

## Human Variation

From Galton to WWII  
Eugenics, Jim Crow, and  
Immigration Restriction

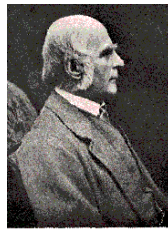
## European Notions

- Francis Galton--England
- Paul Broca--France
- Ernst Haeckel--Germany

## Francis Galton

(1822-1911)

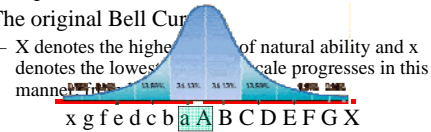
- 1869 *Hereditary Genius*
  - Much taken by his cousin's work on natural selection
  - Fascinated by quantification  
“A man's natural abilities are derived by inheritance, under exactly the same limitations as are the form and physical features of the whole organic world”  
“The men who achieve eminence, and those who are naturally capable are, to a large extent, identical”



Portrait of Francis Galton

## Galton's Hereditary Genius

- System of racial ranking in his chapter “The Comparative Worth of Different Races”
- The original Bell Curve
  - X denotes the highest of natural ability and x denotes the lowest of natural ability in this manner



- Between a and A is the average natural ability
- Everything in lower case denotes below average natural ability, while upper case denotes above average
- Because of racial differences, an "A" ranking in one race is not the same as an "A" ranking in another

## According to Galton

- The average intellectual standard of the Negro race is some two grades below [Englishmen]
- The average ability of the Athenian race [Golden Age Greece] is, on the lowest possible estimate, very nearly two grades higher than [Englishmen]—that is, about as much as our race is above that of the African Negro
- Native Australians are one class below the Negro, while a Lowland Scotsman or Northern Englishman is half a class above the average Englishman

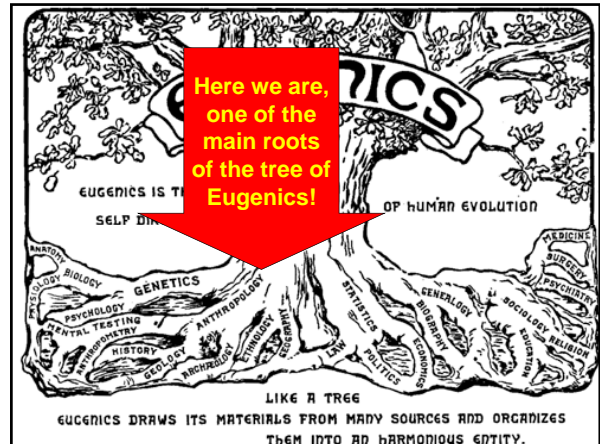
## Galton's Rankings

Athenian	x g f e d c b a A B C D E F G X
Lowland Scots	x g f e d c b a A B C D E F G X
English	x g f e d c b a A B C D E F G X
Negro	x g f e d c b a A B C D E F G X
Australian	x g f e d c b a A B C D E F G X

- In other words, an Athenian A would be the same as a Scot B+, and English C, a Negro E and an Australian F!

## Eugenics

- Galton used his conclusions from *Hereditary Genius* to form the basis of the science of Eugenics
- He coined the term *eugenic* based on the ancient Greek for "good in birth" or "noble in heredity" in his 1883 *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development*
- Eugenics: the science of improving the human stock by giving the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable
- Many scientists followed Galton's lead in taking up the call for selective breeding—or selective elimination of parts of the population



## Pierre Paul Broca

(1824 – 1880)

- French Physician
- Founded Anthropological Society of Paris in 1859
- Expert on the brain
- Was convinced brain size was directly related to the degree of intelligence
- Sought measurement to distinguish races—especially inferior vs. superior races



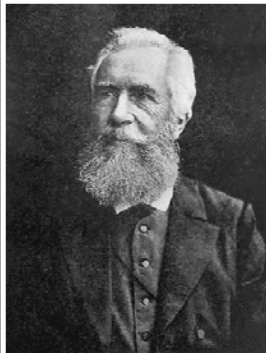
## Broca on Brains

In general, the brain is larger in mature adults than in the elderly, in men than in women, in eminent men than in men of mediocre talent, in **superior races than in inferior races** (1861)

