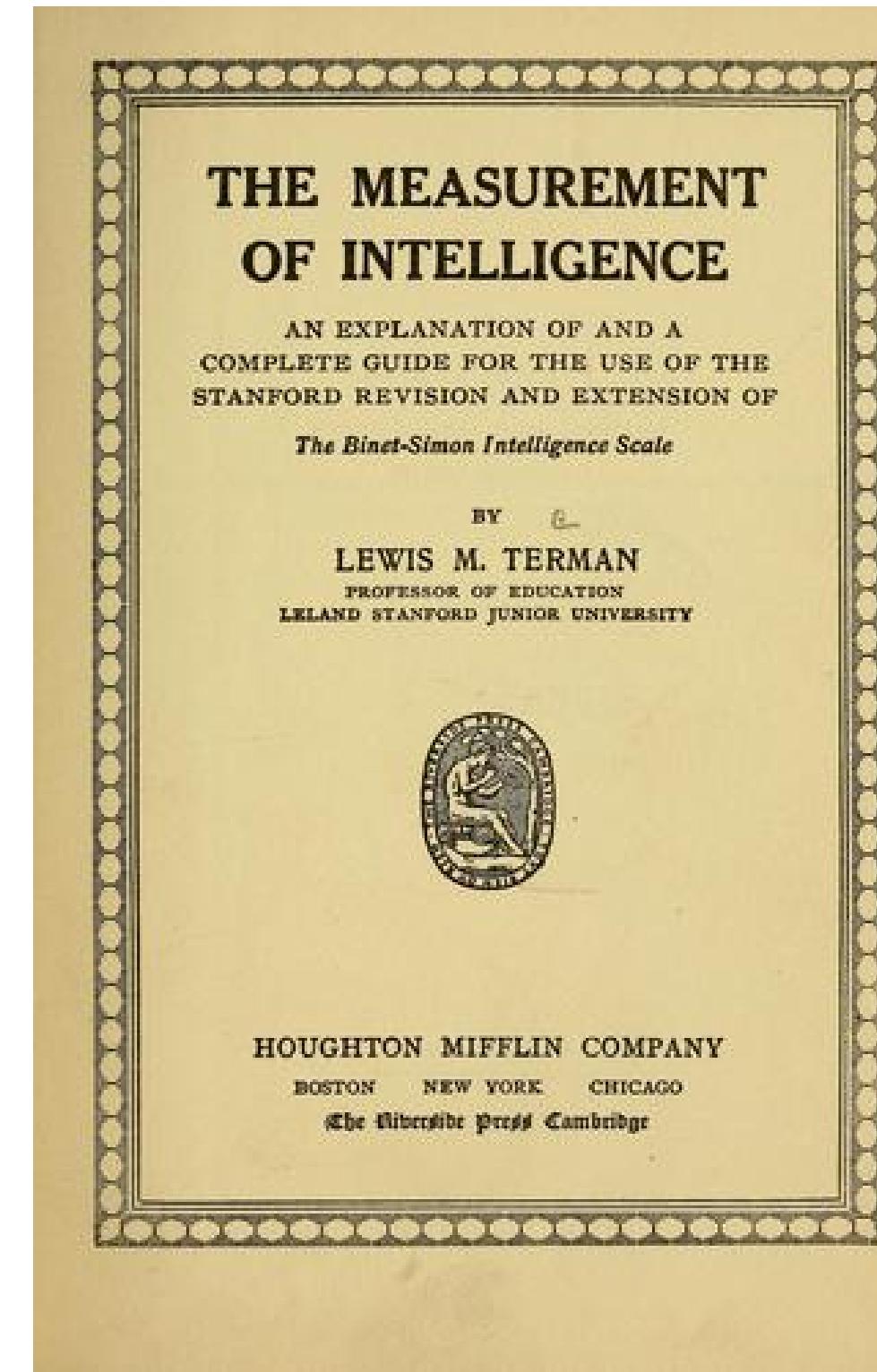
Popularized Binet-Simon  
test in USA as Stanford-  
Binet test



# Terman's Stanford-Binet revision

Terman advocated for widespread intelligence testing across America

1916, published a revised version of Binet's test for Americans.



