

# Review of: "Facing the Facts About Test Score Gaps"

John Jackson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Michigan State University

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

Academic scholarship carries with it certain ethical and epistemological obligations. This paper fails to be mean the minimum standards to be considered scholarship. While it has the form of scholarly paper, it is no such thing.

At a bare minimum, a scholarly paper acknowledges it is joining an ongoing conversation about its topic: to acknowledge the work on which the paper is building and to represent alternative views accurately and explain why the paper takes issue with this. This is how we teach our undergraduates to read and respond to a scholarly paper. These obligations are epistemological because they help in the production of accurate knowledge about the examined topic. These obligations are also ethical, as they show the writer respects and acknowledges the work of those with whom it agrees and those with whom it disagrees.

The present paper is an epistemological and ethical failure. It is not scholarship.

“the widely promulgated theory that the gap is purely environmental” (p. 1). If it is widely promulgated, there should be ample citations to psychologists making this claim about “purely environmental.” This sentence, the key to the paper, is completely undocumented because it is false. The only attempt to document it is Endnote #5 which cites two books by journalists and Gould’s *Mismeasure of Man* which is approaching its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. The paper is strangely obsessed with this old book. Gould died over twenty years ago and, whatever you may think of his work, it cannot be considered a recent statement about genetics and intelligences. The paper does not present a scrap of evidence from the psychological literature to support this central claim.

“Although evidence has been steadily accumulating for many years, public discussion of partially genetic causes of race-related test score gaps is treated as toxic, particularly within the administrative structures of government, academic, and research institutions” (p. 2). False and undocumented. Here is a bibliography of over 300 Racial Hereditarian Research (RHR) papers published since 2012:

Bird, Kevin, Jackson, John, and Winston, Andrew. 2023. “A Bibliography of Racial Hereditarian Research”. Zenodo. doi:10.5281/zenodo.8250806. <https://zenodo.org/record/8250806>

For a “taboo” topic, RHR is not hard to find. Of course, as you see from the bibliography, it is often found in explicitly White Nationalist websites. RHR researchers often claim that their critics pointing out their collaboration with White Nationalists as evidence of a “taboo” rather than simply responsible critique of their agenda.

White Nationalist sources are not incidental to the central claims of the present paper. The paper cites Lynn & Becker's National IQ Dataset (see the sources in the bibliography cited above for the shoddy nature of this dataset). That book was published by Lynn's personal vanity press, Ulster Institute for Social Research. A previous edition of that book was published by Lynn's other favorite publisher, Washington Summit Press, owned and operated by Richard Spencer, a key organizer of the deadly Unite the Right Rally. Lynn published many books with this White Nationalist press (see the bibliography cited above). Continuing this shameful tradition, the paper cites a book published by Arktos Publishers, a press dedicated to publishing fascism and racist eugenics. RHR writers never explain how their self-proclaimed "objective" scientific papers rely on White Nationalists for their data and how they then cite those books as supposed politically-neutral authorities.

And, of course, the paper cites numerous papers published in *Mankind Quarterly*, the journal edited for decades by two men (Robert Gayre and Roger Pearson) who promulgated the Nazi race doctrines of Hans F.K. Guenther.

It is unimaginable that responsible scholarship would ever cite such sources as authority in a purported scientific paper. Such sources are NEVER cited in human genetics, medical genetics, or biological anthropology. And, the citation of such sources gives lie to the RHR claim, as promulgated in this paper and throughout the RHR literature, that their "research" is an apolitical search for scientific truth.

The paper does not come to grips with the extensive scientific literature that engages and refutes the central claims of RHR, such as the claim that continental "races" are biological entities or that Self Identified Race and Ethnicity map on to biological "races." Human geneticists and evolutionary biologists agree that "race" is a socially constructed phenomenon and that the study of human variation is impeded by racial ideas. Despite the paper's claim that their research is hushed up or ignored, it has been roundly criticized by real scientists for decades. None of this research is acknowledged or addressed in the present paper, thus revealing the paper's ethical and epistemological failure:

Bird, Kevin, Jackson, John, and Winston, Andrew. "A Bibliography of Responses to Racial Hereditarian Research". Zenodo, August 18, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8263594>. <https://zenodo.org/record/8263594>

The bottom of page 2 of the present paper asks for an honest evaluation of RHR. I suggest RHR researchers honestly engage with the extensive research that shows their continual collaboration with White Nationalists and supporters of racist social policies. These collaborations have gone on for decades and yet RHR researchers have never tried to explain their support for such activities. If there is a "taboo" around this research, it is that of RHR writers who refuse to honestly engage with their critics.