Course Description and Objectives

Is race “real”? Do men and women have different brains? Is sexuality a choice (and should that matter)?

This course examines the way these and other questions have been taken up in scientific discourse. We will approach race, gender, and sexuality as biosocial constructs, exploring their roles in debates about the relationship between biology & society, nature & culture, and human similarity & difference.

The first section of the course places these debates in their historical context, as we examine the role that cultural understandings of race, gender, and difference played—and continue to play—in the development of Western science. Next, we will investigate contemporary scientific questions related to genetic diversity, sexuality, medicine, and technology.

Finally, the course ends with an examination of the way race, gender, and social inequalities become embodied and can affect human biology.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this class, students will be able to:
• Critically evaluate claims about the biology of race/gender/sexuality.
• Analyze the significance of biological determinism in debates about social inequality.
• Demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of ethnic/racial differences and inequities in U.S. society.

What’s in the syllabus?

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Professor:
Dr. Angela C. Jenks
Email: ajenks@uci.edu
Student hours: Weds, 2-4pm
Sign up: angelajenks.youcanbook.me

TAs:
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Scott Jung jungs5@uci.edu
Courtney Graves courtng@uci.edu
Harvard President Larry Summers’s 2005 suggestion that the overrepresentation of men in science and engineering fields is due to innate differences in ability reignited debates about male and female brains, gender inequality, and biological determinism.

**Course Requirements**

**Reading Annotations (13.3% of grade)**

Each week, we will collectively annotated assigned readings through the Perusall platform. Please contribute at least FIVE substantive annotations to each article. Annotations may be thoughtful questions, comments, or context. Some annotations may be in response to comments or questions that the professor or fellow students have already made. Annotations cannot be made up, but missing two assignments will have no effect on your grade.

**Discussion Participation (20% of grade)**

Discussion sections are an important component of the course and offer opportunities for learning in smaller groups. You will receive credit for participation in at least six (6) weekly discussions throughout the quarter.

You will be able to choose whether to participate in live (synchronous) virtual sessions or non-live (asynchronous) online sessions.

**Weekly Quizzes (26.7% of grade)**

Weekly quizzes will be administered on-line through the course Canvas site. These will contain objective and short answer questions related to material covered in assigned readings, lectures, videos, podcasts, and discussions. Quizzes should be completed on your own, but you may use any course materials (notes, readings, etc.). Quizzes cannot be made up, but you may drop your two lowest quiz grades.
While biological determinism has been used to justify inequality, it can also be used to argue for equality and acceptance. What’s at stake in viewing sexuality as biologically innate?

Flexibility & Grace

We will be moving through this course under extremely unusual circumstances. Many students are dealing with housing and food precarity, job loss, medical emergencies, dependent care dilemmas, and irregular computer or internet access. Delays and missed deadlines are to be expected.

Many of the assignments in the class are designed to be flexible – you may miss assignments and drop lowest grades with no penalties. We will work to accommodate other late work as much as we can. Your Professor & TAs are also facing new and unforeseen circumstances. We ask that you extend to us the same flexibility and grace as we navigate this situation together.

Blog Entries (20% of grade)

Throughout the quarter, pay attention to current events, popular images, and other references illustrating the intersection of race, gender, and science that you encounter in everyday life. Turn in at least three of these items with commentary and discussion. More information about acceptable entries and grading will be distributed through the course website.

Public Education Project (20% of grade)

For your final course project, make and share a public-facing resource focused on any topic related to the study of race, gender, and science. This could be a short film, infographic, comic, photoessay, game, op-ed essay, etc., but your project must be 1) based on research; 2) connect to course questions, topics, and themes; and 3) shareable to a targeted audience.

You will complete this assignment in several stages. First, choose a topic to investigate in more depth. Your blog entries are intended to help you generate ideas. Next, use course and library resources to conduct your research and develop an argument. Finally, consider the best way to communicate that argument to a particular public audience and produce your final project. Additional information and a grading rubric will be distributed in the Canvas site.

Academic Integrity

Learning, research, and scholarship depend upon an environment of academic integrity and honesty. This environment can be maintained only when all participants recognize the importance of upholding the highest ethical standards. Academic integrity is a requirement for passing this course. All student work must be the work of the individual receiving credit. Please familiarize yourself with UCI’s Academic Integrity Policy and speak to your instructor if you have any questions about what is and is not allowed in this course.
FRESH Basic Needs Hub

If you have difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat everyday or lack a safe and stable place to live, contact the UCI Basic Needs Coordinator at fresh@uci.edu.

