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Professor R. A. Fisher, F.R.S.  
Whittinghame  
44 Storeys Way  
Cambridge, England

My dear Fisher:

The current number of the Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (Volume 53, page 57) has a biometric account of Anglo-Negro children in English seaports. The biometrical methods seem all right and yet some of the conclusions seem absurd when one knows the great amount of variability, for instance in nasal width, lip thickness and skin color in these hybrids.

Little, the author, finds, for instance, that they are "less variable in nasal and facial indices" than English children. That would be all right for F-1's but it is impossible to believe that it is true of later generations, in which segregation has taken place. I should be glad to know what you think of his results biometrically. They seem to me definitely misleading because one knows from observation that every extreme between the two races can be seen in later generation hybrids. He also thinks he has evidence of hybrid vigor in the F-1; although he states that "it must be regarded very tentatively."

I find it difficult to reconcile these two sets of facts and I wonder if you find anything wrong with his biometrical methods or have any way of explaining the apparent dilemma.

My "Human Ancestry" is to be published by the Harvard Press on January 26, dealing with human and some earlier paleontology, with a couple of genetical chapters on the nature of species.

Yours sincerely,



R. Ruggles Gates

RRG:mt