CT2-25

• Vote results on future readings, plans for midterm review
• Note the 50th anniversary of the DNA Double Helix discovery (handout)
• Discussion of Social Darwinism, Rawls’ imaginary social contract, and implications for judgments of fairness in the social distribution of resources
Top 4 Chapters for future reading

- #1, Chapter 18, Gender
- #2, Chapter 17, Violence
- #3, Chapter 10, Fear of Determinism
- #13, Out of Our Depths
50th Anniversary of The Double Helix

- Credited to Frances Crick and James Watson, 1953
- 23 chromosome pairs contain a total of about 3 billion adenine-thymine and guanine-cytosine base pairs in human DNA, their order defining about 30,000 different genes
- Humans vary in 1/1000 (3 million) of their base pairs
- But, a single base pair difference in a gene made up of 1000s of base pairs can make a big difference in its expression (see examples in 2-27 lecture)
2. Social Darwinism

- Modern intellectual theory of “egalitarianism”: Steven J. Gould’s (1981) “Mismeasure of Man” for IQ, argues that people are not meaningfully different
- But greater rewards do “naturally” go to people with greater inborn talent, and there is much evidence that Gould was wrong
- Does it follow that what is “natural” is “good”? Social Darwinists (Spencer) say yes! Moral philosophers (Moore, Rawls) say no!
Rawls’ imaginary social contract in recognition of individual innate and environmental differences: Consequences for compensatory social policies

- “The tradeoff between freedom and material equality is inherent to all political systems”
- Social Darwinist right, Totalitarian left, and Rawlasian left views on this trade off
The freedom-equality trade off in the U.S. compared to other modern European countries

- Differences in the **adult minimum wage** compared to adult median (lowest in U.S. at 38%, highest in France at 70%)
- Differences in **income discrepancy** (most extreme in the U.S.)
- Differences in **poverty rates** (18.7% U.S., 4.7% Netherlands)
  [http://www.cfc-efc.ca/docs/ccsd/00000324.htm](http://www.cfc-efc.ca/docs/ccsd/00000324.htm)
- Differences in **taxation of highest incomes** (lowest rate in the U.S.)
- Differences in **medical care** (greatest in the U.S., 41(75) million without health insurance in 2001, increasing rapidly now)
- Differences in social health reflected in **incarceration rates** (highest in the U.S., 10-1 over Sweden), **homelessness** (highest by far in the U.S.), **quality of education** (greatest variation in the U.S.) [see new Colorado voucher plan on CNN]