

What was most interesting to you in reviewing these resources?

One of the most interesting aspects of our understanding of race is how early philosophers connected the concepts of race and humor theory. Linnaeus's proposal states that the skin color of an individual comes from the type of phlegm they produce, such as yellow for people of Asian descent and black for African descent. Although proven factually incorrect, the basic concept of certain traits or features being an indicator of race would later be adapted by Buffon and more importantly, Immanuel Kant. Kant's work and philosophy created the baseline western idea of human rights; however, Kant himself was a racist who did not view Africans as human beings. With the proliferation of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, it is no wonder why the oppression of black people by western institutions was so prominent and is still ongoing today.

What did you learn from these resources about the evolution of skin color?

One parallel I immediately noticed upon reading is that the relationship between skin color and race is the same as the relationship between sex and gender. The concepts of race and gender are both man-made, with society creating boundaries of what is and what isn't. For example, I am white. Of course, my skin is white, but aspects such as the clothes I wear, the interests I partake in, and the socioeconomic condition of my being are also factored into my whiteness. Anyone can wear clothes, but the concept of race attaches certain ascriptions to people of different skin colors, hence why brands such as LL Bean are seen as "White" clothes and FUBU as "Black" clothes. Inherently these labels are discriminating as is the concept of race itself. In the case of sex and gender, sex is the biological reproductive organ a living organism is assigned at birth; Male, Female, Intersex or aphyll. These are biological conditions of being. However, the concept of "man" and "woman" are constructs made by men. Just as I can wear FUBU, I can also wear a dress, yet western society connects both things to groups that I am not in; African Americans and women.

What do these resources tell you about the types of people that do science?

"Science" is an outdated term for a Eurocentric view of the world. In the context of the article, scientists of the past were xenophobic European men who believed themselves superior to those of other races simply by announcing that said races were not human. These men built the foundation for eugenics, and therefore I believe they should be remarked as nothing but footnotes in the doldrums of history. Why are men like Kant, a racist xenophobe propped up by western institutions as one of the greatest philosophers of all time while men such as W.E.B. DuBois are relegated to being mentioned one time a year and scantily at that? Racism. Plain and simple.

What new questions do you have after learning about Dr. Jablonski's research and how human skin color evolved?

What is the scientific community doing to rectify the harm caused by people such as Kant? I have an answer to that question: Nothing. Science is racist. The institutions which propagate it are racist and the only way to create equity within the scientific community is to abandon our current viewpoint and create a new one with all voices (races, genders, etc.) accounted for. To conduct proper science requires a holistic approach that our current framework simply does not have.