

The price one pays for using the probit method when the assumptions on which it is based are not satisfied is that one's estimates of the  $ED_{50}$  (e.g., 50 percent tassel time) is subject on the average to a larger error than the estimate yielded by the sample mean. In fact, when the underlying distribution is normal no estimate will have smaller average error than the sample mean. In addition the computation of the sample mean and standard deviation involves considerably less work than the use of the probit method. This pleasant concatenation of circumstances is not as frequent in statistics as it might be and should not be overlooked when it occurs.

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I am interested in the comments made by J. Cornfield on my note on the application of probits to sweet corn earliness data. I did assume that the population had a normal distribution for flowering date, but I based my application on the general shape of the original curves in Fig. 1.

My attention has also been drawn by Ray Barratt to his paper "Alternaria Blight versus the Genus *Lycopersicon*" (Tech. Bull. 82, N. H. Agric. Exp. Sta., 1944), in which he uses an arithmetic probability curve to allow comparison of percentage yield and percentage defoliation on the same scale. As my application is similar in principle to that of Dr. Barratt, the use of ordinary probability paper would suffice.

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### On Gates' *Human Ancestry*

I should like to comment briefly upon W. R. Krogman's review of R. Ruggles Gates' *Human ancestry from a genetical point of view* (*Science*, July 1, 1949). A reviewer is certainly entitled to say what he thinks about a book; but at the same time he is, I believe, obligated to give his readers a fair and unbiased estimate of another man's work. This Krogman has not done.

Dr. Gates recognizes five species of mankind, which for him differ mentally as well as physically. He makes the following statements (all quoted by Krogman): "This eighteenth century doctrine [that 'all men are born free and equal'] is hopelessly at variance with the facts of science"; "... there is no question of the inheritance

of mental abilities and disabilities"; "... the mental differences between races remain and cannot be gained." Dr. Krogman objects to what he calls this "sequential build-up" on the ground that "the reader is led, even though perhaps unconsciously, into a *racist* patterning of thought, both culturally and biologically" (*italics mine*).

To this writer all of Gates' statements are accurate and are well authenticated by readily available evidence. Whether we like them or not, they are facts which we must honestly face and make the best of. Use of the term *racist* is, I believe, as unnecessary as it is irrelevant. This word, to be sure, is a favorite with literary anthropologists who write for popular consumption, and is sometimes effective, I suppose, with timid souls. But like *red* and *fascist* it is a scare word, an evaluative (and usually derogatory) rather than a scientific description.

I agree with Krogman that Gates' book is somewhat uneven in quality and is often hard reading. But I do not agree that it is a "bad" book or is "not a good" book. On the contrary, its emphasis upon biology provides a much needed and refreshing antidote to the wishful thinking of the apostles of the "new anthropology." It should be read by every psychologist, and should be required reading for all sociologists.

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I am accused of being biased. I admit it. I am biased against anything that will either directly or by implication give support to those who are prejudiced against other peoples. I do not retreat from my stand that this book trends in that direction. Mr. Garrett must please note that in my review I used the term *racist* only after the author had first implied it when he referred to "the mental differences between races." The author wrote from a "genetical point of view." This means a biological point of view. The logical assumption becomes that the so-called "mental differences between races" are genetically or biologically based. I wish to affirm my own feeling that no one has really proved mental differences on a racial basis; what they really mean is a cultural basis.

I agree with Garrett that psychologists and sociologists should read this book—with a good book on cultural anthropology as a quick antidote!

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