



Stefan Kühl's Examination of Pioneer Fund Tactics

Chapter 1: The "New" Scientific Racism

Pioneer Fund's Financial Backing

Pearson's and Eysenck's outraged denials to accusations of Nazism, however, have to be considered in the light of the financial support behind Pearson's literary activities. Pearson's publications have been supported, in part, by the Pioneer Fund, a foundation whose early leadership had praised aspects of Nazi Germany's racial policies and

which has, in more recent years, given financial support to controversial research into race and intelligence. Between January 1, 1986, and December 31, 1990, Pearson's Institute for the Study of Man received \$214,000 from the Pioneer Fund, mostly for "literary activities."

Harry H. Laughlin and Frederick Osborn, scientists who played a leading role in the American eugenics movement, and, as I will illustrate, who supported Hitler's race policy, initiated the Pioneer Fund in 1937. Textile magnate Wickliffe Draper acted as its primary benefactor. The Fund's stated purpose was to "improve the character of the American people" by encouraging the procreation of descendants of "white persons who settled in the original thirteen colonies prior to the adoption of the constitution and/or from related stocks" and to provide aid in conducting research on "race betterment with special reference to the people of the United States." Today, the Pioneer Fund is the most important financial supporter of research concerning the connection between race and heredity in the United States. It also continues to finance studies in the areas of eugenics, human genetics, and immigration. The Pioneer Fund both provided Pearson with money for his extensive literary activities and helped to make possible the research of nearly all of the scientists whom Pearson defends against the "Marxist techniques" of crying "racism," "Nazism," and "fascism."

The Pioneer Fund, as historian Barry Mehler has demonstrated, has a dismal record on civil rights issues. In the post-World War II period, certain recipients of the Pioneer Fund aligned themselves with the American Right in fighting against the Supreme Court ruling that declared segregated schooling unconstitutional. Draper, who until the 1960s served as both the main benefactor and the most influential figure in the Pioneer Fund, also worked with the United States House Un-American Activities Committee to demonstrate that blacks were genetically inferior and ought to be "repatriated" to Africa. Francis E. Walter, the director of the Pioneer Fund in the 1950s and 1960s, chaired the same committee. In the 1970s, the Pioneer Fund granted \$40,000 to Ralph Scott, professor of educational psychology at the University of Northern Iowa, for his investigation of "forced busing and its relationship to genetic aspects of educability." Scott also used the funds to organize antibusing conferences.

When Arthur J. Jensen, whom Pearson calls "the foremost researcher responsible for the revival of 'hereditarian' thought in recent decades," became known for his thesis that blacks are hereditarily less intelligent than whites, the Pioneer Fund was eager to finance his work. In 1969, the Berkeley psychologist published an article in which he argued that, on average, blacks were born intellectually inferior to whites. He alleged that blacks' scores on IQ tests were some fifteen points lower than were those of whites. The reason, he argued, was that intelligence was an inherited capacity. Since races tend to be "inbred," blacks were therefore likely to remain lower in intelligence.

Jensen received support from another protege of the Pioneer Fund, William Shockley. In 1970, Shockley, co-winner of the Nobel prize for physics in 1956, declared that the quality of the human race was declining in the United States because genetic research was being neglected. Shockley insisted that the average IQ of blacks was significantly lower than that of whites, and proposed a "Sterilization Bonus Plan." This plan, which Pearson called "extremely logical in its simplicity," was designed to "reduce the number of babies who don't get a fair shake from their parental dice up." Shockley proposed to pay "intellectually inferior" people if they agreed to be sterilized, hoping that

[I]f a bonus rate of \$1,000 for each point below 100 IQ, \$30,000 [were] put in trust for a 70 IQ moron of twenty-child potential, it might return \$250,000 to taxpayers in reduced costs of mental retardation care.

When critics asserted that his plans were reminiscent of Hitler's race policies, he argued that "the lesson to be learned from Nazi history is the value of free speech, not that eugenics is intolerable." In the late 1960s and 1970s, the Pioneer Fund provided Shockley with more than \$179,000 over a ten-year period.

