

Woke from the Dead

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Needed: Heterodoxy in academe

- Being stamped out as moral necessity
- Why & how?
- What can we do?

Insights from
individual differences psychology

My Aim Today

1. Summarize how social justice “wokeness” has evolved since 1960s to reincarnate the corpse of racial intolerance, and worse
2. Explain how two distinctively human traits are driving it
3. Offer strategies for protecting heterodoxy in academe

Based on first-hand
observation and experience

Woke, stay woke, wokeness

1972 – black vernacular, from Civil Rights Era

- Awakening to rights, hope, and pride
 - “I been sleeping all my life. And now that Mr. [Marcus] Garvey done woke me up, I’m gon stay woke. And I’m gon help him wake up other black folk.” (B. Beckman)

2020 – currently fashionable ideology that inequality proves (white) injustice

- Injustice is endemic. Eradicate it by any means possible
 - “Aware of the truth behind things ‘the man’ doesn’t want you to know, i.e. classism, racism, and any other social injustices”
 - Be a warrior for “social justice”
- Signals speaker’s virtue, “being with it”
 - “Being very pretentious about how much you care about a social issue”
 - “Trying to sound like a deep thinker when you’re really just following a trend”

Reflects sociological reasoning

Explicit in the 1970s

Nothing to do with race, neo-Marxist fad

Equalitarianism

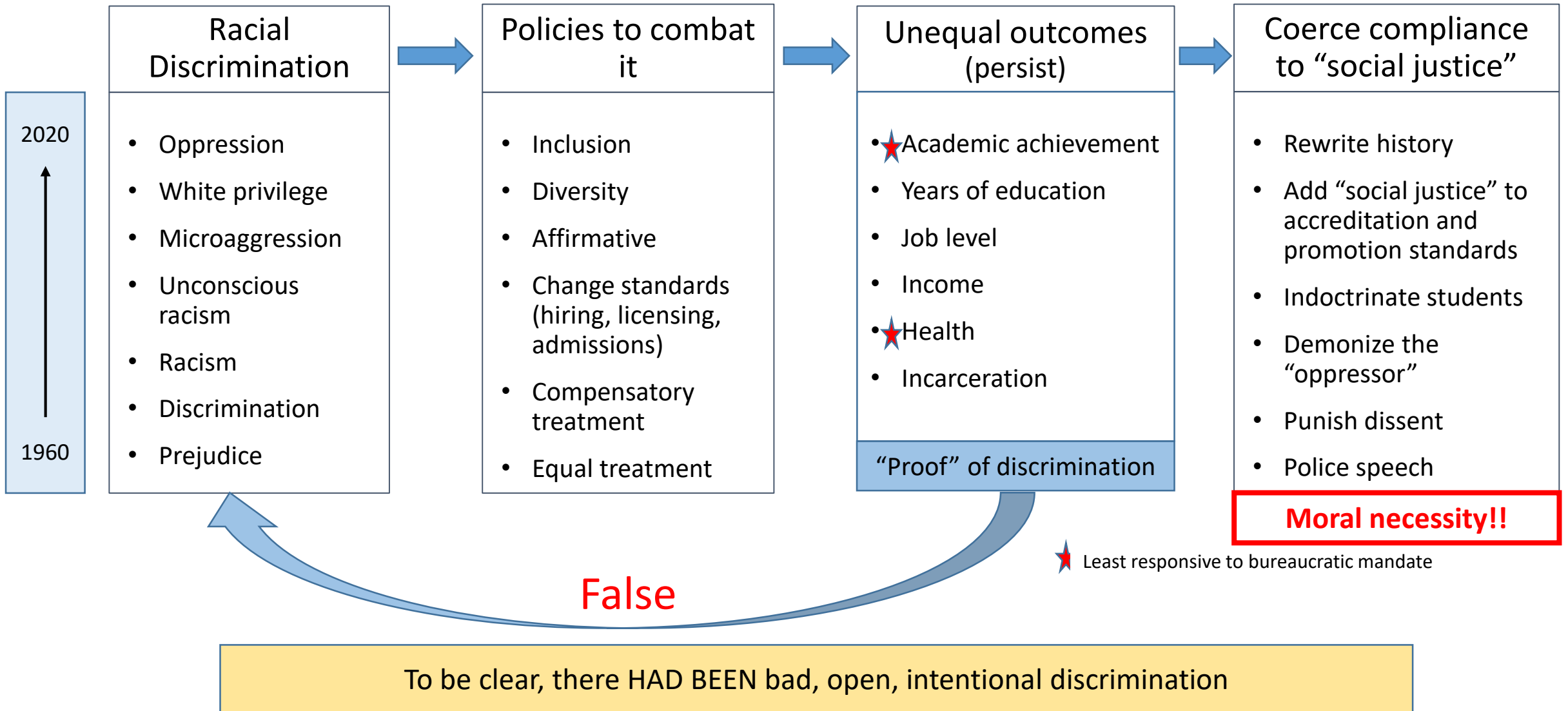
- All humans born the same
- Only their environments differ
- Outcomes would be equal if environments (advantages) were too
- Outcomes continue to differ a lot
- Some people are unfairly hogging privileges they do not deserve
- Call them to account and change the system

