

RACE And RACES

Richard A. Goldsby

SECOND EDITION

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Richard A. Goldsby

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

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**To
John,
Elizabeth,
Joanna,
and
Marilyn**

foreword

Race is a biological phenomenon, racism a sociological attitude. Because racism has led to wholesale misery and crime, the existence of races has often been denied. The author of this book, *Race and Races*, begins with an acknowledgment of the biological situation that mankind falls into a diversity of populations, which are called races. He is aware from facts known about dogs, sparrows, and flies that races, including those of men, are distinguished by different frequencies of genes; that the genic content of any one race includes a great array of different genetic constitutions; that there are no “pure” races; that the diversity of constitutions of different races overlaps greatly; and that—for all these reasons—a racial population and the individuals belonging to it are two very different entities, the populations being a complex pool of genes, and the individuals representing unique samples from this pool.

The silent or openly expressed assumption that races can be graded along a scale from inferior to superior has been made by peoples and tribes all over the globe since the dawn of history. It has left all of us with scars and prejudging inclinations. Dr. Goldsby has tried hard and successfully to control prejudice by giving a fair account of the problems presented by the existence of races. His book is that of a man who knows his subject as a scientist and who also perceives the social meaning of his findings and interpretations. His book will clarify the issue of race for many who may come to it with vague popular notions of various shades and of opposite viewpoints. Nevertheless, the author permits the reader to judge on his own, although he does not hide his personal accent. It is a good sign in our troubled times that such a book has been written. It will do its part in our endeavors to make the future a better one.

Curt Stern

Berkeley, California

preface

In 1969 the *Harvard Educational Review* published an article by Arthur Jensen entitled "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?" In this article Jensen questioned and laid siege to the central assumption of compensatory education: the idea that all groups possess equal inherent intellectual potential and, therefore, any differences in achievement observed when one group is compared with another must be a consequence of differences in the environments each has experienced. In an attack that began with his now widely quoted slogan, "compensatory education has been tried and apparently failed," Jensen questioned the assumption of an equal distribution of innate potential among racial groups. In particular, he suggested that the differences seen in the academic achievements of Blacks and Whites reflect an innate, that is to say, genetic, difference in the intellectual potentials of these groups. More than any other article, "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?" has been responsible for the renewed interest in the meaning and significance of race.

It was after reading the Jensen paper in 1969 that I prepared the first edition of *Race and Races* in order to provide a basic introduction to the biological reality, meaning, and limited significance of race. During the years since the preparation of that first edition, new information and new points of view have developed. Some of these are sufficiently important to make even so basic a primer as *Race and Races* incomplete and distorted without their inclusion. Furthermore, as this latest episode in the race-mental ability argument continues,¹ I find it increasingly difficult to affect in my writing

¹The debate over the equal distribution of intellectual potential is a recurrent theme in American political history. In the 1920's laws were passed designed to slow the flood of Jewish and Eastern European immigrants into the United States to a trickle. The legislators used as a justification specious assertions that these peoples were intellectually inferior. And, before the 1920's, during the antebellum 1800's, arguments for maintaining slavery included questionable "proofs" of Black inferiority.

a neutrality which belies my enlistment—by birth and conviction—against the views expressed by Professor Jensen. Consequently, this second edition is a bit more contentious than its predecessor. It is also more robust as a result of the inclusion of new material on race and mental ability, milk intolerance, the inheritance of skin color, and quantitative comparisons of the genetic diversity both within and between races.

My thanks go out to those colleagues who have encouraged me in the preparation of this second edition of *Race and Races*. Their suggestions have been extremely valuable in shaping the direction of this revision. I am also much indebted to Mrs. Margaret Schaffer who carefully prepared and diligently guarded the grammatical integrity of the manuscript. And, finally, I want to acknowledge that it is always a pleasure to prepare a book with the editorial, art, and production departments of Macmillan.

Richard A. Goldsby

Palo Alto, California

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a synopsis

I think about my education sometimes. I went to the University of Chicago for a while after the Second World War. I was a student in the department of anthropology. At that time, they were teaching that there was absolutely no difference between anybody. They may be teaching that still.

[Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., from *Slaughterhouse-Five* or *The Children's Crusade*]

No, Mr. Vonnegut, they are not still teaching that. At least not all of them are. Diversity, not uniformity, is the rule in nature, and the varieties of men we recognize as races are an expression of that pattern of diversity. The existence of human races and their intrinsic differences are facts which can be documented. Characteristic racial differences can be demonstrated for indicators as diverse as blood type, fingerprint pattern, and in some cases even composition of the urine. For instance, if we had three groups of people, say a group of Whites from northern Europe, several Japanese, and a number of Blacks, we could distinguish these racial groups from each other without ever looking at them. We could do so on the basis of known average racial differences in fingerprint pattern (Mongoloids have more whorls than Whites or Blacks); blood types (Whites have more Rh negatives than either Blacks or Mongoloids); and urine (the Japanese population will be distinctive in containing a large number of individuals who excrete a particular amino acid). We could even identify the Japanese on the basis of their ear wax. Most of them have a dry, crumbly type of ear wax whereas that of most Blacks and Caucasoids is more sticky and adhesive. It is clear that there are profound constitutional differences between racial populations. Everybody isn't just like everybody else.

Because misconception and misunderstanding of the significance of racial differences carry such great potential for harm, it is important to display and interpret the known facts about constitutional racial differences correctly and to place observations of racial differences in proper social perspective. The lessons of history illustrate the dangers that lie in an incorrect interpretation of the nature, meaning, and significance of race. Incorrect interpretation has been responsible for most tragic examples of systematic inhumanity and gratuitous intergroup violence. Just a little more than 35 years ago, offering specious arguments of Nordic racial superiority as a justification for its horrors, Nazi racism exterminated whole peoples. The incorrect and finally illegitimate doctrine of White superiority with its corollary of Black inferiority runs like an ugly thread through the entire fabric of American history. The

crucial factor responsible for the introduction of such dangerous racist aberrations into the pattern of societies is the step from the recognition of palpable racial differences to an assumption of racial superiority. In the recent history of the world some racial groups have been too ready to believe that the lower technological accomplishments of other races were inherent and genetically determined rather than a reflection of life styles and the vagaries of history. This assumption of a constitutional inferiority provided the fundamental justification for the appropriation of the land of the North American Indians, the treasure of the Aztecs, and the very bodies of Blacks.

Against such a background of recorded past and possible future episodes of racially inspired malevolence it is understandable that some who are interested in bettering race relations seek to do so by denying the existence of human races. If one can prove there are no races of man, then, logically, racial bigotry and the evil resulting from its practice can be eliminated. Those who feel that the concept of race, no matter how carefully formulated, is a myth hold that supposed biological differences between races of man are, in an absolute sense, without biological reality or meaning. In popular extension, this point of view holds that apparent racial differences are superficial, only skin deep, and that men are really brothers under the skin.

From what has gone before it should be clear that this will not be the conclusion reached by this book. It is true that all men are related by their common humanity and by the common capacities that human potential confers on them, but when a six-foot Swede and a five-foot Pygmy shake hands, they are not mistaken for brothers, no matter how amicable and warm their meeting. Tall men and short men, Jews and Gentiles, for that matter men and women live in harmony not because they are alike, but because they try to respect, admire, trust, understand, and even love each other. I do not believe it is useful or even desirable to try to promote harmony between races by denying that there are biological differences between them. Acceptance of the differences, together with an appreciation of their significance, is a more secure foundation on which to build racial harmony.

What Is a Race?

A race is a breeding population. A breeding population is one which for reasons of geography or culture mates largely within itself. As examples of breeding populations that we can call races we can

include groups such as the Australian Aborigine and the American Black. On the other hand, it is inaccurate to speak of groups such as the Jews, who share much common culture but not a common pool of inheritance, as a race. The Australian Aborigines exist as a race primarily because of geographical factors. The isolation of their homeland, the island-continent of Australia, has for millenia insured that mating will take place with fellow islanders. The American Black is a relatively new and hybrid race maintained as a breeding population by social factors. Segregation and custom rather than geography make it likely that the majority (though the rainbow-like diversity of this group makes it clear that by no means all) of matings will be with other American Blacks. Jews, on the other hand, though a closely knit cultural group, are not a race because they are not a single but rather many different breeding populations. Two thousand years ago, in the Diaspora, the Jewish people were deliberately scattered by the Romans. In spite of the dispersion, Jews have managed to maintain their faith and have often adopted highly parallel cultural solutions to the problems they encountered as minorities. However, the racial makeup of these various Jewish populations changed, more and more diverging from each other and in most cases coming to resemble that of the people among whom they settled. The lack of racial identity of Jews is best illustrated by the diversity found in the Jewish state of Israel. There one sees a culture made up of a racial spectrum ranging from whites of northern Europe to browns from Africa and the Near East.

