

EN3N3-15 Race Objects

26/27

Department

English and Comparative Literary Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Alirio Karina

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module introduces students to the conceptual history of race, attending to critical contributions in the philosophical and scientific literatures that have produced the race concepts shaping the past and today's world, and to the sites of the body on which race concepts have to congeal and be adjudicated. The first section of the module examines theories of racial origin and categorization from the classical period through the 19th century, exploring how these theories come to interact with one another and take newly consequential forms with the Age of Discovery and the genocidal, colonial and slaving projects that emerge from it. The second examines particular sites on the body, how they come to be associated with particular subcomponents of racial ideology, and how this association creates contradictions and limits that trigger, in various different historical contexts, related kinds of politics of race management.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

To introduce students to the conceptual history of race, through the philosophical and scientific theories that sought to define it. To explore the development of these theories and concepts as they are applied across different contexts and to different subjects. To develop an understanding of how these concepts are embodied in different periods, what anxieties they reflect, and how

these anxieties relate to political efforts to affirm and codify race.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Part 1: Taxa

Week 1: Introduction

Linnaeus. 1735. *Homo in Systema Naturae*

Aristotle, Book 1 of *Politics*

Week 2: Places and Natures

Hippocrates, *On Airs, Waters, and Places*

Ptolemy, excerpt from *Geography*

Galen, *De Temperamentis*

Week 3: Climate

Bodin, J. excerpts from 1566 *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* and 1576 *Les Six livres de la République*

Hegel, G.W.F. 1837. "The Nature of a State" in *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*

Week 4: Civilization

Pope Nicholas V. 1452. *Dum Diversas*

Gobineau, A. 1853. *The Inequality of Human Races*.

Week 5: Fate

Bible, Genesis 9 (KJV)

Seligman, C. G. 1939. excerpts from *The Races of Africa*. London, Thornton Butterworth

Ibn Khaldun, 1377, excerpt from *The Muqaddimah*

Goldenberg, D. M. 1997. "The Curse of Ham: a Case of Rabbinic Racism?" in Jack Salzman and Cornel West, eds, *Struggles in the Promised Land*. Oxford University Press. pp 21-51

Part 2: Object Problems

Week 7: Skulls and Intelligence

Combe, G. 1843. excerpts from *A System of Phrenology*.

Morton, S.G. excerpts from 1839 *Crania Americana*, 1844 *Crania Aegyptiaca*

Tiedemann, F. 1836. *On the Brain of the Negro, Compared with That of the European and the Orang-Outang*. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* (126): 497-527

Poskett, J. 2019. *Introduction to Materials of the Mind: Phrenology, Race, and the Global History of Science, 1815-1920*. University of Chicago Press.

Conklin, A. 2013. "Skulls on Display", in *In the Museum of Man: Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850–1950*. Cornell University Press

Week 8: Bodies, Strength and Sexuality

Wilson, T., 1890. *Anthropology at the Paris Exposition in 1889*. Report of the United States National Museum for the year ending June 30, 1890.

Beddoe, J. 1861. *On the Physical Characteristics of the Jews*. *Transactions of the Ethnological*

Society of London 1:222-237

Kopernicki, I. 1871. Anatomico-Anthropological Observations upon the Body of a Negro. *The Journal of Anthropology* 1(3): 245-258

Hrdlicka, A. 1898. Physical Differences between White and Colored Children. *American Anthropologist* 11(11): 347-350

Qureshi, S. 2004. Displaying Sara Baartman, the 'Hottentot Venus'. *History of Science*, 42(2):233-257.

Briggs. 2000. The race of hysteria: "Overcivilization" and the "savage" woman in late nineteenth-century obstetrics and gynecology. *American Quarterly*, 52(2):246-273.

Marriott, D. 1996. Bordering on: The black penis. *Textual Practice* 10(1):9-28

Week 9: Color, Evil and Sickness

Bible, Leviticus 13 (KJV)

Rush, B. 1799. Observations Intended to Favour a Supposition That the Black Color (As It Is Called) of the Negroes Is Derived from the Leprosy. *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 4: 289-297

Schamberg, J. F. 1899. The Nature of the Leprosy of the Bible: from a Medical and Biblical Point of View. *The Biblical World* 13(3): 162-169

Pastoreau, M. 2009. "In the Devil's Color", in *Black: The History of a Color*. Princeton University Press

Mitchel, D. & S. Snyder. 2003. The Eugenic Atlantic: race, disability, and the making of an international Eugenic science, 1800–1945. *Disability and Society* 18(7): 843-64

Bachrach, S. 2004. In the Name of Public Health — Nazi Racial Hygiene. *New England Journal of Medicine* 351(5): 417-420

Week 10: Appearance, Purity and Pollution

Royal Anthropological Institute, 1864. Miscegenation*. *The Anthropological Review* 2(5): 116-121

Kristeva, J. 1982. "Approaching Abjection" in *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. Columbia University Press

Sexton, J. 2003. The Consequences of Race Mixture. *Social Identities* 9(2): 241-275.

Morgan, J. L. 2018. Partus sequitur ventrem: Law, Race, and Reproduction in Colonial Slavery. *Small Axe* 22 (1): 1–17

Edwards, J. 1999. "The Beginnings of a Scientific Theory of Race? Spain, 1450–1600" in Stillman Y. K. and N. A. Stillman, eds, *From Iberia to Diaspora*. Leiden: Brill

Burk, R. L. 2017. "Purity and Impurity of Blood in Early Modern Iberia", in Muñoz-Basols, J., L. Lonsdale & M. Delgado (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Iberian Studies*. Routledge.

