18th and 19th Century Views of Human Variation

Development of the Concept of Race

Don't forget to post a comment today for our discussion Thursday

George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon

- French naturalist and author
- Histoire Naturelle
 - 44 volumes published from 1749-1804
- Credited by many with first use of race in its zoological sense in his 1749 volume of Natural History
- Ardently opposed classification and argued against Linnaeus' work



George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon

- Some claim that he delineates six races
- This apparently comes from Darwin's Descent of Man

There is the greatest possible diversity amongst capable judges whether [man] should be classed as a single species or race, or as two (Virey), as three (Jacquinot) ... six (Buffon) ...

- Darwin cites as his source Hudson Tuttle's Origin and Antiquity of Physical Man, Boston, 1866.

George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon

Here is what Tuttle says (p. 18):

ere is what Tuttle says (p. 18):

Buffon makes six varieties of mankind; viz.,.-Polar Negro, Tartar,
American, Australian, Asiatic, European. Kant divides man into four
varieties, white, black, copper, and olive; Hunter into seven varieties;
Netzau, into two: Virey, into three; Blumenbach into five: Desmoulins
into sixteen species; Bury de St. Vincent, into fifteen; Morton into
twenty-two families; Pickering, into eleven races, Burke, into sixty-three;
Jacquirnot, into three species of one genus. Such are the
disagreements of those who have devoted themselves to this study.
We cannot admit that mankind can have diversity of origin, while so
united by one great plan. If a species or variety the man sprang up in
Europe, and another in America, by agency of conditions existing in
those localities, it would be beyond probability that they should both be
formed on the same plan: what then of the possibility of sixty-three or
more species being formed on the same model? Deny we may, with
plausibility, the origin of the diverse races from a single pair six
thousand years ago, but the bond of union which exists between them
points to a common source.

George Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon

- Here is the standard Physical Anthropology text take on Buffon's races:
 - Laplanders (polar people), Tartars (Mongolians), Southern Asiatics, Europeans, Ethiopians, Malays ■ Divides Linnaeus' Europæus in two and Asiaticus into three
- Warren's New Physical Geography by William H. Brewer 1890 says that Buffon's races are widely accepted and he enumerates:
 - Caucasian, Mongolian, American, Malay, African, Australian

Buffon and Race

Of the Varieties of the Human Species (1749)

- Buffon did not use the term for race in the modern
 - The Danish, Swedish, and Muscovite Laplanders, the inhabitants of Nova-Zembla, the Borandians, the Samoiedes, the Ostiacks of the old continent, the Greenlanders, and the savages to the north of the Esquimaux Indians, of the new continent, appear to be of one common
 - one common race [the Ostiacks] appear to form a shade between the race of Laplanders and the Tartars . . . [or] the Laplanders, the Samoiedes, the Borandians, the Nova-Zemblians, and perhaps the Greenlanders, and the savages to the north of the Esquimaux Indians, are Tartars reduced to the lowest point of degeneracy . . . the Ostiacks are less degenerated than the Tongusians, who though to the full as ugly, are yet more sizeable and shapely.

Buffon and Race

- in the island of Mindoro, which is not far from Manilla, there is a race of men called Manghians, who have all tails of [four to five inches], and some of these men had even embraced the Catholic faith
- Those of Formosa, and the Mariana islands, resemble each other in size, vigour, and features, and seem to form a race distinct from that of every other people around them
- In Ceylon there is a species of savages, who are called Bedas; they occupy a small district on the north part of the island, and seem to be of a peculiar race
- Nowhere in this volume does he delineate 6 races of man
 - In another volume of Histoire, he writes about 6 races of cat and this usage may have crept into the literature about the history of the concept of race

Concluding statement in Of the Varieties of the Human Species

Of the Varieties of the Human Species

From every circumstance may we obtain a proof, that mankind are not composed of species essentially different from each other; that, on the contrary, there was originally but one species, which, after being multiplied and diffused over the whole surface of the earth, underwent divers changes from the influence of the climate, food, mode of living, epidemic distempers, and the intermixture of individuals, more or less resembling each other; that at first these alterations were less conspicuous, and confined to individuals; that afterwards, from continued action, they formed specific varieties; that these varieties have been perpetuated from generation to generation, in the same manner as deformities and diseases pass from parents to their children, and that in fine, as they were first produced by a concurrence of external and accidental causes, and have been confirmed and rendered permanent by time, and by the continual action of these causes, so it is highly probable that in time they would gradually disappear, or become different from what they at present are, if such causes were no longer to subsist, or it they were in any material point to vary.