# Terman's eugenic motivations

*it is safe to predict that in the near future intelligence tests will bring tens of thousands of these high-grade defectives under the surveillance and protection of society. This will ultimately result in curtailing the reproduction of feeble-mindedness and in the elimination of an enormous amount of crime, pauperism, and industrial inefficiency.*

*The number of children with very superior ability is approximately as great as the number of feeble-minded. The future welfare of the country hinges, in no small degree, upon the right education of these superior children.*

# Eugenical concerns about war

World war I had broken out in 1914...

Eugenicists were debating whether war would help or hurt the causes of eugenics

War could eliminate “unfit” people, but could be randomly killing “fit” and “unfit” people.

Eugenicists were interested in using mental tests in the war effort

# American Psychologists in WWI

Yerkes, R. M. (1918). Psychology in relation to the war.  
Psychological Review, 25(2), 85–115. <https://doi.org/10/dhdj4j>

APA created several committees to determine how psychologists could help the war effort.

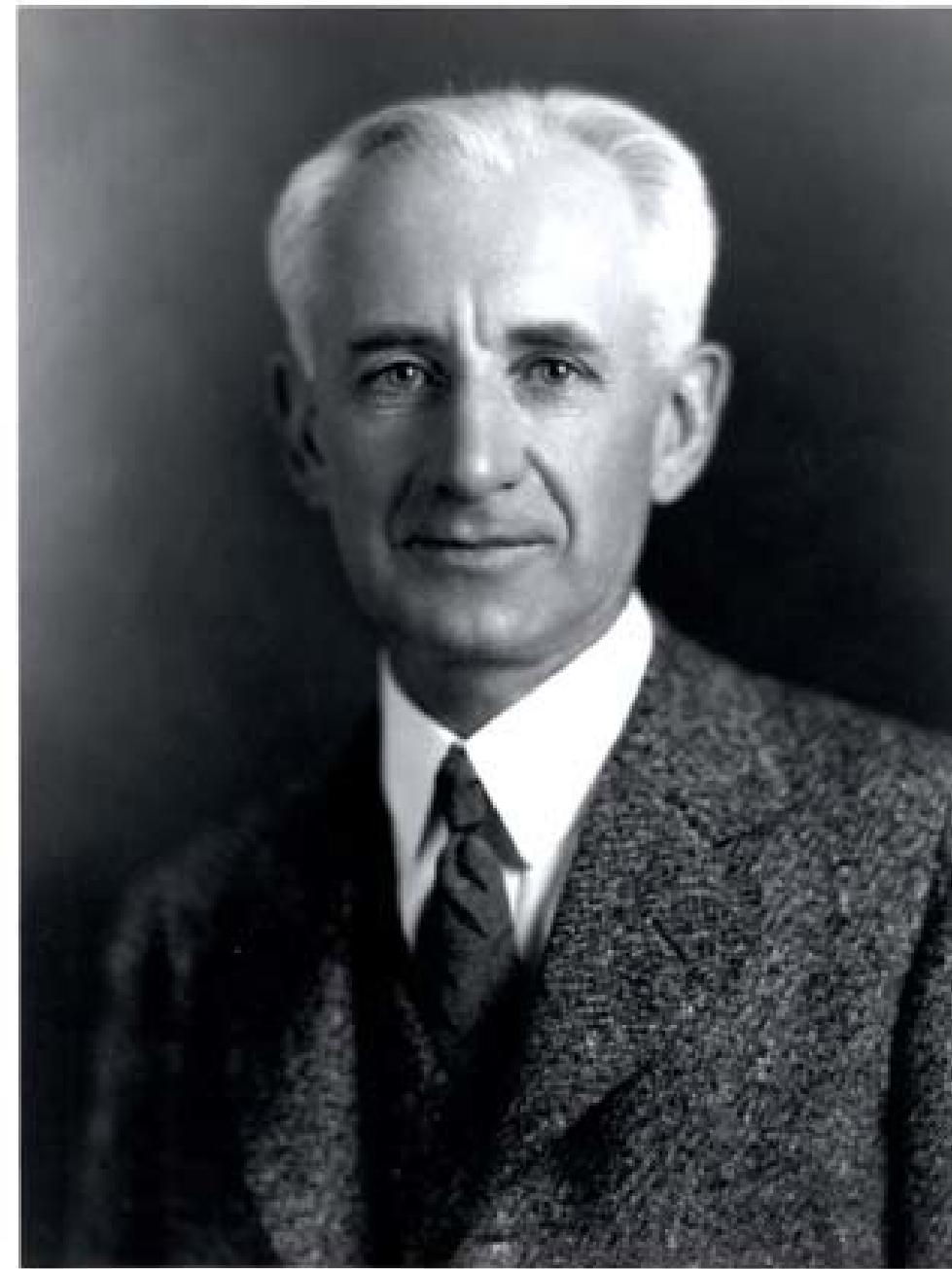
Many of them were committed to the eugenics movement, and one-time APA presidents, including Robert Yerkes, Madison Bentley, Edward Thorndike, John B. Watson, Walter D. Scott, Robert Woodworth, and Carl Seashore

