WILL GOLIATH BLINK? CHARLES MURRAY'S NOBLE BUT PROBABLY FUTILE ATTACK ON THE ORTHODOXY

The proverbial Martian would find contemporary discourse about race in the West peculiar, even paradoxical. On the one hand, many modern intellectuals insist that race is a pernicious reification of superficial human differences that has been decisively refuted by modern science. On the other hand, many of these same intellectuals obsess about racial disparities and injustices and actively promote policies that treat people of different races differently (e.g., affirmative action). Thus, mainstream discourse simultaneously contends that belief in race is an anachronistic superstition *and* that racial equality is an ethical imperative that can only be achieved through racially conscious policy and analysis. To circle this square, sophisticated defenders of the mainstream argue that although race does not actually exist, it is real because the masses believe that it is real and therefore treat people of different (illusory) races differently. And this differential treatment causes disparate outcomes. The category "race," like the category "witch," is therefore analytically indispensable so long as people's belief in it influences their behavior toward others. Following Murray, I will refer to this position as the orthodoxy.

Against this, there is an alternative position, *race realism*, which argues that people use the concept of race for the same reason that they use the concept of species or sex, namely, because it picks out a salient and meaningful biological category. More adventurous versions of race realism even contend that many of the racial disparities that the orthodoxy blames on widespread racism are actually caused by intrinsic or at least recalcitrant average differences in psychological traits and tendencies between races. (I'll call this position hereditarianism.) Needless to say, hereditarianism is not popular among educated elites in the West. In fact, it is so *unpopular* that merely espousing it can lead to accusations of moral treachery and in unfavorable but by no means rare circumstances, to the loss of employment. In other words, the social constructionist orthodoxy's victory has been so complete and so merciless that it not only rejects alternative views without debate, but also it punishes those who promulgate them. For this reason, any challenge to the orthodoxy that escapes from the gloom of private conversation or rarely accessed articles and blogs into the light of the mainstream, however fleetingly, is noteworthy. Nobody has succeeded at this better than Charles Murray, whose first assault on the orthodoxy (with Richard Herrnstein), *The Bell Curve*, was so effective that, like a popular revolt that temporarily triumphs before being quelled, it continues to haunt the memory of the intelligentsia, who routinely forward it as an example of the insidious danger of race science.

Murray's latest two books, *Human Diversity* and *Facing Reality* continue this praiseworthy rebellion. They are lucid and compelling, but perhaps excessively cautious and overly eager to minimize the radical restructuring of public and scientific discourse that accepting human variation would require. In this article, I review both thematically rather than thoroughly, focusing exclusively race differences and ignoring the large (and excellent) sections in *Human Diversity* that address sex and class differences.

Human Diversity

With limpid, unembellished prose and promises that it is not full of "bombshells" or fatal threats to progressive moral concerns, *Human Diversity* attempts to forward a trenchant attack on the orthodoxy that is also palatable to the average educated reader. Most broadly, the book is a sustained argument against the orthodoxy's conviction that in a well-ordered and just social system, "*...people of all human groupings will have similar life outcomes*" (p. 2); but it is also an argument against social constructionism, and against the view that the West is beset by pervasive and powerful "isms" (sexism, racism, and classism) that hold people back like invisible chains.

Murray contends, instead, that sexes, classes, and races vary in outcomes both because of cultural forces (perhaps including invidious prejudices) *and* because of genetically caused differences in "cognitive repertoires." Contrary to the claims of the orthodoxy, therefore, in a society wholly free from pernicious isms, groups would have different outcomes because they have different traits (on average). Murray assures his readers that nothing unsavory follows from this, "…I reject claims that groups of people, be they sexes or races or classes, can be ranked from superior to inferior. I reject claims that differences among groups have any relevance to human worth or dignity" (p. 9). And although one can quibble with the specifics, he is undoubtedly correct. People should be judged by their own particular traits, not by the average characteristics of a broader category to which they can be assigned. It's worth noting here that claims of "inferiority" and "superiority" are almost never used by serious hereditarians. Instead, they are imputed to them by scholars looking to clobber a rhetorical effigy. At this point, I am inclined to advise hereditarians to ignore such vexatious tactics, but it's hard to fault Murray for reassuring his readers that he is not an early 20th century imperialist race scientist who has deduced the superiority of the European race with his calipers, since he's been the subject of similar (and equally outlandish) calumniations since *The Bell Curve.*

Murray makes the case that there are almost certainly socially consequential race differences "in cognitive repertoires" that "could be at least partially genetic" (p. 134) by focusing on three important findings in genetics and the evolutionary sciences: (1) Human genetic variation corresponds to self-identified race and ancestry (SIRE); (2) Recent human evolution has been copious and local; and (3) Racial variation in genes related to cognitive traits is common. The first point challenges the orthodoxy's contention that race is a social construct; while the second and third challenge the orthodoxy's contention that race differences are superficial because humans are all Africans under the skin.

