

**SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
SPRING 2014 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

**MAKING THE BIOTECH BODY:
Technologies, Knowledge, and Global Markets**
<https://sites.google.com/a/ssrc.org/dpdf/biotech>

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**University of California Berkeley
June 4-8, 2014**

This field explores critical approaches to emergent forms of biological identity and their intimate and commercial meanings. Since 1960, a new world of capitalized and commercialized biology has reconfigured understandings and experiences of embodiment. Brain mapping is seen as a guide to criminal behavior; direct-to-consumer genetic testing seems to validate racial categories; massive biobanks retain and control DNA data for private use; and race-based diagnostics and pharmaceuticals reanimate old ideas about human biological variation, skin color, and social order. Meanwhile, these endeavors are the focus of intense marketing.

In this workshop we will work together—research directors and students—to explore and interrogate these vexed intersections and to elucidate what Donna Haraway called “world-changing technoscientific practices” in historical, ethnographic and broader humanistic terms. Our main resource will be each other, as we explore some provocative ideas, consider theoretical commitments, and share our perspectives.

This is the first of two annual DPDF workshops designed to help graduate student fellows prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the first workshop are 1) to map the research field with respect to contributing disciplines, methods, sources, and area knowledge; and 2) to help prepare fellows for their pre-dissertation summer research. The goal of the second workshop, September 17-21 in Arlington, VA, will be to focus on the mechanics and methods of writing a dissertation proposal—the actual practice of producing a persuasive and defensible plan for a major research project.

Workshop Readings and Resources

We have identified six key readings that students should complete before arriving at Berkeley. Each of these texts provides a critical perspective on technical knowledge systems that will inform our discussions at the workshop: They are uploaded to the course website.

WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENTS

Note: Assignments must be completed and uploaded to the DPDF online workspace on the dates indicated below which are PRIOR to arrival at the workshop.

1. Revised proposal. Prepare a revised draft of your proposal that is *no more* than 12 double-spaced pages (8-12 pages is ideal). Also prepare a single page bullet point note outlining areas where you feel the proposal and project would benefit from further theoretical, empirical, logistical or logical thought and development. What are the key weaknesses of the project and research plan at this point from your perspective? Your revised proposal with bullet-point list of issues **should be uploaded to our online workspace by Friday May 21.**
2. Annotated bibliography of no less than 15 relevant sources, primary and secondary, that capture important points of reference for your thinking about your project in relation to the larger field of making the biotech body. Include a separate, one-page summary introducing your bibliography that describes where your project fits in terms of existing debates and scholarship. To whom does your project (ideally) speak? What kinds of scholars? What kinds of questions? This should be **uploaded to our online workspace no later than Monday May 26.**
3. Review and assess all other participants' research proposals after the revised proposals have been submitted May 21. Try to sort them into multiple categories suggesting how they relate to each other, where the overlaps are, the synergies, the divergences. Formulate at least one key question that you would like to raise about each of the other participants' project during the workshop, considering conceptual, empirical, practical, and theoretical issues. Does the project sound realistic? What kinds of evidence does the project require? Are the methods articulated likely to yield that evidence or might it be useful to consider additional methodological strategies? What kinds of assumptions does it enact? Where does it seem strong and where weak? As we discuss each proposal in our structured workshops, be prepared to share these questions with your fellow participants.
4. Complete the assigned readings posted on the field website. The six articles total about 140 pages of reading so be sure you allow time to complete these as well as all of the proposals prior to the workshop. Be prepared to draw on these readings in our discussions.
5. You will be assigned someone else's proposal to present to the group After the revised proposals have been posted to the website May 21, prepare a 10-minute summary that captures as accurately as you can the ideas that are in the proposal. When you present this work, present it as though the author were not in the room and you have been asked to relay as accurately as you can the ideas and perspectives of the author to a group that knows nothing about the proposal or the author. Your level of understanding will be a powerful clue to the author about the clarity of the proposal. Your presentation should address the project on its own terms but be sure you also engage the theme of the session in which you are presenting in relation to the project. So, if you are presenting in the workshop with the theme "Thinking about Method and Theory" be sure you address the relationship between theory and method in the project you have been assigned. If you are presenting in the session on "Conducting Fieldwork and Archival Research," in addition to presenting the project you have been assigned on its own terms, be sure you address how fieldwork and/or archival research are discussed in the proposal.