The disciples of Jensen and Shockley carried forward the new wave of research in racial questions that attracted public attention in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The most important financial backer of their research was, as in the cases of Jensen and Shockley, the Pioneer Fund. J. Philippe Rushton, a psychology professor and Guggenheim fellow, is representative of this new group. At a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Rushton delivered a paper that "proved" differences in the mental traits of whites, Asians, and blacks. Rushton claimed that, on average, blacks are more aggressive and sexually active than are whites and Asians. Rushton, whose research is based to a large extent on secondary sources, distinguishes three races—"Caucasoids," "Mongoloids," and "Negroids"—by using more than fifty variables. His conclusion is that the three groups are different in intelligence, as well as in brain size, personality, temperament, sexual restraint, and social organizational skills. Rushton finds a distinct pattern in which "Negroids" and "Mongoloids" are at opposite ends of the spectrum and "Caucasoids" in a median position.

Together with his colleague Anthony F. Bogaert, Rushton explains the higher frequency of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) among blacks by pointing to their supposed reproduction strategies. Due to their lack of intelligence and social

skills, Rushton and Bogaert argue, blacks can only compete with whites and Asians in the evolutionary process by maintaining a higher level of sexual activity. This could be proved, they asserted, by the fact that the penises and vaginas of blacks are larger on average, and that blacks have a higher premarital, marital, and extramarital intercourse frequency. The higher percentage of AIDS infections among blacks is therefore presented as the result of their genetically preeminent sexual behavior. Rushton, who provided Pearson access to his personal files and published in Pearson's *The Mankind Quarterly*, has been heavily attacked in Canada and the United States. Pearson explains that the widespread protests against Rushton in Canada result from "the steady growth of immigrant power [in Canada] since the beginning of the present century." Between 1986 and 1990, Rushton received more than \$250,000 from the Pioneer Fund.

Robert Gordon is yet another protégé of the Pioneer Fund. He was not as creative as Rushton, but he was the author of a comprehensive collection of publications. Since the early 1970s, Gordon has promoted the notion that the differences in delinquency rates of blacks and whites are due to differences in their respective genetic constitutions. Many of Gordon's academic publications repeat the thesis that a connection exists between race, inherited intelligence, and the tendency toward criminality. In 1975 Gordon presented his thesis concerning the IQ-commensurability of racially specific delinquency rates. In a paper presented to the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association in 1986, he repeated that intelligence is a more accurate determinant in accounting for the black–white differences in crime rates than is income, education, or occupation.

Gordon, drawing on his status as a professor at Johns Hopkins University, defends colleagues who have been criticized for their research into race and intelligence. In *Race, Intelligence and Bias in Academe*, Pearson quotes Gordon's support for two such colleagues: Linda Gottfredson and Michael Levin. In 1990 he defended Gottfredson, a University of Delaware educational psychologist, against faculty members and students who protested her acceptance of Pioneer Fund money. Gordon called the Fund one of "the last sources of private support that courageously operates at all in this intellectually taboo arena." In a letter defending Michael Levin, of City College of the City University of New York, he wrote:

If our nation is to deal rationally with the awkward but extremely consequential fact of group differences in various mental abilities, which are the rule rather than the exception, and not tear itself apart instead in an ideological frenzy, future leaders of all races are going to have to learn about those differences and how to ponder their implications in a civil and mutually respectful manner.

Gordon received \$124,000 from the Pioneer Fund between 1986 and 1990.

In the 1980s, the largest share of Pioneer Fund money went to support controversial "twin studies" at the University of Minnesota; over \$500,000 was awarded between 1986 and 1990 alone. At the Minnesota Center for Twin and Adoption Research, psychologists study twins who were raised apart to determine how much of behavior is grounded in heredity. Psychologist Thomas J. Bouchard and his colleagues follow Jensen, Rushton, and Gordon only in that they argue for the predominance of inherited

over environmental influences. Statements about differences between races are not an aspect of the Minnesota project. Their goal is to prove that tendencies toward religiosity, political radicalism, or tolerance toward sexual minorities are to a large extent inherited, as are preferences and capacities for certain professions. Bouchard and his colleagues conclude, based on their findings, that the possibility of influencing intelligence and learning abilities is slim.