Surprisingly, Murray begins his "framework for understanding race differences" by arguing that the orthodoxy's desire to "discard the word *race*" (p. 135) is legitimate and not solely or even mostly driven by ideology. Therefore, he adopts the term ancestral population or simply population for the rest of the text. This might be a prudent strategy, and it certainly illustrates Murray's desire to write a book that could persuade somebody not already immersed in the literature of race realism. However, I'm skeptical of his claim that the orthodoxy's crusade against the word race is legitimate; and the reasons he forwards for accepting it are unpersuasive. For example, he writes that "it is an error to think of races as primordial," because of the constant mixing of humans (p. 135). And he notes that "the number of groups into which people can be sorted genetically is fluid and depends on how much genetic information is brought to bear on the sorting" (p. 135).

These two claims are correct, but largely irrelevant. And they appear to accept the

orthodoxy's caricature of what race means. Many of the scholars who bludgeon the concept of race, mocking the supposedly unsophisticated thinkers who use it, first convert it from a humble scientific category into a bizarre and elaborate Platonic essence that supposedly divides humans into discrete categories (See Winegard, Winegard, & Anomaly, 2020; Sesardic, 2010). The problem is that no serious scholar of racial variation uses the word this way; therefore, this rhetorical exercise is about as edifying as criticizing ecologists for using the term water because actually no body of water is pure H20. There is a voluminous literature on the concept of race, and race realism remains, in my view, the most plausible position. And therefore it is important to pushback against fallacious arguments and egregious misrepresentations that attempt to eradicate the word from scientifically respectable discourse. (Thankfully, if one reads Murray's book and substitutes "population" with "race," the meaning of the text is the same since the extension of both terms is the same.)

Despite this offer of peace to the orthodoxy, Murray is not interested in détente. Race (or population, as it were) is not a social construction. Two recent discoveries (or confirmations of earlier discoveries) are important here: (1) Genetic variation corresponds strongly to SIRE; and (2) Genetic variation is non-randomly related to ancestral geography. In fact, if they did not undermine powerful sacred values, scholars would likely note that these modern discoveries impressively vindicate many earlier analysts of human variation, who are, instead, routinely maligned. (Obviously, these findings do not vindicate all of their speculations.)

Murray is a lucid guide through the modern literature, which can be quite complicated, and he deserves praise for his ability to expound complex concepts clearly. For example, he explains the results and implications of recent genetic cluster analyses of human populations in a few pages, while also addressing common criticisms. The basic point is this: When scholars analyze genetic variation around the globe, they find that it is not amorphous or haphazard; instead, it is patterned and largely corresponds to continental ancestry. At K = 5 (K is the number of clusters), analyses generally produce clusters that correspond to Africa, Europe, East Asia, the Americas, and Oceania. When K is increased to 7, South and Central Asians and Mideasterners split off (Li; Rosenberg et al., 2005; Li et al., 2008). This pattern of genetic variation happens to resemble the phenotypic differences that provoked earlier thinkers to categorize human variation in the first place! Of course, these analyses are not without critics, some who forward reasonable objections to the notion that they support race realism. But many of the objections, upon inspection, reduce to semantic quibbles. Most serious scholars, even those who disdain race realism, accept that genetic variation is not wholly random and that it is indeed related to geography (e.g., Rutherford, 2020). As Murray writes, "My view of the orthodox reaction to the cluster analyses is that it constitutes a complicated set of 'Yes, buts.'…a truth uncongenial to the orthodoxy goes untouched" (p. 156).