In other words ...



- All humans come from a single origin
- The physical differences we see between groups of people are the result of adaptation to differing environmental conditions
- If everyone were subjected to same environment for many generations we would all look similar

(Compare this to Graves table 3.1, p. 39)

Degeneration of the Primordial Type

- Buffon argued that skin color differences were reflective of the geographical degeneration of the primordial type
 - He suggests restoration of the "degenerate races to the purity and vigor of the original type" would require the transplantation of the these people to a more temperate zone plus a change of diet and a long span of time

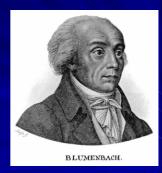
Buffon and Degeneration

- The peoples in the vicinity of the Caspian Sea came close to his conception of the original perfection and purity of humans
 - Degeneration from this perfection was manifest in any direction away from Europe
 - Argued that to avoid degeneration in the tropics and the New World, Europeans must dominate and subdue nature since the "weak and vitiated savage peoples [of these regions] have neither the power to improve themselves, nor, because of their degenerate state, can they bring about the necessary technological domination of nature"

Johann Friedrich Blumenbach,

(1752 – 1840)

- German Anatomy Professor
- Father of Physical Anthropology
- Father of Craniology
- Founder of
 Anthropology in
 Germany



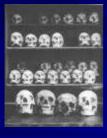
On the Natural Variety of Mankind (1775; 1781; 1795)

- Advocates monogenism and points out that the varieties blend into one another in imperceptible ways:
- "Thus too there is with this that insensible transition by which as we saw the other varieties also run together and which, compared with what was discussed in the earlier sections of the book, about the causes and ways of degeneration, and the analogous phenomena of degeneration in the other domestic animals, brings us to that conclusion, which seems to flow spontaneously from physiological principles applied by the aid of critical zoology to the natural history of mankind; which is, That no doubt can any longer remain but that we are with great probability right in referring all and singular as many varieties of man as are at present known to one and the same species"

Blumenbach

- Diverged from Linnaeus
 - Classified man as separate from non human primates (Order Bimanus vs. Quadrumana)
 - On second attempt (1781), divided man into five races versus the four of Linnaeus
 - Split Linnaeus' Asians into Mongolians for most of Asia and Malayans for Southeast Asia
 - Critiqued Linnaeus' rankings of races while explaining racial origins as degeneration from the Caucasian type
 - Took special exception to arguments about mental limitations of Africans
 - Felt that differences in skull shape and skin color (among other traits) had been caused by the environment

Blumenbach Position



- Blumenbach related skull shape to racial classification
- He did so by placing a skull between his feet and looking down at it
 - This became known as the "Blumenbach position"
- He used this technique to classify his skulls into his five racial categories

Blumenbach's five races





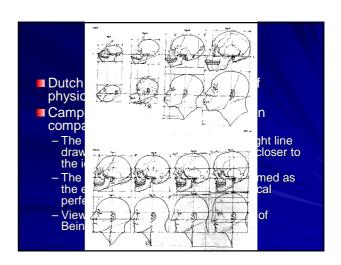




I have allotted the first place to the Caucasian ... which makes me esteem it the primeval one. This diverges in both directions in two, most remote and very different from each other; on the one side, namely, into the Ethiopian, and on the other into the Mongolian. The remaining two occupy the intermediate worlding. The remaining two occupy the intermediate positions between the primeval one and these two extreme varieties; that is, the American between the Caucasian and Mongolian; the Malay between the same Caucasian and Ethiopian.

