

"WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE
MINORITY UNEMPLOYED"

Summary of remarks by:

Professor Jan E. Dizard
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Delivered at:

Conference on SELECTION AND THE MINORITY JOB APPLICANT

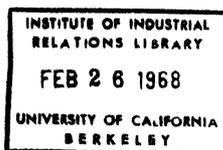
Tuesday, February 13, 1968
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Conference Co-sponsors:

Institute of Industrial Relations
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and

Technical Advisory Committee on Testing
to the California Fair Employment
Practice Commission



The world of the minority unemployed is conditioned by facts not generally recognized by the larger society. While unemployment at any given point in time may be as low as 8%, over time, many, if not most, Negroes go without work. Specifically, at least 50% of adult (16-65) male Negroes are out of work for some period in the course of a year. This "simple" fact shapes attitudes and calls forth behavior that appears "irrational" to the larger society, operating as it does on a different awareness and understanding. Efforts to reduce joblessness that are predicated on the larger society's definitions and assumptions fail as a result, though not exclusively because, of the fact that the unemployed do not accept the assumptions of the larger society and, moreover, they suspect the motives and honesty of the larger society.

The unemployed are not, generally, apathetic or uninterested in resolving their plight. They actively seek jobs, as seen in the fact that turnover in the ranks of the unemployed is high. In seeking jobs, however, they rely more on themselves and friends and relatives than on governmental or private agencies from whom they have learned to expect little or no assistance. In addition, they seek jobs for more instrumental purposes--having little commitment to any given job. They evaluate the jobs they get in about the same way we do--they are miserable, frequently demeaning and exhausting jobs. That they pay so little is indication of the value placed on the work by the employer. That his employees quit so frequently is an expression of the same evaluation. To insulate themselves against the double insult of unemployment and, when employed, demeaning labor, work as a means for achieving self-respect and self-realization is played down. It is not that they do not want work: They want work that will allow

for pride and dignity, work that will provide a reasonable standard of living, work that will allow them to be themselves, to be what they want to be.

These attitudes and perceptions are complemented in behavior. The high rate of job quitting, the reluctance to enter job training programs and, once enrolled, the high likelihood of dropping out, the high rates of absenteeism--all of these actions point in the same direction: A disenchantment with the social order, its values and assumptions. Also prevalent is a mistrust of employers and the methods they use to screen employees. They see interviews and tests as devices to keep Negroes out, another manifestation of the run-around. They avoid employers who have or have had reputations for not hiring or otherwise discriminating against Negroes.

I know of no easy solutions that can be inferred from the above and related observations. One thing seems, however, rather certain: More of the same will not be the answer. The time has come, indeed it is long past for a fundamental rethinking of the assumptions and the values implicit in current employment procedures and programs. Without this, the "long hot summers" in the ghettos will become as normal for the poor as trips to the cool mountain resorts are for the affluent.

"THE SCREENING PROCESS AS APPLIED TO APPLICANTS FOR
EMPLOYMENT PRIOR TO TESTING"

Summary of remarks by:

Dr. Victor Howard
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The Screening Process as Applied to Applicants for
Employment Prior to Testing

My objective in these next few minutes will be to review a somewhat different aspect of the problem of Selection and the Minority Job Applicant -- that of the screening process as it applies to applicants, or more accurately, to "potential applicants" prior to actual testing.

In terms of the total employment process, screening actually begins with the establishment of criteria that potential applicants will be required to meet. The determination of the requirements for success on the job must be done by a careful and systematic look at what people on the job actually do -- in other words, a job analysis. These must then be communicated in writing to those responsible for recruiting and selection of applicants. We must be careful to ensure that we are selecting for the appropriate job level, i.e., entry, journeyman, master, etc., bearing in mind that the selection of only qualified persons only adds to the total employment costs.

Once we have determined the appropriate criteria, and have prepared a job description or position description, the second aspect of the screening process occurs. This is the result of how and where we go about obtaining potential job applicants -- in other words, how we communicate our job needs to those who might most be interested. And here I am referring to the degree of aggressiveness and the manner in which the employer promotes his job needs, and the way in which this information is made known to the minority community.