Social constructionists might respond that although genetic variation is not as random as splashes of paint on a canvass, it is also not so organized that it produces a coherent picture of human divisions into continental races. Human variation, they might continue, is too complicated, too clinal, or too noisy to categorize profitably. Individuals are individuals each with unique and unclassifiable patterns of genetic differences. But this runs into an obvious objection: genetic variation strongly corresponds to a person's self-identified race and ethnicity (SIRE). That is, if one has a person's genotype, then she can accurately predict the person's SIRE. Genetic variation is not random, and it is not too noisy or clinal to classify profitably. As Murray summarizes, "If race and ethnicity were nothing but social constructs" this "would be impossible," but "it's actually a sure bet" (p. 156). The evidence for the two important claims of

race realism, then, is nearly unassailable. Genetic variation corresponds reliably to SIRE *and* to geographic ancestry. It is strange, therefore, that Murray concludes the chapter by once again objecting to the concept of race, writing, "The material here does not support the existence of classically defined races, nor does it deny the many ways in which race is a social construct" (p. 157).

I do not know for certain, but I suspect that Murray's idea of the "classical definition" of race is similar to the Platonic caricature that I claimed was a perversion of race realism—one that is often pummeled like a piñata by social constructionists for rhetorical effect but that which few race realists have ever held. Thus, it is of course true that these data do not support the "classical definition" of race, since no data in the post-Darwinian, post-polygenist world reasonably could. (Perhaps one might argue that Carlton Coon's conception of the largely independent evolution of *Homo erectus* into different races of *Homo sapiens* comes close, but even Coon did not hold the view that human races were discrete, Platonic-like categories.) I will reiterate what I wrote earlier: it is a mistake to concede the term "race" to the orthodoxy. And it is a mistake both intellectually and strategically. Intellectually, because the concept of race that the orthodoxy demands scholars eschew is a straw man; and strategically, because refraining from using the word allows the orthodoxy to control discourse by moralizing and demonizing it. Like Murray, I am not a flamethrower. It is, in my view, a good idea to try to persuade reasonable people; and if that requires gentle rhetoric, then that is a sacrifice that is worth making. But this sacrifice should not include the immolation of a perfectly reasonable nomenclature.

These often-abstruse debates about genetic variation and classification would likely be as tedious as other wearisome exercises in taxonomy if they were not so obviously related to the politically and ethically supercharged topic of racial differences in cognitive traits and abilities. And a less courageous writer than Murray would, therefore, have demurred about psychological variation, correctly calculating that *Human Diversity* was already loaded with enough explosive material to blow up any chance at mainstream success. But, of course, Murray would not have co-authored *The Bell Curve* if he were the type to demure. He clearly believes and explicitly states that science will unveil more than a few genetically caused differences in cognitive repertoires among races and devotes the last two chapters in his section on "A Framework for Thinking about Race Differences" defending that (heretical) position. In chapter 8, he forwards the evolutionary case for his belief; and in chapter 9, he offers suggestive genetic data.

It was once common to argue that because humans evolved in Africa roughly 200,000 years ago and did not spread into different continental environments until roughly 50,000 years ago, there simply wasn't enough time for them to evolve unique psychological adaptations (Gould, 1984). However, this position (1) Underestimates the potential pace of evolution; and (2) Misstates the actual debate about human psychological variation by focusing on unique psychological adaptations instead of small and subtle correlated changes in existing adaptations. Murray makes the first point more effectively than the second, but even here much of his discussion of recent, local evolution is abstract, focusing on difficult-to-understand (for the lay person) analyses of signs of selection in the genome instead of concrete examples. As always, his writing is laudably perspicuous, but I do wonder whether it would have been wiser to spend more time on specific cases of recent, rapid evolution, such as Belyaev's Siberian silver foxes and Kettlewell's moths (a disputed example, to be sure) than on genetic evidence of local selection.

Caviling aside, Murray's discussion of standing variation is crucial and praiseworthy. A simple idea about race differences is that they are caused by a few unique alleles that have large

effects. Perhaps, for example, Northeast Asians have alleles A, B, and C; Europeans, D, E, and F; and Africans G, H, and I. This is understandable for those who only vaguely remember some guy named Mendel from high school biology. If pea plants can change dramatically because of differences in one gene, then why can't humans? Geneticists have long known, however, that this view is wrong. Most traits that humans find intriguing—athleticism, conscientiousness, intelligence—are highly polygenic. And, in fact, even traits that were once exemplars of Mendelian simplicity such as skin, eye, and hair color are more complicated than was routinely taught. Therefore, most race differences did not evolve through a few *de novo* mutations that have far reaching consequences. Nor did they evolve through a number of "hard sweeps," bringing new mutants to near fixation (Schrider & Kern, 2017). Instead, they evolved through "soft sweeps" in which already existing genetic variation ("standing variation") is shuffled around in response to selection pressures. Murray explains with a colorful analogy: "Think of standing variation as kindling. For a long time, it has no effect on anything. The allele frequencies drift aimlessly from generation to generation. Then something changes in the environment—the equivalent of a match" (p. 170).