Blumenbach and the term "Caucasian"

I have taken the name of this variety from Mount Caucasus, both because its neighborhood, and especially its southern slope, produces the most beautiful race of men, I mean the Georgian; and because ... in that region, if anywhere, it seems we ought with the greatest probability to place the [original forms] of mankind





Saarjite Baartman The Hottentot Venus

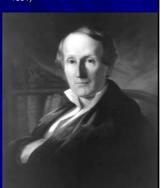
Brought to London in 1810, this young South African girl was put on display at pubs, fairs, museums and universities because of her 'unusual' physical appearance A debate ensued between abolitionists and those who wanted to study her from a scientific point of

She died at the age of 25, and her skeleton was displayed in a Paris museum until 1974

museum until 1974
Her sexual organs and brain were
displayed in the Musee de l'Homme
in Paris until as recently as 1985
Saarjite Baartman's remains were
returned to South Africa in 2002

Samuel George Morton

- Philadelphia Physician, Polygenist, Founder of the American School of Anthropology
 - Measured cranial capacity (volume of braincase) to assess differential worth
- Very careful scientist
 - Collected over 1000 skulls between the 1820s and 1851
 - Considered a great data-gatherer and objectivist
 - Oliver Wendell Holmes praised the "severe and cautious character"
 - "severe and cautious character of his work"
 On his death, the New York
 Tribune wrote that "probably no scientific man in America enjoyed a higher reputation among scholars throughout the world, than Dr. Morton"



Morton on race

- Races are primordial divisions of species
- Morton proposed that the five established races would be more aptly described as groups which he divided into families and primary races
 - American race: American family, Toltecan family Malay race: Malay family, Polynesian family
- He thoroughly confused the definition of race and species
 - Claimed that interbreeding of human races was not evidence that they were members of the same
 - Cited evidence of limited fertility in hybrids After an Australian women gave birth to a child by a European father she could no longer become pregnant by an Australian male—report of a "Polish traveler"

Morton

- Crania Americana, or, a Comparative View of the Skulls of Various Aboriginal Nations of North and South America (Philadelphia: J. Dobson, 1839)
 - Corroborate Blumenbach's five-fold racial division
 - Concluded that the American Indians were descended from a common stock distinct from the races of the Old World based on cranial capacity
 - Argued against environment causes of race formation
 - Demonstrated significant differences in cranial capacity -- and therefore, according to him, intelligence -- among the races
 - Mongolians and Caucasians head the list, and Americans and Ethiopians bring up the rear

Morton's Racial Rankings from Crania Americana

Europeans

The Caucasian Race is characterized by a naturally fair skin, susceptible of every tint; hair fine, long and curling, and of various colors. The skull is large and oval, and its anterior portion full and elevated. The face is small in proportion to the head, of an oval form, with well-proportioned features. . . . This race is distinguished for the facility with which it attains the highest intellectual endowments.... The spontaneous fertility of [the Caucasus] has rendered it the hive of many nations, which extending their migrations in every direction, have peopled the finest portions of the earth, and given birth to its fairest inhabitants. . . .

Morton's Racial Rankings from Crania Americana

Asians

- This great division of the human species is characterized by a sallow or olive colored skin, which appears to be drawn tight over the bones of the face; long black straight hair, and thin beard. The nose is broad, and short; the eyes are small, black, and obliquely placed, and the eyebrows are arched and linear; the lips are turned, the cheek bones broad and flat. . . . In their intellectual character the Mongolians are ingenious, imitative, and highly susceptible of cultivation [i.e. learning]....So versatile are their feelings and actions, that they have been compared to the monkey race, whose attention is perpetually changing from one object to another....

Morton's Racial Rankings from Crania Americana

- Native Americans
- ative Americans

 The American Race is marked by a brown complexion; long, black, lank hair; and deficient beard. The eyes are black and deep set, the brow low, the cheekbones high, the nose large and aquiline, the mouth large, and the lips tumid [swollen] and compressed. . . In their mental character the Americans are averse to cultivation, and slow in acquiring knowledge; restless, revengeful, and fond of war, and wholly destitute of maritime adventure. They are crafty, sensual, ungrateful, obstinate and unfeeling, and much of their affection for their children may be traced to purely selfish motives. They devour the most disgusting [foods] uncooked and uncleaned, and seem to have no idea beyond providing for the present moment. . . Their mental faculties, from infancy to old age, present a continued childhood. . . [Indians] are not only averse to the restraints of education, but for the most part are incapable of a continued process of reasoning on abstract subjects. .

