

history are handy tools to have while reading. While its personal bent makes it not the best selection for an assigned reading, a lecturer might find the scores of parallel—Cicero and Thomas Jefferson, Cicero and Machiavelli, Cicero's Rome and Bush's America—to be good fodder for lecture topics in a variety of disciplines.

University of Central Florida

Melinda Gottesman

John P. Jackson, Jr. and Nadine M. Weidman. *Race, Racism, and Science: Social Impact and Interaction*. Science and Society Series. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 2006. Pp. 403. Paper, \$29.95; ISBN 0-8135-3736-3.

In a lucid account, John P. Jackson and Nadine M. Weidman trace the origin, development, and decline of the concepts of race and racism within the context of the discourse among scientists about these concepts. The authors define science broadly to include the natural and social sciences. The concepts of race and racism, rooted in medieval Spain, predate the rise of experimental science. Several Enlightenment thinkers aimed to study race with what they regarded as scientific objectivity. Jackson and Weidman make clear that the pursuit of objectivity was illusory. Enlightenment thinkers were subjective in regarding Europeans, or some subgroup of Europeans, as superior to Asians, Amerindians, and Africans. The authors do well to emphasize the plasticity of race. Some writers and scientists regarded Europeans as a race. Others believed Europeans to be not one but rather several races. Some used race as a synonym for species whereas others regarded the races as subgroups of a species. In the nineteenth century speculation about race and evolution culminated in Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). Darwin's circumspection on the relationship between race and evolution did not deter others from asserting that Europeans were the superior race because they were more highly evolved than other races. In some instances, post-Darwinian racists placed Africans as a link between the apes and Europeans. Particularly important is the authors' coupling of the pseudo-science eugenics with the atrocities of the Holocaust. The revulsion against Nazi race policies led scientists to distance themselves from racism. Ultimately geneticists undermined the concept of race, making clear that aside from small variations, all humans have roughly the same genotype. There is not enough genetic diversity among people to justify the concept of race.

Several features of *Race, Racism, and Science* recommend it to the reader. The authors divide each of the seven chapters into subsections. At the end of chapters one and two, Jackson and Weidman summarize their narrative in a conclusion. For reasons that are unclear, the authors drop the conclusion from subsequent chapters, though they end each chapter with a summation despite the absence of a formal conclusion. After each chapter the authors appended a bibliographic essay that focuses on secondary

sources, though in their research the authors used both primary and secondary sources. Sidebars provide details about the lives of several scientists discussed in the book.

Race, Racism, and Science should be an indispensable book in any course in which race is the central concern. An African studies course might use the book as a supplement to the lectures and textbook. A graduate course in the history of biology might also use *Race, Racism, and Science* as a supplement. An instructor might, taking the book as a starting point, ask students to research and report on the work of one topic in the book. A student, for example, might examine the craniometry of Samuel Morton or the eugenics of Charles Davenport. Alternatively an instructor might use the racism of Louis Agassiz as the basis for a discussion of the subjectivity of science. Instructors eager for material suitable for a lecture might draw upon the book for its narrative on eugenics, a topic germane to the histories of the United States, Britain, and Germany. One hopes that *Race, Racism, and Science* will receive the attention it deserves.

Independent Scholar

Christopher Cumo

Helen M. Jewell. *Women in Late Medieval and Reformation Europe, 1200-1550.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Pp. 171. Paper, \$29.95; ISBN 0-333-91257-8.

This excellent volume is part of the European Culture and Society Series. Helen M. Jewell, now retired, was formerly Senior Lecturer in the School of History at the University of Liverpool. Her previous publications include *Women in Medieval England* and *Women in Dark Age and Early Medieval Europe c. 500-1200*, the latter also in this series. The author combines a historiographical survey of trends over the last thirty years with recent scholarship that will provide an indispensable introduction for students, teachers, and anyone interested in women's history from the later Middle Ages to the Reformation. The book could be assigned for an upper-division course covering this period, but an instructor could find a great deal of material for lectures in this a rather slim but densely packed volume.

In chapter 1, which is an introduction, the author states that the focus is on Western Europe. She then looks at the various social groupings and communities as well as the impact of political, economic, demographic, and religious developments on women during the period 1200-1550. The chapter concludes with an examination of primary sources and an evaluation of the historiography of the subject. The second chapter discusses the misogynistic elements in Ancient Medicine, the Judeo-Christian tradition, and canon and secular law that worked to keep women in an inferior position throughout the Middle Ages for the most part. Furthermore, women's options contracted in the Renaissance, and the Reformation strengthened patriarchal ideology. The next two chapters are especially interesting because of their focus on the practical, i.e., women in rural and urban communities. Chapter 3 first examines the role of