Murray argues that we have strong evidence in humans that the match of continental climatological and ecological challenges has indeed lit the kindling of standing variation. He examines the GWAS (genome-wide association study) Catalog and Phase 1 of the 1000 Genomes Project for differences in target allele frequencies (SNPs associated with cognitive repertoires) among Africans, Europeans, and Asians. First, however, he examines differences in target allele frequencies *within* the same race (e.g., Kenyans and African Americans or Chinese and Japanese) using SNPs associated with schizophrenia. The correlations are remarkably high, .98 for African and Asian groups and .97 for European groups. However, when that analysis is repeated *between* races, the "landscape is completely different" (p. 188). The correlation for Africans and Europeans is .74; the correlation for Asians and Europeans is .81; and the correlation for Africans and Asians is .70. This is not an unusual pattern. The proportion of large target allele differences between the races in SNPs related to cognitive traits, for example, is over 30% for every comparison. As Murray writes, "the data confirm the proposition" that "population differences in variants associated with personality, abilities, and social behavior are common" "no matter how you look at them" (p. 191).

Murray addresses various complications and problems (e.g., population stratification). And he is admirably cautious, in general, which is the appropriate attitude for a scientist. However, my criticism of his analysis of local, recent selection in humans also applies here: The material is quite abstract, and Murray might have been better served by beginning with some concrete phenotypic differences, e.g., in cognitive ability or propensity for collectivism, before addressing the possibility that that difference (and others like it) had been sculpted by the forces of evolution. This would make it clear what the target allele frequency differences in cognitive repertoires *might* mean. They might mean that Northeast Asians have higher average cognitive ability than Europeans at least partially because of genes; they might mean that Europeans have slightly higher average self-control than Africans at least partially because of genes; they might mean that Africans have slightly higher intellectual spontaneity than Europeans at least partially because of genes. And on and on. As it is, Murray resolutely refrains from speculating, declining to forward a single concrete example of a likely difference in cognitive repertoires. Strategically, this might be wise, but it does seem like a pulled punch; after all, it is exceedingly unlikely that genetically caused race differences will be entirely unrelated to current phenotypic differences.

Human Diversity's discussion of race differences ends with Murray's cautious but optimistic reflections on society's ability to handle nearly indisputable evidence of genetically caused race differences in cognitive traits. One's predictions about such things are probably more indicative of one's temperament than of the state of the limited available evidence, but I do think Murray underestimates the challenge human variation poses to our society. Of genetically influenced race differences, Murray writes, "Probably some will lend themselves to value judgments, but even those will cut both ways. No population is free of defects nor possessed of all the virtues" (p 201). This is almost certainly true. But it's equally true that one race might have *more* desirable traits, on average; and it's thus equally true that one race might have *less*. I am skeptical that our intelligentsia is or will soon be in a position to accept this possibility with honesty and equanimity. Murray notes that we currently deal quite well with an enormous "genetically-grounded population difference on a highly sensitive trait," namely the difference between men and women in violent behavior (p. 202). But this example is importantly different from the many incendiary race differences researchers may discover because it seems to "favor" the group that is not "privileged" (i.e., women). The orthodoxy is clearly most offended by potential race differences that appear to favor Europeans, which is why, for example, when Jared Diamond explicitly argued that New Guineans were probably "genetically superior" to Europeans in mental ability, the intelligentsia greeted his book not with denunciations and accusations of racism, but with enthusiastic praise (See Diamond, 1997, p. 21).