A prognathous face, more or less black color of the skin, woolly hair and intellectual and social inferiority are often associated, while more or less white skin, straight hair and an orthognathous face are the ordinary equipment of the highest groups in the human series ... **A group with black skin, woolly hair and a prognathous face has never been able to raise itself spontaneously to civilization** (1866)

## Ernst Haeckel

(1834 – 1919)



- Introduction of Darwinism to Germany
- Embraced social Darwinism
  - Expanded the concept of evolution to make a "scientific" framework in support of an openly nationalistic racism that was instrumental in paving the way for the Holocaust
- Ranked the races as evolutionary steps leading up to the superior "Aryan" race

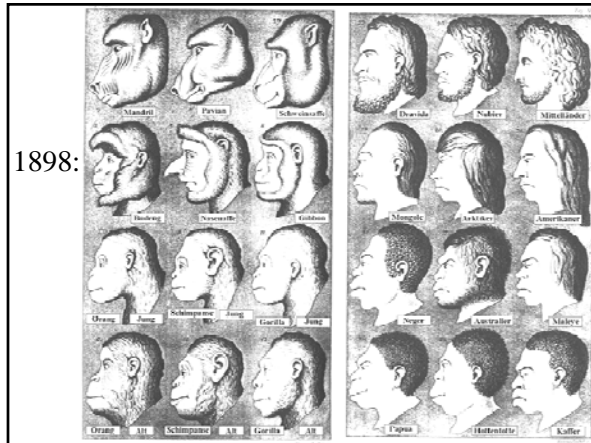
## Haeckel

- The "lowest savages" such as Australian aborigines were closer to apes or even dogs in their reasoning faculties than to humans like Goethe or Darwin
  - Jesus' noble personality was not Semitic, but "more characteristic of the higher Aryan race"
- Haeckel believed that the Germans were racially superior and "deviated furthest from the common primary form of ape-like men"

## Haeckel on Eugenics

- He admired the Spartans because they practiced infanticide of abnormal infants, to improve the biological quality of their race:
  - "a practice of advantage both to the infants destroyed and to the community"
- He recommended that sickly adults should be eliminated to stop them spreading their genes
- He recommended the execution of criminals:
  - "Not only would the struggle for life among the better portions of mankind be made easier, but an advantageous artificial process of selection would be set in practice, since the possibility of transmitting their injurious qualities would be taken from those degenerate outcasts."

## Haeckel (1874) : *The Evolution of Man*



## Nathaniel Southgate Shaler (1841 – 1906)

- Legacy of the American School of Anthropology
  - Trained by Louis Agassiz at Harvard
  - Became a dean at Harvard
  - Published in popular media like *Atlantic Monthly* 1890: Science and the African Problem
    - Maintains stereotypes about African-American inferiority, need for supervision

## Nathaniel Southgate Shaler

(Science and the African Problem, 1890 *Atlantic Monthly*)

“We can see how English, Irish, French, Germans, and Italians may, after time of trouble, mingle their blood and their motives in a common race, which may be as strong, or even stronger, for the blending to these diversities. We cannot hope for such a result with the negro, for an overwhelming body of experience shows that the third something which comes from the union of the European with the African is not as good material as either of the original stocks; that it has not the vital energy and the character required for the uses of the state. The African and European races must remain distinct in blood.”