A third, and most significant aspect of the preliminary screening process, lies in the Initial Interview. This Oral Interview as it is

often called, presents a significant hurdle to the potential job applicant. Its usual purpose is twofold, first, to obtain necessary and useful information to be used in the selection and placement process, and second, to act as a rather coarse screen to filter out those obviously unsuitable for the position to be filled.

In a survey conducted a few years ago, by Dr. F. Ruch's Psychological Services, Incorporated of Los Angeles, among members of the American Society for Personnel Administration, it was determined that... "The personal interview is still the most widely used method of evaluation -- used by 97 percent of the companies in 1958, and 94 percent in 1963."

Even allowing for the effects of inflation, I believe it can safely be assumed that more than 90 percent of employers today use the personal interview in their selection and screening process.

Because of this widespread use of the oral interview, and also because, as I have just stated, it frequently is used as a "filter". I believe that it merits our close attention at this time. We need to look both at the "Interviewer," and his or her qualifications, training, knowledge of the law, etc., and at the "interview" itself. With respect to the Interview, we can raise a number of rather relevant questions concerning its purpose, how it is conducted, how the results are recorded and evaluated, and what use is made of the information obtained.

I believe that it can be stated with no great fear of contradiction that this probably is one of the weaker areas of the whole employment process at the present time. It is an area that is worthy of our attention, not so much because it is a potential source of

deliberate discrimination as because it is so easy for it to become a focal point for unwitting or unmeaning discrimination due to inadequate or improper guidance and training of the interviewers themselves.

This then, is the preliminary screening process as I see it, a process that "selects down" the potential number of applicants before the actual testing point is ever reached. It is, I believe, an area too often overlooked in this sense, and one which I recommend to your careful attention.

"THE IMPACT OF FEDERAL EQUAL EMPLOYMENT REGULATIONS
ON PERSONNEL TESTING PROGRAMS"

Summary of remarks by:

Howard Lockwood, Corporate Manpower
and Management Development Specialist
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Burbank, California

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The Impact of Federal Equal Employment Regulations
on Personnel Testing Programs

My objective is to show you that a "good" testing program and a "fair" testing program are the same. There is now pressure in the way of federal pressure to look at testing programs, to insure that they are "good" and "fair".

To give some background, it has been clear for some time that Negroes do less well than whites on the kinds of tests widely used in personnel selection. As a result a higher percent have usually been screened out when seeking jobs. Tests, then, began to be perceived as barriers to minorities and to federal and state agencies that were seeking to provide equal employment opportunities. Interestingly, some progressive companies who wanted to increase their percent of minority employment also noted that many minorities failed to meet previously set test standards.

The first big legal challenge to tests came with the Motorola case in 1964. An Illinois Fair Employment Practice hearing examiner charged that a test used by Motorola was inherently discriminatory against persons with culturally disadvantaged backgrounds. This charge was not upheld in the courts, but it caused a storm of interest.

In 1965, the California Fair Employment Practice Commission set up a Technical Advisory Committee on Testing to advise it on the whole subject of the use of tests in selecting minorities and in May 1966 the Technical Advisory Committee on Testing issued their guidelines. The crux of these recommendations was that tests should be related to the training or job to be performed.

Later the newly formed Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission issued guidelines on testing of minority applicants which reiterated the need

to validate tests. In 1967 the Office of Federal Contracts began to draft an order regarding the testing of minorities by government contractors. These were quite specific requiring in essence that unless evidence was available or developed to show the validity of a test, it should be discontinued. This order has not been issued, but it certainly reflects the thinking of that agency. In investigations by both federal agencies tests have been under question.

It should be said parenthetically contrary to the belief of many, that "culture free" and "culture fair" tests do not appear to have much promise for the solution of this problem. Since jobs have cultural content, tests to predict performance in these jobs must have cultural content. However, we must be careful that the cultural content relates to the job.

