To 'Fill the Comfortable Cradles and Empty the Gutters': Maternalist Eugenics and Reproductive Inequalities in the United States

Tonie Marie Gordon Youngstown, Ohio

M.A., Sociology, University of Virginia B.A., Professional Writing and Editing, Youngstown State University

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Abstract

After the cruelties of the Holocaust exposed the potential for scientific racism to devolve into genocide, the practice of eugenics became stigmatized in the Western world. In 1950, a global panel of scientists working with UNESCO, reported that racial hierarchies are not rooted in biological fact. Consequently, by the 1960s, a number of social scientists pronounced the end of eugenics and other forms of scientific racism. To the contrary, eugenic infringements on women's reproduction including coerced birth control, forced sterilization, compulsory reproduction and the genetic manipulation of the reproductive process has continued in the United States since this time. Such infringements on women's reproduction, have in the post-civil rights era, increasingly targeted black women. The interrelated paradoxes of the continuation and simultaneous racialization of eugenics leads to the following questions: What mechanisms have sustained eugenics from the dawn of the twentieth century to modern day? And, in the post-Civil Rights Era, how has eugenics come to increasingly target women of color?

Most of the current multidisciplinary literature on eugenics and women's reproduction and coupling or 'maternalist politics' documents eugenics without offering a theoretical framework that explains its continuance. Likewise, scholarship that takes up the relationship between eugenics and race examines eugenics as a consequence of racism without identifying its underlying processes. To more thoroughly access the mechanisms underlying maternalist eugenics, I have conducted a meta-analysis comparing the Age of Reform (1890-1940) and our contemporary Era of Neoliberalism (1980-2015). Comparing these periods has allowed for an analysis of the cultural dimension of maternalist eugenics within different configurations of the state-market relationship. Accordingly, I show how the politics of progressivism and reform as opposed to the politics of neoliberalism produced divergent reproductive inequities or as I refer to them, "reproductive dystopias".

A process I call "image-to-policy transmutation" in which complex cultural representations of "the other" in political and scientific discourse translates into policy, underlie the practice of eugenics in each period. By calling attention to image-to-policy transmutation in each period, I show how groups of women based on race, class and notions of disability become targeted for negative eugenics including coercive birth control measures and forced sterilization. Simultaneously, I show how other women in each period become subjected to positive eugenics or manipulation to produce multiple, genetically "fit" children. This dissertation attends to the diffusion of cultural understandings of difference within the realms of scientific discourse, national politics and the market. As such, this research contributes to cultural scholarship that focuses on inequality and boundary-making. This dissertation, which is inextricably tied to contemporary U.S. policy-making, also contributes to the literature inside and outside of academe on reproductive justice.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Certainly, most Americans, when considering an alignment between racism and science a system based on economic competition and scapegoating that goes so far as to impose harsh and life-altering judgments on racial, economic, and social "others"—envision a Hitler led Germany. Indeed, for many Americans, population control is fused to images of concentration camps, gas chambers and medical experiments conducted by Nazi Doctors and the Anti-Semitic propaganda that accompanied it. Dozens of popular films, books, documentaries and museums have seared these images into the American consciousness (Novick 2000; Mintz 2001). The unconscionable acts of the Nazi Holocaust, especially those atrocities committed against Jews throughout Europe in the early-Twentieth century, have become the archetypal image of population control and racist science. "Never again!" the rallying cry of the Jewish Defense League and an appeal to human rights that resonated with people the world over, is for most of us a reminder of the cruel possibilities of humanity and a charge to never allow the dehumanization of a population to reach such severe heights that their dignity and bodily integrity are obliterated.

