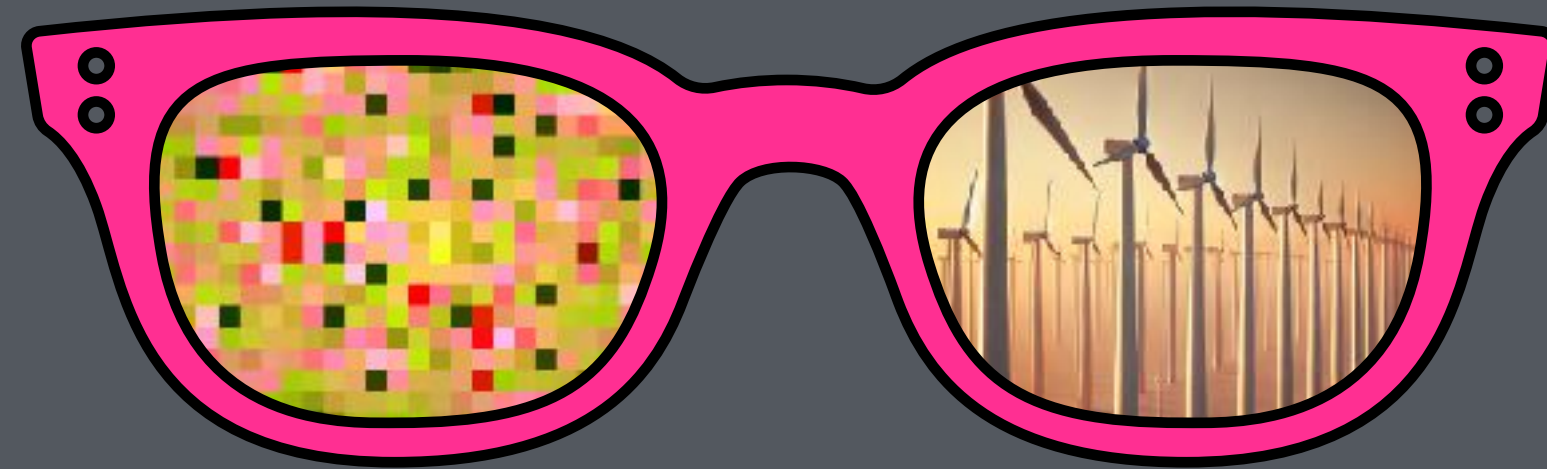


Data and the State

PUBPOL 2130 / INFO 3130



Kinds of People

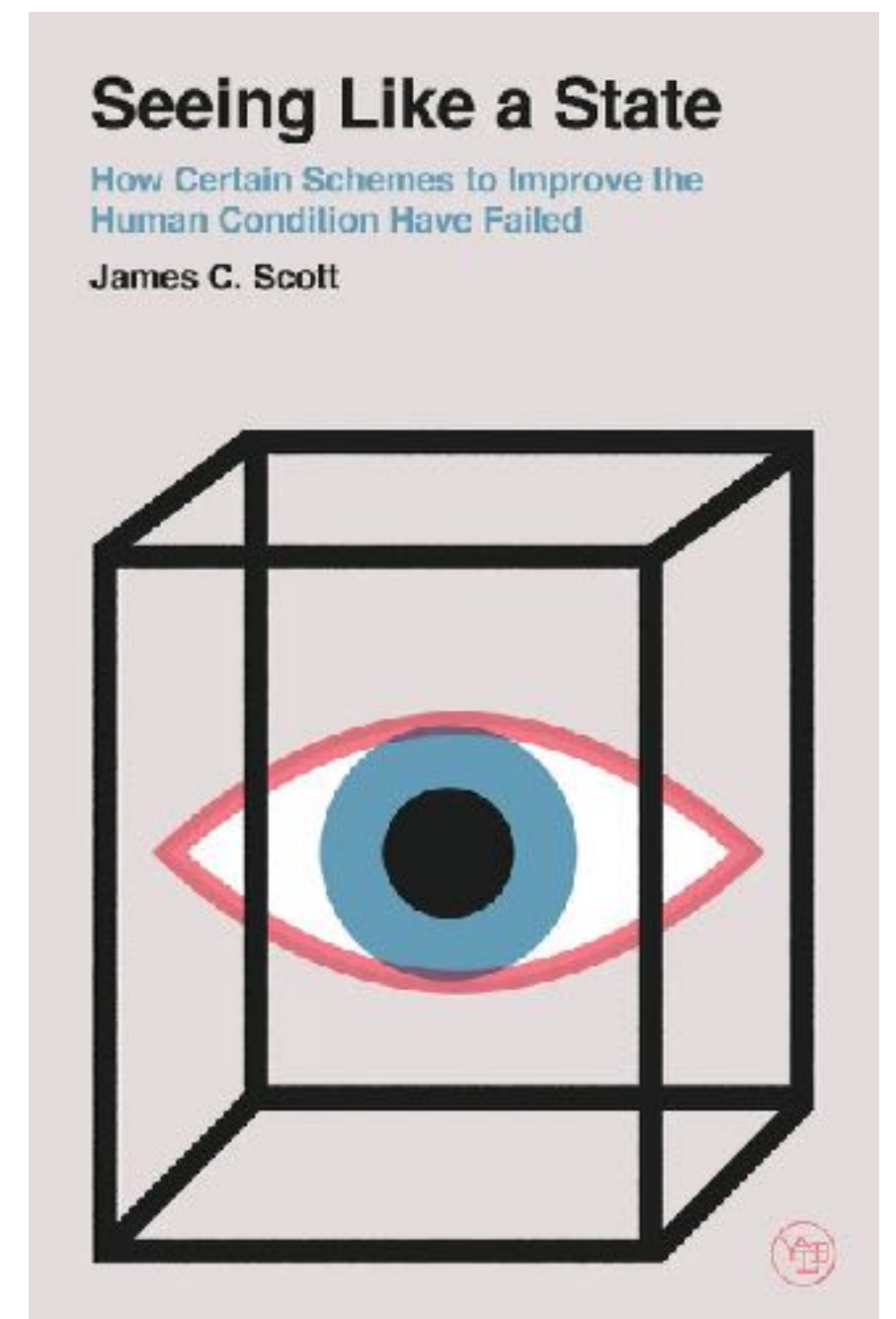
Lecture 3, Tuesday Jan 28

Announcements

- Waitlist is set up for PUBPOL
- Expect up to 10 hours of work outside class, something like 3 hours on reading and 4 hours on notebook and a few more organizing everything together
- HW1 due today, then starting with this week's notebook, you have **11 days** to turn in HW
 - *"UDL": an assignment of this complexity would ordinary have 4-day or 7-day turnaround*
- Exam days are set for **Thursday Feb 13** (right before Feb break) and **Tuesday Mar 25**. It's an in-class paper-and-pencil 40-minute exam. Those who want extra time should notify course staff 2 weeks in advance. We're enrolled in ATP, so you can do low-distraction testing at SDS.
 - *"UDL": you can stay for extra time without having to leave the room.*
- If you miss these, there's a different test given as a makeup. Please avoid that if possible!

Scott

- James Scott, scholar of anthropology and comparative politics, died last year
- “Originally, I set out to understand why the state has always seemed to be the enemy of “people who move around,” to put it crudely.”
- “early modern European statecraft... [put people] into a legible and administratively more convenient format. Social simplifications... made possible quite discriminating interventions of every kind, such as public-health measures, political surveillance, and relief for the poor.”
- Maps and data, allied with state power, “remake reality”
- But this also led to “huge developmental fiascoes”: Great Leap Forward in **China** (1958-1962), collectivization in **Russia** (1928-1940), and compulsory villagization in **Tanzania, Mozambique, and Ethiopia** (1970s-80s).



