



University of Sussex
Sussex Centre for Language Studies

Annotated Bibliography

Essay Title: Compare and contrast what H G Wells' 'The Island of Dr Moreau' and the Eugenics Society pamphlet from the early 1920s tell us about ideas on genetics and race in the early twentieth century.

Danahay, Martin. "Wells, Galton and Biopower: Breeding Human Animals." *Journal of Victorian Culture* 17, 4 (2012) 468-479.

This article compares and contrasts the attitudes held by Wells and Galton (founder of the Eugenics Society) regarding the applications of scientific advancements on human production. It cites essays and other writing by Wells which highlight his views and critiques of the eugenics movement (p469). The author does not argue that Wells was completely opposed to the eugenics movement or to violence towards animals, but rather suggests that he considered all humans to have the potential of becoming an animal. The article also discusses the influence Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* had on both Galton and Wells (p470), which helps to contextualise the key texts (*Island of Dr. Moreau* & *E.E.S. pamphlet*). The analysis of how London is depicted at the end of the novel is also relevant as it highlights the anxieties society held about the "boundary between the animal and the human" (p473). The article was published in a peer-reviewed journal so can be considered reliable.

Endersby, Jim. *A guinea pig's history of biology*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Chapter 3 'Homo sapiens: Francis Galton's fairground attraction' describes the context of and process with which Galton developed his ideas on eugenics and the possible improvement of humanity. The chapter gives detailed descriptions of the historical context which relates to both key texts to be discussed in the essay. For example, it describes the urbanisation of Britain and its adverse effects on public health: "By the middle of the nineteenth century, Britain was the most urbanized country the world had ever seen" (p65); with the rapid expansion of cities came challenges such as the failure of sewage systems leading to disease and unhygienic living conditions. This helps to highlight some of the sources of anxiety that existed in British society at the time the two texts were published; in my essay, this could be used to analyse the proposals put forward in the *E.E.S. pamphlet*, which appeals to the public fear that there are too many sick people who are dependent on the state. The chapter also describes how strongly Galton was influenced by the works of

Charles Darwin (pp70-73) – he took inspiration from *On the Origin of Species* and developed his own theories on heredity and the improvement of the human race (p70). This, again, could be referred to in the essay when discussing the socio-historical context. The book is from a credible source as it was written by a lecturer at the University of Sussex who specialises in the History of Science. It was published 10 years ago, but the topic I am looking at is unlikely to have changed in that time.

Christensen, Timothy. "The "Bestial Mark" of Race in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*." *Criticism* 46, 4 (2004) 575-595

This article explores the role of racial discourse in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. It contains some relevant textual examples of how the language of race is incorporated into the novel. In particular, it argues that the repeated use of "negroid" refers to an evolutionary stage of human development, thus likening the animal people to the primitive, lesser people with lower "moral and intellectual priority" (p586). Another useful section is the discussion over the use of the word "type" to refer to the animal folk. The article suggests that this is a reference to the influential works of Edward Tylor (anthropologist) and his use of "type" to refer to stages of human development from "primitive" to "civilized". The author also examines how Wells deals with the "relation of scientific and religious conceptualizations of humankind" (p 577), analysing the way in which "the Law" brings the animal society close to human society. The article is published in a peer-reviewed journal. The year of publication was some time ago, but the analysis should still be relevant today.