# The Alpha-Beta Test

Alpha-Beta tests involved mass testing of 1.75 million Americans

A “mental census” for the Army

Psychologist Robert M Yearkes (1876-1956)

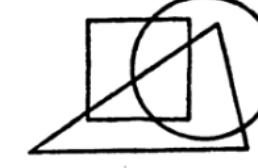


# Examples

Alpha test was for literate soldiers

Beta test was for illiterate soldiers

FORM 6	GROUP EXAMINATION ALPHA	GROUP NO.....
Name.....	Rank.....	Age.....
Company.....	Regiment.....	Arm..... Division.....
In what country or state born?.....	Years in U. S.?.....	Race.....
Occupation.....	Weekly Wages.....	
Schooling: Grades, 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8: High or Prep. School, Year 1. 2. 3. 4: College, Year 1. 2. 3. 4.		

- TEST 1**
1.
  2.  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9
  3. 
  4. 
  5.    Yes No
  6.
  7. A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P
  8.    MILITARY GUN CAMP
  9. 34-79-56-87-68-25-82-47-27-31-64-93-71-41-52-99
  10.
  11.  7F  4  3  5A  8   6  9B  3
  12. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Division of Psychology, Medical Department U. S. A.  
Authorized by the Surgeon General, Feb. 8, 1918, Edition, Aug. 16, 1918, 200,000.

FIG. 1.

# Racial bias

Yearkes argued the results showed that whites had superior intelligence compared to blacks and immigrants

# Application and Interpretation

## EXPLANATION OF THE INTELLIGENCE GRADES.

*The purpose of the psychological tests.*—In no previous war has military efficiency depended so much upon the prompt and complete utilization of the intelligence of the individual soldier. The purpose of the psychological tests is to give a quick and fairly accurate classification of the men according to general intelligence. They aid:

- (a) In the discovery of men whose superior ability recommends their advancement.
- (b) In the prompt segregation in the Development Battalions of intellectually inferior men whose inaptitude would retard the training of the unit.
- (c) In building organizations of equal or appropriate strength.
- (d) In selecting suitable men for various army occupations or for special training in the technical schools.
- (e) In eliminating the feeble-minded.

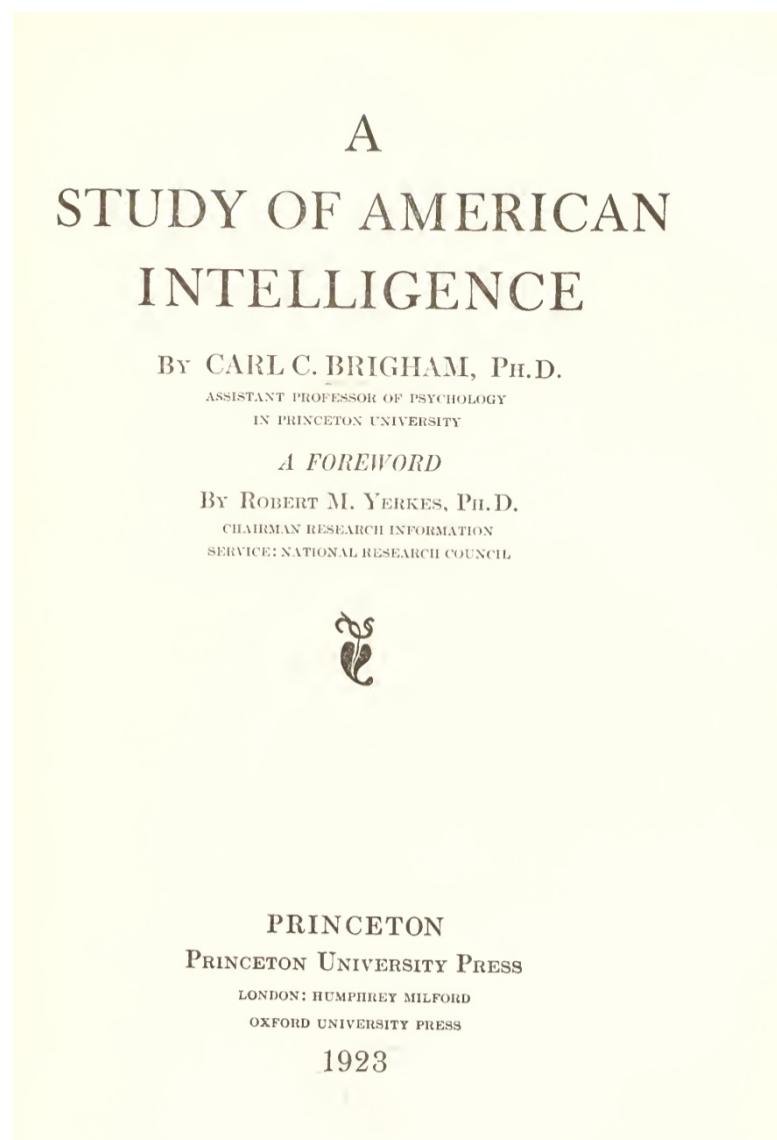
*What the tests measure.*—The tests give reliable index of a man's *ability to learn, to think quickly and accurately, to analyse situations, to maintain a state of mental alertness, and to comprehend instructions*. They do not measure loyalty, bravery, dependability, or the emotional traits that make a man "carry on." A man's value to the service is measured by his *intelligence, plus other necessary qualifications*.

