Envisioned as a science of better human breeding in the interest of racial purity, eugenics, in the 1920s and 1930s celebrated its triumph in the U.S. With the 1924 Johnson law for the control of immigration and 1927 Supreme Court decision that upheld the constitutionality of a eugenic sterilization law in Virginia, eugenics ceased to be a speculative science and became an agent of social change in the United States. This talk will offer insight into the science of better breeding in the first two decades of the twentieth century and will examine the impact of eugenic discourse on the fiction of Jack London and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. How was it that two writers considered to be in the vanguard of progressive thinking (London due to his endorsement of socialism and Gilman due to her uncompromising feminism) were susceptible to theories that later informed racist scientific ideas of Nazi Germany? What was the lure of eugenics to otherwise progressive writers of that time? How did eugenic discourse shape each author’s approach to fiction-making? These are the questions that I plan to engage in my talk.