Morton's Racial Rankings from Crania Americana

- Africans
- Characterized by a black complexion, and black, woolly hair; the eyes are large and prominent, the nose broad and flat, the lips thick, and the mouth wide; the head is long and narrow, the forehead low, the cheekbones prominent, the jaws protruding, and the chin small. In disposition the Negro is joyous, flexible, and indolent; while the many nations which compose this race present a singular diversity of intellectual character, of which the far extreme is the lowest grade of humanity. . . . The moral and intellectual character of the Africans is widely different in different nations. . . . The Negroes are proverbially fond of their amusements, in which they engage with great exuberance of spirit; and a day of toil is with them no bar to a night of revelry. Like most other barbarous nations their institutions are not infrequently characterized by superstition and cruelty. They appear to be fond of warlike enterprises, and are not deficient in personal courage; but, once overcome, they yield to their destiny, and accommodate themselves with amazing facility to every change of circumstance. The Negroes have little invention, but strong powers of imitation, so that they readily acquire mechanic arts. They have a great talent for music, and all their external senses are remarkably acute.

Morton

- Crania Aegyptiaca, or, Observations on Egyptian Ethnography, Derived from Anatomy, History, and the Monuments (Philadelphia: J. Pennington, 1844)
- Compared skulls obtained by George R. Gliddon from archaeological sites in Egypt, then the oldest available
 - Deduced that racial distinctions were as prominent 6,000 years ago as they were in 1840
 - Thus racial differences were primordial and unchanging - The elite of Ancient Egypt, he argued, were Caucasians
 - He claimed that while Negroes were abundant, "their social position, in ancient times was the same as it is now, that of servants or slaves.
 - Here he makes his strongest argument for the polygenic origins of humanity and the irreducibility of racial distinctions

Gould and Morton

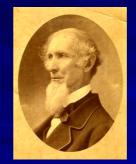
- Steven Jay Gould argues in his "Mismeasure of Man" that Morton finagled his numbers to come up with very different average cranial capacities for the racial groups with Africans at the bottom
 - He was working from a bad photo copy and actually got the numbers wrong
 - This was pointed out to him several times but he refused to correct the error in the reprint of his book 20 years later
- Is this an example of culture influencing science—the point Gould was trying to make about Morton?

Josiah Clark Nott

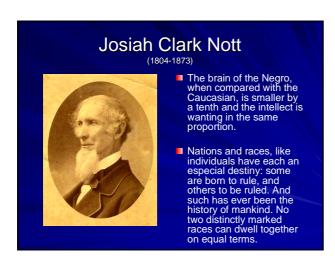
- Well known Physician and successful Gynecologist
- Key researcher on yellow fever and malaria
- Pioneer for medical education in Alabama
 - Formed first Alabama School of Medicine
- Medical director of the Confederate General Army Hospital in Mobile
- Tried to limit religious influence on science



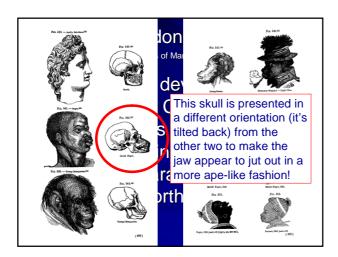
Josiah Clark Nott

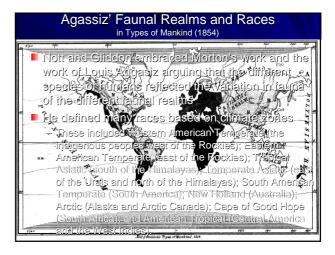


- If I had time I could multiply the proofs of the moral and intellectual inferiority of the Negro and Indian when compared with the Caucasian.
- [Negroes could not live in the North because] a cold climate so freezes their brains as to make them insane.



Nott and Gliddon Types of Mankind (1854) prepared with George R. Gliddon Object is to refute the theory of the unity of the human race to validate the inferior position of Africans - Pro-slavery argument that became very influential in the pre-war years - Based on the research of Morton





I.—ARCTIC REALM—inhabited by MYPERBOR.EANS; and containing:—
AAA—an Hyperborrows fauna.

II.—ASIATIC REALM—inhabited by MONGOLS; and subdivised into:—

II.—Bear and the same of the sona.