Is still the standard social science model

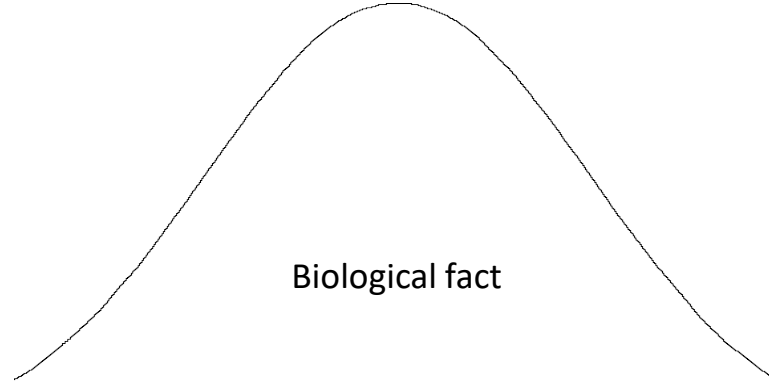
Family advantage → Child IQ → Education → Occupation → Income → Health

And for woke reasoning

“Wokeness” rhetoric & strategy, 1960-2020



Woke ideology resolutely denies a key human trait—
intelligence—to achieve its goal



But does talking about these
facts constitute
discrimination?

Isn't it more noble to deny
them?