Due to the attention of China's "eugenics law" in the U.S., some Americans contemplating eugenics might think of China, where population control is written into law and strictly enforced, making its presence an undeniable reality. In 1995, the People's Republic of China passed a law requiring pre-marital medical checkups for married couples with permission to procreate, in order to ascertain whether one of the potential

¹ The absence of eugenics within the American consciousness has been documented by Brave and Sylva (2007) as well as Burke and Castaneda (2007), who documented the surprise of attendees to museum exhibits and symposiums that highlight the history of eugenics in the United States.

parents has a hereditary condition, mental disorder or contagious disease (Dikötter 1998). If any such abnormality is found, than the intended parents are forced to abort the pregnancy and/or undergo sterilization (Gewitz 1994; Dikötter 1998). This legislation also requires parents to undergo routine medical examinations to ensure that the fetus is developing healthfully (Mao 1997). Furthermore, China's "one child policy" coupled with the reverence and favoritism given to men over women in Chinese culture has resulted in large-scale abortions of female fetuses and the mass infanticide of baby girls (Chan et. al 2002; Handwerker 2002). Pregnant women who are not married are forced to undergo abortions (Dikötter 1998). The de-prioritization of baby girls and the complete suspension of women's freedom to control their own reproductive lives has erupted in a tidal wave of outrage from feminist and other human rights groups who named it "a war against women and girls" (Hom 1991).

In sum, most Americans think of population control taking place in different times like in the years leading up to World War II, or other countries like Germany and China. Conversely, the history of population control in the United States, called eugenics, has been largely forgotten (Brave and Sylva 2007; Burke and Castaneda 2007; Bouche and Rivard 2014). In this dissertation, I take up the American story of eugenic population control. In confronting the history and the contemporary practice of eugenics in the United States, I also explore the parameters of the U.S. in terms of the laws and policies that gain traction, the role of the market and market-based logic in the making of these policies and their effect on particular populations based on intersections of race, class and disability.

Eugenics was coined in 1883, when amateur British scientist Francis Galton joined the Greek word eu (good or well) with the suffix –genēs (born). According to Galton, "Eugenics is the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race; also with those that develop them to the utmost advantage" (qtd. in Winfield 2007:5). Eugenics, then, is the science of improving the human race by eliminating people with particular "undesirable" characteristics, based on culturallyascribed perceptions of human worth. Eugenic science launched an international social movement that made a profound political impact within many nations (Barrett and Kurzman 2004). In fact, nations all over the globe used eugenics to alter their population, becoming what Bauman (1989) describes as "gardening states," where a particular society is seen by eugenicists as, "an object of designing, cultivating and weedpoisoning" (p. 13). Eugenic campaigns involving sterilization, euthanasia, and genocide have occurred throughout many regions of the world.² For instance, in Britain where the science of eugenics first took root, sterilization, segregation of the mentally "unfit", and health examinations before marriage were among the measures enacted with the aim of "awakening throughout the community an enlightened eugenic consciousness" around the turn of the twentieth century (Bland and Hall 2010:219).³

Eugenics became particularly popular in the United States (Black 2003; Bruinius 2006; Currell and Cogdell 2006; Largent 2008; Lombardo 2008). In fact, of the three

² For a careful detailing of eugenics in various national contexts, including Australia, New Zealand, China, South Africa, Kenya, France, the Netherlands, Russia, Iran, Cuba, Mexico, Brazil and Cuba, see Bashford and Levine (2010).

³ According to Carlson (2001), "the unfit" is a "term used in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to describe those whose needs may require intense social and personal attention and expensive investments of society's resources, although some of those who were called the unfit may not have had any problems at all other than being victims of bias" (p. 1). I find this explanation of the term valid although I argue that *most* of those condemned by eugenicists as "unfit" were merely victims of ignorance and/or bias.

international eugenics conferences held between 1912 and 1932, the second and third were held in the United States, evidence that the U.S. became the epicenter of eugenic thought in the early decades of the twentieth century (Black 2003). As the nation emerged as a dominant, global force in the early twentieth century, controlling the progress of the nation to enhance efficiency and prosperity became a primary American concern. Eugenics gained scientific legitimacy in the U.S. at the dawn of the twentiethcentury by appropriating the methods and language of science to legitimize culturally biased assumptions of human worth based on gender, race, sexuality, and intellectual ability (Kamin 1974; Bowler 1983; Gould 1996; Jackson 2002; Kitcher 2003). Around the turn of the century, the U.S. arm of the eugenics movement emerged and eventually gained enough political legitimacy to shape matters of U.S. law and policy. The ideology of eugenics was deeply entrenched in U.S. politics.⁴ For instance, "every president from Theodore Roosevelt to Herbert Hoover was a member of a eugenics organization, publicly endorsed eugenic laws, or signed eugenic legislation without voicing opposition" (Lombardo 1996:1).

