EXTD 203: Ethical and Social Issues in Genetics
Fall 1996, Tuesday: 7:00-9:20 p.m.
Science Center, Rm. 274

Adrienne Asch (email: aasch)
Office Hours: Thurs. 10a.m.-1p.m. & by appointment
Teaching Office: Founders 217a, x3248
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COURSE READINGS:

Readings for this course are drawn from two sources: articles placed on Reserve (R); and the following books available at the bookstore (B):


    Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein.


Students are responsible for all of the readings listed for the week, except for those under the heading "student reports." I will explain the use of the "Student Report" items in plenty of time for each student to select readings from those listed for papers and class discussions that use these selections. See Course Requirements below.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Attendance and active participation in class discussions, requiring that students be ready to discuss the readings the day they are listed on the syllabus. Given the discussion-format of the class, your involvement is crucial for everyone's learning. I will take attendance and will expect students to be absent rarely, if at all. Attendance, participation, and a group oral presentation will be 20 percent of the final grade.

2. Written assignment due October 11th and explained during first weeks of class (15 percent).

3. Written assignment due November 15th, that will include readings listed in "Student Reports" sections of syllabus (30 percent).
4. Analysis of one controversial question in a 10-page paper due last day of exam period. Paper topics must be approved by November 26th. Examples of appropriate topics will be provided, but students may propose others (35 percent).

OFFICE HOURS:

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Thursdays and by appointment. I can arrange other times for people who cannot use these hours, or in situations where I must cancel office hours. I usually am not available Mondays or Tuesdays and cannot meet with people before class time on Tuesday evening.

CLASS TOPICS AND READINGS

Unit I: General Introduction to Issues in Genetics

September 10: Introduction and Overview.

  Note: I want to set up fifteen-minute meetings with each of you during the first three weeks of the term, so please make sure to arrange a time to visit with me.

September 17: Discussion of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein.

  Guest Lecture: Jim Noggle, English Department. This class meeting will take place at my home, 666 Washington Street, 8 Horton House, with refreshments provided.

  Shelley, M. Frankenstein. (B)


September 24: Basic Genetics.

  Guest Lecture: Emily Buchholtz, Biological Sciences Department.

October 1: Thinking About Ethical and Social Issues in Genetics; analyzing moral problems raised by genetic research; understanding the problems raised by doing any type of scientific research.


October 8: History of Eugenics.

"Victims of the Past," 30-minute film made by Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda in 1937. This film portrays the Nazi version of "genetic counseling."


The Nuremberg Code, 2.
Annas and Grodin, "Introduction," 3-11.
**October 11: Assignment 1 due.**


**Unit II: Selecting Children's Characteristics**


Guest Lecture: Faith Ferguson, Sociology Department.


October 29: Prenatal Diagnosis and Parenthood: Who uses the technology? Why? What is the process?
"Human Development from Fertilization to Birth," C. Grobstein, in "Fetus" section of EOB, 847-851. (R)

"Preimplantation Embryo Diagnosis," Alan H. Handyside, 985-986; "Carrier Screening," A. Cao, 993-995. Both selections are in the "Genetic Testing and Screening" section of EOB. (R)

"Practice of Medical Genetics," K. Berg, in the "Medical Genetics" section of EOB, 1646-1652. (R)


"Practice of Genetic Counseling," B. Bieseker, in "Genetic Counseling" section of EOB, 923-927. (R)


Panzarino, C. (1990, October-November). "What is Choice, and Who is Choosing?" Roll Call, 6-7. (R)


Berube, M. (December 1994). "Life as We Know It: A Father, a Son, and Genetic Destiny." Harper's Magazine, 41-51. (R)


Student Reports:

Each student should select one of the 3 options below:

I. one other chapter from Brightman, A. (Ed.) Ordinary Moments (R)

II. one selection from Part One of Turnbull and Turnbull, Parents Speak Out (R)


November 5: Arguments for and Against Prenatal Diagnosis.
Critiques of the practice of prenatal diagnosis and of genetic counseling, and critiques of the critiques.


Press, 69-95. (Stop once you get to the section, "Time Limits on Abortion.") (R)


Student Reports:


November 12: Knowing Your Own Genetic Future?

"Genetic Predisposition and the Human Genome Project: Case Illustrations of Clinical Problems": PART I by Ray White; PART II by C. Thomas Caskey, in Annas and Elias, 173-185. (B)

Macklin, R. "Privacy and Control of Genetic Information," in Annas and Elias, 157-172. (B)


November 15: Assignment 2 due.

November 19: Case Study in Behavioral Genetics: Genetics and Violence.

Science, Vol. 264, June 17, 1994. (R)


November 26: Genetics and Self-understanding.

Two groups will present prepared presentations on facets of this material as part of the class participation requirement; the groups will be selected and arranged during the semester and will have the chance to meet with me as part of the preparation.

"Genetics and Human Self-Understanding," A. Flew, in EOB, 961-967. (R)


From Weir's *Genes and Human Self Knowledge* (B):


**December 2: Ethics of Genetic Research.**

Groups of students will prepare presentations on this material (see note for November 26th).


Weir, R. (1994.) "Why Fund ELSI Projects?" in Weir, 189-194. (B)
