

Sociology 100 and 207

Flaws in the evidence and arguments of biological determinists

1. Unjustified extrapolation of data on lower animals and insects to humans.
2. The selection and presentation of only the evidence confirming biological determinism, while ignoring contrary data.
3. The invention of data (Cyril Burt).
4. The misapplication and misinterpretation of data from IQ tests.
5. Five fallacies in the use of the concept "gene:"

-genes determine complex behaviours and personality characteristics

-genes determine developmental limits

-the assumption that heritability equals unchangeability

-the belief that heritability of a trait within populations explains differences
between populations

-a failure to understand fully the interactive relationship between gene, organism, and environment

6. A misapplication of the principles of epidemiology, most importantly a routine use of the correlation equals causation statistical fallacy