Charts 1 through 4 describe in simple terms the problem which federal agencies are hitting at. They also show the simplest kind of evidence needed to show whether or not a test is valid and fair.

The dilemma for employers is that most don't know whether their tests are valid. In a study made by the Fair Employment Practice Commission in 1966 of 39 companies in the San Francisco Bay Area, only five [or 13 percent] had evidence to show that their tests were valid. In a sense, we could conclude that 9 out of 10 of the companies do not at this time have evidence of whether their tests are either "good" or "fair".

While the requirements by the government for testing programs are optimum and ideal, they are not incompatible with the optimum standards which psychologists would set for testing programs.

Companies have two good reasons to take another look at their testing programs:

Are they "good"? Are they helping us select workers who have a good likelihood of success and low likelihood of failure?

Are they "fair"? Are they related to job or training performance, rejecting those with a high likelihood of failure?

Dr. Ruch has told you how to set up a "good" testing program. Follow his advice carefully and you will not only have a "good" program, you will also have a "fair" one.

EXAMPLE 1

<u>Test Score</u>	<u>Performance</u>	
	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
30-34		00
25-29	0	000
20-24	00	0000
15-19	000	00000
10-14	00000	000
5- 9	0000	00
0- 4	00000	0

NOTE: 0 = Worker

EXAMPLE 2

<u>Test Score</u>	<u>Performance</u>	
	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
30-34		00
25-29	000	0
20-24	000	000
15-19	0000	0000
10-14	000	00000
5- 9	0000	00
0- 4	000	000

NOTE: 0 = Worker

This is a simple hypothetical example of a valid test. There is substantial relationship between test scores and job performance. Note that 14 out of 20 [70%] of the low performers had test scores below 15 while only 6 out of 20 [30%] of the high performers had test scores below 15. The use of a minimum hiring score of 15 would greatly reduce the chance that new hires would be low performers. Or conversely, it would increase the chance that they would be good performers.

This table shows a test that is not valid; that is, the scores do not relate to job performance in this case. Ten out of 20 low performers score below 15; 10 out of 20 high performers score below 15. The use of this particular test would not increase the likelihood of getting high performers for this particular job. It should be pointed out that a test might not be valid for one job and be quite valid for another.

EXAMPLE 3

<u>Test Score</u>	<u>Performance</u>	
	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
30-34		00
25-29	000	●
20-24	000	000
15-19	0●00	00●0
10-14	00●	0●000
5- 9	●00●	00
0- 4	●00	●●

NOTE: 0 = White Worker
● = Minority Worker

This is the same example of an invalid test shown in Example 2. However, this time the minority workers are identified. The test does not increase the company's chance of getting high performers. But if the test is used it will reject a high percent of minorities that apply. When invalid screening procedures such as this are used, they are barriers -- usually unintentional -- for minorities and culturally disadvantaged people seeking employment.

EXAMPLE 4

<u>Test Score</u>	<u>Performance</u>	
	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
30-34		00
25-29	0	0●0
20-24	00	000●
15-19	000	00●000
10-14	00000	0●0
5- 9	●0●0	●0
0- 4	●0●00	0

NOTE: 0 = White Worker
● = Minority Worker

This is the valid test shown in Example 1, with minority workers identified. The test scores relate to performance, meaning that the test is measuring some important factor needed to successfully perform the job. A number of minority workers scored low on the test in this case, but several passed. Despite the fact that few minority persons qualified, the company would be justified in using the test because there is clear evidence that it is measuring an important factor in job success.

THE DISADVANTAGED UNEMPLOYED: WHY SHOULD
MANAGEMENT CARE?

Summary of remarks by:

Vern F. Peak, Director
Personnel Recruitment and Development
Kaiser Industries Corporation, Oakland

Delivered at:

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The Disadvantaged Unemployed: Why Should
Management Care?

