

ANTH 3640 Race and Human Evolution
Assignment #6 Summary Notes
Postwar Concepts of Race & Evolution

I. UNESCO 1950 vs. 1951

A. Major Continuities/overlaps between the statements.

1. Derivation of human groups from a common stock.
2. Need to distinguish between race and ethnicity.
3. Humans have been classified in different ways, usually into three great groups.
4. Genetics is not a major factor in producing differences in cultural achievement between human groups.
5. There is no biological justification for prohibiting intermarriage between different groups.
6. Human equality as an ethical principle does not depend on equal endowment.

B. Major Discontinuities. The 1951 Statement:

1. Preserves the utility of “race” as a concept; as a valid “classificatory device”.
2. Suggests the continued viability of using mental, temperament, personality, and character traits to distinguish human groups.
3. Drops “appeals to authority”: Darwin, Confucius, the Bible.

II. Coon and His Critics

A. Coon

1. Five modern human races (“subspecies”) exist today (i.e., circa 1962).
2. These races have separate evolutionary histories out of *H. erectus*, as evidenced by geographic or regional continuity of skeletal form (see image below from an earlier slide show).
3. Human races crossed the threshold to modernity at different times (Europe and Asia first, Africa later).



Ancients (above) and Moderns (below) compared. See the regional differences and similarities? They're subtle...

B. The Critics, circa 1962.

1. Livingstone (indirectly—he doesn't take on Coon by name)
 - a. Human variation is not concordant (racial traits vary independently of each other; this continues what Douglass and Darwin started...).
 - b. There are no races; there are only *clines* (gradients of human variation).
2. Dobzhansky (directly—he reviews Coon's book)
 - a. Humans have always been wanderers, colonizers, and interbreeders—we should expect “introgression”.
 - b. Impossibility of the parallel and independent evolution of *H. sapiens* five different times.
 - c. Potential of this theory to provide “grist for racist mills”.