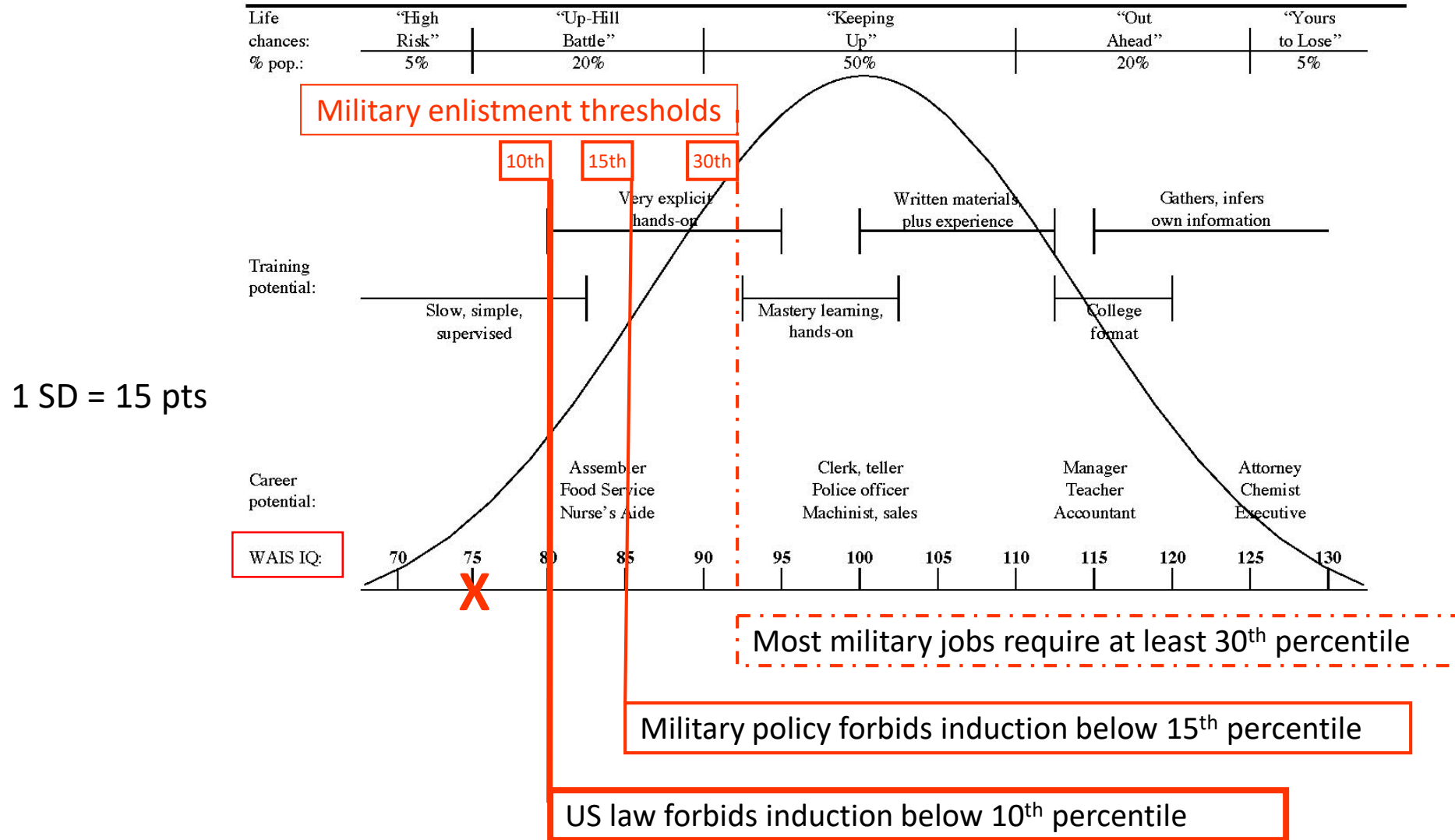
Individual differences in phenotypic intelligence (g) are:

- Real
- Functionally important
- Brain-based
- Genetically influenced
- More heritable with age
- Worldwide
- ~Same across generations

More proficient
learning, problem
solving, abstract
thinking, seeing
connections, drawing
inferences

