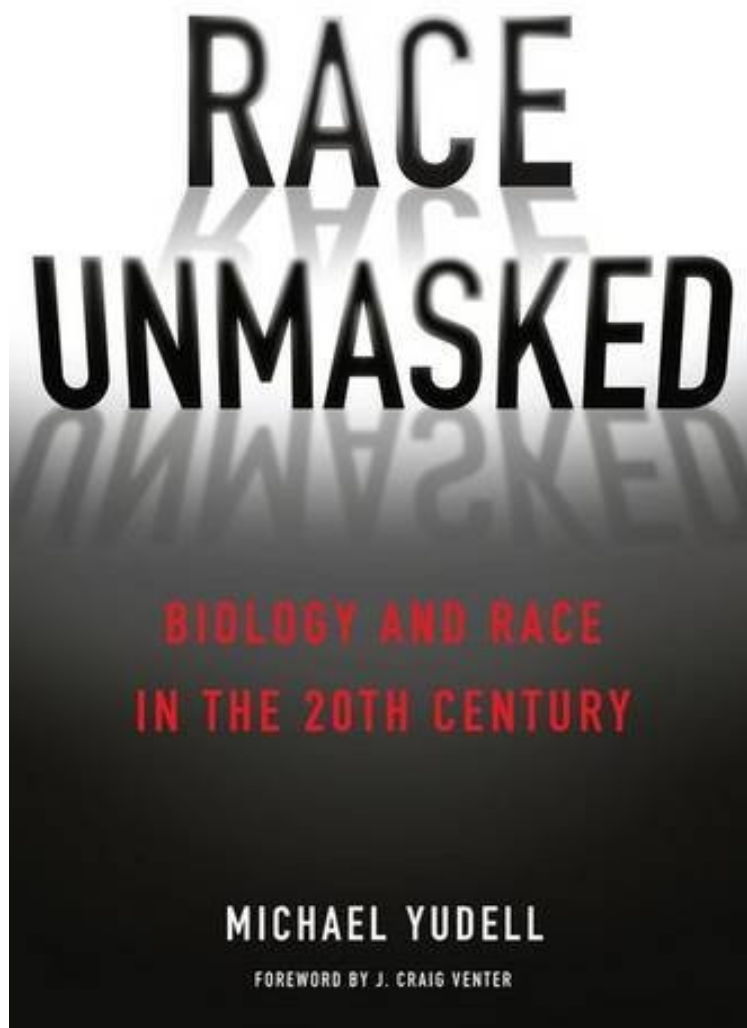


(Free) Race Unmasked: Biology and Race in the Twentieth Century

Race Unmasked: Biology and Race in the Twentieth Century

Michael Yudell

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Michael Yudell : Race Unmasked: Biology and Race in the Twentieth Century before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Race Unmasked: Biology and Race in the Twentieth Century:

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Exploring the previously unexplored, with the good and not so good scienceBy V. M. RicksThis book gets to the heart of the race matter in the US. One significant question that got

answered for me was HOW did a non-biological factor like race get perpetuated, or made to be real? Yudell actually unmask the term.. This is a must read for anyone who has ever wondered what race is and who is or is not a racists? He presents the science in a readable way. Thank you for a clear and cogent explanation.1 of 6 people found the following review helpful. It is time we faced the truth about race as ...By marion palmerIt is time we faced the truth about race as a social construct and not a scientific reality. We are all one and this book shows us that truth.13 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Narrow and pedantic, but packed with important informationBy Aaron C. BrownFirst off, this book is much narrower than the title suggests. The focus is almost entirely on the United States and the distinction between black and white. Racial and eugenic theories that were important in Europe are mentioned only in passing, and there is little discussion of the possibility of more than two races. The time period covered is roughly the Jim Crow era in the southern US, from the separate-but-equal laws of the 1890s to the repeal of most de jure segregation in the mid-60s, with only small attention paid to earlier and later events. From a scientific perspective, this corresponds to the period in which Darwinian evolution was unquestioned (excluding Communist countries) but before the mechanics of DNA were understood.This period and outlook make sense from the standpoint of US history and sociology, less sense from the standpoint of scientific and pseudoscientific study of race. US racism was not based on science. While there were some apologists for racism who claimed scientific support, they were fringe figures both politically and intellectually. Frankly, this book gives them far more attention than they deserve. Politically, racists were often anti-science and anti-intellectual. Moreover, while it is not impossible to argue for a biologically coherent theory of race, it cannot correspond to the binary distinction that was (and is) salient in US politics.This book provides a careful parsing of thinkers, mainly sociologists and population biologists, who struggled with the idea of race. This is a tedious job. Although most of these people were clear writers and there is extensive documentation of their debates, much of the controversy is hard for a modern reader to interpret because it relies on vague or mistaken ideas of heredity. Today we understand the distinction between the statistical distribution of characteristics within a fixed population and the genetic potential of an individual member of that population, but many of the sources discussed in this book are confused, or at least unclear, about it. Another example is the distinction between heredity and environment. While that is not clear-cut even today, our knowledge of genetics and embryology provide useful structure that the book's subjects lacked.Although this book is not light or fun reading, it is worth the trouble for the light it sheds on contemporary political debates. Black/white racism has been a virulent force in US society for 250 years, but it has adapted over the years. Race Unmasked explains how and why Reconstruction Era ideas of race evolved into concepts relevant today. It provides much of the answer for why racism didn't disappear with Brown v. Board of Education and the Civil Rights Act; or for that matter, with the Emancipation Proclamation. Careful reading of the key thinkers about race in the US in the first half of the 20th century, most of whom were wise, observant, realistic and smart (some, of course, were not), deepens our understanding of this formative era.I recommend this book for serious students of US sociology. I suspect it will be of more limited interest to scientists and historians, perhaps not worth the work of reading it.

