

Will Our Multicultural Elites Ever Become Race Realists?

By JOHN DERBYSHIRE

Thank you, Bob [Robert Vandervoort, executive director of ProEnglish]. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

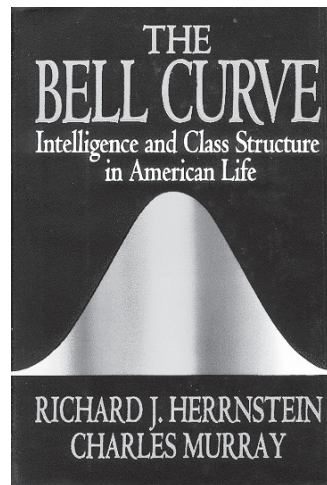
I am going to put to you what I think you will find a rather startling, perhaps absurd, proposition: that the elite classes of the U.S.A. may turn racist.¹

As startling as it may be, this is not an original idea.

Charles Murray² has been in the news recently³ on account of his new book⁴ on cognitive stratification in U.S. society — the trend, now more than half a century old, for professional elites to separate off from working-class Americans, developing different and diverging lifestyles, and practicing assortative mating⁵ — elites marrying elites.

This is a return to the theme of *The Bell Curve*⁶ which Murray co-authored with the late Richard Herrnstein,⁷ and which was published in 1994⁸ — almost twenty years ago.

As my starting point here today, I'm going to quote from that earlier book.⁹ This is from Chapter 21 of *The Bell Curve*,¹⁰ in which Herrnstein and Murray are dis-



cussing possible consequences of cognitive stratification. Perhaps the most startling of the possibilities they suggest is that “Racism will emerge in a new and more virulent form.” Here is the passage that follows.

The tension between what the white elite is supposed to think and what it is actually thinking about race will reach something close to breaking point. This pessimistic prognosis must be contemplated: When the break comes, the result, as so often happens when cognitive dissonance is resolved, will be an overreaction in the other direction. Instead of the candor and realism about race that is so urgently needed, the nation will be faced with racial divisiveness and hostility that is as great as, or greater, than America experienced before the civil rights movement. We realize how outlandish it seems to predict that educated and influential Americans, who have been so puritanical about racial conversation, will openly revert to racism. We would not go so far as to say it is probable. It is, however, more than just possible. If it were to happen, all the scenarios for the custodial state¹¹ would be more unpleasant—more vicious—than anyone can now imagine.

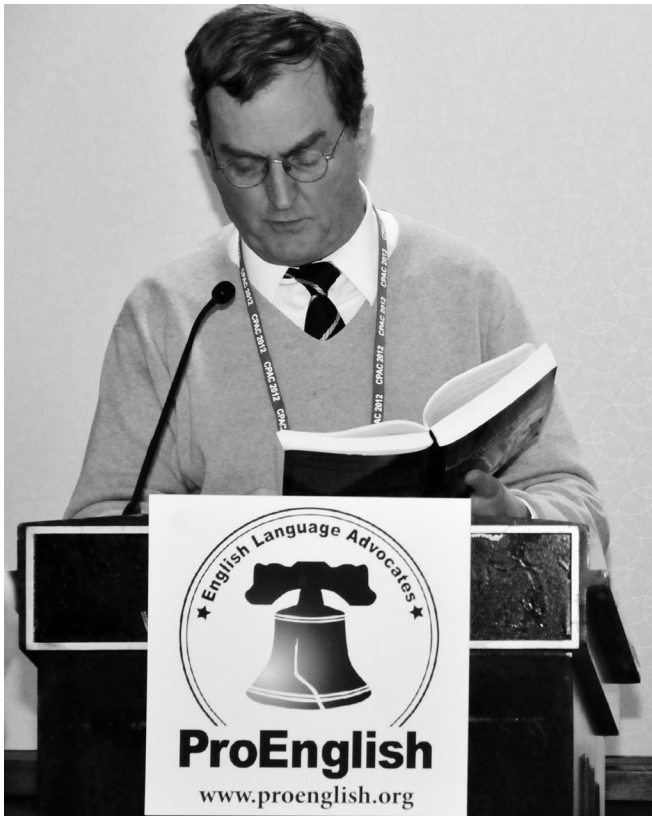
I should explain that by the phrase “the custodial state,” Herrnstein and Murray mean a sort of Indian-reservation policy in which the elites “fence off” the low-IQ underclass.

That our elites might turn racist does indeed sound outlandish. The reigning doctrine on race throughout the Western world today is the Standard Social Science Model,¹² which I’ll just trim down to “Standard Model” in what follows. According to this doctrine, all observed group differences are the result of social forces. The Standard Model says that there is a conceivable, discov-

John Derbyshire writes the “Derbtown” column for Takimag.com and is a regular contributor to VDARE.COM. The following article is based on his speech delivered to the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) during a panel discussion on “The Failure of Multiculturalism,” February 9, 2012. The host of the CPAC panel discussion was ProEnglish.

erable, attainable configuration of social forces in which all group differences would vanish; and that we ought to strive to shift our own society towards that configuration. Among our political and cultural elites, the Standard Model is universally accepted.¹³

Looking to the future, there are three possibilities. One of them, Possibility One, is that our elites will continue to adhere to the Standard Model. The other two are implied in the extract I just quoted from Herrnstein and Murray: Possibility Two, We may attain “the candor and realism about race that is so urgently needed,” and Possibility Three, Our elites will revert to “open racism.”