Villella, P. B. 2011. "Pure and Noble Indians, Untainted by Inferior Idolatrous Races": Native Elites and the Discourse of Blood Purity in Late Colonial Mexico. *Hispanic American Historical Review* 91 (4): 633–663

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand and demonstrate coherent and detailed subject knowledge and professional competencies in the conceptual history of 'race', with a focus on from the classical period through to developments in the 19th century.

- Deploy accurately standard techniques of literary analysis and enquiry within the discipline. In particular, the student should be able to trace the histories and implications of different primary texts in the history of the race concept and their impact.
- Demonstrate a conceptual understanding of, and develop sustained arguments regarding how racial ideas have developed in conversation with political and historical pressures, and in relationship to pre-existing canons of race thinking.
- Appreciate the uncertainty, ambiguity and limitations of knowledge in the discipline: the student should be able to both position themselves and intervene critically in the field.
- Make appropriate use of scholarly reviews and primary sources, including philosophical and historical sources, from across the module.
- Apply their knowledge and understanding in order to initiate and carry out an extended written project.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Subject specific skills

This module is designed to offer students a foundation to the histories of ‘race’ as a concept and the various objects, materials and ideas around which the concept has been organized. It will introduce students to critical and influential developments in racist thinking, with a focus from the classical period through to the 19th century. The module will enable students to develop an understanding of how racial ideas have developed in conversation with political and historical pressures, and in relationship to pre-existing canons of race thinking.

Transferable skills

Students will learn to make appropriate use of scholarly reviews and primary sources, including scientific and philosophical texts from the multiple locations and periods covered on the course. They will further enhance techniques of research. They will be able to apply their knowledge and understanding in order to initiate and carry out an extended written project.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (12%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Reading and preparing for class and writing assignments.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Analytic Portfolio	30%		Yes (extension)
Portfolio of five weekly 400 word analytic responses to the primary texts, on weeks of the student's choosing. Feedback is given weekly; the revised portfolio is marked at the end of the term (30%)			

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Essay	70%		Yes (extension)
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Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 3 of UCXA-QQ37 Undergraduate Classics and English
- Year 4 of UCXA-QQ38 Undergraduate Classics and English (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 3 of UENA-QQ00 Undergraduate English & Cultural Studies
- Year 3 of UENA-Q300 Undergraduate English Literature
- Year 3 of UENA-QP36 Undergraduate English Literature and Creative Writing
- Year 4 of UENA-QP37 Undergraduate English Literature and Creative Writing with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of UENA-Q301 Undergraduate English Literature with Intercalated Year
- Year 3 of UCXA-QQ39 Undergraduate English and Classical Civilisation
- Year 4 of UCXA-QQ3A Undergraduate English and Classical Civilisation (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 4 of UFRA-QR3A Undergraduate English and French
- Year 4 of ULNA-QR37 Undergraduate English and German
- Year 4 of UHPA-QR34 Undergraduate English and Hispanic Studies
- Year 3 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- UENA-VQ33 Undergraduate English and History (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of VQ33 English and History (with Intercalated year)
 - Year 4 of VQ33 English and History (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of UENA-VQ34 Undergraduate English and History (with a term in Venice)
- Year 4 of ULNA-QR38 Undergraduate English and Italian
- Year 3 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies
- Year 4 of UENA-QW35 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies with Intercalated Year
- Year 3 of UFIA-QW25 Undergraduate Film and Literature
- Year 4 of UFIA-QW26 Undergraduate Film and Literature (with Study Abroad)
- Year 3 of ULAA-M136 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year)
- UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts
 - Year 3 of LA99 Liberal Arts
 - Year 3 of LA92 Liberal Arts with Classics
 - Year 3 of LA73 Liberal Arts with Design Studies
 - Year 3 of LA83 Liberal Arts with Economics
 - Year 3 of LA82 Liberal Arts with Education
 - Year 3 of LA95 Liberal Arts with English
 - Year 3 of LA81 Liberal Arts with Film and Television Studies
 - Year 3 of LA80 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 3 of LA93 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development
 - Year 3 of LA97 Liberal Arts with History
 - Year 3 of LA71 Liberal Arts with Law
 - Year 3 of LA91 Liberal Arts with Life Sciences
 - Year 3 of LA75 Liberal Arts with Modern Languages and Cultures
 - Year 3 of LA96 Liberal Arts with Philosophy
 - Year 3 of LA94 Liberal Arts with Theatre and Performance Studies
- UVCA-LA98 Undergraduate Liberal Arts with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of LA85 Liberal Arts with Classics with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of LA72 Liberal Arts with Design Studies with Intercalated Year
 - Year 4 of LA79 Liberal Arts with Economics with Intercalated Year

- Year 4 of LA78 Liberal Arts with Education with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA88 Liberal Arts with English with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA77 Liberal Arts with Film and Television Studies with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA76 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA86 Liberal Arts with Global Sustainable Development with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA90 Liberal Arts with History with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA98 Liberal Arts with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA84 Liberal Arts with Life Sciences with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA74 Liberal Arts with Modern Languages and Cultures with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA89 Liberal Arts with Philosophy with Intercalated Year
- Year 4 of LA87 Liberal Arts with Theatre and Performance Studies with Intercalated Year
- Year 3 of UPHA-VQ72 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature
- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ73 Undergraduate Philosophy and Literature with Intercalated Year
- Year 3 of UPHA-VQ52 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics
- Year 4 of UPHA-VQ53 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics (with Work Placement)
- Available to all finalist students on non-English Literature degree programmes – subject to availability and must have A level English Literature or equivalent qualification.