## Shaler’s legacy

- A student who was strongly influenced by courses taught by Shaler was **Theodore Roosevelt** (Harvard class of 1880) who took Shaler’s views on the inferior races to heart in his migration and imperialist policies
- Senator **Henry Cabot Lodge** (class of 1871) was another protégé of Shaler, and he urged congress to institute a literacy test as part of the process of qualifying for immigration in 1896
  - To restrict undesirable Southern and Eastern European migrants and favor Western and Northern (Nordic) Europeans
  - The bill was passed but was vetoed by President Cleveland
  - Similar literacy test passed in 1913 and 1915, vetoed by President Taft
  - Finally the bill passed in 1917 and support in congress was strong enough to override the veto of President Wilson

## Immigration Restriction League

(1894)

- Founded by three wealthy graduates of the Harvard class of 1889
- Influenced by students of Louis Agassiz
  - John Fiske (science editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and responsible for its strong racist bent) was first president of the IRL
  - The students had been most influenced in their coursework by Nathaniel Shaler who was named a vice president of the IRL

## Plessy v. Ferguson

(1896)

- Decision established the constitutionality of segregation and created a climate for Jim Crow legislation and disfranchisement
  - Established the “separate but equal” based on scientific and public writings about race including those of Brinton and Shaler
- Found that the object of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment was to enforce equality between the races before the law—majority opinion:
 

“But in the nature of things [the amendment could not have intended to] abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political equality”

## Lynching by State, 1882-1962

Top 6 States

State	Whites	Blacks	Total
Mississippi	40	538	578
Georgia	39	491	530
Texas	141	352	493
Louisiana	56	335	391
Alabama	48	299	347
Florida	24	257	282

## Deniker's 13 Races of Europe

(1899)

- In addition to arguing for 13 racial divisions of Europe's population, he defined ethnic groups
 

“Ethnic groups are formed by virtue of commonness of language, religion, social institutions, etc., which have the power of uniting human beings of one or several species, races, or varieties and are by no means zoological species.”



### William Ripley (1899)

"The Races of Europe"

Ripley identified **THREE** European races:

- **Teutonic**
- **Alpine**
- **Mediterranean**

## Franz Boas

(1858 - 1942)



- German Physicist
- Founding father of American anthropology
  - Focus on environmental / historical influences
- Worked on ethnographic exhibits at the Chicago World's fair of 1893
- Challenged scientific racism in museum collections
  - Tried to reverse depiction of savagery, barbarism, civilization in exhibits

## Boas and Immigration

- President Theodore Roosevelt established the U.S. Immigration Commission in 1907
  - 3 senators, 3 house members, 3 scientists
  - Boas was one of the scientists named to committee
- Boas questioned the underlying premise of the commission that there was some qualitative difference in the “new” migrants when compared to earlier migrants from England, Holland, Germany
  - Attempted to counter Eugenics material with the careful statistical study of measurements of migrants

## Boas’s migrant studies

- Undertook studies of children of Eastern European migrants to the U.S.
- Summary publication in 1912
  - Differences between foreign- and American-born children documented *plasticity* in growth and development including traits that had long been viewed as quintessential unchanging **components of race like skull measurements**
- He also found that more advanced growth was associated with **higher socioeconomic status**

## Boas’s migrant studies

- Interpreted changes as the ability of the environment to mold anatomy through growth process
- Two recent re-analyses of his measurements disagree about the statistical significance of differences in skull shape
  - Both reaffirm that Boas was essentially correct in asserting the importance of plasticity

## Boas and Race

- One of the first anthropologists to firmly disentangle culture and biology
- 1911 *The Mind of Primitive Man*
  - There is no such thing as racial purity
  - The differences *between* “races” are small compared to the differences *within* them
  - There is no evidence that an individual of any race is incapable of participating in any culture
  - Groups are “primitive” by virtue of their *life circumstances*, not because of hereditary “racial” factors

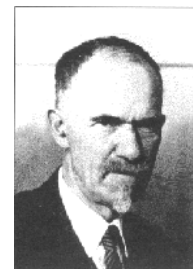
## The Legacy of Franz Boas

- Boas continued to fight for racial equality throughout his career
  - Published scientific findings disputing eugenic racism in popular magazines
  - Supported the NAACP and its leaders during its early years
  - Trained many students at Columbia who continued to push for a scientific separation between race and culture
  - Fought with Madison Grant for control of anthropology in the U.S.