Eugenics is part of an ongoing, American legacy. Although eugenicists passed anti-immigration legislation (Roberts 1998; Daniels 2005) and biased child welfare policies (Ladd-Taylor 1994; Lindenmeyer 1997; Lovett 2007), one of the most crucial ways in which eugenicists directly impacted the character of the national garden was through enacting measures that constrain women's reproductive options. In this dissertation, therefore, I focus on *maternalist eugenics*, the critical overlap between laws,

⁴ A number of works document the substantial influence of eugenics during the early twentieth century, see Kelves (1985), Allen (1989), and Black (2003).

policies, and cultural understandings of reproduction and mothering and eugenics. Also, by making critical linkages between the liberalism of the Age of Reform and contemporary neoliberal policies, I intend to investigate the ways in which particular configurations of the state-market relationship foster different forms of eugenics, with diverse consequences for women.

The continued practice of eugenics in the United States presents a number of interesting paradoxes. Firstly, after World War II, the practice of eugenics was vilified for its association with the Nazi Holocaust.⁵ Secondly, eugenic practice has survived statewide apologies *for eugenics*. In total, five states have apologized for their role in the eugenics movement, beginning with Virginia in 2001; then Oregon in 2002; and most recently California, North Carolina and South Carolina in 2003. ⁶ And, thirdly, eugenic infringements on reproductive choice have continued despite eugenics laws having been repealed in many states. For instance, California, the state with the highest sterilization rates in the country, repealed its sterilization law in 1979.⁷

Fourthly, contemporary eugenics conflicts with gains in human rights and civil rights made in the U.S. over the latter-half of the twentieth century. The relationship between eugenic practice and the racial climate of United States also creates a thought-

⁵ The Nuremberg trials held between 1945 and 1949 where military leaders of Nazi Germany were tried for crimes against humanity (among other charges) by the International Military Tribunal with subsequent trials held by the United States Nuremberg Military Tribunals made the condemnation of eugenic science public. Crucially, the Nuremberg trials resulted in the "Nuremberg Code" which establishes the necessity of voluntary consent among human subjects, and states that scientific experimentation should be used for the public good, that studies should not cause mental or physical harm, or cause injury (U.S. Government 1949).

⁶ As previously noted, coerced sterilizations of female inmates within the California corrections system took place the same year the apology was issued, and the sterilizations continued at least 7 years after the apology.

⁷ State-mandated sterilizations ended in the 1970s, when many states repealed their sterilization laws. However, not all states formally repealed these laws during that time. For instance, West Virginia only repealed its sterilization law in 2013.

provoking contradiction. The increased prosperity, political participation and educational gains of African Americans over the last century has instilled cautious optimism that the racial climate of the United States is moving toward racial egalitarianism (e.g. Wilson 2012 [1978]). While the United States is not a racial utopia, or a completely egalitarian state, such milestones seemingly suggest that racial relations and the position of racially-marginalized groups has generally improved over time, especially in the post-Civil Rights Era. Therefore, it is logical to assume that eugenics would have become less racialized toward the end of the twentieth century and early-twenty-first century. To the contrary, as we shall see, eugenics has become more increasingly racialized post-Civil Rights era. This begs the question: In the post-Civil Rights Era, how has eugenics come to increasingly target women of color? Additionally, taken together, these illogicalities point to a crucial, interdisciplinary inquiry: How could eugenics continue within a nation where it has been politically condemned and undermined?

