The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Philosophy
Summer 2020

PHL F325M
Medicine, Ethics and Society
MTh 11.30 -13.00

Instructor: Sahotra Sarkar.
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Office Hours: MW: 10.30 -11.30;
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Course Description:

This course consists of a philosophical consideration of the relation between medicine and society with a focus on values. It has five broad themes: (1) It begins with a brief look at how science and values interact in the practice of medicine. (2) Next it takes a look at what science tells us about human bodies, when they are alive and when they are not, when, if alive, they are human and when they are not. These questions are relevant to many traditional issues in biomedical ethics, including abortion and euthanasia, though the scope of this course is much broader. (3) It then turns to the Human Genome Project and postgenomics and their implications for medicine. It questions the goals and achievements of the Human Genome Project but engages with how it may have enabled a new biomedical future by fostering a new eugenics. It deals with the troublesome legacy of eugenics in the past and analyzes the extent to which those problems can be adequately addressed. (4) In this context, the course turns to the advent of CRISPR technology and what it means both for the elimination of genetic diseases and prospects for designer babies. (5) Finally, the course turns to issues of public health, with a focus on the theory of vaccination as well as vaccine hesitancy, but with an eye towards addressing general questions of the social control of individual choice, as for instance exemplified most extremely in the current public health response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Prerequisites: None, but students are expected to be willing to satisfy ambitious reading requirements and to participate meaningfully in class discussions and other course-related activities.

Course Organization:

Because of UT's response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, this course will be taught entirely online but with the expectation that students have course-related activities every working day of the week. On Mondays, the Instructor will deliver a synchronous lecture over UT Zoom that sets the agenda for the week and summarizes the online lectures and explicates the week's academic goals. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays, on their own time, students will be expected to absorb up to three online lectures on their own time. Each lecture will have associated with it a set of readings that are critical for participation in the course. The lecture will consist of a detailed outline and, with two exceptions, an audio component consisting of the Instructor lecturing on the topic. The audio component will go beyond the readings and, on some occasions, beyond the outline. They are also central to the course. These materials will be made available through multiple sources including a dedicated web-site (`https://sahotra-sarkar.org/medicine-ethics-and-society-lectures-2020/`) and Canvas. Students are expected to have completed these lectures before class time on Thursday when the Teaching Assistant will conduct a synchronous review/discussion session over UT Zoom. On Fridays, students will be expected to complete an online Canvas-based assessment of the work of the week. While they can choose when to engage in this assessment, the time taken to complete it, once begun, will be limited to 75 minutes. These assessments will be the basis for the course grade.

Class Policies and Conduct:

Students with disabilities will be accommodated as specified in: `http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/accommodations-and-services/`.

For the university policy on academic honesty, look at: `http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php`.

Required Texts:

The following three books will be required:

- Gilbert, S. F. and Pinto-Correia. 2017. Fear, Wonder, and Science in the New Age of Reproductive Biotechnology. New York: Columbia University Press. Available through the University Co-op.
- Hotez, P. J. 2018. Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Available through the University Co-op.
- Sarkar, S. 2020. A Brave New Eugenics? CRISPR and the Human Future. Available at: `https://sahotra-sarkar.org/a-brave-new-eugenics-crispr-and-the-human-future/`.

Other required texts are available through Canvas. Additional (optional) recommended readings are also available at the same location.

Grading Policy:

Grades will be assigned on the basis of:

- Five on-line assessments, each worth 20 points, consisting of multiple-choice and essay questions. Each assignment will be available through Canvas on the date specified in the syllabus below. While students may take that assignment at a time of their choice during that date, they will have 75 minutes to complete the assignment. Grades will not be curved. Passing grades will consist of: 60 -62, D-; 63 -66, D; 67 -69, D+; 70 -72, C-; 73 -76, C; 77 -79, C+; 80 -82, B-; 83 -86, B; 87 -89, B+; 90 -92, A-; 93 -100, A.