## Charles Davenport

(1866-1944)

- 1911 *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*
- Leading American exponent of eugenics—“America’s Galton”
- Harvard-trained Zoologist
- Went from U Chicago to Station for Experimental Evolution at Cold Spring Harbor in 1904
  - Well funded by Carnegie Institution and railroad widow, Harriman
- Founded the Eugenics Record Office as a clearinghouse for human genetics



## Davenport's Goals

- The general program of the eugenicist is clear-- it is to improve the race by inducing young people to make a more reasonable selection of marriage mates; **to fall in love intelligently**. It also includes the control by the state of the propagation of the mentally incompetent. It does not imply the destruction of the unfit either before or after birth.

## Henry Goddard

- Concept of feeble-mindedness creeps into Eugenics
- The Kallikak Family (1912)
  - The father, a strong, healthy, broad-shouldered man, was sitting helplessly in a corner. The mother, a pretty woman still, with remnants of ragged garments drawn about her, sat in a chair, the picture of despondency. Three children, scantily clad and with shoes that would barely hold together, stood about with drooping jaws and the unmistakable look of the feeble-minded.
  - They were feeble-minded, and no amount of education or good environment can change a feeble-minded individual into a normal one, any more than it can change a red-haired stock into a black-haired stock.... Clearly it was not environment that has made that good family. They made their environment; and their own good blood, with the good blood in the families into which they married, told.

## Davenport on the Kallikaks

- It appears probable, from extensive pedigrees that have been analyzed, that **feeble-mindedness of the middle and higher grades is inherited as a simple recessive**, or approximately so
- It follows that two parents who are feeble-minded shall have only feeble-minded children and this is what is empirically found
- Published in *Science*--key basis for later sterilization laws

## Davenport on Race

- **Race Crossing in Jamaica** (1929)
- Studied Black, White, and Mixed race adults and children in Jamaica
- Purpose was to demonstrate that race crossing was dangerous because it produced disharmonies
- His conclusions were that race crossing should be avoided
  - Although many of his findings refuted this conclusion
  - He found “Brown” children to do better on some psychological tests than either White or Black

## More about race

- He wanted to comment on race relations in America—but he never studied them
- He hypothesized that “the large amount of psychosis that we have in this country may be a consequence of the co-mingling of various European and the African races”

## Immigration Restriction

- The issue of immigration of increasing numbers of Eastern and Southern Europeans (Alpines and Mediterraneans in Ripley's scheme) continued to be a problem in the post-WW I world
- The Immigration Restriction League ramped up its work

## Madison Grant

(1865 – 1937)

- Lawyer, amateur anthropologist, eugenicist, conservationist
- Vice President of the Immigration Restriction League



## The Passing of the Great Race

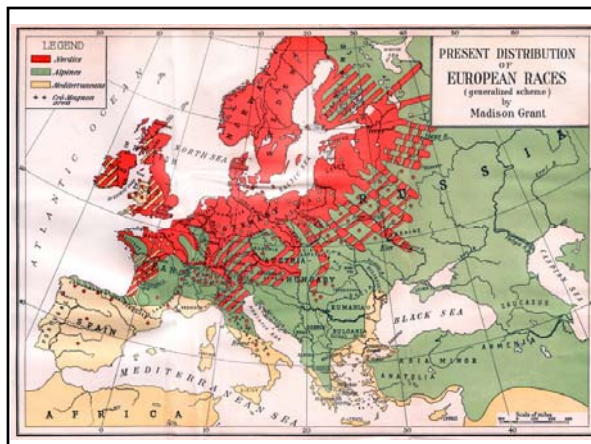
“**A rigid system of selection through the elimination of those who are weak or unfit-in other words, social failures-would solve the whole question in one hundred years**, as well as enable us to get rid of the undesirables who crowd our jails, hospitals, and insane asylums... **This ... can be applied to an ever widening circle of social discards**, beginning always with the criminal, the diseased, and the insane, and extending gradually to types which may be called weaklings rather than defectives, **and perhaps ultimately to worthless race types.**”

