




Christianity, Race, Slavery: New Considerations for the Life Sciences

Thursday, February 27
4:00PM – 5:30PM
Royce 306

The idea that so-called races reflect inherent biological differences between social groups has been a prominent aspect of Western thought since at least the Enlightenment. While there have been moments of refuting this way of thinking, fixed biological conceptions of race haunt new genetic technologies, where race is thought to be measurable at the molecular level. Keel argues that the resilience of this naturalized understanding of race may stem less from overtly political motives on the part of scientists and more from our inherited theological traditions that predate the Enlightenment, were in play during transatlantic slavery, and continue to shape the intellectual horizon of scientific reasoning.



Terence Keel is an associate professor with a split appointment in the Department of African American Studies, and the UCLA Institute for Society and Genetics. He is a critical race theorist, historian of science, and scholar of religion who has written widely about American biomedical science, religion, law, and modern thought. Keel is an affiliate of the UCLA Bedari Kindness Institute as well as the Center for the Study of Racism, Social Justice & Health at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health.