

Fuck Charles Murray: Transcending the IQ Paradigm (DRAFT)

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Them what has, gets.

– Folk saying

Abstract

We describe the bones of a scientific paradigm to replace the IQ paradigm.

1 Introduction

The observed correlation between IQ and outcomes is an empirical fact that must be explained away before we can throw out the IQ paradigm.

We posit the following chain of causation:

1. The rich give their children fancy educations, basically booksmarts.
2. The poor give their children the educations they can afford, basically street-smarts and trade skills.
3. IQ tests predominantly measure the former, since the rich people control the academic establishment that certifies them
4. IQ tests are administered by people who don't know the answers and have personal prejudice, making them just a very fancy and subtle/deniable version of poll tests with a grandfather clause.
5. Outcomes are biased towards the rich because capital usually wins ultimatum games over labor (Not always, though. Solidarity!)

The first loose thread that proves this paradigm is Richard Feynman. Born to a poor Jewish family, he had all the fancy Jewish wisdom and all the fancy trade skills and street-smarts, but probably lacked some of the book learning that the test was measuring, and maybe his IQ test administrator hated Jews, or disliked Feynman upon meeting him, or had an argument with his wife that morning, etc. His measured IQ was surprisingly low, given that he ended up being one of the great geniuses of human history. (He also failed a sanity test when he was about to get drafted, if I recall correctly from his books.)

The second loose thread that proves this paradigm is that black people are really good at chess, far better than some of the most celebrated geniuses who have walked the Earth. I personally beat Paul Erdős in a game of chess at the age of 12 or 13. I took a few chess lessons from Ramdake Lewis, a black chess master from Cincinnati, around the same time, and learned a few really good tricks. If IQ existed, and was rank-ordered in any way, and correlated to race, this would be a devastatingly unlikely series of events: my IQ at the time would have had to have been higher than Erdős's and lower than Lewis's, meaning that Lewis would have had to have been one of the smartest people to ever live. Maybe he was and is (I haven't kept up with him). But certainly he's not as famous or as celebrated as Paul Erdős.

The third loose thread that proves the paradigm is the existence of "Jewish questions" in the Russian academic system. These were incredibly tricky math problems that were given only and specifically to Jewish applicants to academic opportunities. Ultimately, some Jewish people figured out how to crack this style of puzzle and made sure to spread the knowledge within the community. This particular phenomenon, together with the primacy of math in academia, is probably sufficient to explain Jewish overrepresentation in math and the sciences. (There would have been a very similar effect with Einstein and the Jewish physics community in pre-World War II Germany, since Einstein was both a first-rate researcher and a first-rate explainer and educator. Einstein would probably have taught anyone, but maybe Jewish people were more drawn to talk to him.)

There is thus no reason to presume that race has anything to do with IQ, since IQ is a meaningless construct. To the extent that there are measured differences between races, it really just reflects the match between the education received by the test designer and that received by the test subject.

2 Strengths-based Intelligence Modeling

Consider that each person has some number of skill statistics. Each skill statistic represents their skill in some particular human endeavor. It need not even be an intellectual endeavor, it could be basketball or football or hockey or soccer or chess or whatever.

Model each skill statistic using either the Elo or Glicko rating system in competitive games. (Preferably the Glicko rating system, since it is more empirically grounded and stable.) This rating can either be a unipartite rating in competitive games or a bipartite rating in feats of strength, like the chess puzzles on Chess.com. This rating can exist either for individual in individual competitions, or teams in team competitions.

That's it. That's the framework.

3 TODO

1. Make a D&D style campaign manual that illustrates the above framework, and invite people to play it.