

## Going Beyond “He Said, He Said” on Race-tracking

In its response to my recent articles about our two-tracked race-based admissions, the USNA administration, and according to reports the CNO as well, are currently in the “deny deny” stage that precedes admission of uncomfortable truths. This is the mode the Army was in with respect to the “friendly fire” death of Pat Tillman—until they had to abandon that and admit that, well yes, he’d died from friendly fire. And yes, they, um, misrepresented the truth before that. This is the Navy that is “held to a higher [moral] standard,” you remember. I’d be happy if they would just admit outside the walls what they make clear inside it.

The Pentagon, we hear, claims that Prof. Fleming “has his facts wrong.” Not so. To be sure, details of the admissions process change all the time: weightings on the Whole Person Multiple change every year, for example. But the fundamentals don’t depend on me being the source; they’re spelled out in current USNA documents. The fundamentals are *that we identify, admit by fast-track, and actively promote by racial categories* minority candidates whose predictors are far lower than those required for white candidates to be competitive, thus filling a slot for which a much better (white) candidate is rejected.

You don’t have to be an insider to realize how illogical it is for USNA to say loud and clear that “diversity is our number one priority” and still insist it doesn’t put its thumb on the scales. Of course it does. It’s come up with what its official “diversity” slide show calls in Orwellian fashion a “streamlined” admissions process for minorities, which means they are direct admitted or sent to NAPS with predictors that get white applicants rejected. And once they’re here, we create pre-college and low-track courses for them.

You don’t even have to know how the admissions system works, or the difference between “direct” admit—for minorities and athletic recruits (given a pro forma “nomination” from a pot, most typically Secretary of the Navy nominations) vs. admission by competition to win a “slate” of up to ten nominations (most typically given by congresspeople)—white high school senior applicants. Nor need you actually teach the result when it arrives at Annapolis, as I do. For the last few years I have taught many classes of remedial English. Recently I considered one from last semester at random to show the lengths we go to to get racial (and athletic) recruits. Out of 18 students, 16 came from NAPS (i.e. they had already had two semesters of remediation and they still needed a pre-college English course, and following on that low-track English—the same is true in math and sciences). 100% of the students were either racial minorities or recruited athletes, half minority and half white. Many ended up on probation or got D grades not just in my course.

Who would be dumb enough to believe that by “making diversity our number one priority” we mean merely scaring up applications, and not treating them differently once we get them, or the students, once admitted? (Actually we don’t get 10 viable applications for every slot, only requests for information from what may be 7<sup>th</sup> graders—but saying we do makes our ratings go up, so we do.) That’s as silly as saying that we identify the quarterback we want, wine and dine him, and then throw his application into the pot with the ten other guys we say want his slot. Of course we don’t, and we don’t with minorities either. We direct admit these, which means that racial minorities go to the

head of the line and white applicants with higher predictors duke it out for the remaining slots.

I don't approve of a separate door for athletic recruits (we could have fine teams with walk-ons without compromising our standards), and have written about that (yes, it made me unpopular). But that's not the issue here. Athletic prowess is a skill. Being Hispanic isn't. Giving preferences merely for race is illegal.

The Naval Academy's official 2008 PowerPoint "Diversity Presentation" makes our two tracks clear. The "Strategic Goal" (slide 8) is to "Provide a streamlined candidate identification and selection process" for non-white groups, listed in Slide 4: Hispanic, African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander.

"Streamlined" turns out to be a euphemism for the separate track for minorities. Slide 41, Minorities Inducted, makes clear that minority students divide into only two categories, USNA direct (class of 2010: 161) and NAPS (class of 2010: 111). This is the "streamlining." Either they come direct to USNA—i.e. do not have to compete to win a "slate" of up to ten (most typically) congressional nominations (higher-performing minority applicants come "direct," though they don't have to be as high-performing as whites)—or are sent to NAPS. NAPS is the answer for minorities with lower predictors, where almost all come to USNA the next year (114 out of 124 who attended for the class of 2012, 202 NAPSters total—Slide 44). The Class of 2013 had 244 from NAPS, about 20% of our class. So the majority of NAPS students are low-performing minorities. Low-performing white applicants not also athletes or priors are rejected.

Sending sub-par minority students to a federally-funded program and not comparable white students (unless recruited athletes) is illegal. Until a year or so ago, the focus on minorities was written into the NAPS charter; JAG officers made them take it out of the de jure version of NAPS, still it is central to the de facto use of NAPS. As Slide 14 makes clear, "Initiatives to Achieve Minority Representation" include: "Increasing minority applications, reducing minority attrition [i.e. tutoring and systemic protecting at USNA], structuring NAPS to best support USNA admissions goals (Example: NAPS 2007: 118 minorities, 64 prior enlisted, 93 athletes)," and "Increasing number and position/seniority of minority role models –Example 1/6 Battalion Officers, 7/30 Company Officers, 5/30 Senior Enlisted, new Director of Admissions." In other words, by USNA's own admission, we picked the Director of Admissions for race, we pick our student leaders for race, we send students to NAPS for race. This is the two tracks: sub-par minorities come to USNA through NAPS or "direct" (as white non-athletes do not) and are coddled and artificially placed in leadership positions.