Furthermore, taking race differences seriously does, I think, challenge some of the left's policy preferences; and it certainly poses difficult questions to fair-minded citizens who are willing honestly to think through the consequences. A few examples: if scholars were reasonably confident that the Black-White IQ gap (of roughly one standard deviation) was caused primarily by genetic variation, would it be wise for politicians and pundits to discuss this openly? Should policy makers use this information to eradicate affirmative action? If they did, is it possible to imagine a stable, liberal society with enormous racial disparities in income and social status that doesn't blame the environment for the gaps? I raise these questions not because they are fatal to Murray's project (I don't think they are), but because they pose severe challenges to those of us who believe that honesty about race differences is better than well-intentioned silence or noble lies. One could easily write an entire book attempting to address these inquiries, so it's obviously unfair to criticize Murray for failing to answer them satisfactorily, but it's not, I think, unfair to point out that his (undoubtedly constrained) answers hardly get below the surface of the thicket of complicated moral problems that human variation imposes on those who advocate intellectual openness and honesty.

Despite these and other inevitable shortcomings, *Human Diversity* is a rewarding and courageous book that is nothing less than a vigorous and sustained attack on the orthodoxy's view of human variation and the causes of human disparities. Laudably balancing provocative ideas with judicious prose and ethical wisdom, it is an excellent option for somebody who finds loud and unapologetic race realism unseemly but who is open to evidence and argument about race differences. Because it lays the conceptual groundwork for properly understanding the race differences with which Murray's most recent book wrestles, *Human Diversity* should be read before *Facing Reality*, which is an even more courageous, candid, and daring assault on the orthodoxy.

Facing Reality

Whereas *Human Diversity* was an often technical and abstract book that clearly aimed to persuade an educated and politically moderate reader, *Facing Reality* is more of an explicit challenge to contemporary sensibilities. (Murray claims that *Facing Reality* is especially targeted to center-left people, and I don't doubt his sincerity, but I'm skeptical he can reach that audience.) It is also more straightforwardly political, beginning with a lament for the decline of the American creed that all men (and women) are created equal, which originated in "the first sentence of the second paragraph of the Declaration of independence" (p. 1). Of course, *created equal* here does not mean *created literally the same*; rather it means that all humans have a kind of metaphysical equality—a sanctity and autonomy that cannot be abridged without reason by the state or by other citizens. It also means that humans should be judged by their unique traits and talents, not by the average characteristics of any group to which they can be assigned. Thus, it is more or less the creed of Enlightenment-inspired individualism.

Paradoxically, however, the thesis of the book is that to protect the American creed of individualism, responsible intellectuals actually have to discuss race (group) differences more openly and honestly. For if they do not, then they cannot reasonably rebut accusations that racial disparities in America are incontrovertible evidence of pervasive bigotry or at least of more subtle forms of institutional racism. And an inability to refute and reject those allegations imperils the American creed because it encourages racial identity politics as the only remedy to ubiquitous injustice. Thinking and talking about group differences is thus like a poison that is an antidote to a different and more mortal poison.

Facing Reality focuses on what are likely the two most socially consequential race differences: cognitive ability and violent crime. Readers who are familiar with the literature will be familiar with the general pattern of differences, but Murray once again proves to be an excellent and lucid guide, succinctly laying out the case that there are large racial disparities in measured cognitive ability and violent crime rates while also addressing familiar objections about test bias and racism in the criminal justice system. Furthermore, Murray also improves our general understanding of the effects of these differences by analyzing the "first-order effects" or "direct effects" of race differences that are indisputable (p. 63). Here are the basics:

(1) There is a persistent gap in measured cognitive ability between Blacks and Whites such that whites score roughly one standard deviation higher that showed up as earlier as relevant evidence was available and that has remained, with some variation, moderately stable across the 20th and 21st centuries (The gap narrowed in the 70 and 80s, but has since stabilized) (Hunt, 2010; Mackintosh, 2011; Murray, 2007).

(2) There are other reliable race differences in measured cognitive ability such as those between Whites and Latins (Whites roughly 8 points or .6 SD higher) and between Whites and Asians (Asians roughly 5 points or .3 SDs higher). These differences are less well documented than the Black-White difference, but are well supported by data.

(3) Although there were once plausible objections to these comparisons because of potential test biases, the evidence is now overwhelming that IQ tests inside the United States are reliable and not biased against or for any racial group (Jensen's 1980 classic *Bias in Mental Testing* is still the best read on this; see also Warne, 2020).

(4) Although the bell curves for each race overlap, the cognitive ability advantage of Whites and Asians has significant real-world consequences. Consider, for example, the proportion of people from each race who are equal to or above a specific IQ. At 100, 70 percent are European or Asian. At 115, 85 percent. At 125, 90%. And at 140, 96% (p. 39). Since measured cognitive ability is related to educational outcomes and job performance, these numbers are meaningful.