Scholarship on eugenics has explored the cultural legacy of eugenics (Kelves 1985; Cuddy and Roche 2003; Lombardo 2008 and 2011; Black 2012), racism within the eugenics movement (Roberts 1991, 1997 and 2009; Alland 2002; Davis 2003), eugenics and gender discrimination (Gordon 1990 and 2002; Kluchin 2009) and eugenics as a technological re-emergence with the advent of the genome (Duster 2003; Knowles and Kaebnick 2007; Kahn 2013), however this scholarship does not explain eugenics as an inter-generational legacy in the United States, nor do they explain the shift in the demographics targeted under maternalist eugenics. Scholarship that explains eugenics as a consequence of *a priori* notions of gender discrimination does not explain why Black women in particular have made up an increasingly large percentage of those targeted for

coercive birth control and forced sterilization in the post-Civil Rights Era. Likewise, understanding maternalist eugenics merely as an outgrowth of racism still does little to get at why maternalist eugenics now targets a higher percentage of black women than during the height of influence from the Ku Klux Klan which corresponded with the apex of scientific racism. Furthermore, while cultural accounts help to illustrate eugenics in the United States, such accounts are a-theoretical and therefore unable to provide any organizing principles or heuristics that confront these paradoxes. This question can only be resolved by understanding the complex factors (cultural, political and economic) that shape the reproductive inequalities of different groups of women in the U.S. within historically-contingent state-market contexts.

⁸ For instance, in speaking about eugenic sterilization pre-Civil Rights, Larson (1995) states: "American eugenicists often asserted that compulsory sterilization programs did not unequally impact racial minorities, and surviving statistics generally confirm this claim" (p. 155). However, in the post-Civil Rights Era, black women make up a disproportionately large share of those targeted for forced sterilization and coerced birth control. Several law suits have been waged on behalf of black and Latino women who were sterilized either unknowingly or coercively. In 1974, Relf v. Weinberger, a case involving three African American girls who were sisters in the same family receiving welfare benefits. The oldest, Katie Relf, who was seventeen at the time of the complaint, had an intrauterine device inserted at a local clinic. The two younger sisters, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice were sterilized at ages fourteen and twelve respectively. None of the girls received proper medical consent for the procedure, their mother who could not read or write had signed a letter of consent under threat of losing welfare benefits for the family (Davis 2003; Nelson 2003). The Relf case created a considerable public outery and advocates of reproductive justice rallied for greater government oversight and accountability for government-funded sterilizations (Nelson 2003; Luna and Luker 2013). After considerable public backlash, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) released information on the organization's role in coerced and forced sterilizations, revealing that at least 2,000 involuntary sterilizations had been performed on poor black women by 1972 (Ward 1986). In 1975, a classaction suit, Dolores Madrigal et. al v. E. J. Quilligan, was filed following the sterilization of 10 Chicanas who were not properly informed when signing sterilization forms in English, a language in which none of the women were fluent (Valencia 2004; Garcia et al 2009). While a national issue, the racialization of forced and coerced sterilization was heightened in particular states. For instance, in North Carolina since 1964, approximately 65% of women sterilized under the North Carolina statute were women (Lewis and Millis 2003). Although data is incomplete because government agencies have not been made to collect or disseminate statistics on race and sterilization, government reports that have been released, sterilization abuse survivors publicized in the news, and independent empirical research and historiographic research all confirm that black women made up a majority of those sterilized post-Civil Rights (Davis 1983; Ward 1986; Roberts 1997; Nelson 2003; Lewis and Millis 2003), though none of these analyses take up this seeming irony as the crux of a culturally informed argument on race and eugenics.