Author and columnist John Derbyshire reads a passage from *The Bell Curve* during ProEnglish's panel discussion on “The Failure of Multiculturalism” at CPAC, February 9, 2012.

Let's take the three possibilities in turn. First, continued adherence to the Standard Model. Note that, taking group differences in all generality, the Standard Model is not preposterous. The social and economic underachievement of women in Moslem countries,¹⁴ for example, or for that matter in our own countries in times past, easily yields to a Standard Model analysis. Make some key changes in your laws and customs, and the men-women gap disappears. In some social areas it *more* than disappears: 57 percent¹⁵ of U.S. college students are female today.

In group difference of outcome between races,

the Standard Model was likewise not preposterous fifty years ago. Here in the U.S., nonwhite citizens labored under well-known legal and social disabilities. In what we were just beginning to call the Third World, nonwhite populations had been humiliated and subordinated by decades of colonialism. Remove the disabilities, dismantle colonialism, and socio-economic group differences would surely melt away. The Standard Model as applied to race was not preposterous fifty years ago.

I think it is fair to say that it is now, half a century on, well into the zone of preposterosity. Segregation and colonialism have long since been dismantled; trillions of dollars¹⁶ have been spent to rectify past wrongs; countless helping-hand policies have been enacted;¹⁷ yet still the world, and our individual nations, are deeply stratified by race. “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.”

This is the cognitive dissonance that Herrnstein and Murray wrote about. Neurologists tell us that the brain abhors cognitive dissonance as nature abhors a vacuum; and that, as with a vacuum, the resolution can be sudden and dramatic.

Our elites are snobs,¹⁸ but not fools. The dissonance between what all good folk are supposed to believe, and the evidence of our lying eyes, must sooner or later be resolved, when enough little boys have called out that the Emperor has no clothes.

If you want to say that such dramatic turnarounds simply don't happen, I need only remind you that our elites well within living memory expressed opinions about race¹⁹ that would disqualify them from public office nowadays. About other things, too. Quote: “To hold that the act of homosexual sodomy²⁰ is somehow protected as a fundamental right would be to cast aside millennia of moral teaching.” That was the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court²¹—a person I think can fairly be taken to belong to the elite. The date was 1986, *Bowers v. Hardwick*.²²

If you want to object that elite opinions are in line of descent from Marxist egalitarianism,²³ and that racial egalitarianism²⁴ is of their essence, I will remind you that Marx, in common with well nigh all thinkers on large social and economic matters until the mid-twentieth century, was entirely Eurocentric. He had no interest in non-Europeans. His theory of the Asiatic Mode of Production is universally considered to be the least well-thought-out, most perfunctory part of his work. Plenty of Marxist-inspired movements have been racist. Back in the 1920s when it was starting up, the South African Communist Party marched under banners reading: WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE FOR A WHITE

SOUTH AFRICA.²⁵ Today's China²⁶ and North Korea are both officially Marxist, yet they are two of the most racially particularist states that have ever existed.

China in fact offers us another reason to think that our elites will dump the Standard Model. In China the Standard Model is not held in very high regard. When Taylor Wang²⁷ went into orbit on the Space Shuttle in 1985, CCTV (China's government network) marveled that he was, quote, "The first descendant of the Yellow Emperor to travel in space."²⁸ Even in the aggressively Anglo-Saxon U.S.A. of 1961, it is hard to imagine Walter Cronkite hailing Alan Shepard²⁹ as "The first descendant of Alfred the Great³⁰ to travel in space."

The rise of a competitor superpower with frankly race-realist attitudes can only increase the cognitive dissonance that Herrnstein and Murray wrote about. For an accelerant, there will be the fact that an ever-larger portion of our elites will themselves be descendants of the Yellow Emperor.³¹ Advances in the human sciences will provide further accelerant. Sooner or later a point of crisis will be reached. The spark will jump the gap, what has been stretched will break, the avalanche will slip, and the Standard Model will no longer be tenable, even for elites as preening in their moral vanity as ours.

So much for Possibility One, continued adherence to the Standard Model. It will not happen.

Without the Standard Model, however, our elites will not necessarily take the path predicted by Herrnstein and Murray, the path to "racial divisiveness and hostility that is as great as, or greater, than America experienced before the civil rights movement" — what I called Possibility Three.

There is also, as an alternative, the second path, what I called Possibility Two: a turn to "candor and realism" about race. This path is obviously to be preferred to the other, and it is the point of view for which I proselytize.

It is also to be preferred to the Standard Model. The common perception is that the Standard Model is a humane and socially healthful point of view, while race realism is the sick product of twisted minds. It seems to me that the opposite is the case. The Standard Model seems to me to be socially poisonous, a great generator of rancor, resentment, rage, and division—an evil and destructive doctrine.

