

IQ

How Psychology Hijacked Intelligence  
(Wiley/Duckworth 2007)

# 3 Main Historical Arguments

- IQ test structure and content come from historical circumstance, not science or theory.
- IQ structure and content unchanged over past century.
- IQ tests used to improve institutional efficiency, not to understand individual's mental abilities.

# IQ Abuses

- Wrongful execution/Murder
- Coercive sexual sterilization
- Wrongful Institutionalization
- Immigration abuses
- Specious Links of low IQ to Social Problems
- Educational abuses

# Founding Theoreticians

- Francis Galton – Eugenics
- Alfred Binet – Testing Methods
- Charles Spearman – General Intelligence

# Alfred Binet

- Tested language, abstract thought, attention

## Test Question Examples:

- Differentiate between chocolate and wood
- Follow a lighted match
- Define words like “Horse” and “Fork”

# Importance of Spearman's *g*

- One kind of intelligence
- Fixed
- It's testable
- People can be ranked according to it

# G Remains Unproven

- “The evidence for a general factor in intelligence was pervasive but circumstantial, based on statistical analysis rather than direct observation. Its reality was, and remains, arguable.” -- Herrnstein and Murray, *The Bell Curve*

# 3 Theoreticians' Ideas Combined

- Americans discover Alfred Binet's methods
- Use Binet's tests in Galtonian, eugenic manner
- Predicated on Spearman's idea of one testable, rank-able, inherited general intelligence



# Eugenics and IQ

- Nazis sexually sterilized about 200,000 people based on IQ
- Nazis murdered unknown hundreds of thousands based on IQ

# German IQ Questions

- Who was Bismark?
- What does Christmas Signify?
- How much do 300 Reichmarks grow at 3% over 3 years?
- Form Sentence: Soldier-War-Fatherland

# US Coercive Sterilization

- More than 60,000 Sterilized
- About 22,000 in CA alone

# Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century US Sorting Requirements

- Schools: Universal education laws and urbanization increases school populations
- WWI. From 120,000 men to over 3 million
- Immigration. Up to 5,000 a day to Ellis Island

# Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century IQ Structure Established

- VERBAL: Common knowledge questions, vocabulary and math questions.
- NON-VERBAL: puzzles, blocks, household items

# 3 Main Historical Arguments

- IQ test structure and content born of historical circumstance, not science or theory.
- IQ structure and content unchanged over past century.
- IQ tests used to improve institutional efficiency, not to understand individual's mental abilities.

# Army Response to IQ Tests

Psychologists were as helpful as “a board of art critics to advise me which of my men were the most handsome, or a board of prelates to designate the true Christians.”

# First Known Multiple Choice Question

“Below are given the names of four animals.  
Draw a line around the name of each animal  
that is useful on the farm: cow tiger rat wolf.”  
– The Kansas Silent Reading Test (1915)



# WWI Multiple Choice Question

The **Armadillo** is a kind of:

- Ornamental shrub
- Animal
- Musical instrument
- Dagger

# SATs are Used as a Screen

“The decision to include SAT scores in the [UC’s] Eligibility Index was based not on an analysis of the SAT’s predictive power but on its ability to serve as a screen that would reduce the pool of eligible students.” -- Former UC President Richard Atkinson

# IQ Tests Part of Intelligence

“Intelligence was this, and yet something more.”  
– David Wechsler

“Not everything that can be counted counts and  
not everything that counts can be counted.” –  
Albert Einstein

# Army Alpha Question

Freezing water bursts pipes because:

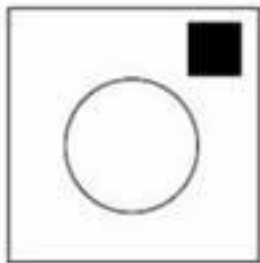
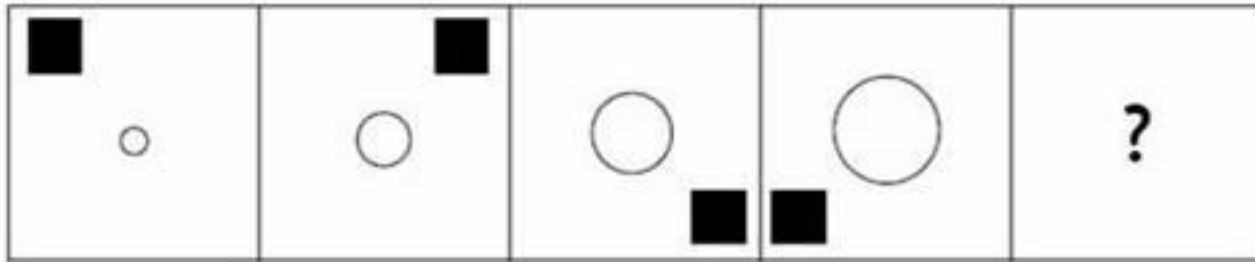
- Cold water makes the pipes weaker
- Water expands when it freezes
- The ice stops the flow of water

# WAIS Comprehension Question

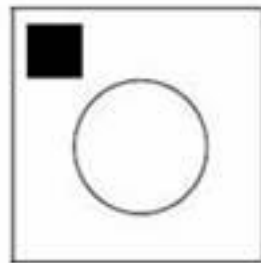
- “What is the thing to do if a water pipe breaks in your house?”

# 11+ Ravens-type Question

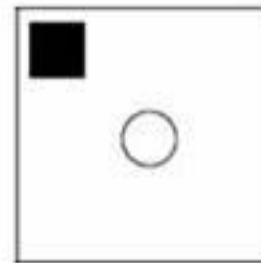
Example 1



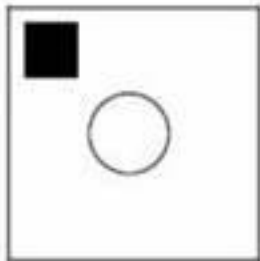
A



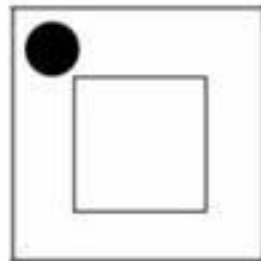
B



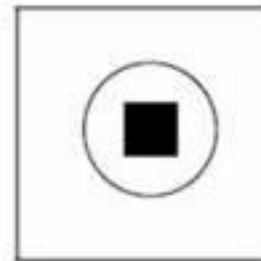
C



D



E



F

# 11+ Analogies Question

“Dirty is to soiled as stained is to (sparse, tarnished, several)”

# 3 Main Historical Arguments

- IQ test structure and content born of historical circumstance, not science or theory.
- IQ structure and content unchanged over past century.
- IQ tests used to improve institutional efficiency, not to understand individual's mental abilities.



# IQ and *g* now have Competition

- Robert Sternberg's Successful Intelligence
- Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences
- Cognitive Processing model

# IQ History Conclusions

- IQ tests aren't based on theory,
- are too vague to tell us much about individuals
- have been abused in the past
- Can sometimes help institutions be more efficient

# Six Lessons From IQ History

- **LESSON ONE:** BALANCE OF INTEREST TESTS: INSTITUTION VERSUS INDIVIDUAL
- **LESSON TWO:** STUDENTS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN SCHOOL EFFICIENCY
- **LESSON THREE:** BE A BORED AGNOSTIC
- **LESSON FOUR:** IGNORE INTELLIGENCE EXPERTS
- **LESSON FIVE:** THE NATURE/NUTURE DEBATE HAS NO BEARING ON REALITY.
- **LESSON SIX:** IQ TESTS ARE ACHIEVEMENT TESTS.

# Chris Brand

- “Academic studies ... suggest that non-violent pedophilia with a consenting partner over age 12 does no harm so long as the pedophiles and their partners are of above-average IQ and educational level.”