Scott's four elements of state tragedy

1. Administrative ordering of nature and society

capacity

2. "High modernist ideology" — muscular self-confidence about scientific and technical progress

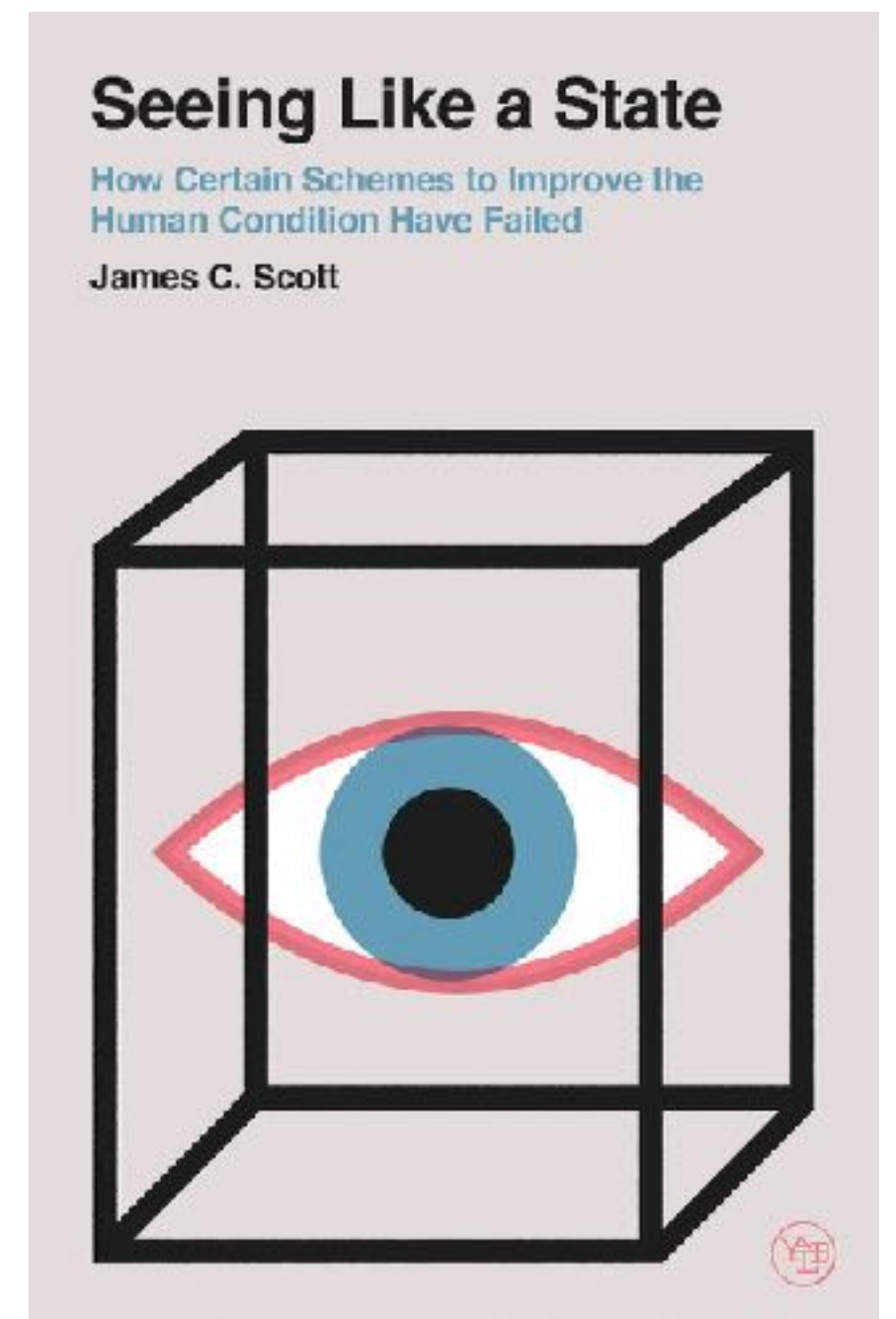
desire

3. Authoritarian state

determination

4. Prostrate civil society

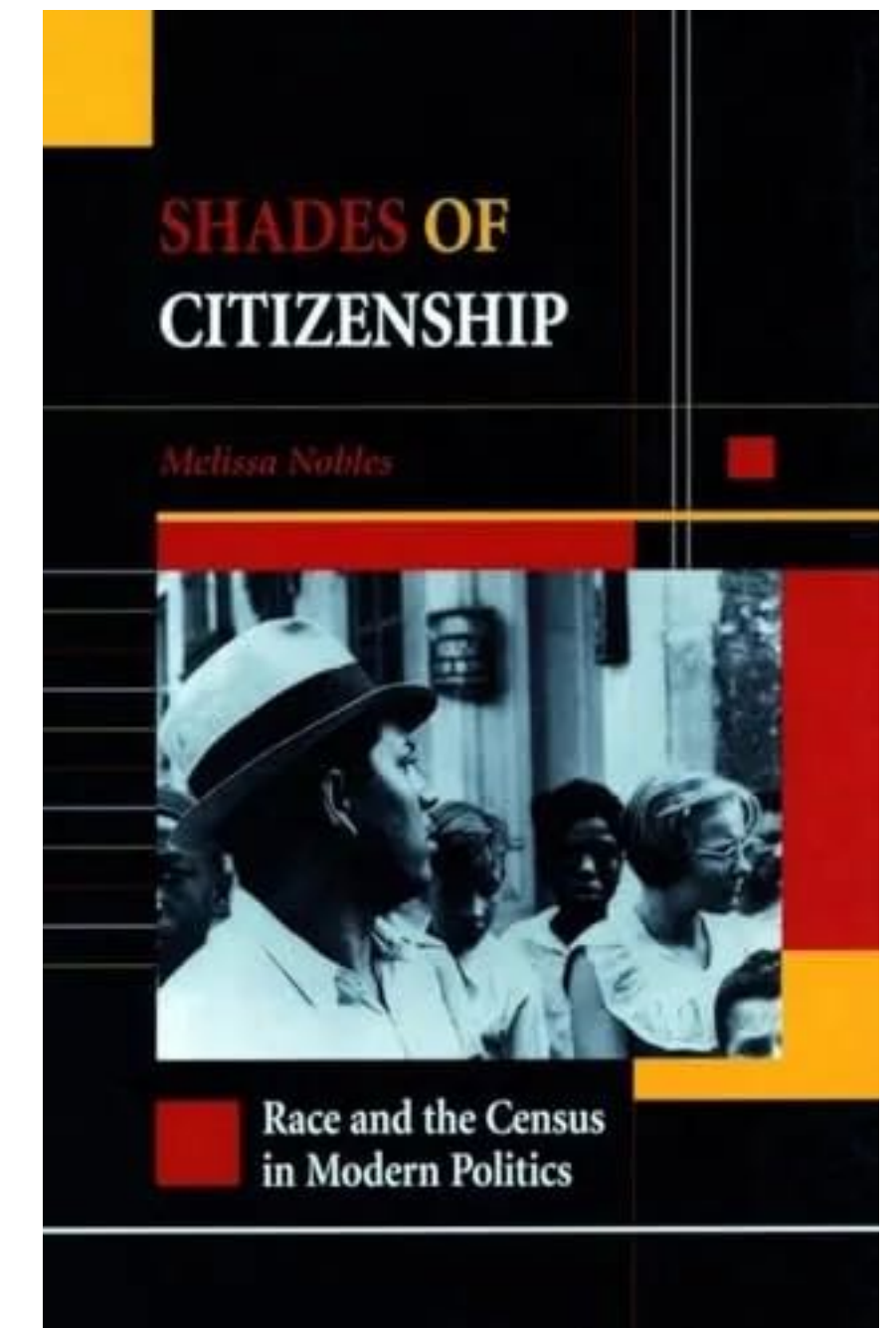
opportunity



“administrative ordering”
often starts with race

Nobles

- Melissa Nobles: Political scientist at MIT (now university chancellor)
- “census bureaus are not politically neutral institutions, employing impartial methods, but state agencies that use census methods and data as instruments of governance.”
- Race categories structure **race talk** (discourse) and this is not just raw material but grounds the rationale for public policy
 - USA: democratic and constitutional governance **in principle*
 - Brazil: highly concentrated elite governance (monarch, oligarchs, military) with “periodic” elections
- Brazil “yet to contend in a sustained manner with this maldistribution of income and its accompanying crushing poverty, or with the crisis of public education, the necessity of land reform, or the absence of efficacious social policies