EUGENICS AND ETHICS
Philosophy 514

In this new course we will study and evaluate two eugenic programs carried out during the twentieth century. The first is the eugenic sterilization program implemented in numerous states of the United States, especially during the years between 1905 and 1940. The second is the program of "racial hygiene" undertaken by the National Socialists in Germany, especially between 1933 and 1945. We will read primary sources and secondary analyses pertinent to both of these programs. Second, we will read and critically analyze selected works of two eugenists, Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911), the founder of modern eugenics, and H.J. Muller (1890-1967), a distinguished classical geneticist and a proponent of human genetic improvement through voluntary germinal choice. Finally, we will explore the question whether eugenic ideas or programs are becoming more prevalent in U.S. scientific and social thought in the 1990s.

OVERVIEW OF CLASS SESSIONS

Class 1 (January 18): Introduction to the Course

Class 2 (January 25): Francis Galton and the Origins of Eugenics

Class 3 (February 1): Eugenics in Great Britain and the United States I

Class 4 (February 8): Eugenics in Great Britain and the United States II

Class 5 (February 15): The Legacy of Hermann J. Muller

Class 6 (February 22): Involuntary Sterilization in the United States I

Class 7 (March 1): Involuntary Sterilization in the United States II

Spring Break

Class 8 (March 15): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: U.S. Perspectives I

Class 9 (March 22): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: U.S. Perspectives II
Class 10 (March 29): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: German Perspectives I

Class 11 (April 5): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: German Perspectives II

Class 12 (April 12): Site Visit to the U.S. Holocaust Museum

Class 13 (April 19): Connections between the U.S. and German Eugenics Movements

Class 14 (April 26): Eugenics and the 1990s I

Class 15 (May 3): Eugenics and the 1990s II

TEXTBOOKS


READINGS

Class 1 (January 18): Introduction to the Course

Class 2 (January 25): Francis Galton and the Origins of Eugenics


Kevles, *In the Name*, Chap. I.

Class 3 (February 1): Eugenics in Great Britain and the United States I

Kevles, *In the Name*, Chaps. II-XII.

Class 4 (February 8): Eugenics in Great Britain and the United States II

Kevles, *In the Name*, Chaps. XIII-XIX.

Class 5 (February 15): The Legacy of Hermann J. Muller


Class 6 (February 22): Involuntary Sterilization in the United States I


Class 7 (March 1): Involuntary Sterilization in the United States II


Spring Break

Class 8 (March 15): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: U.S. Perspectives I


Class 9 (March 22): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: U.S. Perspectives III

   Proctor, Racial Hygiene, pp. 177-312.


Class 10 (March 29): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: German Perspectives I


Class 11 (April 5): Racial Hygiene under German National Socialism: German Perspectives II

   Aly, et al., Cleansing the Fatherland, pp. 156-295.

Class 12 (April 12): Site Visit to the U.S. Holocaust Museum

   No new readings; please work on term paper.

Class 13 (April 19): Connections between the U.S. and German Eugenics Movements


Class 14 (April 26): Eugenics and the 1990s I


   One review of Herrnstein and Murray's book.

Class 15 (May 3): Eugenics and the 1990s II

   Troy Duster, Backdoor to Eugenics (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1990), pp. 112-129.

   Robert N. Proctor, "Genomics and Eugenics: How Fair Is the Comparison?" in George J.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The first and most important requirement is to complete all of the readings in advance of each class session and to be prepared to discuss them in class.

All students will also be asked to take part in the site visit to the United States Holocaust Museum on April 12th.

There will be two papers in the course, a short paper and a final term paper. The short paper may be either a critical review of a book on eugenics or a philosophical paper criticizing an argument advanced by a commentator on eugenics or advancing a constructive argument of your own. The short paper is due on Wednesday, March 15th, the first class period after spring break. The short paper should be between five and ten double-spaced pages long. The final term paper should be philosophical in character, either analyzing the work of one of our authors or another commentator on eugenics or advancing and arguing for a position of your own. The final paper should be between fifteen and twenty-five pages long and is due on Friday, May 12th.

If extraordinary circumstances necessitate the late submission of a paper, please notify the instructor before the deadline date, so that an alternative deadline can be negotiated.

The components of the course grade will be as follows:

- Completion of readings and participation in class discussion: 40%
- Short paper or book review: 20%
- Final term paper: 40%.