*What the grades mean.*—All men are classified by the tests as A, B, C+, C, C-, D-, or E, as follows:

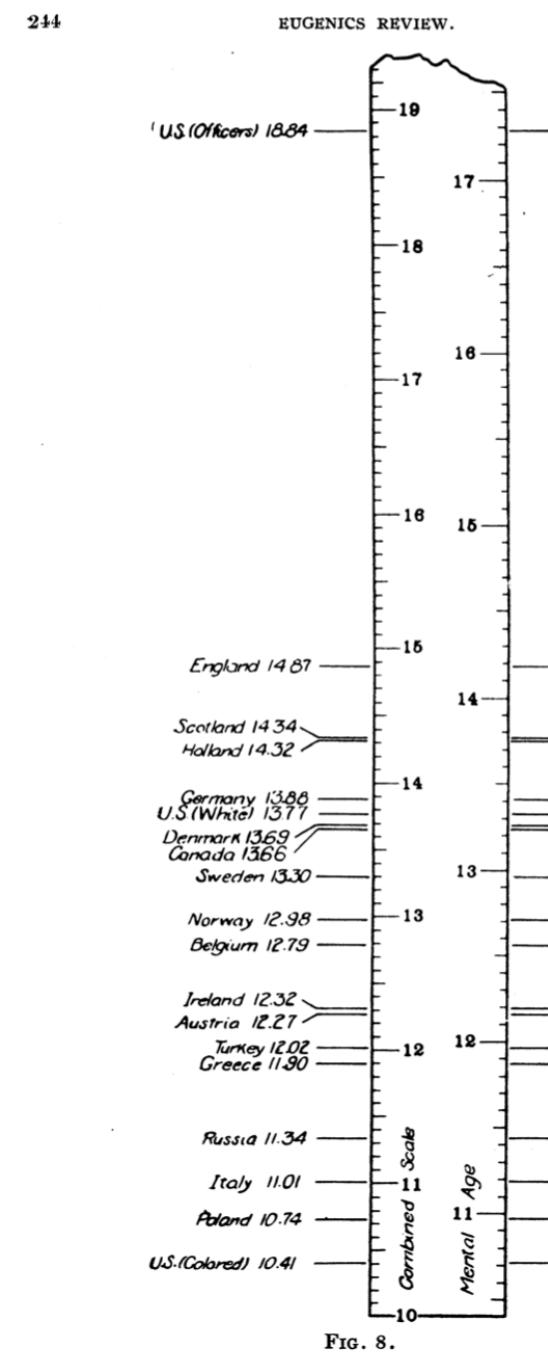
- A *Very superior intelligence.*—High officer type, when backed by other necessary qualities.
- B *Superior intelligence.*—Commissioned officer type and splendid sergeant material.
- C+ *High average intelligence.*—Good non-commissioned officer material with occasionally a man worthy of higher rank.
- C *Average intelligence.*—Good Private type, with some fair to good non-commissioned officer material.
- C- *Low average intelligence.*—Ordinary private.
- D *Inferior intelligence.*—Largely illiterates or foreign born.. Usually fair soldiers, but often slow in learning.
- D- *Very inferior intelligence*, but considered fit for regular service.
- E *Mental inferiority*, justifying recommendation for Development Battalion, special service organizations, rejection or discharge.