for the poor and working classes. Politics largely takes place on the state and municipal levels, making it difficult for federal legislators and the president to develop and sustain national policy goals.”



2000

Nobles

- Both heavily shaped by the transatlantic slave trade — of ten million people transported in 19th c, Brazil accounts for 40% and US for 7%, but grew to largest slave population over time
- Abolished 1865 (U.S.) and 1888 (Brazil)
- U.S. race mixing discourse: “One Drop rule”
- Brazil race mixing discourse: mixing could raise status in hierarchy
 - “To be Brazilian, in contrast, has turned on an elastic notion of race in which all Brazilians are regarded as racially mixed and all are becoming “whiter.” ”



Apartheid South Africa

1948–1991: South African government run under rigid, violent, institutionalized racial segregation under White rule

Segregation extended to schools, housing, jobs, transit, policing

Office for Race Classification was established within state statistical apparatus

1949 - Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act

1950 - Immorality Amendment Act

1950 - Population Registration Act — initially White, Coloured, Native

“coloured person” means a person who is not a white person or a native;

“native” means a person who in fact is or is generally accepted as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa;

“white person” means a person who in appearance obviously is, or who is generally accepted as a white person, but does not include a person who, although in appearance obviously a white person, is generally accepted as a coloured person.

Later, White / Coloured / Asian / Bantu

(Some of) the stakes

In one infamous example a jazz musician, Vic Wilkinson of Cape Town, was born to a coloured man and a white woman, and originally he was classified as white. After apartheid he was reclassified as coloured and then twice more reclassified as he married women of different races and moved to different neighborhoods. (Note that the remarriages took place outside of South Africa for legal reasons.) Finally, both he and his Asian wife Farina were reclassified as coloured, allowing them and their children to live together. At the age of fifty, Vic received a new birth certificate and crossed the race lines for the fifth time (see figure 6.2, *Sunday Times* 1984).

from Bowker and Star, *Sorting Things Out*

Who gets to decide?

cf. Jews in Third Reich, Maori in New Zealand

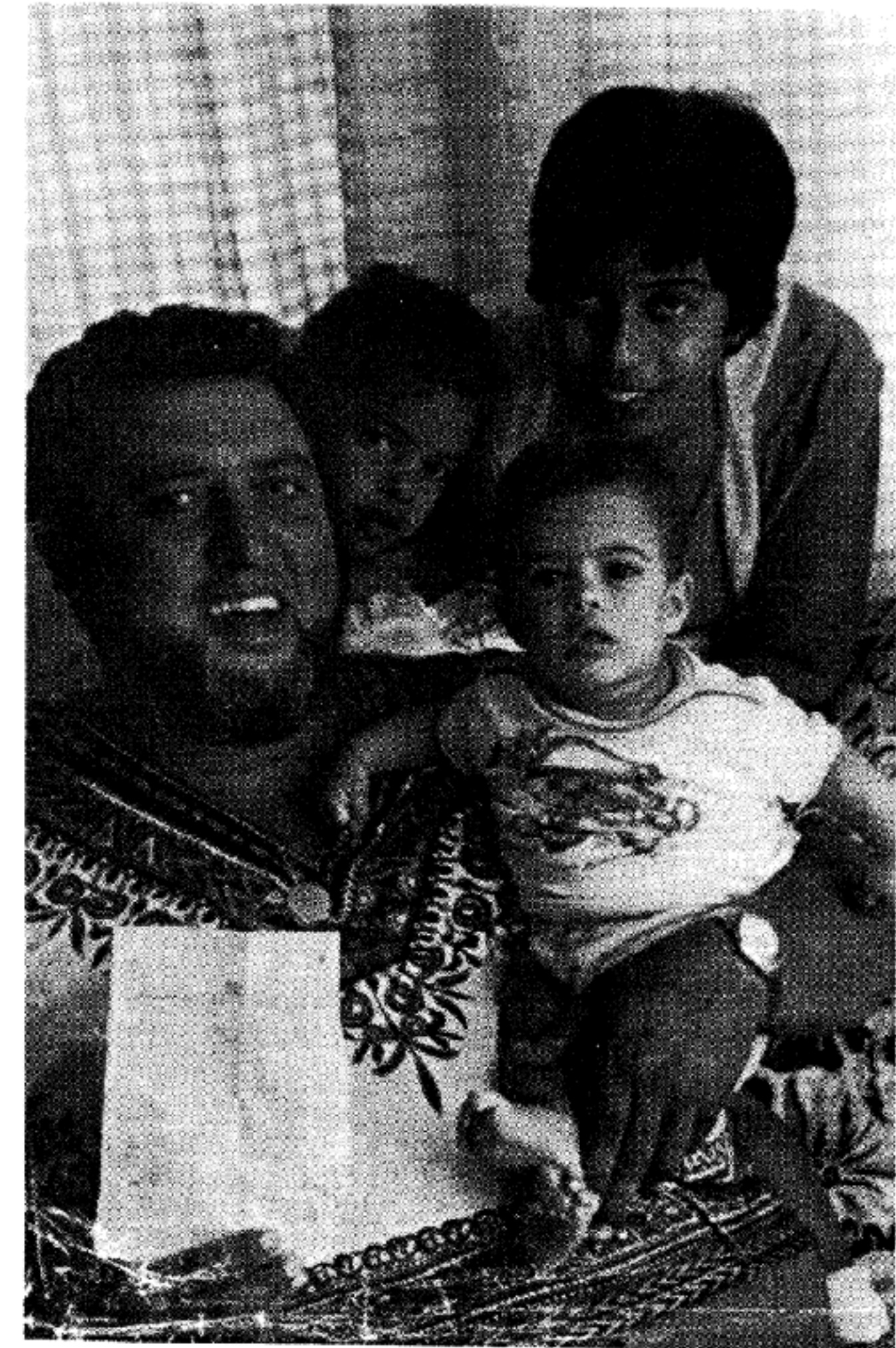


Figure 6.2

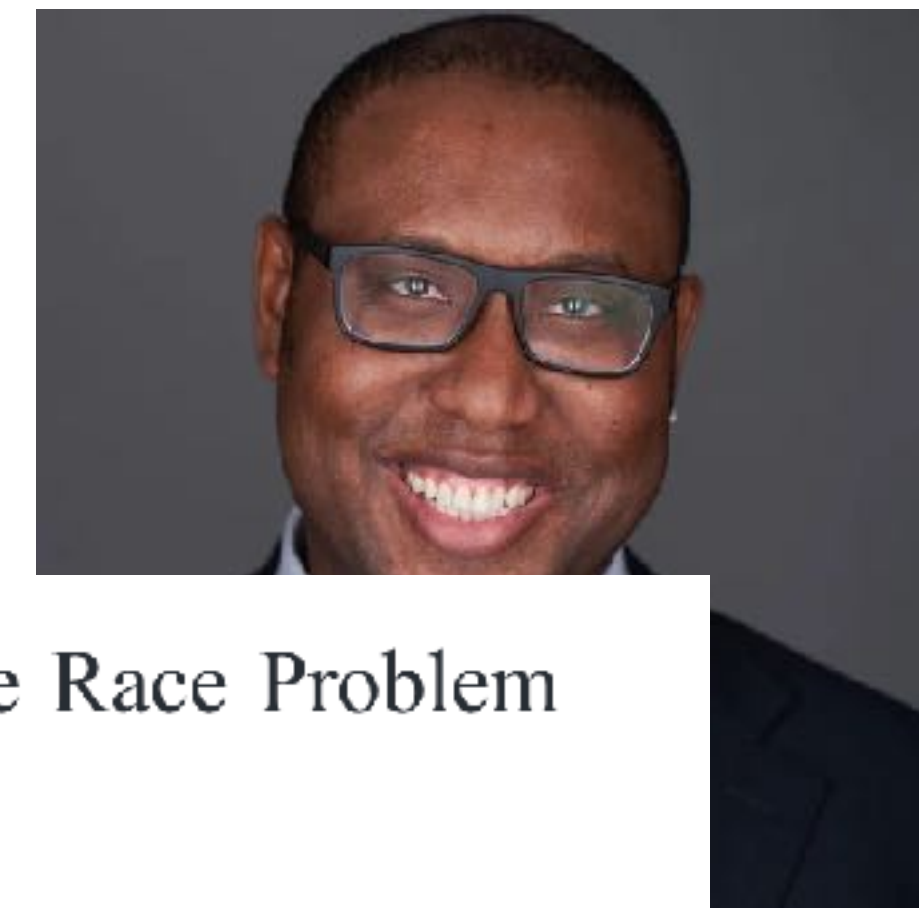
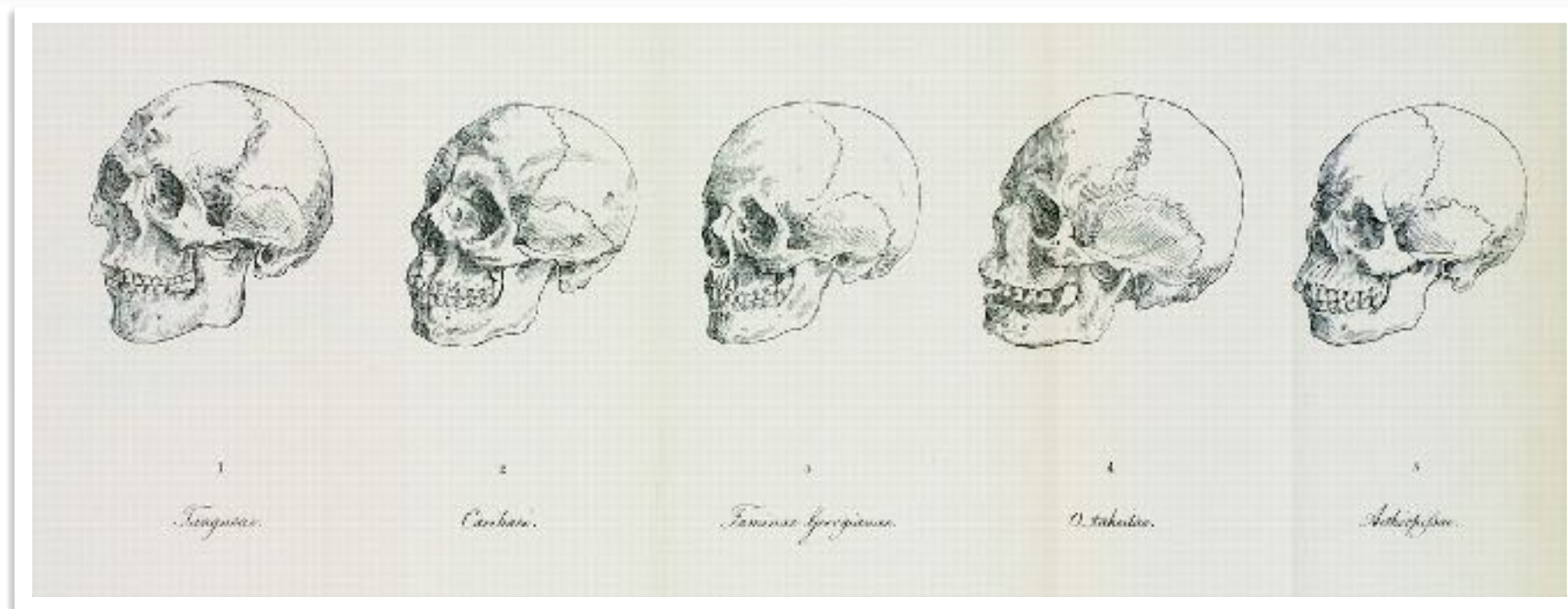
Vic Wilkinson and his family of Cape Town, showing the certificate of his fifth racial classification.

Source: Johannesburg *Sunday Times*, 11/4/84, 21. Terry Shean/*Sunday Times*, Johannesburg, courtesy of Times Media, Inc.

Spencer

- Not everyone thinks race is primarily social!
- Quayshawn Spencer is a “racial realist” in the philosophy department at UPenn
- He argues that k-means and PCA clustering has corroborated the reality of OMB race

Moreover, the OMB considers its set of racial groups to be “comprehensive.” These statements lead me to believe that, according to the OMB, race is just {black, white, Asian, American Indian, Pacific Islander}.



A Radical Solution to the Race Problem

Quayshawn Spencer*†

It has become customary among philosophers and biologists to claim that folk racial classification has no biological basis. This paper attempts to debunk that view. In this paper I show that ‘race’, as used in current US race talk, picks out a biologically real entity. I do this by first showing that ‘race’, in this use, is not a kind term, but a proper name for a set of human population groups. Next, using recent human genetic clustering results, I show that this set of human population groups is a partition of human populations that I call ‘the Blumenbach partition’.

1. Introduction. Philosophers and biologists alike repeatedly assert that folk racial classification has no biological basis. A few representative quotes are below, but many more can be generated with ease:

- “There are no biological races, only man-made races” (Root 2000, 32).
- “The human species does not contain biological races now nor has it at any time in the past 250,000 years” (Graves 2004, 20).
- “We know enough about race to be quite confident that races will not turn out to be significant biological kinds” (Dupré 2008, 52).

However, the goal of this paper is to debunk this common view.

Particularly, I show that ‘race’, in its current US meaning, is a rigidly designating proper name for a biologically real entity, specifically for the

partition at the $K = 5$ level of human population structure. Since that partition is roughly coextensive with J. F. Blumenbach’s anthropological division of humankind, I call the partition ‘the Blumenbach partition’ in honor of Blumenbach. I defend my view in three steps. First, I conduct an investigation of the US meaning of ‘race’. Here I uncover quite a few

it's not just race

Politics of what is visible



PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

DEFENDING WOMEN FROM GENDER IDEOLOGY EXTREMISM AND RESTORING BIOLOGICAL TRUTH TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

EXECUTIVE ORDER

January 20, 2025

Sec. 2. Policy and Definitions. It is the policy of the United States to recognize two sexes, male and female. These sexes are not changeable and are grounded in fundamental and incontrovertible reality. Under my direction, the Executive Branch will enforce all sex-protective laws to promote this reality, and the following definitions shall govern all Executive interpretation of and application of Federal law and administration policy:

(a) “Sex” shall refer to an individual’s immutable biological classification as either male or female. “Sex” is not a synonym for and does not include the concept of “gender identity.”

(b) “Women” or “woman” and “girls” or “girl” shall mean adult and juvenile human females, respectively.

(c) “Men” or “man” and “boys” or “boy” shall mean adult and juvenile human males, respectively.

(d) “Female” means a person belonging, at conception, to the sex that produces the large reproductive cell.

(e) “Male” means a person belonging, at conception, to the sex that produces the small reproductive cell.

“Making up people”

Prime examples:

- ★ Homosexuality
- ★ Autism
- ★ Multiple personality
- ★ Obesity
- ★ Poverty
- ★ Geniuses and prostitutes and etc etc etc

engines of
discovery

engine of practice

engine of administration

engine of resistance

1. Count!
2. Quantify!
3. Create Norms!
4. Correlate!
5. Medicalise!
6. Biologise!
7. Geneticise!
8. Normalise!
9. Bureacratise!
10. Reclaim our identity!