Imagine you are a member of a group that, in the generality, underachieves socially and economically: a black in the U.S., an Inuit in Canada, a Pacific Islander in New Zealand,³² even a Malay in Malaysia. If the Standard Model is true, the *only possible* explanation for your group's underachievement is malice on the part of

other groups. Hence the rancor, resentment, rage, and division.

If, on the other hand, group underachievement is a consequence of the laws of biology working on human populations, there is no blame to assign. The fact of group inequalities, even in societies that have striven mightily to remove them, is as natural and inevitable as individual inequality, which nobody minds very much. The only proper object of blame is Mother Nature; and she is capable of inflicting far worse things on us than mere statistical disparities between ancient inbred populations.

Under a reigning philosophy of candor and realism, each of us can strive to be the best he can be, to play as best he can the hand he's been dealt, in liberty and equality under the law.

I hope this will be the point of view our elites will arrive at when the Standard Model has crumbled into dust. The other alternative, the one envisaged by Herrnstein and Murray, would be worse, far worse. I intend to do all I can to promote the idea that there is a sane path, a path of reason, fairness, and liberty, of "candor and realism," between phony egalitarianism and vicious neo-racism. Follow me down that path, please.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. ■

Endnotes

1. <http://www.johnderbyshire.com/Opinions/HumanSciences/ditchingdiversity.html>
2. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/charles-murray-re-enters-great-american-inequality-debate>
3. <http://www.vdare.com/posts/why-charles-murray-is-focusing-on-the-state-of-white-america>
4. http://www.amazon.com/Coming-Apart-State-America-1960-2010/dp/0307453421/?_encoding=UTF8&tag=vd0b-20&linkCode=ur2&camp=1789&creative=9325
5. <http://www.vdare.com/posts/assortative-mating-among-movie-stars>
6. http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0684824299/?_encoding=UTF8&tag=vd0b-20&linkCode=ur2&camp=1789&creative=9325
7. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/the-purpose-of-tenure>
8. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/for-whom-the-bell-tolls>
9. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/the-bell-curve-ten-years-after-it-tolls-for-us>

10. [http://books.google.com/books?id=UGhYAAAAMAAJ&q=The tension between what the white elite is supposed to think and what it is actually thinking about race will reach something close to breaking point.&dq=The tension between what the white elite is supposed](http://books.google.com/books?id=UGhYAAAAMAAJ&q=The+tension+between+what+the+white+elite+is+supposed+to+think+and+what+it+is+actually+thinking+about+race+will+reach+something+close+to+breaking+point.&dq=The+tension+between+what+the+white+elite+is+supposed)
11. <http://www.vdare.com/posts/the-new-yorker-retracts-malcolm-gladwells-potential-libel-of-charles-murray>
12. http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Standard_social_science_model&oldid=455678028
13. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/pinkers-progress>
14. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/ft-hood-reprise-empowering-women-particularly-muslims-key-to-world-peace-and-containing-imm>
15. http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2005-10-19-male-college-cover_x.htm
16. <http://www.johnderbyshire.com/Opinions/Culture/racetohtop.html>
17. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/carl-pope-and-the-virus-of-hate-0>
18. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/too-white-too-evangelical-too-rural-too-american-iowa-bashing-snobs-and-sore-losers>
19. <http://www.amren.com/ar/2000/09/#cover>
20. <http://www.johnderbyshire.com/Opinions/Culture/disgusting.html>
21. [https://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=site:vdare.com JUSTICE BURGER,#sclient=psy-ab&hl=en&safe=off&source=hp&q=site:vdare.com Chief Justice Burger &pbx=1&oq=site:vdare.com Chief Justice Burger &aq=f&aqi=&aql=&gs_sm=3&gs_upl=142211142211011580311110101](https://www.google.com/search?hl=en&q=site:vdare.com+JUSTICE+BURGER,#sclient=psy-ab&hl=en&safe=off&source=hp&q=site:vdare.com+Chief+Justice+Burger+&pbx=1&oq=site:vdare.com+Chief+Justice+Burger+&aq=f&aqi=&aql=&gs_sm=3&gs_upl=142211142211011580311110101)
22. http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/historics/USSC_CR_0478_0186_ZC.html
23. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/americas-egalitarian-temptation-stalinisms-unquiet-ghost>
24. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/egalitarian-orthodoxy-noble-fiction-or-noxious-poison>
25. <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Apartheid.html>
26. <http://www.vdare.com/articles/importing-sino-fascism>
27. <http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/wang-t.html>
28. <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=2209&dat=19850506&id=RJorAAAIBAJ&sjid=oPoFAAAIBAJ&pg=4921,1281511>
29. <http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/Bios/htmlbios/shepard-alan.html>
30. <http://www.royal.gov.uk/HistoryoftheMonarchy/KingsandQueensofEngland/TheAnglo-Saxonkings/AlfredtheGreat.aspx>
31. http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Yellow_Emperor&oldid=475904872
32. <http://www.johnderbyshire.com/Opinions/Britain/kiwis.html>