

The **UCSC Sociology Colloquia Series** presents:

Inside a Technology of Prediction:

Race, Risk, and Speculative Knowledge



**James
Doucet-Battle**

Assistant Professor of Sociology, UCSC

**Thursday, February 2, 2017
11:40 – 1:15 pm
Rachel Carson College room
301**

Free & open to the public

Recent work in Science and Technology Studies has explored how the racial categories of the biopolitical nation-state have driven biotechnological innovation. However, venture capital, or biocapital, demands generating convincing global market applicability beyond the limited confines of any one particular nation-state. UCSC Assistant Professor of Sociology **James Doucet-Battle** examined one biotechnology company's attempt at recruiting African Americans to further hone a universal Type 2 diabetes risk algorithm for broader clinical and market acceptance. He argues that the company's racial methodology failed to prove that race performs predictably as biology, ultimately exhausting the patience of its venture capital funders.

Based on large part on fieldwork conducted in Northern California, New York, Texas, and North Carolina, Doucet-Battle interrogated both a biotechnology and a bio-moment, when speculative and disease risk eclipsed diagnostic technologies in terms of profitability and rationalizing earlier pharmaceutical interventions. Doucet-Battle offers an invitation to think more broadly about how both market and racial logics (mis)-inform biotechnological knowledge production, translation, and outreach; and their bioethical intersections with matters of consent, inclusion, and medical justice.

James Doucet-Battle is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is currently writing a book manuscript, *Translating Sweetness: Recruiting Race and Risk in Type 2 Diabetes Research*, an ethnographic recounting of three distinct, successive, and interrelated technological moments between 2008-2012 – clinical drug trial, diabetes risk prediction technology, and genomic research, respectively, when participatory inclusion of African-descent research subjects and researchers became increasingly important. Doucet-Battle is affiliated with the Science and Justice Research Center and the Race, Genomics, and Media Working Group at UC Santa Cruz, and is a member of the Center for Translational Genomic Research Working Group at the University of California, San Francisco.