(5) There are large disparities between racial groups in violent crime, including homicide. In some cities, Africans are nearly 20 times more likely to commit a violent crime than Whites. The disparity for homicide is even larger, with Africans much more likely to commit homicide than Whites.

(6) The other race disparities are more moderate such that Latins commit violent crimes at about two and a half times the rates of Whites and Asians commit them at significantly lower rates (Murray does not include Asians because the numbers are so low).

(7) As with IQ tests, there was once plausible reason for concern that such disparities were an artifact of racist police and prosecutors, but that concern is no longer merited. Analyses have shown that arrest rates correspond closely to victimization reports. And the most sophisticated investigations of racial disparities in arrests have concluded that they are "…attributable to differential involvement in reported crime rather than to racially biased law enforcement practices" (D'Alessio & Stolzenberg, 2003, p. 1381).

The surprising thing about many of these data is that they are available, at least in some form or another, to any curious journalist or scholar. And yet articles from venerated media outlets and generally conscientious academics that examine racial outcome disparities in arrests or socioeconomic status often fail to grapple with them. Such a failure is hard to blame on ignorance or laziness. Rather, the orthodoxy appears steadfastly committed to ignoring these ideologically inconvenient data in the way one might ignore a corpse in the attic, covering the stench with an increasingly elaborate array of excuses, elisions, and ad hoc explanations. The result is that the average educated person's view of the world is grossly distorted because he or she is almost certainly ignorant of the reality of race differences. In fact, many people seem to believe that merely asserting that there are such differences is *ipso facto* racist, which, of course, makes facing reality a difficult task.

A good-natured moderate might respond that although these race differences are indeed real, we should still avoid discussing them for fear that our society remains so racist that such candor might ignite a conflagration of bigotry and hatred. That fear is, I think, misplaced, but also, and importantly, it likely *underestimates* the costs of ignoring or remaining silent about large differences in cognitive ability and crime because those differences, like tiny bends in a river, can have enormous downstream consequences, especially if society strives to suppress knowledge of them.

One of those costs is the way that ignorance of these differences distorts our discourse about meritocracy, racism, and social justice. The orthodoxy not only contends that America is systemically racist, but also it chastises those who have the temerity merely to question the

dogma. Some thinkers, influenced by the "anti-racist" arguments of Ibram X. Kendi, even maintain that the very existence of a racial disparity is at least strong *prima facie* evidence of racism. (It must be said that they apply this selectively, since I've yet to encounter an argument that the National Basketball Association is racist against Whites.) But analyses of disparities that ignore underlying race differences are worse than useless; they are positively misleading. *Facing Reality* calmly, clearly, and forcefully makes this (should be) obvious point, demonstrating that, in fact, when one digs into the data, a very different picture of America emerges from the pervasively racist one that appears in most mainstream journals and news articles.

Because systemic racism theory argues that the labor market, like the rest of American society, consistently discriminates against Blacks *in an irrational manner*, it must contend that Blacks who make it through that gauntlet of discrimination are more talented, skilled, ambitious, and productive on average than Whites who make it through. But the data actually show precisely the opposite. Blacks have significantly lower measured cognitive ability than Whites at the same type of job; and they score lower in job performance (and productivity) on both subjective and objective measures (See, e.g., Roth, Hoffcut, and Bobko, 2003). Using data from the 1972 National Longitudinal Study and the 1979 and 1997 cohorts of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, Murray shows that these disparities in cognitive ability are often remarkably large. For example, the average IQ of a White K-12 teacher is 110, while the average IQ of a Black teacher is 95. The disparities are smaller for some types of job, and larger for others, but they are always in the same direction: Whites higher than Blacks (and Latins). Thus, *Facing Reality* does vindicate the claim that labor markets are systemically racist—but not against Blacks.

The same basic logic holds for policing and the criminal justice system. Champions of systemic racism consistently point to disparities in incarceration and police shootings as incontrovertible evidence of pervasive bias. But this is no more persuasive than pointing to similar disparities between men and women to claim that the criminal justice system is pervasively misandrist. Since the underlying violent crime rates among Blacks, Whites, and Latins are very different, the incarceration and police shooting rates should be (statistically, if not morally) as well. Ignoring race differences in crime allows and in fact encourages a divisive and trust-destroying narrative of widespread police racism to spread. The damage of this narrative is impossible to calculate, but possibly immense.