# Scientific Racism

Carl Brigham popularized the alpha-beta army test results in his 1922 book



He furthered racist conceptions of intelligence



# Continued racism

- Arthur Jensen
- Herrnstein and Murray's 1994 book, The Bell Curve

# **IQ testing and mental health**

Eugenics proponents advocated that IQ tests be used to identify “feeble-minded” people that should be institutionalized by the state and/or involuntarily sterilized

# Goddard's "who is a moron?"

Goddard describes how  
“feeble-mindedness”  
should be split into  
categories based on IQ

idiot: mental age of two

imbecile: mental age of 3 to  
7

moron: mental age of 8 to  
12

*The Scientific Monthly*, Vol. 24, No. 1, January 1927

## WHO IS A MORON?

By Dr. HENRY H. GODDARD  
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

# Goddard's problem

Considers two general “solutions” to how society should deal with people identified as “morons” by IQ tests

more unfortunate. Perhaps our ideal should be to eventually eliminate all the lower grades of intelligence and have no one who is not above the twelve-year intelligence level. Aside from the impossibility of eliminating half of the population, one may very well question whether such a thing would be desirable, even if it could be done. One thing remains to be considered, the tremendous significance of education for the moron.

First of all, some of my readers have already raised the question as to the advisability of letting these people go out into the world, even though they can support themselves. Is there not danger that they will marry and bring into the world feeble-minded children and so continue this defective race? Yes, there is considerable danger of that, *if it is a danger*. Let us look at it a little more closely. Just what is the danger? First, that we are propagating the feeble-minded. Yes, but we have learned how to “cure” them, and when cured (trained) they are very useful. They are happy in doing their kind of work that you and I do not want to do—positions that it is hard to get people to fill. In other words, *we need these people*.

# Roadmap

1 The intelligence test race

2 Binet-Simon Test

3 Mental testing and Eugenics

4 Critical responses

# Critical Responses

Kamin, L. J. (1974). *The science and politics of IQ*. Psychology Press.

Hilliard, A. G. (1976). A Review of Leon Kamin's *The Science and Politics of I.Q.* *Journal of Black Psychology*, 2(2), 64–74.

<https://doi.org/10/gg3hr5>

In short *The Science and Politics of I.Q.* is not only a sufficient rebuttal to racist behavioral science, it is as well a study in the psychology, sociology and politics of behavioral science itself. Kamin's conclusion is bold:

"There exists no data which should lead a prudent man to accept the hypothesis that I.Q. test scores are in any degree heritable . . . The I.Q. test in America, and the way in which we think about it, has been fostered by men committed to a particular social view. That view includes the belief that those on the bottom are genetically inferior victims of their own immutable defects. The consequences has been that the I.Q. test has served as an instrument against the poor-dressed in the trappings of science rather than politics." (pp. 1 & 2)

## A Review Of Leon Kamin's *The Science and Politics of I.Q.*

By

Asa G. Hilliard III

*"When Herodotus visited Egypt and recognized the African originals of the Greek deities, he makes the sage remark that his countrymen, in their ignorance of the beginnings, counted the birth of their gods from the time when they first acquired a knowledge of them."* (Massey, 1886, p. 2)

Finally, a scholarly treatment of the evidence for the I.Q.–heredity discussion is here! Dr. Leon Kamin is Chairman of the Department of Psychology at Princeton University. In this thoughtful and meticulously documented book, the circus atmosphere of debate and rhetoric which has surrounded the I.Q.–heredity issue has yielded to data. More than that, Kamin has placed the data in its socio-historical context. What has emerged is a book of profound importance for the contemporary social and professional scene. The book is a "bomb shell." Ironically this "bomb shell" seems to have exploded in the desert, since there are no headlines and there is little noise within the profession of psychology. Perhaps this is a testimonial to its effectiveness. Black psychologists will find Kamin's book useful for several reasons:

1. It documents the consequences of working primarily with secondary sources.
2. It documents the way racism distorts perception of scholars who influence public policy.
3. It documents the political nature of data.
4. It documents the modes of affecting public policy.
5. It documents the critical need for a sense of history as a backdrop for putting the work of the behavioral scientist in perspective.
6. It documents the slow reception of truth by the scholarly establishment.
7. It documents cases where data seem to follow from the belief of the investigators, rather than the reverse.
8. It documents the need for the protection of the public from bad "science."