## Madison Grant

- The Passing of the Great Race (1916)
  - One of the most influential works of scientific racism and eugenics to come out of the U.S.
  - Eugenics aimed primarily at the European segment of America
    - Argued for migration restriction and mandatory sterilization of the "socially worthless" like poor white trash typified by the Southern White and Europeans from south and eastern Europe

## Madison Grant

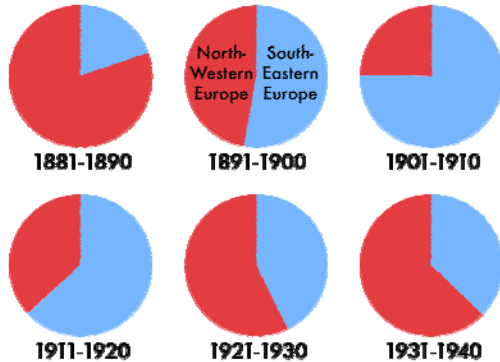
- Provided statistics for the Immigration Act of 1924 to set quotas on immigrants from certain European countries
  - After passing the statute, Grant was irked that any non-Nordics were allowed to immigrate
- Assisted in the passing and prosecution of several anti-miscegenation laws
  - E.g., Racial Integrity Act of 1924 in Virginia, where he sought to codify his particular version of the "one-drop rule" into law



## U.S. Immigration Act of 1924

- Limited the number of immigrants who could be admitted from any country to 2% of the number of people from that country who were already living in the United States in 1890
  - Excluded immigration of Asians
  - Aimed at restricting the Southern and Eastern Europeans who were immigrating in large numbers starting in the 1890s, as well as prohibiting the immigration of East Asians and Asian Indians

Relative proportions of immigrants from Northwestern Europe (red) and Southeastern Europe (blue) in the decades before and after the immigration restriction legislation



## Harry Laughlin

(1880 – 1943)

- Assistant Director of the Eugenics Record Office, from its start in 1910
- Important testimony to congress on immigration restriction, 1922
- One of the strongest advocates of Eugenic sterilization



## Laughlin on Sterilization

- Wrote *Eugenical Sterilization in the U.S.* in 1922
  - Comprehensive study arguing for sterilization and enforcement of existing laws (only CA performed)
- Proposed model sterilization law for the eugenical sterilization of “socially inadequate persons”
  - A **socially inadequate person** is one who by his or her own effort, regardless of etiology or prognosis, fails chronically in comparison with normal persons, to maintain himself or herself as a useful member of the organized social life of the state

## Eugenical Sterilization

The **socially inadequate classes**, regardless of etiology or prognosis, are the following: (1) Feeble-minded; (2) Insane, (including the psychopathic); (3) Criminalistic (including the delinquent and wayward); (4) Epileptic; (5) Inebriate (including drug habitues); (6) Diseased (including the tuberculous, the syphilitic, the leprous, and others with chronic infections and legally segregable diseases); (7) Blind (including those with seriously impaired vision); (8) Deaf (including those with seriously impaired hearing); (9) Deformed (including the crippled); and (10) Dependent (including orphans, ne'er-do-wells, the homeless, tramps and paupers)

## Nazi Sterilization Policy

- American eugenicists were proud of their impact on the 1933 legislation in Nazi Germany
- The German Law was influenced by the “success” of the California law and based on the Model Eugenic Sterilization Law by Harry Laughlin
  - The German law was slightly more moderate
    - It demanded sterilization in cases of mental retardation, schizophrenia, manic-depressive insanity, inherited epilepsy, Huntington's chorea, hereditary blindness, deafness, and malformation
  - The *Eugenical News* (published by the ERO) commented that “to one versed in the history of eugenic sterilization in America, the text of the German statute reads almost like the American model sterilization law”