Furthermore, vast disparities in violent crime rates make certain kinds of prejudice perfectly rational. As Murray writes, "The differences in group rates of violence are real and large, and it is human nature, not racism, to take precautions accordingly" (p. 104). In many large cities in America, the violent crime disparity between Whites and Blacks is a multiple of 10. Because humans have brains that were designed, at least partially, to detect patterns, it is not only unreasonable, but also immoral to expect them not to notice this. The good-natured moderate might argue that it's unseemly to discuss this, but the orthodoxy *forces* candid intellectuals to do so by so vocally insisting that all prejudices, fears, or stereotypes about certain neighborhoods are *ipso facto* racist. There are few easy answers to this problem but lying about it or admitting fears sotto voce to friends while publicly ridiculing "racists" for their worries about minority crime are almost guaranteed to make it worse.

Murray concludes *Facing Reality* with reasonable scientific admonitions and debatable political advice. He urges fellow researchers to use proper control variables. If a researcher examines racism in policing, then he or she should also examine race differences in violent crime. If a researcher examines racism in labor markets, then he or she should also examine race

differences in cognitive ability and other relevant personality traits. This is so obviously true, that I'm sure Murray laments that he has to write it. But alas he does.

He also argues that identity politics are anathema to the American creed, and that if Whites adopt them, then "disaster follows" (p. 115). Murray is a classical liberal, an individualist who believes that racial identity politics distort and disfigure the American political system, which, following Jonah Goldberg, he describes as a "garden hacked out of a tropical jungle" (p. 110). It is a precious and unnatural creation that requires sedulous attention lest the jungle grow back. Much of one's attitude about Murray's claims will depend upon one's political predispositions. I share many of Murray's liberal beliefs; therefore, I also worry about the swelling tide of white identity politics. But I do think the issue is more complicated that *Facing Reality* suggests. (Of course, the book is quite short, so it's not entirely fair to criticize Murray for failing to grapple thoroughly with such a complicated topic.) White identity politics are probably inevitable in a country with a rapidly changing demographic profile (Kaufmann, 2018). Identity is inherently contrastive. People define themselves *as different from* something. Thus, as the White share of the population in the United States dwindles, Whites will become more conscious of their identity as a unique racial group. Reasonable people can debate about the best path forward, but I suspect we will have to learn to live with at least a low-level of White identity politics so long as the United States remains a large, multi-racial country.

Facing Reality is an excellent and courageous book. It combines novel and useful investigations of race differences in the United States with carefully considered political and moral analysis. Murray writes clearly and judiciously, wisely refraining from bomb throwing or obvious hyperbole. Undeniably, he is fearful that the American experiment, which he so dearly loves, is sliding back into the gloom of the jungle as dishonesty about race and racism unleash tribal hatreds and animosities. Whatever one's view of the reasonableness of his worry, he is certainly correct that intellectuals on both the left *and* the right are afraid to rebut erroneous narratives about pervasive racism because that would require talking openly about race differences in socially desirable traits. But if *Facing Reality's* central thesis that we need to be honest about group difference to preserve individualism is correct, these intellectuals are grievously mistaken to remain silent.

Conclusion

Race realism and hereditarianism are minority views that have nearly been vanquished from mainstream discourse. But the totality of available evidence is overwhelmingly supportive of what actually amounts to a moderate position: Human races are real (not completely socially constructed) and differ from each other in small, subtle ways both because of genes and because of the environment. Evidence continues to accumulate that many of these small and subtle differences are related to cognitive repertoires, including socially valued traits such as intelligence (See, e.g., Wingeard et al., 2020; Lasker, Pesta, Fuerst, & Kirkegaard, 2019). Despite this accumulating evidence, the orthodoxy not only continues to claim that race is social constructed and that therefore there are no race differences, but it also continues to punish heretics who dare to defy its dogmas. It also continues to grow in power, becoming an intimidating Goliath. Charles Murray has been one of the most consistent challengers of this orthodoxy and has therefore been pilloried by mainstream academics and pundits, many of whom have not bothered to read his actual writings. I suspect that trend will continue into the

indefinite future. Many will condemn *Human Diversity* and *Facing Reality* without taking the effort to read them. But perhaps my greater fear will be realized. Perhaps the orthodoxy has become so powerful that it no longer needs to heed these challenges. Perhaps what were once stones are now as specks of sand, and Goliath won't even blink.

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