

# Socio-biological theory of race essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

What is race (according to this perspective)?

\* Racial classifications are based on physical differences \* These physical differences are seen to represent underlying genetic differences. \* Physical differences: skin color, eye shape, hair texture, body shape a) Race = physical/genetic differences

b) Race = character/behavioral differences

Assumptions: a) >>> causes >>> b)

\* Biological determination

Where did this perspective come from?

\* Must travel back in time, prior to the era of sociobiology

Roots:

16th Century

\* Rare

\* 1508

\* William Dunbar (Scottish Poet) > "The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis" \*

17th Century

\* Groups

\* Technical term > classification system (groups/a people/stock) \*

18th Century

\* Evaluation/Judgment

\* Race > groups "strange to the European eye"

\* Race > the "other" -> groups "other than the European" \*

## 19th Century

### a) Biology/Genetics

- \* Socio-biology enters the picture
- \* Thinking scientifically about race
- \* Biological determinism

### b) Hierarchy

- \* Natural Hierarchy of human races

### c) Race Scientists

- \* Ex#1. Retzius & Cephalic Index
- \* Measure of Civilization
- \* Long Heads = more civilized
- \* Round heads = less civilized
- \* Ex#2. Morton & Cranial Capacity
- \* Measure of Civilization
- \* Ex#3. Galton & Eugenics
- \* “ Science of improving the stock”

1) Goal to prove so-called superior race through selective breeding \* Breed people from “ genetically superior groups”

2) Discourage/prohibit breeding among genetically “ inferior groups” \* Ex#4.

Galton & IQ

### Critical Review/Limitations:

1. Race classification schemes questionable

2. " Races" more similar than different:

Ex#1.

" Blacks" and " Whites" have more genes in common, than genes thatdistinguish the two so-called " Races".

Ex#2.

More genetic/biological variability within the " White" race and within the" Black" race than between " Whites" and " Blacks"

3. " Racial" traits & behaviors Questionable

No contemporary, convincing scientific evidence

4. IQ test biased

\* Otherness = strangeness

\* Carolus Linnaeus

\* Broca

\* Racial determinist

Swedish

Botanist Father of

Zoologist Taxonomy

Physician

Racial GroupCharacteristics/Behaviors

Europeans= light, lively, inventive, muscular swift, clever America Indians=  
choleric [irritable], combative, persevering Asiatics= yellow, melancholic,  
inflexible, severe

Africans= phlegmatic, indulgent, crafty, negligent, slow

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It was assumed that:

- 1) The groupings were accurate/true
- 2) The behaviors/characters of those within particular group were accurate/true.
- 3) The evaluations/judgment were true