



## Bean-Counters and Baloney

This may seem to be just another passing piece of silliness. But it is part of a more general bean-counting mentality that turns statistical differences into grievances. The time is long overdue to throw this race card out of the deck and start seeing it for the gross fallacy that it is.



At the heart of such statistics is the implicit assumption that different races, sexes and other subdivisions of the human species would be proportionately represented in institutions, occupations and income brackets if there was not something strange or sinister going on.

Although this notion has been repeated by all sorts of people, from local loudmouths on the street to the august chambers of the Supreme Court of the United States, there is not one speck of evidence behind it and a mountain of evidence against it.

Ask the bean-counters where in this wide world have different groups been proportionally represented. They can't tell you. In other words, something that nobody can demonstrate is taken as a norm, and any deviation from that norm is somebody's fault!

Anyone who has watched football over the years has probably seen at least a hundred black players score touchdowns- — and not one black player kick the extra point. Is this because of some twisted racist who doesn't mind black players scoring touchdowns but hates to see them kicking the extra points?

At our leading engineering schools — M.I.T., CalTech, etc. — whites are under-represented and Asians over-represented. Is this anti-white racism or pro-Asian racism? Or are different groups just different?

As for baseball, I have long noticed that there are more blacks playing centerfield than third-base. Since the same people hire centerfielders and third-basemen, it is hard to argue that racism explains the difference.

No one says it is racism that explains why blacks are over-represented and whites under-represented in basketball. Bean-counters only make a fuss when there is a disparity that fits their vision or their agenda.

Years ago, a study was made of the ethnic make-up of military forces in countries around the world. Nowhere was the ethnic make-up of the military the same as the ethnic make-up of the population, or even close to the same.

Nearly half the pilots in the Malaysia's air force were from the Chinese minority, rather than the Malay majority. In Nigeria, most of the officers were from the southern tribes and most of the enlisted men were from the northern tribes. Similar disparities have been common among various groups in many places.



Written by [Dennis Behreandt](#) on August 13, 2010

---

In countries around the world, all sorts of groups differ from each other in all sorts of ways, from rates of alcoholism to infant mortality, education and virtually everything that can be measured, as well as in some things that cannot be quantified. If black and white Americans were the same, they would be the only two groups on this planet who are the same.

One of the things that got us started on heavy-handed government regulation of the housing market were statistics showing that blacks were turned down for mortgage loans more often than whites. The bean-counters in the media went ballistic. It had to be racism, to hear them tell it.

What they didn't tell you was that whites were turned down more often than Asians. What they also didn't tell you was that black-owned banks also turned down blacks more often than whites. Nor did they tell you that credit scores differed from group to group. Instead, the media, the politicians and the regulators grabbed some statistics and ran with them.

The bean-counters are everywhere, pushing the idea that differences show injustices committed by society. As long as we keep buying it, they will keep selling it- and the polarization they create will sell this country down the river.

**Thomas Sowell** graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University (1958) and went on to receive his master's in economics from Columbia University (1959) and a doctorate in economics from the University of Chicago (1968). He is the author of 28 books including his most recent, *Intellectuals and Society*. Currently he is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. His Web site is [www.tsowell.com](http://www.tsowell.com).

COPYRIGHT 2010 CREATORS.COM

Please contact your local newspaper editor if you want to see the Thomas Sowell column in your hometown paper.



## Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative, non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



[Subscribe](#)

### What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.