In conferences on equal employment opportunities for minority groups, it has become standard operating procedure to devote the morning and afternoon sessions to the "nuts and bolts" aspects of the problem: company policy declaration and implementation, recruiting practices and procedures, testing, selection, training, and on-the-job orientation. The luncheon speaker, on the other hand, is assigned the task of converting the unbelievers and exhorting the faithful to increase their good works. Most of you know that I have spoken frequently on this subject over the last several years.

The fact that you are here today is pretty good evidence to me that you are not among the unbelievers. Furthermore, presumably you have come to learn more about the proper uses and the limitations of screening, testing and selection devices as they relate to the disadvantaged. As a result, I have the uncomfortable feeling that the traditional role of the luncheon speaker is inappropriate for this occasion.

I have another uncomfortable feeling that I want to talk to you about for a few minutes. Simply stated, my feeling is that there seems to have been a marked deterioration in the social "climate" where efforts are being made to improve the lot of the minority unemployed. Such a generalization can be supported by compiling a list of examples and can be refuted equally effectively by compiling a different list. I would like to view our problem from the perspective of the words of some wise and thoughtful men who within this decade addressed themselves to the problems and issues which underlie the subject of this conference. As you listen to these words, reflect upon the mood -- the climate -- of the days in which they

were written. You will get, I think, a vivid sense of commitment and a largeness of view essential to sustained effort.

Less than three years ago, a well-known executive of a major national company said in a public address:

"I am afraid, however, that even today, many in the business community do not recognize the depth and the magnitude of the Negro protest movement. Negroes today have little interest in the history of other minorities, the growth of their opportunities and their absorption into the mainstream of American life. Negroes are preoccupied almost exclusively with their own cause, and with the injustices which they have suffered. Out of this singlemindedness, they developed the unit of the strength of demand for not only equal but often special treatment - in part as compensation for the kind of special treatment from which they suffered at the hands of the white community for centuries.

"The easy assumption that if the Negro achieves legal equality he can then easily achieve economic equality has limited, if any validity. Automation, urban decay, de facto school segregation, housing segregation, confront the Negro with obstacles far higher than the legal barriers he has now through great effort overcome...don't misunderstand me. I am not predicting organized violence. But, I do believe that the demands for change and the consequent stress in the social structure, are going to escalate rather than diminish: we must be prepared for more, not less, protest: for wider, not narrower, action to win changes in the whole spectrum of our society: in short, for intensification of the civil rights revolution on all fronts." in a keynote address at the plans for progress northwest conference held in San Francisco in June, 1965, Edgar F. Kaiser said:

"The militant highly organized movement of the Negro American to win his full rights of citizenship has been called, and appropriately, a revolution....it is, however, the first revolution in which those in revolt have no desire to take over -- or to overturn -- a government or a way of life, They just want to join the majority of Americans in sharing the full rights and duties of citizenship -- in voting -- education -- housing -- and economic opportunity. We are not finding our task an easy one. We must learn new ways, and adopt new ideas of policies. We must struggle with a new glossary of uncomfortable phrases -- such as 'discrimination in reverse' -- 'quota systems' -- 'the numbers game' -- 'lower standards' -- and 'restrictive testing practices'".

In a paper devoted entirely to the Negro American, Daniel P. Moynihan cast the problem in terms of the nature of American democracy. Here is what he said in the opening pages of that paper:

"The civil rights revolution of our time is entering a new phase, and a new crisis. In the first phase, the demands of the Negro American were directed primarily to those rights associated with the idea of Liberty: the right to vote, the right to free speech, the right to free assembly. In the second phase, the movement must turn to the issue of equality. This dualism, which has always been present in the civil rights movement, simply reflects the dualism of American democracy. From the outset, American society has been committed to the twin ideals of liberty and equality. These are not the same things, nor do they appeal to different persons with the same force. The declaration of independence began with a proposition about equality, but the word does not appear in the constitution until almost a century later. One reason, surely, is

that at the time the constitution was adopted, almost one American in five was a slave.

