

## *Jensen's Pseudo Anti-Racism: A Reply to Puccetti*

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Professor Puccetti makes clearer than I first did a distinction between two types of racists: (a) those who believe that some races are innately intellectually inferior to others (\*racists) and (b) those who (usually because they are \*racists) advocate treatment amongst races that would be unjustly discriminatory (\*\*racists). A legitimate distinction, but does it apply in the case of Arthur Jensen?

Professor Puccetti never disputes my claim that in 1969 (a) and (b) denoted, amongst others, Arthur Jensen. I insist the same is true of the 1978 Jensen referred to and praised by Puccetti. First, the 'new' Jensen's \*racism: 'So what we are left with, at present, is merely the considerable plausibility of there being some non-trivial genetic component in the I.Q. differences between certain racial groups.'<sup>1</sup> That Puccetti should

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1 A.R. Jensen, "The Current Status of the I.Q. Controversy," *Australian Psychologist*, 13 (1978), pp. 22-23.

have failed to notice the contradiction between this statement and Jensen's advocating an official position by educators (isn't Jensen an educator?) of open agnosticism as to the causes of I.Q. differentials is most puzzling. Equally puzzling, and as serious, is Puccetti's claim that, since 'Professor Jensen recommends, first, that racial discrimination in any form be legally prohibited and that equal employment and educational opportunities be provided for members of all minority groups,'<sup>2</sup> Professor Jensen is clearly not a \*\*racist. Jensen's actual words, which in my opinion betray his current commitment to \*\*racism, are these:

My concept of justice requires that the fact of statistical differences between racial *populations* should not be permitted to influence the treatment accorded to *individuals* of any race .... This flatly anti-racist philosophy is, of course, a two-edged sword. Righting the past wrongs of racial discrimination can be accomplished best, I believe, by prohibiting racial discrimination in any form, by legal sanctions when necessary, and by seeking equal educational opportunities for members of minority groups who have been denied them in the past, so that they can compete fairly in selection for employment, technical training, or higher education, without condescending dispensations.<sup>3</sup> (Jensen's italics)

What is the other edge of Jensen's anti-racist sword? Surely he is referring to the affirmative action programs (which he pejoratively calls 'condescending dispensations') begun in the 1960's. These were and are, in Jensen's opinion, instances of unjust racial discrimination against whites, and ought to be legally prohibited. But are such programs really unjust? I shall argue that they are not, and that opposition to them is one manifestation of \*\*racism.

Even Jensen, I believe, would agree that unjustified discrimination against individual blacks *qua* blacks still exists in North America. He would even deplore this state of affairs. But such injustice will not disappear simply by wishing it away; how then should we act so as to eradicate it? Amongst other things, we must provide a sufficient — more than a mere token — number of high status role models for blacks to reduce the constriction of their ambition caused by their former and present oppression. Such role models will also serve, to some extent, to refute racist stereotypes which exist in the minds of some non-blacks. And secondly, we must guarantee blacks that their competence will not be ignored by employers and educators. But, given that many of those

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2 Roland Puccetti, "Glass on Racism," this journal, this issue, pp. 69-71.

3 Op. cit., p. 24.

who frame, interpret, and enforce hiring and educational policies are at least mildly prejudiced against blacks, if not full-blown \*racists and \*\*racists, simply having a law forbidding racial discrimination will not suffice to ensure blacks real, as opposed to merely formal, equality. As Jensen well knows, although blacks gained considerable legal equality with whites after the Civil War, this did not come close to ending unjust discrimination against them by employers, judges, juries, educators, legislators, the F.B.I., etc. Affirmative action programs with quotas, therefore, are one of the best ways of ensuring that formal equality of opportunity translates into real equality of opportunity when the distribution of scarce benefits is at issue.

But what types of affirmative action programs should one support? First, I would say that when a black and a white person are considered to be roughly equally qualified for a position, one ought to hire or admit the black. This would not constitute unjust discrimination since, given the existence of \*racism and \*\*racism, it is very probable that the black is really the more qualified of the two, i.e., his or her real level of competence has almost certainly been distorted downwards by the biases of, e.g., some of his or her former teachers and/or employers. This type of program therefore ensures that in almost every case the most qualified individual, viz., the black, will be hired or admitted. I also believe that even when blacks appear to be or really are slightly less qualified than whites long run considerations of both justice and utility dictate hiring the black; however, I do not have the space here to develop those arguments.<sup>4</sup> Let it suffice to point out that Jensen's opposition to even the mildest form of affirmative action is an instance of unjust discrimination against blacks and thus an example of \*\*racism.

Some readers of Professor Puccetti's critique will have noticed that he almost completely ignores the empirical part of my paper, viz., the historical and current causes of racism. Only because of this lacuna could he end his critique by asking how, if two groups display significant I.Q. differentials, could it follow that public knowledge of these differentials could threaten human solidarity. Of course it doesn't follow deductively, nor is it even likely in a non-\*\*racist or anti-\*\*racist society. But this is not the case in the U.S. or Canada. What I tried to demonstrate was that current ruling class interests have used and will continue to use

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4 In this connection see M.G. Fried, "In Defense of Preferential Hiring," in *Women and Philosophy* (Capricorn Books, New York, 1976), pp. 309-319; M.D. Bayles, "Compensatory Reverse Discrimination in Hiring," *Social Theory and Practice*, 2 (1973), pp. 301-312; Virginia Held, "Reasonable Progress and Self-Respect," *The Monist*, 57 (1973), pp. 12-27; Jacquie Miller, "Preferential Hiring," *The Carleton University Student Journal of Philosophy*, 4 (1979), pp. 1-7.

such reputed differentials (a) to justify increasing wage and unemployment differentials between blacks and whites; (b) to divide workers and distract their attention from their real enemy; and (c) to justify attacks on compensatory educational programs and affirmative action programs. I confess I simply cannot see the force of Professor Puccetti's attempt to counter this claim: 'the model of friendship is love and trust, not cleverness.'

And finally, Marxism does not rule out in advance the Jensen-Shockley-Herrnstein \*racism. In my original article I cited the writings of a number of authors which I believe provide decisive refutations of this new form of social Darwinism. And there are many others.<sup>5</sup> How Marxists should act were \*racism, *per improbable*, true is something about which the politically active cannot afford to speculate. \*Racism is now being used to deny blacks and other minority groups equal opportunity for, amongst other things, a university education; an education which these days guarantees fewer and fewer jobs, let alone the 'cushy jobs' which Professor Puccetti feels do not, according to Marxism, befit the proletariat. Thus one of the tasks of anti-racists is to seriously consider, on occasion, the moral obligatoriness of interfering with the dissemination of the views of both \*racists and \*\*racists.

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5 James Lawler, *I.Q., Heritability and Racism* (International Publishers, New York, 1978); Brian Simon, *Intelligence, Psychology and Education*, Revised Edition (Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1978).