Group differences are too*

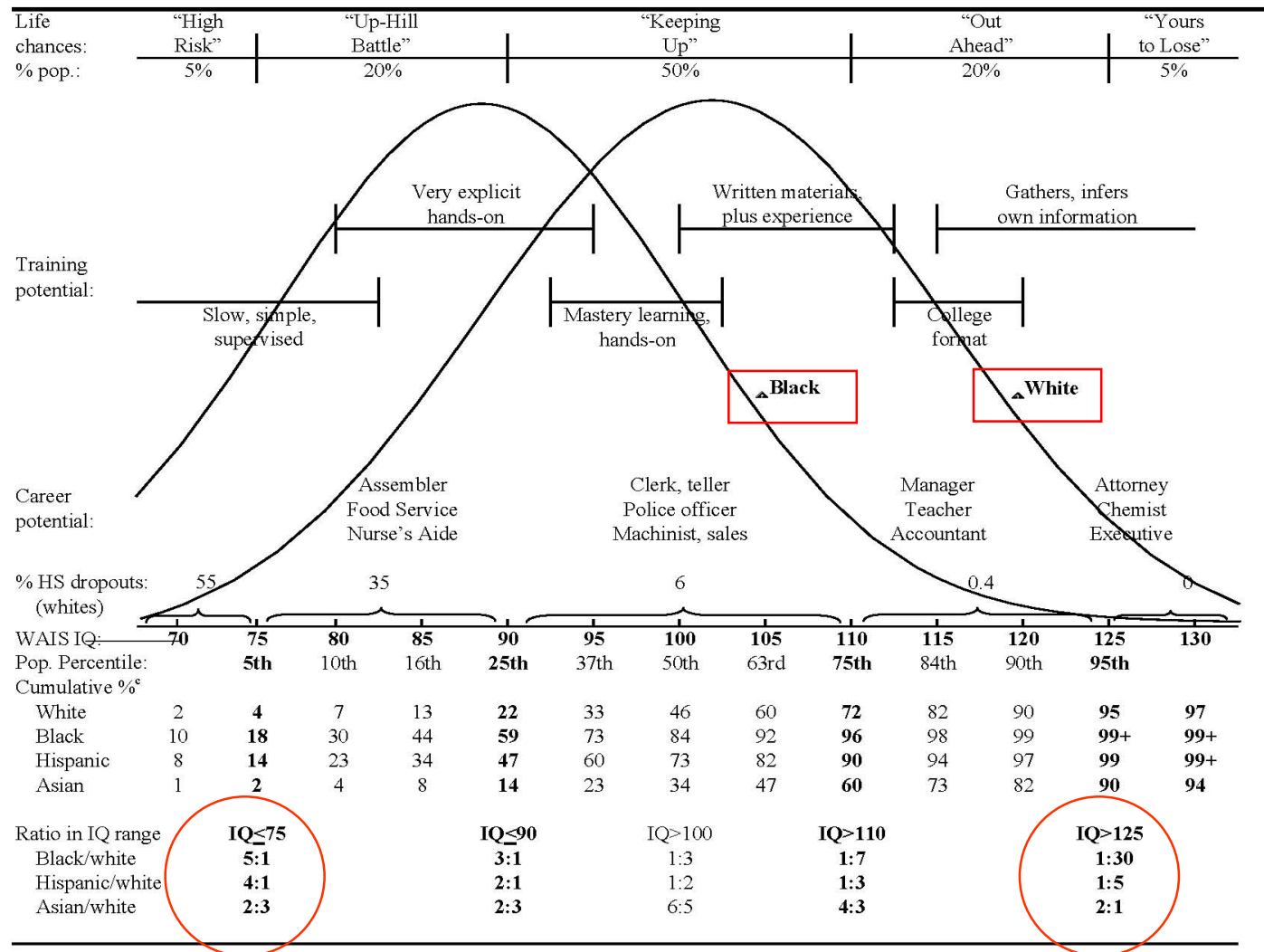
Higher g \rightarrow better performance in school, jobs, health \rightarrow inequality*