"As long as Negro demands concentrated on issues of liberty, they enjoy the unquestioned support of the centers of power in American society. Even those who resisted did so in practice, rather than on principle. No one can successfully challenge the principle of liberty in the United States at this time. However, as demands turn toward those associated with equality, this support seemed to dissipate. Several problems are involved -- the first is that of incomprehension. Great portions of the American middle class simply do not understand the nature of the demand for equality. Typically, they assume such demands are met when equal opportunity is provided ...but equality, as a fundamental democratic disposition, goes beyond equal opportunity to the issue of equal results. Here, middle-class support begins to dissipate, principles are not clear, consensus does not exist.

"Given the ethnic group structure of American life, equality for Negro Americans means that they will have open to them the full range of American economic, social, and political life and that freedom within the pattern of endeavor that they choose. The test of American society will be whether it can work out arrangements so that this happens more or less naturally for Negro Americans, as it has more or less naturally happened for other groups. The rules are unwritten, but well enough understood. Some concessions are in order from other groups, but more than a generation must pass before the outcome will be clear. It will be uneven, but nonetheless acceptable.

"From the very outset, the principal measure of progress toward equality has been employment. For the Negro American it is already, and

will continue to be, the master problem. Employment is the measure of Negro competence." In this regard, why should management care beyond employment? They must become concerned and get involved with such problems as housing, and school segregation, if they don't, the ghetto develops or expands and Management loses potential employees who won't live or even work in this type area; nor would the ghetto, for that matter, stand for us.

Management needs employees and needs them badly today, and so far, our efforts and most of their efforts have been directed toward this end. You are all familiar with the varied programs - T.A.C.T., this program here today, plans for progress, on the job training activities - these are all aimed at making more jobs available to more of the disadvantaged unemployed.

Management must care and again begin to look beyond just the employment problem to a broader base. Housing standards in the Negro areas must be improved to eliminate one of the major problems of frustration to the Negro American. Since when is management not concerned with the broad economic questions that this social upheaval causes? Our new and expanding tax structure, our welfare structure - whose pocket must these funds come from - primarily management and those individuals who are employed.

Perhaps my uncomfortable feeling is in the large part due to these events which now appear to indicate an unhealthy trend, however, from the perspective of the year 2,000, these events may be seen as nothing more than a series of minor incidents, deserving only a few footnotes in the historical accounts of our day.

The basic answer to the question asked in the title of this talk - "The Disadvantaged Unemployed: Why Should Management Care?" is answered in the last two sentences in the quotation from Mr. Moynihan's paper. His answer ... "The Linkage between problems of employment and the range of social pathology that afflicts the Negro community is unmistakable. Employment not only controls the present for the Negro American but in a most profound way, it is creating the future as well." It affects where he goes and what he does. It isolates him from his fellow man or puts his relationship on a confrontation basis. Unless men of good will act wisely and humanely the social order inevitably will give way bit by bit to one of increasing rigidity, and the "right" to position will supersede all other values.

It is obvious that management and the organization for which it is responsible could not long exist in its present form in such a social order. This would be a mean and tragic end to a development which for the first time has brought a society to within striking range of the age-old scourges of poverty, ignorance, and disease.

Lest anyone be under the misapprehension that social pathology is an affliction visited upon "them" but not "us", I would put to you the question Dick Gregory poses to his nightclub audiences. "How would all you liberals out there feel, "Mr. Gregory asks, "if it finally turns out that we Negroes really are inferior?" Our reply to that bitter and penetrating question is an accurate measure of the distance we have to go. The time to start is now.

"VALIDITY OF TESTS AS PREDICTORS OF ON-THE-JOB PERFORMANCE"

Summary of remarks by:

Dr. Floyd Ruch, President
Psychological Services, Incorporated
Los Angeles, California

Delivered at:

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Validity of Tests as Predictors of On-the-Job Performance

A. Major types of "tests" and how used.

1. Job knowledge and skill tests.
2. General and specific tests of intellectual abilities. Examples will be given.
3. Psycho-motor tests [manual dexterity, etc.]. Examples will be given.
4. Personality, temperament and interest inventories. Sample items will be given.

B. Validation designs. These are presented in order of their elegance but not of their practicality in real life.

1. Predictive validity [forward validation].
2. Concurrent validity [the present employee method].
3. Job-profile analysis of present employees.
4. Systematic job analysis to determine measurable factors or components.

C. Advantages and disadvantages of each design.

D. The rank-ordering on the basis of elegance of these designs from a scientific point of view is about opposite to that of the frequency of use in actual practice. Forward validation requires conditions that can be met in industry only at the expense of denying the benefits of proper selection for a considerable length of time -- as much as several years in the case of high level jobs. On the other hand, expert opinion based upon systematic job analysis is the most frequently used.

E. The best compromise between science and practicality is probably to use job analysis and expert opinion to select tests and to establish tentative hiring standards and then to conduct a predictive validity study to determine what tests should be dropped and what weights should be assigned to those remaining in the selection battery. There is a recognized

statistical procedure for correcting for the effect of restriction of range on test scores.

F. A higher proportion of applicants of a given minority group failing to qualify on job-related [valid] tests is not one and the same as discrimination as defined in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

[Quote Secretary Wirtz] OFCC has yet to give the employer a clear definition of its concept of discrimination.

G. The personal interview is a selection device and should be subjected to the same validation procedure as is required of tests.

H. The notion that the predictive validity of aptitude tests is different for minority groups than for the great white majority and that this works to the disadvantage of Negroes is widespread. The studies claiming to have established this point contain numerous errors of design and analysis. The most careful study in this area, that of Mary Tenopyr, finds no evidence that aptitude tests are unfair to Negroes.

I. Given valid batteries of aptitude tests yielding composite scores for particular jobs, the establishment of hiring standards for each job concerned is a management decision. Such a decision is properly made by considering the cost-utility ratio in recruiting for a particular job in a particular community at a particular time.

"WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE MINORITY UNEMPLOYED"

Summary of remarks by:

Professor George Strauss, Associate Director
Institute of Industrial Relations
University of California, Berkeley

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What We Know About the Minority Unemployed

My remarks will be tied in with those of Professor Dizard. I will be concerned with the nature of the recruiting and selection process as applied to minority group members. I will deal chiefly with two recent studies.

The first study relates to whether Negroes tend to do better on written tests or on interviews. It is often thought that written tests, being objective, are fairer to Negroes and less subject to racial bias than are interviews. Indeed, some have suggested that selection decisions should be made entirely on the basis of tests. Two recent studies of the experience of Negro applicants for civil service jobs suggest, however, that Negroes do relatively worse on tests; and that once they pass the test-barrier, their experience with interviews is not much different than that of whites. Of course, employers who wish to discriminate against Negroes can use the interview as a means of eliminating Negro candidates. On the other hand, for organizations who really believe in affirmative action one of the best ways to increase the number of Negro employees may be to put greater weight on interviews, rather than on tests.

The second study relates to apprenticeship. It draws on the experience of a number of cities which have mounted "show case" drives to recruit Negro apprentices. Despite considerable publicity, the number of applicants has been disappointingly small. A high percentage of these fail to pass the entrance tests. Perhaps, even more significant was the high attrition rate at the various steps of the apprenticeship selection procedure. A high percentage of those who indicated interest did not show up at interviews; a high percentage of those who passed at the interview stage did not take their exams; and a high percentage of those who were offered apprenticeship did not show up on the job. It may well be that Negroes look upon a lengthy selection procedure as an

involved rigamarole designed to keep them out.

On the other hand, the experience of the Workers Defense League seems to suggest a way out. The Workers Defense League has been working with possible Negro applicants for apprenticeship, training them in how to do well in interviews and pass examinations. In the first New York Sheet Metal apprenticeship examination which Negroes were permitted to take, the highest ranking Negro came sixty-eighth. In a recent examination, Negroes tutored by the Workers Defense League did better than whites.

All this suggests that neither interviews nor examinations constitute a barrier to Negro employment, provided there is a real wish to make affirmative action work.