If you are near UCI, the FRESH Basic Needs Hub is still open on campus. The hub includes free food and toiletry supplies. To minimize contact, hours and procedures have changed and you will need to make an appointment. A $2000 emergency grant is also available (though you will need to have maxed out student loans to be eligible). Apply for the Economic Crisis Response Grant here.

Computer and Internet Access

Remote learning depends on access to computers and high-speed internet. If you do not have reliable access to a computer, UCI has a free student laptop loan program for Spring 2020. You can request a laptop but need to be able to pick it up from campus.

Some internet providers have offered free or reduced services for students, though availability depends on your location. For more information, go to https://uci.edu/coronavirus/students/index.php and scroll down to "Internet Connectivity for Students".

Communication

If you have any questions not answered in this syllabus, please contact the Professor or your TA. For general questions about the class, feel free to post in the “Questions & Help” section of the Canvas discussion board. For individual questions, you are welcome to visit my virtual office hours (sign up at angelajenks.youcanbook.me) or contact me through Canvas or email. I aim to respond to messages within 24 hours.
Outline of Topics
Course materials are being reconfigured for remote learning and will be listed in the Canvas site. Each week, materials will open at 12:00am on Sunday morning. All assignments will be due by 11:59pm the following Sunday.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
<th>WHAT’S DUE?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: March 29</td>
<td>Getting Started with Remote Learning</td>
<td>Welcome message from Dr. Jenks</td>
<td>Interactive Syllabus Quiz</td>
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<td>Zoom student guide</td>
<td>Remote Learning Survey</td>
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<td>Discussion 1</td>
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<td>Week 2: April 5</td>
<td>Introduction to Race, Gender, and Science</td>
<td>Online lecture: What is race?</td>
<td>Reading annotations</td>
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<td>Online lecture: What is gender?</td>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
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<td>Reading: Martin, Emily. 1991. “The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has Constructed a Romance</td>
<td>Discussion 2</td>
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<td>Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles.”</td>
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<td>The Nature of Human Difference: Taxonomy &amp; Comparative Anatomy</td>
<td>Online lecture: The nature of human difference</td>
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<td>Film: The Life and Times of Sara Baartman</td>
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<td>Representations 14:42-82.</td>
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<td>Week 4: April 19</td>
<td>Biological Determinism and the Naturalization of Inequality</td>
<td>Online lecture: Biological determinism</td>
<td>Reading annotations</td>
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<td>Film: Race, The Power of an Illusion (Episode 2)</td>
<td>Quiz 4</td>
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<td>Reading: Jones, David S. 2004. “Race to Extinction.” In Rationalizing Epidemics.</td>
<td>Discussion 4</td>
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<td>Week 5: April 26</td>
<td>Evolutionism, Social Darwinism, and Eugenics</td>
<td>Film: The Eugenics Crusade</td>
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<td>Film viewing guide</td>
<td>Reading annotations</td>
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<td>Reading: Stern et al. 2017. “California’s Sterilization Survivors: An Estimate and Call for</td>
<td>Quiz 5</td>
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<td>Extra credit: Mid-quarter check-in</td>
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<td>Week 6: May 3</td>
<td>DNA, Genes, and the Rebiologization of Difference</td>
<td>Online lecture: Sexing the Chromosomes</td>
<td>Reading annotations</td>
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<td>Online lecture: The Promises and Perils of DNA Testing</td>
<td>Quiz 6</td>
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<td>and Molecular Genetics of Sex Determination.” Signs 32(1): 49-82.</td>
<td>Blog entry 2</td>
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| **Week 7: May 10** | Race, Gender, and Medical Research | Online lecture: Personalized Medicine  
Online lecture: Inclusion and Difference  
Quiz 7  
Discussion 7  
Topic brainstorm: Public Education Project |
| **Week 8: May 17** | The Science of Sexuality | Online lecture: Human Sexual Behavior  
Quiz 8  
Discussion 8 |
| **Week 9: May 24** | Racialized and Gendered Technologies | Online lecture: Racialized Technologies  
Online lecture: Gendered Technologies  
Quiz 9  
Discussion 9  
Blog entry 3  
Research/Argument Check-in: Public Education Project |
| **Week 10: May 31** | The Social Production of Biology | Lecture: How Racism Affects Health  
Quiz 10  
Discussion 10  
Extra Credit: Course Feedback |
| **Finals Week: June 7** | Public Education Project | Due                                                                                          |                                                                                                  |