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It seems to be necessary every generation to beat back the forces of academic racism. In 1961 Juan Comas published a scathing commentary in this journal about the odious works of a racist psychologist named Henry Garrett and the journal *Mankind Quarterly*, which persevered nevertheless and which possesses a sad continuity (through the Pioneer Fund and *The Bell Curve*) with the work currently under review, that of Rushton. What are we to do if we wish to maintain some semblance of academic rigor and at the same time defend the principles of academic freedom? The answer: precisely what Comas did there and Lieberman has done here—subject the work in question to vigorous critique.

Rushton's work has value for the anthropology of science as an example of fetishizing the brain (see Paterniti 2000 and Bower 2000 on those of Einstein and Ishi) and as illuminating the relationship between the substance and the look of science. It has no value as biological anthropology, however, which is presumably why the American Association of Physical Anthropologists took the extraordinary step of revoking his membership at its 2000 meeting.

The first thing that struck me when I read Rushton's work was how anyone today could possibly believe that "civilization" was an organic property rooted in the innate constitution of certain people. Civilization is a property of social history; genetic microevolution is too slow to account for it, and a century of acculturation studies has shown how readily "civilization" is transmitted independently of the gene pool.

The argument that civilization is a genetic property was a self-serving justification for political evils ranging from colonialism to genocide. Anthropology fought that battle many decades ago. To deny it today is like arguing that the acceleration due to the earth's gravity is not 32 feet/second/second but more like 26. Rushton's work is thus akin to modern creationism, but it claims paradox-

ically to speak on behalf of Darwin. This makes it important to expose it for the quackery it is.

The bane of such quackery is the rigorous use of scientific controls, and the better the controls, the weaker Rushton's arguments about race, biology, and intelligence are empirically. Two recent studies demonstrate this nicely.

David and Collins (1997) studied the relationship between birth weight and race, in which black Americans are at higher risk for having low birth-weight babies even when the data are controlled for socioeconomic variables. Here is a feature both evidently racial and biological. Yet when they introduced a significant control, namely, African immigrants to the United States, the racial pattern vanished; the African-born immigrants clustered with American whites rather than with American blacks. The low-birth-weight phenomenon appears to be not an endowment of the black gene pool but a consequence of the experience of growing up black in America. The obvious implication is that this experience is sufficiently different from the experience of growing up white in America as to render gross comparisons of diverse adult phenotypes entirely unrepresentative of underlying genetic patterns. This is not surprising to an anthropological audience.

The second study is relevant to Rushton's basic claim about brains. Do they differ in size across the races? Assuming that the brain secretes intelligence as the pancreas secretes insulin and therefore a bigger organ means larger thoughts, finding a difference between the races in brain size might account for, or even justify, the inequality, exploitation, or violence inflicted upon the poorer thinkers—as racists from every era have recognized. Assuming, in contrast, that variation in brain size is functionally trivial and that attempting to document it across groups is anachronistic, one might casually dismiss the endeavor. The problem is that to do so leaves Rushton arguing on the scientific high ground that there are real, empirically valid correlations between cranial volume and IQ whose meaning is largely self-evident rather than being compelled to consider what the biological meaning of such correlations might be.

Now, of course, there is no reason to think that such a correlation would be impossible. If factors such as diet and the circumstances of life affect both brain size and IQ, then they could be correlated without being causally related. Thus, Rushton's brandishing of correlations would have little scientific merit. And, indeed, another recent study examines the relationship between brain volume and IQ (Schoenemann et al. 2000) but partitions the variation in a significant way. With three relevant variables (IQ, brain size, and conditions of life), these researchers control for the conditions of life by contrasting the relationship between IQ and brain size within families (where the conditions of life vary little) and between families (where the conditions of life vary more substantially). They find a correlation between IQ and brain size only *across* families, where both the conditions of life and the volume of the brain vary. *Within* families, where brain volume differs but the conditions

of life differ much less, there is no correlation between brain volume and IQ. To the extent, then, that there may be an empirical relationship between brain size and IQ, it is far more likely to represent a spurious statistical consequence of common life circumstances than it is to represent a deterministic nexus linking size of brain and size of thought.