



The Big Hoax

But the biggest hoax of the past two generations is still going strong — namely, the hoax that statistical differences in outcomes for different groups are due to the way other people treat those groups.

The latest example of this hoax is the joint crusade of the Department of Education and the Department of Justice against schools that discipline black males more often than other students. According to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, this disparity in punishment violates the “promise” of “equity.”



Just who made this promise remains unclear, and why equity should mean equal outcomes despite differences in behavior is even more unclear. This crusade by Attorney General Eric Holder and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is only the latest in a long line of fraudulent arguments based on statistics.

If black males get punished more often than Asian American females, does that mean that it is somebody else’s fault? That it is impossible that black males are behaving differently from Asian American females? Nobody in his right mind believes that. But that is the unspoken premise, without which the punishment statistics prove nothing about “equity.”

What is the purpose or effect of this whole exercise by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice? To help black students or to secure the black vote in an election year by seeming to be coming to the rescue of blacks from white oppression?

Among the many serious problems of ghetto schools is the legal difficulty of getting rid of disruptive hoodlums, a mere handful of whom can be enough to destroy the education of a far larger number of other black students — and with it destroy their chances for a better life.

Judges have already imposed too many legalistic procedures on schools that are more appropriate for a courtroom. “Due process” rules that are essential for courts can readily become “undue process” in a school setting, when letting clowns and thugs run amok, while legalistic procedures to suspend or expel them drag on. It is a formula for educational and social disaster.

Now Secretary Duncan and Attorney General Holder want to play the race card in an election year, at the expense of the education of black students. Make no mistake about it, the black students who go to school to get an education are the main victims of the classroom disrupters whom Duncan and Holder are trying to protect.

What they are more fundamentally trying to protect are the black votes which are essential for Democrats. For that, blacks must be constantly depicted as under siege from whites, so that Democrats can be seen as their rescuers.

Promoting paranoia translates into votes. It is a very cynical political game, despite all the lofty rhetoric used to disguise it.



Written by [Thomas Sowell](#) on March 13, 2012

Whether the current generation of black students get a decent education is infinitely more important than whether the current generation of Democratic politicians hang on to their jobs.

Too many of the intelligentsia — both black and white — jump on the statistical bandwagon, and see statistical differences as proof of maltreatment, not only in schools but in jobs, in mortgage lending and in many other things.

Some act as if their role is to protect the image of blacks by blaming their problems on whites. But the truth is far more important than racial image.

Wherever we want to go, we can only get there from where we are. Not where we think we are, or wish we are, or where we want others to think we are, but where we are in fact right now.

But political spin and pious euphemisms don't tell us where we are. After a while, such rhetorical exercises don't even fool others.

If we don't have the truth, we don't have anything to start with and build on. A big start toward the truth would be getting rid of the kinds of statistical hoaxes being promoted by Secretary of Education Duncan and Attorney General Holder.

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