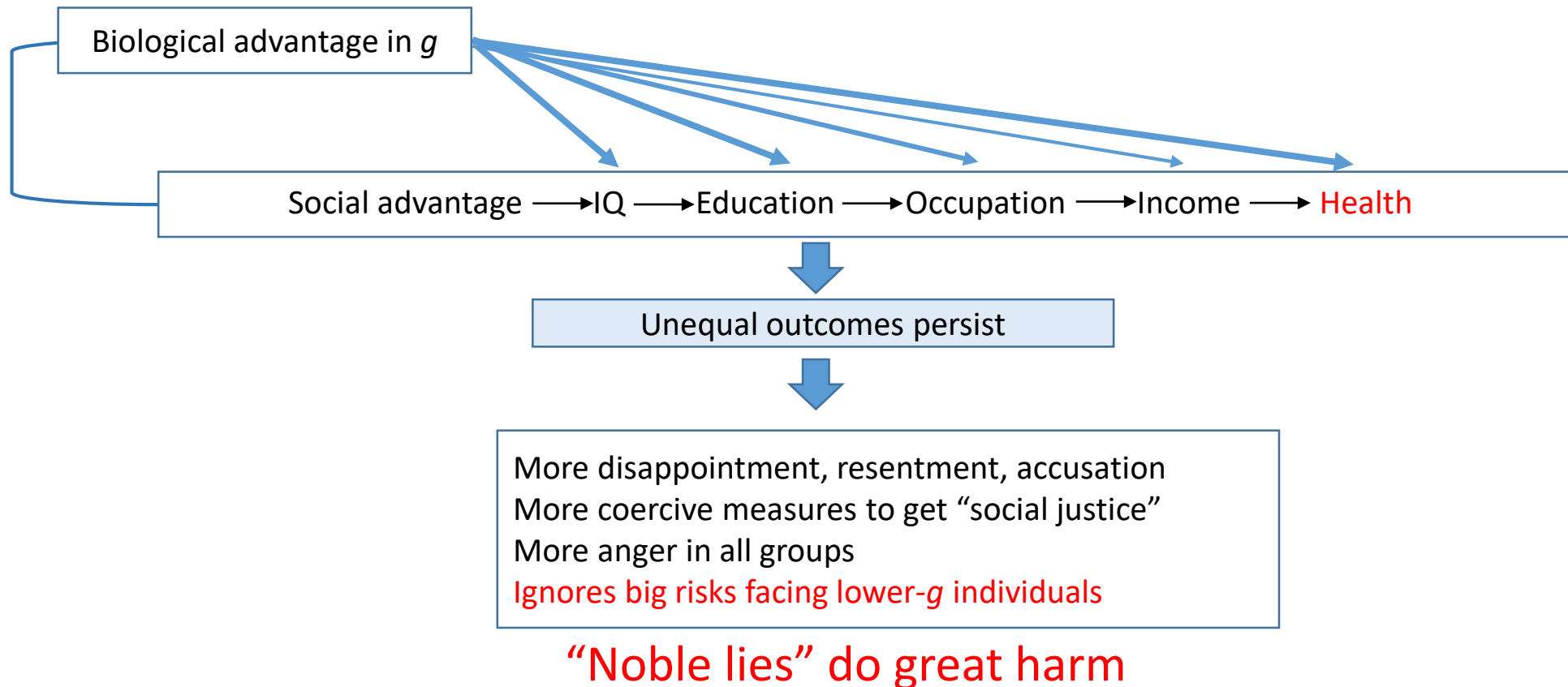
* Gottfredson, L.S. (1997). Why g matters: The complexity of everyday life. *Intelligence*, 24(1), 79-132.

IQ bell curves differ by race → unequal outcomes by race

1 SD = 15 pts



Denying g 's powerful real-world effects doesn't neutralize them



Woke ideology exploits a second evolved trait—
humans are exquisitely social beings

Want to belong & fear shunning

- Deeper than politics
- The ultimate motivated reasoning
- Encourages group-think
- Undermines intellectual integrity

Academe is reputational system

Gauntlet of evaluations

- By colleagues, administrators, editors, etc.
- Who decide promotion, publication, and much else
- Using rules and norms
- Often selectively applied to disfavor the heterodoxy
- And suspended during moral panics

Moral panic

Frenzied public effort to expose and destroy an “evil one”

Players

- Grandstanding instigator “exposes the evil one”
- Avenging angels rush in to vilify
- Others pile on to show moral bona fides
 - Colleagues, administrators, media
- Most shun the target, fearing guilt by association
- Administrators twist protections (e.g, academic freedom) to justify expulsion

The target

- Pressure to recant, betray others

Novel social emergency brings out individual differences in behavior

- Opportunists
- True believers
- Groupies
- Go along to get alongs
- Fair weather friends
- “Distancers” who know better
- Supportive friends
- Strangers to the rescue
- Strangers expressing gratitude

Many are good people

Huge silent—silenced—audience

Some lessons in preventing, mitigating, & surviving anti-heterodoxy in academe

- Everyone can make a difference, in some way
- Think small—low-stakes transgressions are insidious but least threatening to correct.
- Be prepared—know the institution’s written documents inside and out.
- Watch for players to make stupid (self-incriminating) mistakes—woke arrogance and over-confidence make them careless.
- Beware the stealth dictates of non-academic bureaucrats.
 - E.g., see NAS’s new report, *Social Justice Education in America*.
- Enlist big guns where possible (e.g., FIRE).
- Create synergy.

Like here! Thank you.