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Wednesday June 4

Arrival: Orientation material will be available at check in
6-9: Welcome and dinner for all participants

Thursday June 5

Session 1: *Introductions and Mapping the Field*

9:00-10:30 Part 1: Our Bearings

After reviewing the work plan for the week, we will begin to map our territory:
Who is in the room, both physically and intellectually?
Whose ideas haunt us and whose issues bring us to this enterprise?

Our themes:

- ❖ The social meanings of the biological mind: affect, emotion, transgression, race as a state of mental reasoning.
- ❖ Banked value: Brains, genes, biobanks, patents, repatriation, collection, storage, and frozen potentialities, eggs, sperm, blood.
- ❖ Modifying the body: Skin, race, surgery, cosmetic performance, identity, difference and roles of biological/biotechnological systems in the meanings of embodiment.
- ❖ Commerce and the State: Big pharma, reproduction as a commercial and nationalist enterprise, GMOs, denatured nature in global context.
- ❖ Overarching theme: Race, history, identity: Difference, empire work, eugenics, radiation risk, genetic engineering, gender, hierarchies of biological value

10:30-10:40 BREAK

10:40-12 Part 2: Key Readings

Discuss our five key readings: Students will raise questions they have prepared.

12-2 Lunch

Session 2: *Thinking About Methods and Theory*

Modifying the body: Skin, race, surgery, cosmetic performance, identity, difference and roles of biological/biotechnological systems in the meanings of embodiment.

The theme in this session will be linking theory to method. In particular, we want to explore the fit between the research questions and the proposed methods of the proposals presented in this session, and more generally how to successfully articulate this relationship in a research proposal. Are some theories better to think with for some particular kinds of problems? How does the available record (written or otherwise) shape the possible methods? Are the right theories being engaged? What if your theory turns out to be all wrong for your data? We have

grouped here proposals that deal with skin, surgery, and cosmetic desires.

Format: As in later sessions focused on discussing proposals, discussants will introduce their assigned proposals, speaking for approximately 10 minutes; the student whose proposal is being presented will have five minutes or so to respond to the presentation. We will then open the discussion to the group, with both the presenter and the proposal writer, for an additional 25 minutes. All participants will be able to draw on their first responses to the proposal (the version posted on line on May 21) and their live responses to the presentation. This will be the format for all of our presentation sessions. The goal is to help every student understand where their proposal is weak and where it is strong, what potential it has, where it needs more work.

2:00-3:20

Alka Menon, presented by Tess Lanzarota: Ethnic Cosmetic Surgery and the Biotech Body in Multiethnic Societies

Kimiko Tanita presented by Matt Hoffarth: Commodified Bodies and Embodied Consumerism: Cosmetic Surgery Tourism, Asian Eyes, and the Allure of Cosmopolitan Whiteness

3:20-3:30 BREAK

3:30-4:10

Maxwell Rogoski presented by Kerri Brown: Brawn and Beauty: The Scientific Search for Fit Bodies and Smooth Skin in the U.S. and Germany, 1890-1960s

4:15-5:15

The final hour of this afternoon session will take up Donna Haraway's famous characterization of scientists as ventriloquists who speak for nature, giving it a voice that reflects patriarchal values. We will explore forms of ventriloquism, asking students to suggest how their draft proposals would sound (what they would be like) in different voices, as a social science or humanities scholar from a discipline other than their own, and/or as a neuroscientist or molecular biologist. This imaginative exercise in standpoint epistemology aims to sensitize students to the many ways disciplinary identity is expressed in a text and in a proposal.