# Black Psychologists in APA

Up through the 1960s, the APA was overwhelmingly white

In an APA meeting in 1968, a small group of Black Psychologists formed their own organization, [ABPsi](#).

Williams, R. (1974). A History of the Association of Black Psychologists: Early Formation and Development. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 1(1), 9–24. <https://doi.org/10/gg3hq4>

## A History of The Association of Black Psychologists: Early Formation and Development

**Robert Williams**  
Washington University

*Men do not build for others, they build for themselves . . .  
What are you going to expect, that white men are going  
to build up America and elsewhere and hand it over to us?"*

Marcus Garvey  
August 1, 1924

It is not an accident that the National Association of Black Psychologists was formed in San Francisco in 1968. The seeds of discontent had been sown. Specifically, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the proliferation of Black caucuses—the former representing the end of a dream, the latter heralding an era of new hope—were directly correlated with the formation of ABPsi. Except for one or two well-known individuals (e.g. Dr. Kenneth B. Clark and Dr. Martin Jenkins), Black psychologists were virtually unknown prior to 1968. Typically at the annual meetings of the American Psychological Association, Black Psychologists ignored other Blacks. It was rare to see more than two Black people together at a time during an APA meeting. Eye-to-eye contacts and conversations were avoided. Black psychologists were as separate as the fingers are on the hand.

# **moratorium on IQ testing of Black children**

In addition, ABPsi adopted the following six-point statement on testing:

“The Association of Black Psychologists fully supports those parents who have chosen to defend their rights by refusing to allow their children and themselves to be subjected to achievement, intelligence, aptitude and performance tests, which have been and are being used to:

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- 
- 1) Label black children as uneducable;
  - 2) Place black children in special classes;
  - 3) Potentiate inferior education;
  - 4) Assign black children to lower educational tracks than whites;
  - 5) Deny black children higher educational opportunities; and
  - 6) Destroy positive intellectual growth and development of black children.”

It became increasingly clear as the year progressed that APA did not intend to endorse the moratorium on testing since it had a vested interest in the testing movement. We could not expect the Educational Testing Service to endorse the moratorium either, inasmuch as much of its multimillion-dollar annual budget derives from testing. Neither could we expect the Psychological Corporation (publisher of the Wechsler Intelligence Scales) or Houghton-Mifflin (publisher of the Stanford-Binet) to endorse the testing moratorium. The Black Psychologists decided to move independently of APA. In closing:

# Outcomes

Advocacy of Black psychologists led to a moratorium on intelligence testing of Black children in California (1979), still in effect

There was also substantial pushback from groups with vested financial interests in intelligence testing

Williams, R. L., & Mitchell, H. (1978). What Happened to ABPsi's Moratorium on Testing: A 1968 to 1977 Reminder. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 4(1-2), 25-42.  
<https://doi.org/10/gg6btt>

## **What Happened to ABPsi's Moratorium on Testing: A 1968 to 1977 Reminder**

by

**Robert L. Williams and Horace Mitchell  
of  
Washington University at St. Louis**

"When the cock is asleep, he forgets about the hawk"  
An Ashanti Proverb

"Sleep is the cousin of death" from Zaire

In 1968 at its National meeting the Association of Black Psychologists issued a call for a moratorium on all standardized testing of Black students. The charges were "cultural bias", "racism" "unfairness" and even "black intellectual genocide". Indeed, the initial call for a testing moratorium jolted the testing world. The moratorium touched off a furor between staunch advocates of standardized testing (Cleary, et. al., 1975 APA 1976(b), APGA, 1970, A.M.E.G. et.al., 1972 to name a few) and its opponents (Williams, 1970a, 1972a; Barnes, 1972; Green, 1974; Rivers, Mitchell and Williams, 1975; Williams and Rivers, 1975 and Stone 1975).

# Further reading

The [Journal of Black Psychology](#) has published many excellent articles on intelligence testing and its impacts on society

# **What's next**

This is the last lecture for the psychology, eugenics, and intelligence testing learning module.

Your next step is to complete a quiz or assignment by the due date posted on blackboard.

The next learning module is on the topic of “associations”