

## Eugenics history: university geneticists respond

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To the Editor

We wish to correct Angela Saini's misleading claim that University College London's geneticists were "willing to overlook" their department's links with the Galton Laboratory for research into eugenics, founded in 1904 (*Nature* 579, 175; 2020). This undermines several decades of determined effort by us and our predecessors to confront this troubling history.

Over the years, this engagement has informed ethical debates relevant to our research. It has guided the development of genetic counselling protocols and the debunking of the foundations of eugenics, as well as the related issue of 'race' as a biological concept. We have taught this pernicious history to tens of thousands of students who have taken our various courses.

Members of our department have written and spoken openly and critically to the media and the public on the subject. The report produced by the university's Eugenics Inquiry, however, failed to acknowledge this properly, and that is one of several reasons why the majority of the Inquiry committee refused to sign it.

1 Saini, A. Want to do better science? Admit you're not objective. *Nature* **579**, 175, doi:10.1038/d41586-020-00669-2 (2020).