difficult for a European to analyse it. . . . Broadly speaking, the difference between African and European rhythms is that whereas any piece of European music has at any one moment one rhythm in common, a piece of African music has always two or three, sometimes as many as four. . . . From this point of view European music is childishly simple. . . . W. E. Ward, "Music in the Gold Coast," Gold Coast Review II (July-December 1927), 214. "The twistings, turnings, contortions and springing movements executed in perfect time, are wonderful to behold," another scholar noted. "For these set dances. . . . the physical strength required is tremendous. The body movements are extremely difficult and would probably kill a European." G. T. Basden, Among the Ibos in Nigeria (London: 1966 [1921]), 131-132. Both are quoted in John W. Blassingame, The Slave Community: Plantation Life in the Antebellum South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 22-23.


4. On sexuality and exoticism within the Western discourse on race, see Franz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks (New York: Grove Press, 1967); Winthrop Jordan, White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 136-178; Deborah Gray White, Ar'n't I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South (New York, Norton, 1985), 27-61. Concerning the ways modern dance has conventionally been viewed, in terms of the artistic and the erotic, one thinks of the distinction between the mainstream appraisals of Isadora Duncan and Josephine Baker. See


7. Some of the issues that I address here, at least in outline, have received substantial treatment elsewhere. Specifically, the historians of science and culture, Stephen Jay Gould, Nancy Leys Stepan, Sander L. Gilman, and William H. Tucker have discerned the strands of racialist discourse that have prevailed over the last two centuries. Within a broad framework, which is often associated with the writings of Michel Foucault, they have clearly illuminated the lines of force between "knowledge" and power in Western society, just as they have accentuated the social grounding of scientific speculation. For Foucault's thought on this subject, see *The History of Sexuality: vol. I: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980); *The Archeology of Knowledge and the Discourse of Language* (New York: Pantheon, 1982); *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage

Finally, with regard to the comparative dimension to the study of essentialism, ethnicity, and culture, see Gary Okihiro, Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture
(Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1996). Chapter 2 is titled, "Is Yellow Black or White."


Largely left out of the discussions of racial science have been the various works of Thomas Sowell, whose notions of "cultural" variation among "racial" and ethnic groups bear a striking resemblance to the biological distinctions that Herrnstein and Murray seek to draw. His approach to ethnicity and culture might also be compared to the "seed catalog" sociology of


15. See J. Philippe Rushton, *Race, Evolution, and Behavior: A Life History Perspective* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1995). For his part, Rushton attempts to correlate IQ with experimental findings about such matters as brain size and sexual potency, arguing for differential rates of evolution among "Whites, Blacks, and Orientals." By way of the internet, Jon Entine announced his (then) forthcoming book, *Taboo: How Blacks Have Come to Dominate Sports and Why We are Afraid to Talk About It* (New York: Public Affairs, 2000). With less sureness about its grammar than about what science has revealed, the message stated, that "after years of research, it is clear that the evidence is OVERWHELMING that there are significant phenotypical and genotypical differences between population groups and that race is a key "marker" for these differences (even in African-Americans who have a significant admixture of DNA from outside of sub-Saharan Africa." (emphasis in original, Sport Sociology listserv, 12 December, 1997). When the book actually appeared, it was clear that Entine had dismissed the literature on the history of scientific racism as well as the assertions by physical anthropologists and geneticists that "race" possessed no standing as a
scientific concept. Instead, Entine's version of difference largely derives from Rushton's ideas, though it was written for a sports-minded audience (The difference between the book jackets is telling). For a critique of Rushton, see Richard Lewontin, "Of Genes and Genitals," Transition 69 (Spring 1996), 178-193. Some telling reviews of Entine include Jonathan Marks, "A Feeble Quest for the Basketball Gene" New York Times, April 8, 2000; Paul Spickard, review of Taboo in Journal of Sport History 27 (Summer 2000), 338-340.

