



# **Perspectives on Bias in Mental Testing (Perspectives on Individual Differences)**

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# Perspectives on Bias in Mental Testing (Perspectives on Individual Differences)

## Perspectives on Bias in Mental Testing (Perspectives on Individual Differences)

The cultural-test-bias hypothesis is one of the most important scientific questions facing psychology today. Briefly, the cultural-test-bias hypothesis contends that all observed group differences in mental test scores are due to a built-in cultural bias of the tests themselves; that is, group score differences are an artifact of current psychometric methodology. If the cultural-test-bias hypothesis is ultimately shown to be correct, then the 100 years or so of psychological research on human differences (or differential psychology, the scientific discipline underlying all applied areas of human psychology including clinical, counseling, school, and industrial psychology) must be reexamined and perhaps dismissed as confounded, contaminated, or otherwise artifactual. In order to continue its existence as a scientific discipline, psychology must confront the cultural-test-bias hypothesis from the solid foundations of data and theory and must not allow the resolution of this issue to occur solely within (and to be determined by) the political Zeitgeist of the times or any singular work, no matter how comprehensive. In his recent volume *Bias in Mental Testing* (New York: Free Press, 1980), Arthur Jensen provided a thorough review of most of the empirical research relevant to the evaluation of cultural bias in psychological and educational tests that was available at the time that his book was prepared. Nevertheless, Jensen presented only one perspective on those issues in a volume intended not only for the scientific community but for intelligent laypeople as well.

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