## Involuntary Sterilizations by State, 1907-1983

California	20,208
Virginia	7,450
North Carolina	6,297
Michigan	3,786
Georgia	3,284
Kansas	3,032
Indiana	2,424
Minnesota	2,350
Oregon	2,341
Iowa	1,910
Other states	Wisconsin, North Dakota, Delaware, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Oklahoma, Maine, South Carolina, Montana, Vermont, Alabama, West Virginia, New York, Idaho, Arizona
<b>Total, all states</b>	<b>63,966</b>



## Buck v. Bell

1927

- U.S. Supreme Court ruled that compulsory sterilization of the “unfit” was constitutional
- Carrie Buck was committed to a facility for the “feebleminded”
  - Court ruled that she, her mother, and her daughter were feebleminded and promiscuous and should be sterilized
- Oliver Wendell Holmes concluded “three generations of imbeciles is enough!”

## Earnest Albert Hooton

1887 - 1954

- Trained in classics:
  - BA at Lawrence College in 1907
  - PhD at Wisconsin in 1911
- Studied anthropology as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford
  - Diploma in 1912
  - B.Litt. In 1913
- Hired by Harvard to resurrect Physical Anthropology Program



## E.A. Hooton

- Produced many students that went on to foster academic physical anthropology and shape the race discourse:
  - Shapiro, Washburn, Howells, Brues, Coon, Birdsell, Garn, Hunt, Lasker, Baker (my mentor)
- Hooton’s work was accessible to the lay public in books like *Up from the Ape* and *Apes, Man and Morons*
- Tried to establish physical types or races mathematically by measuring thousands of individuals
  - Beyond cranial anatomy focus of nineteenth-century anthropologists, Hooton added in the rest of the body, describing the “constitution” of an individual

## Hooton on Race

(1926)

- Typological Concept of Race
- A race is a great division of mankind, the members of which, though individually varying, are characterized as a group by a certain combination of morphological and metrical features, principally non-adaptive, which have been derived from their common descent
- **Which features? Never specified**

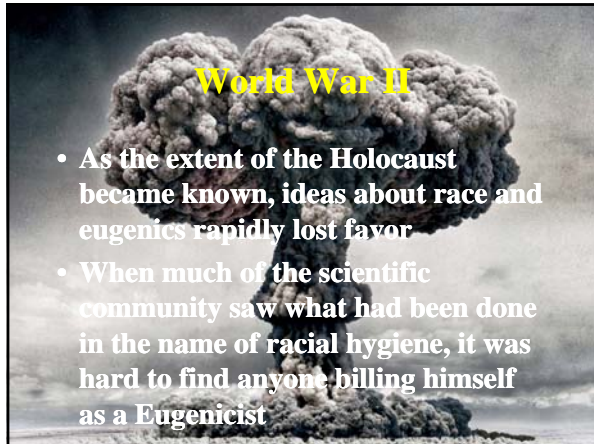
## Hooton on ‘pure race’

*No one knows what a 'pure race' is, although anthropologists are apparently the only human beings who know that they do not know.*

Earnest Hooton (1937) in *Apes, Men and Morons*

## Hooton and Eugenics

- Preached an anti-racist eugenics
  - There is no anthropological ground whatsoever for selecting any so-called racial group, or any ethnic or national group, or any linguistic or religious group for preferment or for condemnation.** Our real purpose should be to segregate and to eliminate the unfit, worthless, degenerate and antisocial portion of each racial and ethnic strain in our population ... by the sterilization of its insane, diseased, and criminalistic elements. The candidates for such biological extinction would not be selected on the basis of Aryan or Semitic descent, blond hair or black skin, but solely on the score of their individual physical, mental and moral bankruptcy.



### Where did Eugenics go?

- Mary Harriman, the Rockefeller family, and the Carnegie Institution funded the Eugenic Records Office until 1939
- 1944 ERO closed
  - Records transferred to the Charles Fremont Dight Institute for the Promotion of Human Genetics at the University of Minnesota (still a hotbed of Eugenic genetics)
  - When Dight Institute closed in 1991, genealogical material was filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah and given to the Center for Human Genetics at the University of Utah