Dinner

Friday June 6

Session 3: *Developing a Bibliography*

Banked value: Brains, genes, biobanks, patents, repatriation, collection, storage, and frozen potentialities, eggs, sperm, blood.

The theme in this session will be on developing bibliography/engaging existing literature. We want to explore the fit between the research questions and the literature engaged in each of these three proposals. What literature might be common for all the proposals? Is some literature essential to a specific proposal? What are the key questions at stake in the literature and how does one develop a proposal to illustrate how a given project engages in and contributes a new and original perspective to those questions. We have grouped here projects that engage with collecting materials around the world, freezing, biobanks.

We will employ the same format as outlined for Session 2 in all the sessions involving presentation and discussion of papers.

9-10:20

Kerri Brown, presented by Alka Menon: Old Bodies and New Bodies: Medicinal Plants, Pharmaceuticals, and the Imagining of the Biotech Body

Caitlin Myers, presented by Felix Reitman: What To Do When You're Expecting to Expect: Elective Egg Freezing and Anticipatory Regimes of Imagined Reproductive Futures

10:20-10:30 BREAK

10:30-11:10

Tess Lanzarotta presented by Maxwell Rogoski: The Making of a Biomedical Community: Scientists, Alaska Native Peoples and Historical Memory, 1931-2014

11:15-12 Small Group Discussion and Individual Meetings with Research Directors

We will identify three groups of four participants each (see attached list and schedule). Each group will meet twice before the final individual presentations in Session 6. There are three time slots set aside for group discussions, but during one of them your group will be rotating through individual meetings with the RDs.

Your small group should devote equal time to the proposal of each member of your group. Your task is to consider the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal and to help develop strategies for addressing any weaknesses. Focus together on the themes of the four sessions in which projects have been presented—Theory and Method; Developing a Bibliography; Conducting Fieldwork and Archival Research; and Engaging Technical Materials—and also consider how the summer research can be most effectively used to address any gaps that need attention. Your work in these small group meetings should be oriented toward preparing for Session 6, during which each student will speak for about 5-6 minutes, reflecting on how the workshop has developed how they are now thinking about their project.

12-2: Lunch

Session 4: *Conducting Fieldwork and Archival Research*

Commerce and the State: Big pharma, reproduction as a commercial and nationalist enterprise, GMOs, denatured nature in global context.

Overall, this session will focus on conducting research in archives and in fieldwork. In exploring the projects in this session we want to pay particular attention to the practicalities of the research process. What sources have been identified? Are these sufficient for the project? Are there others that should be considered? Are there issues involving access to crucial sources and, if so, how might these be overcome? What resources are realistic and what are more vexed? We have grouped here projects that explore global markets, GMOs, state politics.

2:00-3:20

April Hovav presented by Kimiko Tanita: The Global Politics of Assisted Reproduction: The convergence of local bodies and global markets and technologies in the Mexican surrogacy industry

Safak Kilictepe presented by Andrew Gansky: Biopower, Citizenship, and Privileged Reproduction: The Politics of Procreation in Turkey

3:20-3:30 BREAK

3:30-4:10

Priscilla Bennett, presented by Caitlin Myers: Human-Mosquito Contact: The Tale of a Dead-End Bug

4:15-5:15 Small Group Discussion and Individual Meetings with Research Directors

Dinner

Saturday June 7

Session 5: *Engaging with Technical Materials*

The social meanings of the biological mind: affect, emotion, transgression, race as a state of mental reasoning.

These projects all engage a bit more directly than some of the others with the record and paper trail of technical materials—scientific laboratory work, research papers, technologies. The technical plays a critical role in all these projects, however, and in this session we will be thinking together about the appropriate and effective use of technical sources, images and materials so that the right questions are raised about them. We have grouped here papers that deal with computing, cognition, mental testing and neurosciences.