16. See, for example, "The Black Athlete Revisited," Sports Illustrated August 5, 12, 19, 1991, 38-77, 26-73, 40-51. The prevailing representation of black and white athletes had not changed significantly, the authors discovered, since 1968, when the magazine published its first expose of racism in the realm of American sport. But Sports Illustrated has also been one of the most notable purveyors of the myth. See most recently, S. L. Price, "What Ever Happened to the White Athlete?" and idem, "Is It in the Genes?" Sports Illustrated (December 8, 1997), 31-55. Significantly, Murray/Herrnstein, D'Souza, and Rushton all indulge in generalizations about natural athletic endowments, explaining black athletic dominance as a compensation for such things as poor performance on intelligence tests. (On this matter, Entine attempts to distance himself from the others). See Charles Murray and Richard J. Herrnstein, "Race and I.Q: An Apologia," The New Republic (October 31, 1994), 38; D'Souza, The End of Racism, 437-441; Rushton, Race, Evolution, and Behavior, 9. On sport, see Wiggins "Great Speed but Little Stamina"; John Hoberman Darwin's Athletes: How Sport Has Damaged Black America and Preserved the Myth of Race (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).
17. For an innovative assessment of the significance of Michael Jordan, see Michael Eric Dyson, "Be Like Mike?: Michael Jordan and the Pedagogy of Desire," in Reflecting Black: African-American Cultural Criticism (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 64-75. From a different vantage, it is important to consider the embrace of the "bad man" image by players such as Dennis Rodman. On Rodman, we have his autobiography, Bad as I Wanna Be (New York: Delacorte, 1996); John Edgar Wideman, "Playing Dennis Rodman," The New Yorker (April 29 and May 6, 1996), 94-95. On notions of "badness," "banditry," and African American cultural resistance, from the legend of John Henry to the career of Jack Johnson and beyond, see Lawrence Levine, Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977). For the multiple meanings of the black athletic experience, a fine collection of essays can be found in Elliott J. Gorn, ed., Muhammad Ali: The People's Champ (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995).


20. Here it should be understood that the ways in which "difference" and "dominance" have been cast and recast clearly link gender and "race" as cognate hierarchies of privilege and subordination. It was to de-legitimate the accomplishments of "New Women" as well as "New Negroes" at the turn-of-the century, as well as to reject their claims to full participation in the American social, economic, and political arena since then, that the rules of competition and the boundaries of culture have been largely redrawn by those who would defend, or in some instances, reestablish the old gender and racial regimes. See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America (New York: Knopf, 1985); J. A.


Blacks in Western Popular Culture (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992). For the language of racial difference, see Jordan, White Over Black. On the conceptualization of Africa in the European historiography of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Martin Bernal, Black Athena: The AfroAsiatic Roots of Classical Civilization (London: Free Association Books, 1987). It is important to emphasize the instability of the term "race" in this context, for Europeans attached different attributes to "African-ness" over time. It is also important to distinguish Bernal's historiographical discussion from his other assertions. For responses to his problematic thesis, see Mary Lefkowitz, Not Out of Africa: How Afrocentrism Became an Excuse to Teach Myth as History (New York: Basic Books, 1996); Lefkowitz and Guy Rogers, eds., Black Athena Revisited (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).


23. "In strength of fist, the English are superior to all the other European races; while the French and Spanish have a greater power of resisting fatigue and privation, as well as the inclemency of extreme climates . . . We may conclude that the French have certain physical qualities that are superior to those of the Germans, which allow them to brave with impunity the snows of Russia as well as the burning sands of Egypt." Gobineau, The Inequality of Human Races (London: William Heinemann, 1915), 151-153. I am indebted to Scott Haine for bringing these passages to my attention.
24. Gobineau also addressed racial mixing, referring to "tertiary" and "quaternary" races. In the paintbox formulation he advanced, Polynesians had "sprung from the mixture of black and yellow." The Inequality of Human Races, 148-149.

26. Encyclopaedia Britannica, American Edition, XVII, (New York, 1895): 316-320. The longest portion of the entry relates the early closing of the cranial sutures to "the inherent mental inferiority of the blacks, an inferiority which is even more marked than their physical differences."


At the turn of the century, the "science of sport" gave rise to such quixotic ventures as the "Anthropology Days" which accompanied the 1904 Olympic Games. This particular exhibition featured shot-putting Patagonians and tree-climbing Filipinos. The very weirdness of these events underscored the racism of their premises. See Mark Dyreson, "The Playing Fields of Progress: American Athletic Nationalism and the 1904 St. Louis Olympics," Gateway Heritage (Fall 1993), 4-23; Lew Carlson, "Giant Patagonians and Hairy Ainu: Anthropology Days at the 1904 St. Louis Olympics," Journal of American Culture 12 (Fall