USNA, NAPS, and of course the armed forces are funded with federal money, and this is America: race-tracking is illegal. So let's try to understand why they'd do it. The slide show opens with oohrah exhortations from the very top, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs ADM Mike Mullen, who says: "I'm telling our leaders that I expect them to figure out a way to make diversity a priority in all your lives, all your organizations."

The next slides give CNO "talking points": "In ten years the country will be 40% minority. Today, our Officer force is less than 19% minority. We are only as strong, unified, and credible as the degree to which we match society. ... To stay competitive in recruiting and retention, we must engage now."

So skin color is the only thing worth talking about? Not gender, not smarts, not competence, not dedication—but skin color? Remember: "minority" here means *only*

skin color, not minority in religion or sexual orientation or creativity (though many Hispanics are white, and Asians are given preference when they're a small % of the armed forces: apparently non-Caucasians are all alike—this year we direct-admitted as many Asians as blacks, 10% in each case). Why do we have to have an officer corps that exactly reflects the skin color of the enlisted *and correlates to no other quality*? By this logic, we'd have a law that says the next four presidents of the US have to be black because blacks are now about 12% of the population and we've only had one half-black one so far. Do symphony orchestras have to be 40% minority? Doctors? (actually there are now a lot of Indian doctors in the US, and they're non-white—does that make African-Americans happy?) Do all chefs have to be 40% non-white? Does this parity have to be overall, nationally? Or locally too? Perhaps this means the mayor of New York has to be a certain % black, a certain % Hispanic, and a certain % Asian (as well as white)?

Everybody agrees we can't *exclude* officers of color. But this doesn't mean it's necessary, a good idea, or legal to pick them *because* of their skin color either. Does the CNO think black soldiers need black officers to follow orders willingly? If so, does this mean white ones need white officers? We seem to lump all non-whites into one category. But is one "minority" the same as another? Will a black male soldier relate better to a Hispanic or Asian female than to a white male? If I'm black and the black officer is in another unit is that somehow okay? Or do I have the right to have one right here?

I'm a civilian, but I work with and for the military, and I've been doing it for more than a military career of twenty years. Check out my books on the military and its place in the civilian world it works for and exists to defend. Besides, I understand human nature, and I talk with the guys and gals in the military. They're insulted at the suggestion that they need or want officers whose only similarity with themselves is the same skin color. They're savvy enough to smell a fake, a weak officer, or a system that has artificially promoted someone for his or her skin color. Now *that's* a morale problem.

It won't do to justify this frenetic push of recent years with talk about Vietnam-era problems with white officers and black soldiers in Vietnam. (See the "amicus briefs" in the 2003 University of Michigan case, which said it was illegal to run two tracks for admissions—just what we do). That was the racially tense 60s, in a bad war. And who says the problems in Vietnam were racial and not just frustration in general? This ain't Vietnam any more. Who says we have a problem now that justifies any sort of remediation, much less this "diversity at any cost and damn the consequences" one we're currently implementing? If we do, who says this brutal, mendacious, racist way to deal with it is right? It's certainly not legal.

The USNA administration has repeatedly claimed to JO JAGS "reviewed the policy and found it constitutional." Now it seems nobody can document this review, if it ever happened. Anyway: huh? JOs saying that a military policy is "constitutional"? Let's have the Supreme Court in on this one.

USNA has been race tracking for some time now: I wrote about this as a problem in 2005. But this is the year that the brass finally seemed to kick it up several notches: now it's "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead." This is the year that absolute SAT scores have disappeared from the Press Briefing between the classes of 2012 and 2013. For 2012 the briefing was still willing to admit that 30% of verbal SAT scores for the class were below 600 and 18% of math SAT (without noting that these scores are

routinely allowed for the direct-admit groups of minority students, recruited athletes, and priors, but only as individual exceptions for white students). Now we've gone back to apartheid-era South Africa, reporting SAT scores only within racial groups: so-and-so % by blacks compared to black SAT takers, so-and-so % for Hispanics compared to Hispanic SAT takers. Aside from disguising the fact that this places the average SAT scores of both groups in the "not qualified" territory for white applicants (black SAT takers have an average scores of about 440 on the SAT vs. 540 for whites), it's illegal to take the "best blacks" we can get or the "best Hispanics," considering them as separate categories. And the bizarre thing is, the brass seems to be proud of what it's doing.

Look at the slide show. Stand by for the lawsuit.

[http://www.usna.edu/SHPEUSNA/Diversity%20Program%20Review08\\_files/frame.htm](http://www.usna.edu/SHPEUSNA/Diversity%20Program%20Review08_files/frame.htm)

To end on a personal note: I grew up on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, i.e. the South. It drove me wild that blacks were condescended to. I sang "We Shall Overcome" at the NCCJ camp with the black kids, and put on a school play about MLK Jr's death (it involved blowing out a candle and wearing a black veil—embarrassing now). I ended up in Rwanda as the American professor in a country where everybody was black. The president was black, prisoners were black, professors were black (except me and about three white Frenchmen), peons were black. All my students were black, and so was the young man who cleaned my house. (So was the University Dean. And the Director of Admissions.) The language I spoke to them in was French, as well as vestigial Kinyarwanda. And after I left, one group started killing the other.

Black people come in all kinds. So do white people. But according to the military, a black person is apparently more like any other black person than he or she is like any white person. That's his group, and that's how he's going to be admitted, treated, and promoted.

Anybody but me outraged?