9:00-10:20

Andrew Gansky presented by Priscilla Bennett: Emotional Calculus: Coding Bodies and Administering Feelings in the Age of Affective Computers

Felix Reitman presented by Safak Kilictepe: Opening the Black Box of “Neurodidactics”: The Mind of the Child between Neuroscience, Pedagogy, and Biomedicine

10:20-10:30 BREAK

10:30-11:10

Matthew Hoffarth presented by April Hovav: Embodied Cognition: The Science and Politics of Risk, Race, and Identity in North American and Australian Cold War Testing Regimes

11:15-12 Small Group Discussion and Individual Meetings with Research Directors

12-2 Lunch

Session 6: *From Preliminary Research to Proposal*

2:00-3:20

Six-Minute Presentations by each student based on Group Discussions: What have I learned/how does my project look to me now? How has my thinking about my project and my summer plans developed over the course of the workshop?

3:20-3:30 BREAK

3:30-5:00 Discussion with Visiting Scholars

Adele Clark

6-8 Reception and Group Dinner with Visitors if available

Sunday June 8

Session 7: *Looking Forward*

9:00-10:20: Planning the summer

We will devote the first part of this session to exploring the following:

What is most productive given limitations of time and money?

How does one make key decisions when your research is in nascent form?

Avoiding rabbit trails, keeping a central question in the center.

Avoiding clinging to an idea when your own research begins to undermine it.

Strategies for making progress, keeping things going, being flexible.

Confidence strategies.

Listening to what you are learning: the core value of research

Worst research mistakes we have made (sharing, all of us!)

What if you find out someone else is working on your project?

What do you do if a senior scholar wants to see your research?

We also will assign summer research buddies and review summer plans and assignments.

The summer schedule: Plans and assignments

1. Each student must submit a significantly expanded bibliography by **July 15**.
2. You and your summer research buddy may decide how you might want to interact to support each other during the summer but we want to be sure that you check in with each other at least once by **July 15**. By **July 20** you each must upload a 1-3 page report on your check in. What did you talk about? What challenges and/or successes is your buddy facing? What advice did you give them? What challenges and/or successes are you facing? What advice did your buddy give you?
3. A revised proposal, of 12 pages, now reflecting all you have learned, is due uploaded to the DPDF website by **September 1**.

4. A short research field report (approximately 3-5 pages) is due by uploaded to the DPDF website by **September 12**: how did your work go, what did you learn, what lessons can you share that will help others in the group?

10:20-10:30 BREAK

10:30-11:30 Assessing the Field

In this part of the session we will examine questions about why this research field matters and the moral, ideological, political stakes in this arena, including power, human needs, and vulnerability all of which are core issues that animate work on the biotech body.

11:30-12:00 Closing commentary, Research Directors.

**SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP
Hyatt Arlington, Arlington, Virginia
Wednesday, September 17th to Sunday, September 21st, 2014
FALL 2014 WORKSHOP AGENDA**

**MAKING THE BIOTECH BODY:
Technologies, Knowledge, and Global Markets
Website link here for the course**

**Research Director: Susan Lindee mllindee@sas.upenn.edu
Research Director Karen-Sue Taussig: taussig@umn.edu**

This is the second of two annual DPDF workshops designed to help graduate student fellows prepare cogent and fundable dissertation proposals in their chosen field. The two goals of the second workshop are 1) to help fellows synthesize their summer research; and 2) to develop revised drafts of dissertation proposals, either for committee or funding purposes. The workshop challenges fellows to consider their summer research and proposal development within the context of contributions to their research fields. In this, the goals of the fall workshop are closely related to the project of mapping a research field that began during the spring workshop.

Our goal for this workshop is to focus on the mechanics and methods of writing a dissertation proposal—the actual practice of producing a persuasive and defensible plan for a major research project that contributes to scholarship on the making of the biotech body. Fellows will come out of the second workshop with clear courses of action to revise drafts into intellectually mature dissertation proposals, as well as supportive networks of mentors and cohorts of new scholars within the research field.

WORKSHOP READINGS AND RESOURCES

Any new readings and other resources will be placed on the section of the DPDF online workspace devoted to this field.

WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments should be uploaded on the DPDF online workspace unless otherwise noted:

- A revised proposal, of 12 pages, now reflecting all you have learned, is due uploaded to the DPDF website by **September 1**.
- A short research field report (approximately 2-3 pages, informal—this can be a list of observations rather than a crafted narrative) is due by uploaded to the DPDF website by **September 8**: how did your work go, what did you learn, what lessons can you share that will help others in the group?
- Identify a list of 4-5 possible funding sources for your dissertation research. Look at their deadlines, expectations, requirements, and record of support for projects like yours.

Consider federal agencies, foundations, libraries and research centers. What do their proposals require—what are their section headings/format (e.g. background and significance, methods, etc.), how much space do you have for each section, etc.? Find out how much support they provide for dissertation research. You should come to the workshop being familiar with the requirements of the proposal materials for each source and having a copy of their materials or an easy electronic link to them.

- Read the revised drafts of all proposals prior to the beginning of the fall workshop on **September 17**.
- Comments on proposal drafts: We want to ensure that everyone leaves the fall workshop with at least some written comments to refer to as they move to preparing their proposals for submission. Thus, each of you should **prepare** written comments (2-4 pages single spaced) on the proposals for which you are assigned either as *Initial* or *Recap* Discussant (see agenda below). In developing your comments, focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal: Is it well written and accessible to an interdisciplinary audience of reviewers? Are the research questions original and compelling? Are they situated in the appropriate literatures and theories? Is there a clear relationship between the questions being asked and the methods being used (in other words, will the methods excavate the material necessary to answer the questions)? Is it clear that the researcher is well prepared to undertake the research s/he has described? **Bring these written comments with you to the fall workshop.**

WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Wednesday, September 17th

6 p.m.: **Registration and welcome reception**
Workshop materials will be distributed at registration.
Dinner on your own

Thursday, September 18th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: **Workshop Session #1: Summer Research - Successes and Challenges**

As your summer field research reports suggest, the field offers moments of delight and discovery, small triumphs and unexpected allies and friends, and exciting new insights. At the same time, actual research also involves disappointments and sometimes can be very stressful. In this session, we will think critically about four classes of field problems reflected in your reports and explore ways to address them in your research:

1. Subjectivity (a sense of self, inauthenticity, anxiety, discomfort, concerns about what you give back to those you study);
2. Access (negotiating with doctors, archivists, government officials, other scholars to persuade them of the importance and legitimacy of your work);

3. Focus: keeping your eye on the ball—keeping the project moving forward and keeping it viable, practical, realistic and exciting at the same time;
4. Flexibility: Every single day.

2 to 5 p.m.: Plenary Session on Funding and DPDF Alumni

All fellows from the research fields at this workshop will attend this session. In this session, DPDF staff, in conjunction with some of the research directors, will discuss the genre of proposal writing for research funding. Topics to be discussed will include: writing for disciplinary v. interdisciplinary audiences • finding an appropriate tone and style • ways to write about your pre-dissertation research as preparation for long-term research • best practices for preparing a research budget • pulling back the curtain on general review processes.

In the second part of the plenary, students will break out into small groups to role play a review committee and discuss the merits of two short proposals that have been assigned to read prior to the workshop. Following the exercise, students will reconvene and debrief.

Friday, September 19th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #2: Reviewing Proposals

This session focuses intensively on individual proposals. We will employ the same structure to the next two sessions as well. We will spend 40 minutes on each proposal with short breaks between each. Each proposal author will have 5 minutes to articulate the current state of their proposal, highlighting where they have changed or modulated their ideas or approaches since the spring workshop (remember that everyone will have read the proposals so this is not a summary but an opportunity to call attention to what has changed or where you are having the most trouble). The *Initial Discussant* will then have 5 minutes to offer comments. We then will spend 20 minutes for general discussion of the proposal during which the proposal writer will remain silent and listen to the discussion. For these discussions we ask that you think of yourselves as scholars on a review panel evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of a proposal: Is it well written and accessible to an interdisciplinary audience of reviewers? Are the research questions original and compelling? Are they situated in the appropriate literatures and theories? Is there a clear relationship between the questions being asked and the methods being used (in other words, will the methods excavate the material necessary to answer the questions)? Is it clear that the researcher is well prepared to undertake the research s/he has described? The *Recap Discussant* will take notes on this discussion to share with the proposal writer. Following the discussion, the proposal author will have 5 minutes to respond. Then the *Recap Discussant* will close the session with their comments and suggestions for moving forward.