While not racist in itself, this thesis has been adopted by Pearson and his colleagues as important proof that genetic factors set the potential limits of human behavior, while the influence of environmental circumstances is determined by heredity. Based on the research at the University of Minnesota, which he praises "as one of the great successes of modern American science," Pearson draws conclusions about differences among races. For example, from the result that a "conservative, an authoritarian, or a liberal nature, as well as rebelliousness, and aggressiveness, even political preferences" have heritable biological roots, Pearson hopes to extrapolate conclusions about racial differences in personality as well as IQ.

The support of the Pioneer Fund is not limited to Jensen, Shockley, Pearson, Rushton, Gordon, and the Minnesota Project. The list of other recipients of Pioneer Fund grants reads partly like a "Who's Who" of scientific and political racism in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, and Ireland. Recipients include the American Immigration Control Federation, the Foundation of Human Understanding, Richard Lynn, professor of psychology at the University of Ulster, Eysenck's Institute of Psychiatry at the University of London, and Seymour Itzkoff of Smith College.

"Nazi Methods" or "Nazi Ideology"

In the conflict between those who receive Pioneer Fund money and the opponents of the Fund, both sides have accused each other of using "Nazi methods" or espousing "Nazi ideology." For example, Gordon accused Mehler of acting like the former Nazi minister of propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, in his criticism of Linda Gottfredson:

Goebbels would admire Mehler's technique of first inflaming emotions by calculated references to Hitler and the Klan and then promptly channeling those emotions against academics doing research that he opposes, but which he cannot refute through normal scholarship.

In the same article, Gordon implied that those who criticized Jensen, Gottfredson, and himself would bring fascism to America, only under another name.

Similarly, Eysenck has compared the behavior of many of his colleagues to that of Germans under the Nazi government. Although recognizing the correctness of Eysenck's and Jensen's theses, they were confronted by "hostile students" and therefore refused to extend support outside of private conversations. Eysenck concluded that it was in just such a manner that many Germans become anti-Semites "under duress." Eysenck's biographer, H. B. Gibson, commented that the Nazis had been defeated in war, but "anyone with Eysenck's intelligence and grasp of reality knew that the execution of a

few psychopaths" solved little in historical terms. In Eysenck's eyes, according to Gibson, "the most powerful modern heirs of the Nazis were the various extreme political groups who often identified themselves as 'communists' or 'Marxists.'"

Some academics have charged that researchers studying purported racial differences in intelligence are promoting the same ideology that dominated Nazi Germany. Mehler has argued that the Pioneer Fund, in addition to providing financial assistance to research that stands in the tradition of Nazi race ideology, was actually created by men who supported Hitler's racial ideology. Confronted with this charge, and aware of the stakes involved, the president of the Pioneer Fund, attorney Harry Weyher, denied all connections between the founding fathers of his institution and the leaders of Nazi Germany. In a letter to the *American Jewish World*, Weyher asserted that "it is highly unlikely that two such prominent men" as Laughlin and Osborn could have supported Hitler without public knowledge.

In the conflict about scientific racism, the word *Nazi* has degenerated into a term to be used in any situation to discredit the opponent. By providing detailed evidence about the relationship between American eugenicists and Nazi Germany, I hope to ground references to Nazi Germany in the recent controversies about scientific racism on a historically secure basis. The evidence that I present about the history of the Pioneer Fund between 1937 and 1945 and the enthusiasm of its founders for Nazi Germany is not intended to be the only argument against scientific racism. In disputes with scientists active in race research, it is clearly not enough to cry "Nazi." The development, however, of science in general and scientific racism in particular needs to be seen within its proper historical context. The Nazi connection with American scientists and its continuity as manifested in the Pioneer Fund can help us understand Nazi race ideology and the results and implications of present-day race research as part of a shared history of scientific racism.

Source: Stefan Kühl, The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).