Members of the same race have more of their hereditary components in common with each other than with members of different breeding populations. This does not mean that all members of the same race are alike. There is enormous diversity within as well as between racial groups. It is not as though each race came from a single Adam and Eve, with every member of the race tracing his ancestry back to that pair of very great grandparents. The ancestry of all races is to some degree mixed, as though every race has had not one but multiple Adams and Eves. In most cases, too, there have been interracial matings which have from time to time introduced new and different sources of inheritance. Members of a particular race differ so much from each other because they are each the offspring of different parents each of whom traces a different lineage containing differing contributions from other breeding populations. Races are much more like stews than homogenized sauces.

Because of the diversity within races, the concept of race has most meaning when applied to populations rather than to individuals. Imagine how little meaning it would have in terms of the over-all nature of a Mulligan stew to describe or specify in great

detail the composition of a single potato or chunk of meat in the stew. Similarly one does not learn much about the nature of a race by studying a single member of the race. What one is interested in is the over-all composition—the entire recipe. We have already seen that it is possible to establish statistical criteria for recognizing racial populations. For instance, when one encounters a population in which the majority of individuals have type O, Rh positive blood, dry ear wax, and a characteristic fingerprint pattern, he can identify that population as American Indian. Paradoxically, though, if he were asked to predict the fingerprint pattern or the blood type of any particular Indian in that same population, he could not do so with certainty. If, for example, a doctor assumed, without checking, that every pint of blood from an Indian reservation was type O he would not only be incorrect but criminally negligent. It is crucial to bear in mind that racial characterizations reflect the average for a group but cannot describe the isolated individual, who is unique.

Some students of race have suggested that all of the races we see in the world today arose by combinations of a few—maybe four or five—basic racial types. This theory may or may not be true. We do not know enough about the origin of human races to say. What we can say is that there are far more than four or five major breeding populations of mankind today. Actually, even by conservative estimation, more than two dozen breeding populations and hence races can be recognized. This list includes such diverse groups as the American Indian, the Northwest European, the Southeast Asian, the Bushman, the Mediterranean peoples, the West African Black, the Australian Aborigine, and the American Black.

As we have seen, the concept of race has most biological meaning when it is applied to populations, rather than to individuals. However, there have been many attempts to define race in individual terms, most of them juridical systems of racial classification that have been established more with an eye to politics and social custom than biological reality. Consider the description of one's racial identity as a Jew contained in the anti-Semitic Nurnberg laws of Nazi Germany.

In the first regulation of the Reich Citizenship Law, membership in the Jewish "race" is defined:

A Jew is anyone who descended from at least three grandparents who were racially fully Jews. A Jew is also one who descended from two full Jewish parents if (a) he belonged to the Jewish religious community at the time this law was issued or he joined the community later; (b) he was married to a Jewish person at the time this law was issued or married one subsequently; (c) he is the offspring from marriage with a Jew contracted after

the law for the protection of German Blood and German Honor became effective; (d) he is the offspring of an extramarital relationship with a Jew and was born out of wedlock.

In the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor we see some of the consequences that flow from these absurd and biologically meaningless definitions of the Jewish "race." This second of the Nürnberg race laws decreed the following:

Permeated by the knowledge that the purity of the German blood is the basis for the permanence of the German people and animated by the inflexible determination to safeguard the German nation for all time, the Reichstag has unanimously decreed the following law:

1. Marriages between Jews and citizens of German or similar blood are forbidden.
2. Extramarital intercourse between Jews and citizens of German and similar blood is forbidden.
3. Jews may not employ female citizens of German and similar blood under forty-five years of age in their households.

Germany enacted the laws which contained these peculiar definitions of a nonexistent race during the 1930's in an orgy of hysteria. Wild schemes for the protection of "German blood" from Jewish "pollution" were common. One of the most bizarre of these involved using a pendulum as a sort of divining rod to detect individuals with "Jewish" blood.

