

Author's Response

Ethnic nepotism in science?

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Genetic similarity theory was first co-authored with two Anglo-Saxons living in the UK (Rushton, Russell & Wells 1984). The theory has been presented most often at conferences in Europe, next most often in the United States, and least often in Canada. Perhaps these facts help explain the pattern observed by Jaffe. Given the multi-ethnic composition of modern day Britain, Canada, and the United States, and no doubt Germany and Venezuela, too, the procedures devised by Jaffe, if not intended merely to be humorous, must be considered insensitive for testing his hypothesis.

If one were to look for the role of genetic similarity in scientific networking, journal citation analysis would be a better tool. Garfield (1984) showed that nationals preferentially cite fellow nationals, though most citations occur to international-quality articles. English is the *lingua franca* of science, including Third World science; Spanish, a distant second, accounted for 11% (Garfield 1984). Facts such as these have led to charges of linguistic imperialism. Michel Debré, a former prime minister of France, suggested that if French scientists were encouraged to publish in English it might threaten "the existence and permanence of the French nation" (cited by Garfield 1984, p. 261).

National and ethnic rivalries for priority are known from the invention of the calculus to the discovery of the AIDS virus. Equally disputatious are claims and charges about whether Negroids or Caucasoids founded the ancient civilizations of Egypt, whether Caucasoids or Mongoloids were the first to use gunpowder in weapons, and whether Islamic culture was based on African slaves (Lewis 1990; Stanton 1965). The position taken on scholarly topics, as on political issues, may be influenced by ethnicity.

Do citations within a country follow ethnic lines? This question unites three of my research interests: genetic similarity theory, the science of science (Jackson & Rushton 1987; Rushton 1984; 1989), and profiles of ethnic achievement (Rushton 1988). To pursue the research one would have to be able to categorize names by ethnic origin. Following Weyl (1989), typical English names include Fowler, Spence, and York; Jewish names include Cohen, Gold, and Katz; and Chinese names include Chen, Ho, and Wu. Weyl (1989) was interested in ethnic achievement within the United States and found that Jewish names were "overrepresented" by 500% on such rosters as *Who's Who in America* and *American Men and Women in Science*. Chinese names are similarly overrepresented in law, a finding that Weyl suggested may be related to the typical Asian profile on tests of mental ability (high spatial relative to low verbal). If one were to use ethnic names as a basis for a citation analysis one would need to estimate the baselines of the different groups.

To really test genetic similarity theory, however, we must await the results of ongoing studies in the UK (Leek & Smith 1989); the USSR (Svetlov, personal communication), and elsewhere using DNA fingerprint techniques (Jeffreys 1987). To test whether spouses are genetically closer than randomly chosen individuals, Vladimir Svetlov (personal communication) re-examined DNA fingerprints already obtained during forensic and population studies and found spouses are about 10–15% more similar to each other than are randomly chosen samples. Svetlov also reports to me that mice from distinct family

groups reared together *in vivarium* tend to form couples of related individuals rather than of unrelated ones, and a similar tendency seems to be occurring in studies of wild mice. These and numerous other imaginative studies will be used to throw light on the biology of human social relationships, including those occurring in science.

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