D—a. Control Kongolos fauna.
D—a. Control Kongolos fauna.
F—a. Centrol Kongolos fauna.
F—a. Centrol Kongolos fauna.
II.—EUROPEAN REALM—inhabited by WHITE-MEN; and divided into:—
O—a. Samoloscoin fauna.
II.—A Russion fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna.
III.—A MERICAN REALM—inhabited by AMERICAN INDIANS.
NORM ARRIGO.—divided into:—
O—an Adelponnium fauna, or fauna of the Middle States.
P—a. Louistanian fauna, or fauna of the Southern States
Q—a. Tubel-South fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna.
CHYMAL ARRIGO.—A Southern fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna.
III.—A MERICAN RUSSION fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna.
III.—A MERICAN RUSSION fauna.
III.—A Russion fauna

V.—AFRICAN REALM—inhabited by NUBIANS, ABYSSINIANS, FOOLAHS, NB-GROES, HOTTENTOTS, BOSJESMANS; and divided into:—

as—a Nation fauna.

bb—a Nuclear fauna.

cc—an dispution fauna (extending to Arabia).

de ca—a Columnian fauna.

final first Tableland fauna.

gp—a Cupe-of-Good-Tage fauna.

gp—a Cupe-of-Good-Tage fauna.

Man A Madageaver (Giverplay) fauna.

VI.—EAST-INDIAN (or MALAYAN) REALM—inhabited by TELINGANS, MALAYS, NEGHILLOS; and divided into:—

is—a Dublam fauna.

is—a Dublam



Nott Hall (1922)
Named for Josiah Clarke Nott, MD (18041873), who founded the University's first
medical school in Mobile in 1859.
When the Mobile school was discontinued
in 1920, the trustees opened a new twoyear medical program in this building on
the Tuscaloosa campus.
In 1945 the medical school was moved to
Birmingham and expanded to create a full

school of medicine.

Lincoln on "the black race"

... any thing that argues me into his [Douglas'] idea of perfect social and political equality with the negro, is but a specious and fantastical arrangement of words by which a man can prove a horse-chestnut to be a chestnut horse. I will say here, while upon this subject, that I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution Islavery! In the States where it exists. I believe I have no right to do so. I have no inclination to do so. I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and black races. There is a physical difference between the two, which, in my judgment, will probably forever forbid their living together on the footing of perfect equality, and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there must be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the superior position. I have never said any thing to the contrary, but I hold that notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence—the right of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to hese as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas that he is not my equal in many respects, certainly not in color-perhaps not in intellectual and moral endowments; but in the right to eat the bread without the leave of any body else which his own hand earns, he is my equal and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every other man. (October 13, 1858)

Darwin and Race

- On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured <u>Races</u> in the Struggle for Life (1859)
 - Viewed race as significant division of a species
 - ■Akin to modern subspecies
 - ■Step in the process of speciation
- Species → Races → New Species

Darwin on Human Variation

- The Descent of Man (1871):
 - Attempts to account for human origins and human variation
 - Defines sexual selection as accounting for variability between males and females as well as some of the differences between the races
 - Sexual Selection is natural selection on traits related to obtaining mates for sexual reproduction:
 Intrasexual selection: Ability to compete with members of the
 - Intrasexual selection: Ability to compete with members of the same sex for a mate
 - Increased body size, strength, cunning, intelligence
 - Intersexual selection: Attraction between the sexes
 - Enhanced secondary sexual characteristics: Large breasts, buttocks, penis

Male/Female Variability

- Darwin uses sexual selection to account for differences in mental powers of males and females:
 - The chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shewn by man's attaining to a higher eminence, in whatever he takes up, than can woman--whether requiring deep thought, reason, or imagination, or merely the use of the senses and hands
 - Amongst...savages, there have been struggles between the males... for the possession of the females...[which] requires the aid of the higher mental faculties, namely, observation, reason, invention, or imagination
 - Consequently...we might expect that they would at least tend to be transmitted chiefly to the male offspring at the corresponding period of manhood

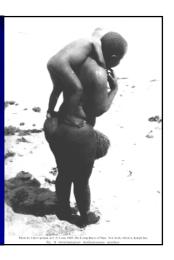
Darwin on Race

The most weighty of all the arguments against treating the races of man as distinct species, is that they graduate into each other, independently in many cases, as far as we can judge, of their having intercrossed. [T]here is the greatest possible diversity amongst capable judges whether [man] should be classed as a single species or race, or as two (Virey), as three (Jacquinot), as four (Kant), five (Blumenbach), six (Buffon), seven (Hunter), eight (Agassiz), eleven (Pickering), fifteen (Bory de St-Vincent), sixteen (Desmoulins), twenty-two (Morton), sixty (Crawfurd), or as sixty-three, according to Burke. This diversity of judgment does not prove that the races ought not to be ranked as species, but it shows that they graduate into each other, and that it is hardly possible to discover clear distinctive characters between them.