Course Schedule:

Date	Topic	Required Readings	Optional Readings
04-Jun-20	**Broadcast lecture**: Introduction to the course.	—	—
05-Jun-20	**Online lecture**: Health and disease.	Boorse 1977. Ereshefsky 2009.	Alexandrova 2018.
08-Jun-20	**Broadcast lecture**: Questions of Life and Death.	Gilbert and Pinto-Correia 2017, Chapters 1, 2.	—
09-Jun-20 10-Jun-20	**Online lectures**: Human embryonic development. When is a human? Nature and nurture.	Gilbert and Pinto-Correia 2017, Chapters 3, 5, 10.	—
11-Jun-20	**Broadcast session**: Review and discussion.	—	—
12-Jun-20	**First assessment**.	—	—
15-Jun-20	**Broadcast lecture**: Postgenomics and medicine.	Sarkar 2020, Chapters 1, 2.	—
16-Jun-20 17-Jun-20	**Online lectures**: What good was the Human Genome Project? The specter of eugenics.	Sarkar 2020, Chapters 3, 5.	—
18-Jun-20	**Broadcast session**: Review and discussion.	—	—
19-Jun-20	**Second assessment**.	—	—
22-Jun-20	**Broadcast lecture**: Reductionism in biology and medicine.	Sarkar 2002.	Tauber and Sarkar 1992.
23-Jun-20 24-Jun-20	**Online lectures**: The CRISPR revolution. Eliminating genetic disease. Designer babies.	Sarkar 2020, Chapters 4, 6, 7.	Gilbert and Pinto-Correia 2017, Chapters 7, 8.
25-Jun-20	**Broadcast session**: Review and discussion.		
26-Jun-20	**Third assessment**.	—	—
29-Jun-20	**Broadcast lecture**: Race, class, and medicine.	Gould 1994.	—
30-Jun-20	**Online lectures**:		

01-Jul-20	Biology and race. Race and IQ. Postgenomics and racial medicine.	Templeton 2013. Gillborn 2016. Duster 2015.	Relethford 2017. Maglo 2010.
02-Jul-20	**Broadcast session**: Review and discussion.	—	—
03-Jul-20	**Fourth assessment**.	—	—
06-Jul-20	**Broadcast lecture**: Philosophy and public health.	Weed 1999.	Beauchamp 1976.
07-Jul-20	**Online lectures**:		
08-Jul-20	Theory of vaccination. Politics of vaccine hesitancy.	Fine et al. 2011. Hotez 2018, Chapters 1 -7.	Hotez 2018, Chapters 8 - 12. Navin 2018.
09-Jul-20	**Fifth assessment**.	—	—

References:

- Alexandrova, A. 2018. Can the science of well-being be objective?. British Journal for the Philosophy of Science 69: 421 -445.
- Beauchamp, D. E. 1976. Public health as social justice. Inquiry 13: 3 -14.
- Boorse, C. 1977. Health as a theoretical concept. Philosophy of Science 44: 542 -573.
- Duster, T. 2015. A postgenomic surprise. The molecular reinscription of race in science, law and medicine. British Journal of Sociology 66: 1 -27.
- Ereshefsky, M. 2009. Defining "health" and "disease". Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences 40: 221 -227.
- Fine, P., Eames, K., and Heymann, D. L., 2011. "Herd immunity": A rough gide. Clinical Infectious Diseases 52: 911 -916.
- Gilbert, S. F. and Pinto-Correia. 2017. Fear, Wonder, and Science in the New Age of Reproductive Biotechnology. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Gillborn, D. 2016. Softly, softly: Genetics, intelligence and the hidden racism of the new geneism. Journal of Education Policy 31: 365 -388.
- Gould, S. J. 1994. Curveball—*The Bell Curve* by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray. New Yorker 28 Nov. 70 (39): 139.
- Hotez, P. J. 2018. Vaccines Did Not Cause Rachel's Autism. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Maglo, K. N. 2010. Genomics and the conundrum of race: some epistemic and ethical considerations. Perspectives in Biology and Medicine 53: 357 -372.
- Navin, M. 2018. Prioritizing religion in vaccine exemption policies. In Vallier, K. and Weber, M. Eds. Religious Exemptions. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 184 -202.
- Relethford, J. H. 2017. Biological anthropology, population genetics, and race. In Zack, N. Ed. Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race. New York, Oxford University Press, pp. 160 -169.
- Sarkar, S. 2002. Genes versus molecules: How to, and how not to, be a reductionist. In van Regenmortel, M. and Hull, D. L. Eds. Promises and Limits of Reductionism in Biomedical Sciences. New York: Wiley, pp. 191 206.
- Sarkar, S. 2020. A Brave New Eugenics? CRISPR and the Human Future. Mss.
- Tauber, A. I. and Sarkar, S. 1992. The Human Genome Project: Has blind reductionism gone too far? Perspectives in Biology and Medicine 35: 220 -235.
- Templeton, A. R. 2013. Biological races in humans. Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences 44: 262 -271.
- Weed, D. 1999. Towards a philosophy of public health. Journal of Epidemiological Community Health 53: 99 -104.