Race, while drawn from the visual cues of human diversity, is an idea with a measurable past, an identifiable present, and an uncertain future. The concept of race has been at the center of both triumphs and tragedies in American history and has had a profound effect on the human experience. Race Unmasked revisits the origins of commonly held beliefs about the scientific nature of racial differences, examines the roots of the modern idea of race, and explains why race continues to generate controversy as a tool of classification even in our genomic age.Surveying the work of some of the twentieth century's most notable scientists, Race Unmasked reveals how genetics and related biological disciplines formed and preserved ideas of race and, at times, racism. A gripping history of science and scientists, Race Unmasked elucidates the limitations of a racial worldview and throws the contours of our current and evolving understanding of human diversity into sharp relief.

How can a concept that has been so debunked as a biological reality keep rising from the dead? Race Unmasked helps answer this by illustrating the troubling story of the sustained, strained, and stained history of the concept of race in scientific thought and practice. (David Rosner, Columbia University)We have needed a reassessment and an intelligent book on how racial categorizing grows within twentieth- and twenty-first-century science without using the simple labels of 'racism' or 'racist.' Race Unmasked is a terrific guide to the often invisible, intertwined terrain of science and politics around race. Re-reading the past with an eye toward nuance and clarity, Michael Yudell understands how 'race' comes to be unintentionally hidden yet still can be uncovered and critiqued. This book should find its way into classrooms across the curriculum. (Susan M. Reverby, Wellesley College, author of Examining Tuskegee: The Infamous Syphilis Study and Its Legacy)Race matters. All over the world we sort each other into groups by skin color, hair texture, and other physical characteristics, yet as Michael Yudell reminds us in this masterful, engaging, and important book, we barely have a clue about the biological basis for what we are doing. Race Unmasked is just the right remedy for those seeking to better understand the horrors and wrongs of racism. (Arthur L. Caplan, New York University Langone Medical Center)Michael Yudell has given us a fascinating and perceptive study of 'man's most

dangerous myth.' This insightful book on race should be read widely by anyone concerned with the multiple uses, misuses, tangled history, and persistent confusions over this vexed and potent concept. (Keith Wailoo, Princeton University) A challenging, well-researched work that clearly shows the interconnectedness of scientific and social thought. (Kirkus s) A detailed history of the concept of race and its evolution throughout the 20th century. (Library Journal (starred review)) This intensely deliberative book unearths many subtle and not-so-subtle examples of this complex historic relationship. (Publishers Weekly) Yudell, a historian of public health, argues that the complicated interaction of science and race visible in the eugenics movement is still playing out. (Bryan Bello Science News) Race Unmasked is worth reading.... Yudell shows clearly the interplay between science, society, and the changing definitions of race that were central to 20th-century history. (Choice) A timely, readable and engaging contribution to the growing literature on race and science. (Lundy Braun Social History of Medicine) Race Unmasked proves itself of enormous importance not only for those who wish to understand the evolution of race as a concept but also for those studying the place of science in American culture. (American Studies) An interesting, thorough, and informative review of the early history of eugenics.... well written and highly readable. (BioScience) [Race Unmasked] is an important, thought-provoking book and deserves to be widely read by people in all disciplines, but especially by the next generation of geneticists who might need to more fully understand the deep historical roots of their discipline. (John B. Jenkins The Quarterly of Biology) This engaging book is a must-read for nurses, physicians, scientists, academics, and all who continue to try to understand diversity in our society today. (Barbara Mann Wall Nursing History Review) This impressive book proceeds to challenge the standard narrative of race science's postwar decline and fall.... Yudell follows in the footsteps of historians such as Richard Hofstadter and Charles E. Rosenberg scholars who have uncovered the interdependence of biology and American social thought. (Warwick Anderson Journal of American History) A welcomed contribution to understanding the history of the present. (Terence Keel Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences) [Race Unmasked] is an important achievement worthy of a wide readership. (Gregory Michael Dorr Bulletin of the History of Medicine) A fine history of how biologists shaped thinking about race in America in the twentieth century and how social values and attitudes shaped the way biologists thought about race. (Michael Root Metascience) Yudell fills a critical gap in scholarly discourse on the history of eugenics and race. (W. Malcolm Byrnes The Journal of African American History) About the Author Michael Yudell is an associate professor at the Drexel University School of Public Health, where he directs the Program in Public Health Ethics and History. He is author of the blog The Public's Health for the Philadelphia Inquirer and his prior books include Welcome to the Genome: A User's Guide to the Genetic Past, Present, and Future and The Genomic Revolution: Unveiling the Unity of Life. He is currently writing a history of autism spectrum disorders.