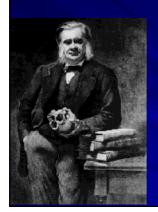
The Descent of Man (1871)

- (From the Hottentot Venus) for steatopygia:
 - It is well known that with many Hottentot women the posterior part of the body projects in a wonderful manner; they are steatopygous...this peculiarity is greatly admired by the men
 - [A] woman who was considered a beauty...was so immensely developed behind, that when seated on level ground she could not rise, and had to push herself along until she came to a slope
 - [T]he Somal men are said to choose their wives by ranging them in a line, and by picking her out who projects farthest [to the rear]

A steatopygous Andaman Islands mother with child



Thomas Henry Huxley



- ■Expressed the predominant view in Victorian society, even among the socially progressive
- Claims about Huxley's supposed racism usually issue from a quotation taken from an essay in which he is arguing for emancipation of the slaves and equal treatment of blacks and women
- ■For his time, Huxley was a radical reformer and

Huxley

Emancipation—Black and White (from Collected Essays, 1865): It may be quite true that some negroes are better than some white men; but no rational man, cognizant of the facts, believes that the average negro is the equal, still less the superior, of the average white man. And, if this be true, it is simply incredible that, when all his disabilities are removed, and our prognathous relative has a fair field and no favor, as well as no oppressor, he will be able to compete successfully with his bigger-brained and smaller-jawed rival, in a contest which is to be carried on by thoughts and not by bites. The highest places in the hierarchy of civilization will assuredly not be within the reach of our dusky cousins, though it is by no means necessary that they should be restricted to the lowest.

Huxley and slavery

Mrs. P. A. Taylor, of the Ladies London Emancipation Society, said of Huxley:

He believes in the doctrine of freedom, or equal personal rights for all men, and he pronounces the system of slavery to be root and branch an abomination—thus making his physiological definition of the Negro's place among men equivalent to an earnest plea for Negro emancipation. Nay, as will have been noted, he goes farther, and, in virtue of the strength of his feeling with respect to slavery, avows a state of opinion regarding the American War in which many who share his feeling with respect to slavery will refuse to go along with him.

Ethnological Society of London (ESL)

- The ESL was founded in 1843 by a breakaway faction of the Aborigines' Protection Society (APS)
 - The APS was an international human rights organization primarily of Quakers, founded in 1837, to protect the health and well-being and the sovereign, legal, and religious rights of the indigenous peoples subjugated by colonial powers
 - ■Went on to combat slavery

Ethnological Society of London (ESL)

- The ESL became one of England's leading scientific societies
- The original members were primarily military officers, civil servants, and members of the clergy, but by the early 1860s scientists had supplanted them
 - This included TH Huxley and EB Tylor
- The ESL supported Darwin against his critics, championed efforts to abolish slavery, and rejected more extreme forms of scientific racism
- James Hunt, as honorary secretary, extended a fellowship in the ESL to Darwin in 1861

Robert Knox

- Scottish surgeon who taught anatomy at in Edinburgh
- 1850 published The Races of Man Race is everything ... Literature, science, art, in a word, civilization, depend on it
 - What races is he talking about?
 - The conflict between the Saxons and Celts
 - This was the view of Irish Celts as savages not capable of being civilized because of their race
- Hunt was student of Knox and took his cues on race from Knox

Anthropological Society of London (ASL)

- The ASL was founded in 1863 by Richard Francis Burton and Dr. James Hunt
 - Hunt claimed that it would concern itself with the collection of facts and the identification of natural laws that explained the diversity of humankind
 - They supported the U.S. Confederacy in the Civil War

 - The issue that most sharply divided the ESL and ASL was the "Negro question"

 Hunt believed that Africans belonged to a different species than Caucasians, that they were substantially inferior, and that slavery was the role for which they were best suited
- The ESL and ASL co-existed until 1871 when they merged to form the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland