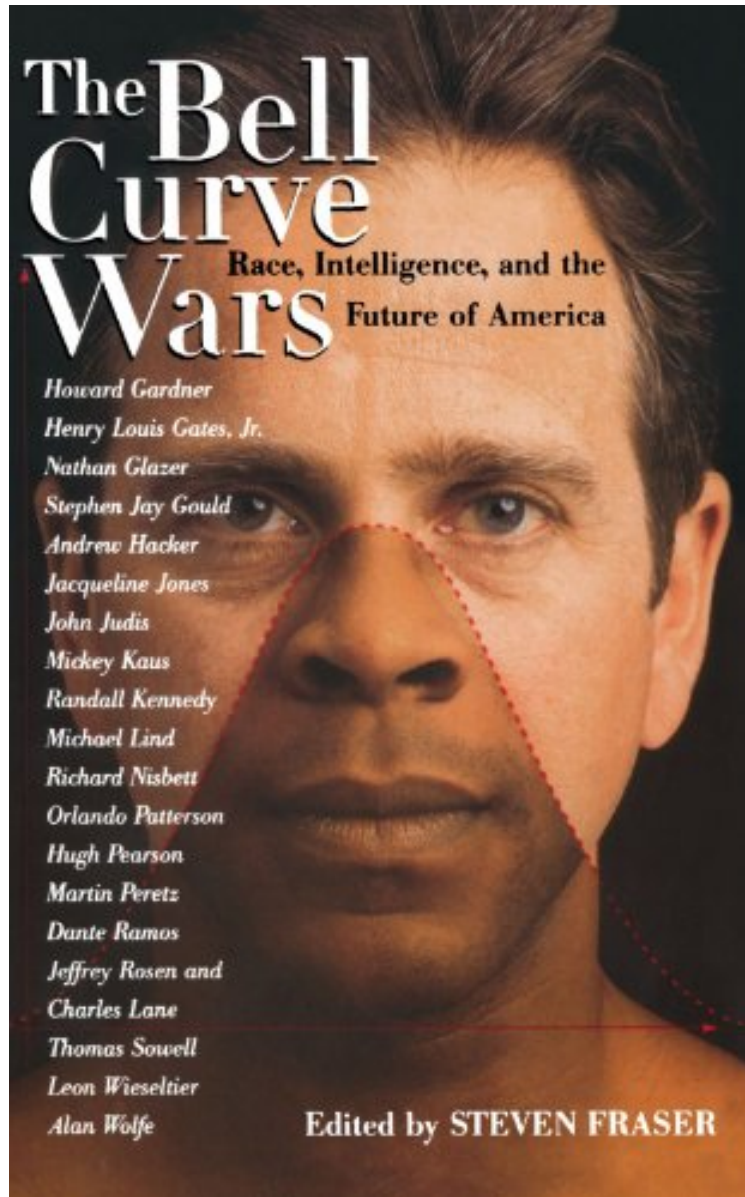


[Download] The Bell Curve Wars: Race, Intelligence, and the Future of America (New Republic Book)

The Bell Curve Wars: Race, Intelligence, and the Future of America (New Republic Book)

Steven Fraser

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Steven Fraser : The Bell Curve Wars: Race, Intelligence, and the Future of America (New Republic Book) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Bell Curve Wars: Race, Intelligence, and the Future of America (New Republic Book):

1 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Thoughtful analysis of a controversial book By J. Davis The Bell Curve, ignited a fury when it was published in the mid 90s. Here a number of reviewers, most of whom with solid academic credentials, evaluate the science/arguments of the Bell Curve. Their criticisms are pretty persuasive to me, although that may be due to my confirmation bias. Only one of the writers is a conservative, Thomas Sowell, and even he is somewhat critical. An important contribution to the debate on a very controversial subject-- the relationship between race and intelligence. 19 of 23 people found the following review helpful. Some Good Amongst the Ranting By Mark V Anderson The Bell Curve Wars is a collection of essays disputing the findings of the Bell Curve (although one essay was in favor). I thought the Bell Curve was a brilliant scientific treatise about subjects that are too often ignored: the importance of intelligence to success in life, and the correlation of intelligence with race. But I knew that many considered it pseudo-science, so I decided I should read this, the most popular book of these opponents. Even though the Bell Curve only spent half a chapter on the genetic basis of the Black/White difference of intelligence, 90% of the Bell Curve Wars was about this topic. I gave this book two stars because there were occasional good points made in the book, although these points were difficult to find amongst all the ideological ranting. Most of the writers were very unsophisticated in their argumentation. They couldn't conceive that someone who finds a difference in intelligence between Blacks and Whites could nevertheless be non-racist. They seemed to disfavor the scientific method of following the evidence, even if it leads to a conclusion one wishes was not true. There were three essays that had possible worthwhile points of evidence in dispute of the Bell Curve: 1) Gould, who discussed factor analysis as a reason that all the significant intelligence correlations in the Bell Curve were not significant at all. I think it unlikely that Gould's analysis is mathematically correct, but it may be a valid counter point. 2) Nisbett, who cited several studies indicating that the IQ variation between the races is not genetic. He also argues that there have been many successful interventions to bring up low IQs. This last was not true when he wrote it, and still isn't true 20 years later. But it is worth discussing, since past failure does not mean there will never be success. 3) Wolfe, who argued that the cognitive elite is not taking over, as argued in the Bell Curve. A small piece of the Bell Curve, but worth more discussion. There were several essays that were simply political rants and not worth reading (Wieseltier, Lind, Kennedy). The worst essays were those that argued that learning an unpleasant scientific truth is worse than not knowing the truth (Glazer, Patterson, Jones, Gates). A couple of essays argued that correlation doesn't equal causation (Sowell, Judis), but they didn't seem to realize that the importance of the Bell Curve correlations were mostly not contingent on IQ being causes. Also neither proposed a theory explaining these correlations being other than the common sense belief that IQ caused the other behaviors, so there is little merit to their complaints. There were a few other isolated comments of interest, but they were hard to find in all the dreck. 21 of 25 people found the following review helpful. Where's the science? By V.L. Mason Offers absolutely NO scientific evidence to refute the Bell Curve, none. Just politically correct nonsense by supposed "intellectuals" not scientists. Total waste of time and money. Strictly an opinion piece and nothing more.

The Bell Curve by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray has generated a firestorm of debate, confirming for some their secret belief in the innate inferiority of certain races or ethnic groups, angering many who view the book as an ill-concealed racist manifesto, and worrying untold others who fear the further racial polarization of American society. In The Bell Curve Wars, a group of our country's most distinguished intellectuals dismantles the alleged scientific foundations and criticizes the alarming public policy conclusions of this incendiary book. Anyone who has wondered about the connection among genes, race, and intelligence, all those anxious about racial antagonisms in our nation, those who question the efficacy of social welfare programs, all those troubled but unconvinced by Herrnstein and Murray's book, will want to read The Bell Curve Wars.

From Publishers Weekly This collection of articles by 19 journalists and academics represents a mostly effective counterattack against Richard Herrnstein's and Charles Murray's controversial bestseller, The Bell Curve. Stephen Jay Gould leads off by refuting the earlier book's central argument: that racial differences in IQ are due mostly to genes. Howard Gardner adds that East Asian examples show that culture, not genetics, is key. Alan Wolfe even doubts that an "economic class structure has been replaced by a cognitive" one. Some contributors offer useful context: Henry Louis Gates Jr. notes that The Bell Curve appeared in a time of diminished liberalism, Randall Kennedy observes that its prominence stems from problems in our market-driven intellectual culture and Jacqueline Jones tartly scores its authors' "wide-eyed, romantic view of the past." Several authors--including Mickey Kaus, Martin Peretz and Leon Wieseltier--reprise pieces from a New Republic issue devoted to The Bell Curve. This collection, unfortunately, has the flaws of a rush job: the contributors, notably the conservative Thomas Sowell, do not respond to each other. (Sowell criticizes the genetics argument but believes that Herrnstein and Murray demolished double standards regarding college admissions and "race norming" on employment tests.) Moreover, this book could have used a solid postmortem on the press coverage and hype surrounding The Bell Curve's publication. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Fraser, the vice president and executive editor of Basic Books, has gathered individual pieces from some 20 contributors, well-known professionals ranging, alphabetically, from Howard Gardner

to Alan Wolfe. In his introduction, Fraser avers that "taken together [these essays] comprise a powerful antidote to a work [Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's *The Bell Curve*, Free Pr., 1994] of dubious premises and socially alarming productions." Joint essayists Jeffrey Rosen and Charles Lane's representative position is that "*The Bell Curve* deserves critical attention, not public smearing and uncritical private acceptance." The critical attention as expressed throughout this collection is stimulating, reasoned, lively, and challenging. An excellent and thoughtful compendium; highly recommended for an academic and general audience. [An interview with Steven Fraser appears on p. 103. Ed.] Suzanne W. Wood, SUNY Coll. of Technology Lib., Alfred. - Suzanne W. Wood, SUNY Coll. of Technology Lib., Alfred, Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Editor Fraser has collected 19 essays that seek to refute all or part of Herrnstein and Murray's recent best-seller about intelligence and race, *The Bell Curve*. In his introduction, Fraser writes that *The Bell Curve* possesses large doses of "profound fatalism and austere elitism," and most of the essays in his book argue against those attitudes. Stephen Jay Gould takes Herrnstein and Murray to task for their use of statistics. Scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. sees their argument as one that perpetuates the tradition of victimizers and onlookers blaming the victim. But not every contributor disagrees with all the points present in *The Bell Curve*. Generally, the more politically conservative the writer, the more that writer accepts the book's central arguments, though the writer will still have some disagreements. In total, a thorough and readable critique of a controversial work. Brian McCombie