	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Initial Discussant</i>	<i>Recap Discussant</i>
9-9:40	Andrew	Maxwell	Caitlin
9:45-10:25	Alka	Tess	Kimiko
10:35-11:15	Kerri	Matthew	Priscilla

11:20-12 April Safak Felix

2 to 5 p.m.: Workshop Session #3: Reviewing Proposals

Proposal *Initial Discussant* *Recap Discussant*

2-2:40	Felix	Caitlin	Tess
2:45-3:25	Safak	April	Matthew
3:35-4:15	Maxwell	Priscilla	Kerri
4:20-5	Kimiko	Andrew	Alka

Friday night: Group Dinner

Saturday, September 20th

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #4: Reviewing Proposals

Proposal *Initial Discussant* *Recap Discussant*

9-9:40	Priscilla	Felix	April
9:45-10:25	Tess	Kerri	Maxwell
10:35-11:15	Matthew	Kimiko	Andrew
11:20-12	Caitlin	Alka	Safak

2 to 5 p.m.: Workshop Session #5: Debriefing Proposal Reviews

2-2:50 Assessments and Observations: The Research Directors will summarize what we see across the proposals, focusing on common issues or challenges for developing the proposals for Fellows' projects.

3-4 Honesty is the Best Policy: You will be assigned to four groups of three Fellows each. Explain to the other two people in your group what is weakest about their proposal, approach, interpretation, methods, use of theory, or anything else you have seen in the proposal. This assignment is to hone in with some no-holds critique that can help each Fellow see where they are vulnerable to referees. In approaching this task, we remind you of the ethos of intellectual generosity that is so essential to scholarly engagement. Be sure to be honest and forthright while reading each other's work with empathy, with an attempt to understand beyond disciplinary limits but providing helpful critique that may further strengthen and support your respective projects.

4-5 Funding: We will have Fellows share the information identified about funding sources for your projects. We will discuss deadlines, expectations, requirements, and whether there might be additional sources to consider. We also will discuss timelines for meeting various deadlines.

Writing assignment for Saturday night: Revise the element of your proposal that has now been identified by the group in our discussions and in your meetings with the directors as the weakest part of your proposal. Figure out how to solve the problems that have been identified. Be prepared to share your revised section and your revised approaches on Sunday morning.

Sunday, September 21st

9 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Workshop Session #6: Wrapping Up and Next Steps

9-10 We will begin with a small group session focused on “Honesty.” Break into small groups of three to discuss how you solved the problem identified on Saturday afternoon. Spending 15 minutes on each of the proposals in your group, discuss the changes and evaluate whether they successfully address the identified weakness. We will then come back together to report back to the large group.

10-11:30

11:30-12 Wrap Up/Next Steps: The Research Directors will close the workshop with a discussion of next steps.

12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Farewell lunch at hotel

Individual meetings with Research Directors: Over the course of the workshop the Research Directors will schedule individual 30-minute meetings with each Fellow. These will take place during lunch breaks and at the end of the day after the group workshop meetings.

Our current schedule is:

Thursday 1-2 Lunch break	1 hour
Thursday 5-6 After the plenary	1 hour
Friday 8:15-8:45	½ hour
Friday 1-2 Lunch Break	1 hour
Friday 5-6 (then group dinner in DC)	1 hour
Saturday 8:15-8:45	½ hour
Saturday 1-2 Lunch break	1 hour