



Cyril Burt: Fraud or Framed?

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When Sir Cyril Burt died in 1971, he was widely recognized as Britain's most eminent educational psychologist whose studies of gifted and delinquent children, contributions to the development of factor analysis, and research on the inheritance of intelligence brought widespread acclaim. Within five years of his death, however, he was publicly denounced as a fraud who had fabricated data to conclude that intelligence is genetically determined. Examiners of the published data found serious inconsistencies that raised questions about their authenticity; the case has divided the scientific community ever since. Were the charges justified, or was he a victim of critics fearful of validating such a politically unacceptable scientific theory? This is an up-to-date and unbiased analysis of one of the most notorious scandals in science, now more timely and widely discussed than ever with the publication of *The Bell Curve*, the best-selling polemic that raises arguments comparable to Burt's. The distinguished contributors examine the controversial areas of Burt's work and argue that his defenders have sometimes, but by no means always, been correct, and that his critics have often jumped to hasty conclusions. In their haste, however, these critics have missed crucial evidence that is not easily reconciled with Burt's total innocence, leaving the perception that both cases are seriously flawed. An introductory chapter lays the background to the case, followed by an examination of Burt's work that relates to the controversy. The book concludes with a chapter on Burt's character, other cases of apparent scientific fraud, and the impact of Burt's alleged fabrications. These findings have profound implications not only for the study of psychology, but for the wider issues relating to integrity in scientific research, and the impact of intelligence testing on social policy.

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