Some may be surprised to learn that laws aimed at protecting imagined "racial purity" have not been the exclusive property of Nazism. Until the Supreme Court ruled them unconstitutional in 1966, miscegenation laws designed to protect the "purity" of the White race were part of the legal codes of many states in this country. Here are some examples of statutes containing legal definitions of one's identity as a Negro:

1. A miscegenation statute of Missouri decreed it was a felony for Whites to marry Negroes. "Negroes are defined as persons having one-eighth part or more of Negro blood."
2. An Arkansas statute stated that it was a misdemeanor for any White person to marry "any person who has in her or his veins any Negro blood whatsoever."
3. A Texas miscegenation law stated that it was a felony for Whites to marry "Africans or descendants of Africans."

All of these legal definitions of race, whether based on religious and cultural associations or on naive considerations of geographical

origins or blood fractions, are of little use in establishing a biologically meaningful definition of race. This biological irrelevance is not surprising, however; legal definitions of race are designed not to serve scientific rationality but rather to lay the groundwork for the persecution or exclusion of individuals. Specifically, the Nürnberg Race Laws were concocted to assure the removal of Jews (an ancient and distinguished people but hardly a race) from participation in German life. Here in the United States miscegenation codes were part of a pattern of discriminatory laws designed to keep the Black population socially as well as sexually isolated from Whites. In short, legal definitions of race usually reflect prevailing ideas of racial superiority and purity rather than considerations of demonstrated biological fact.

Why Discuss Race?

We do not discuss race merely to recognize and point out variations between groups. We want to see what contributions an exploration of the biology of race can make to a discussion of two larger questions, one of considerable academic interest, the other of great practical importance. First, for the satisfaction of our own curiosity we want to know why there are different races and how they might have come to be. Second, given the observed biological differences among races what, if any, is their significance for society?

In order to answer the question of racial origins it is necessary to look into the origin of man himself and consider how biological variation may have played a role in his successful adaptation to many different environments. During the course of his evolution, we know that man, like all other living things, responded to his environment by adapting biologically. Many of the characteristics such as skin color and body build that we recognize as associated with race, represent adaptations evolved by man living in widely differing environments. Since his emergence in the warm, sunny climates of Africa some two million years ago man has successfully invaded and made his home in vastly different areas of the world. A key to man's global success has been the ability of different human populations to evolve variations in skin color, body structure, blood chemistry, and physiology best suited for survival in different environments.

The differences in skin color we see in various human populations probably arose in response to differing intensities of sunlight striking the parts of the globe that those various populations called

home. Solar intensity is highest in the tropics and least in the extreme southern and northern latitudes. If we look at the distribution of skin color among human populations prior to 1492 and the voyages of discovery, we encounter progressively darker skins as we approach the tropics. Penetration of the skin by sunlight causes the production of vitamin D in a layer of tissue just under the skin. If this layer receives insufficient sunlight, too little vitamin D is produced. Vitamin D deficiency causes the softening of the bones associated with rickets. Too much vitamin D results in excessive calcium uptake and deposition; bones become brittle and easily broken and calcium deposited in the kidneys produces stones. In the early days of man's existence he did not have such cultural adaptations as vitamin-D-enriched milk and sun-shielding pith helmets to compensate for too little or too much sun. Consequently early man's skin was the filter that regulated his absorption of sunlight. In the northerly climes, there was a genetic selection favoring fair skins that efficiently passed the faint rays of the cool north sun. Around the tropics selective pressures favored a heavily pigmented skin that dramatically reduced the amount of sun penetrating to the vitamin D synthesis layer. So when we look at the tropical populations of Asia and Africa, at peoples who have inhabited this sun-belt for millennia, we are not surprised to find the black skins of Africa, the browns of southern Asia, and the blacks of southern India and Ceylon.

Some of the differences in body build that we see between racial populations probably also arose as adaptations to climates. Contrast the long-limbed, slim bodies of some African Black populations with the short-limbed, generously fleshed body type found in populations of Greenland Eskimos. Both are body types well suited to the environments where they are found. Cold climates favor a heavy, heat-conserving body with short extremities. A hot climate favors a relatively lean body with long extremities. Such a body type has a high surface-to-volume ratio that exchanges heat with the environment. Careful studies which effectively measure surface-to-volume ratio show that populations in hot climates do indeed tend to have larger numbers of individuals with heat-dissipating high surface-to-volume ratios than those in colder climates such as that of Europe.

I do not mean to suggest that every racial characteristic is or has been a significant factor in the survival of the population that it marks. The survival value of appropriate skin color or body build is clear, but what about a "shoveled" incisor or a blue penis? Shoveling of the incisors, a condition in which the inner surfaces of the incisors are concave, is common in Mongoloid populations.