All of this reveals that not enough is known about the mechanisms that produce and sustain reproductive inequalities. The political condemnation of eugenics and the termination of laws have not put an end to eugenics in the United States. Therefore, it is logical to argue that eugenic reproductive inequalities do not, nor have ever, occur merely because of a failure of legislative or policy measures or because of any single institution. This leads to the following question: What mechanisms have sustained eugenics from the dawn of the twentieth century to modern day? Therefore, I take a more expansive view of state power, including the state's relationship to market processes, to explain contemporary eugenics. Maternalist eugenics occurs at the intersection of complex, even contradictory laws, policies, institutional settings and subsequent policy-logics inherent in the collision between democratic politics and an increasingly capitalist world system. *Eugenics and Gender*

Eugenicists, relying on pseudo-science, believed that characteristics such as feeblemindedness, laziness, alcoholism, and lasciviousness (among others) were hereditary and could be eradicated only through selective breeding (Kelves 1985; Black 2003). Eugenics, then, functions as the science of improving the human race largely through the control of fertility. Women, by way of being so highly implicated in the reproductive process, have borne the brunt of eugenics from the Age of Reform to the modern day. In fact, the driving principal behind eugenics is differential birthrate, a term that draws critical attention to the trend by which the poor tend to have larger

⁹ For historical evidence of this, see Davenport (1909), Elderton and Pearson (1910), Pearson (1912), Robinson (1912), Fisher (1924), and Popenoe (1930).

¹⁰ While much of eugenics has been directed toward women, some scholars provide a needed analysis of eugenics and men, both historically and contemporarily. The literature on eugenics and men focuses mainly on the history of the vasectomy (which has roots in eugenics) (Gugliotta 1998; Drake, Mills and Cranston 1998), criminality (Spalding 1997; Richeson 2009) and cultural notions of masculinity (Ordover 2003).

families than the middle and upper classes. Indeed, founder of eugenics Francis Galton, was "first to sound an alarm about the differential birthrate" between classes (Paul 1998:216).

Eugenicists typically focus their efforts on controlling fertility by violating women's bodies through invasive procedures such as sterilization. In the Age of Reform, women were often sterilized under the suspicion of feeblemindedness, dependency on the state and promiscuity. And, even in recent decades, women have been sterilized or coerced into taking contraceptives under the stigmatized, controlling image of the "welfare queen," a cultural reassertion of poor women as improper mothers (Collins 2000a). Therefore, eugenics reinforced a heteronormative gender binary whereby women's sexuality should be "controlled" or "contained" for their own good and the good of the nation (Coontz 2005; Kluchin 2009). However, the control and containment of women's sexuality under eugenics is (and has been) profoundly affected by factors outside of gender such as culturally prescribed notions of class, disability, race and sexuality that have played a significant role in eugenics. Eugenics views altering women's bodies as a means to manipulate the human gene pool; however, eugenics simultaneously employs a hierarchal taxonomy of race, a view of the poor as inherently "degenerative" and a disdain for persons with physical and mental disabilities. 11

¹¹ The proposed project investigates gender with the understanding that gender is experienced along multiple axis of privilege and oppression. Accordingly, I employ an intersectional perspective. The term intersectionality was developed by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) who argued that legal frameworks often operate along a single axis of oppression, when oppression can only be experienced along multiple axes. Utilizing an intersectional perspective is especially important in understanding eugenics because particular groups of women have been targeted due to perceived promiscuity, mental deficiency or other culturally proscribed inability to produce "superior" children. These culturally proscribed notions are implicated by larger societal understandings of the multiple statuses, including their class status, racial/ethnic makeup, their physical and mental abilities, and how they express their gender and sexuality. Accordingly, I integrate and explore the connections between scholarly treatments of eugenics that primarily focus on a sole indicator of inequality. Socially constructed notions of class, race, sexuality, and disability are all

Accordingly, class, disability, race and sexuality, are all analytically important in understanding maternalist eugenics. ¹²

Indeed, eugenicists attempted to craft their own utopia, their particular view of modern progress and high civilization. For most, this "eutopia" was comprised of a homogenous white race with superior physical and mental abilities. And, those outside of this ideal were considered dangerous, criminal, indolent or diseased. Eugenics, then, sustains a bifurcated system of motherhood whereby childbearing is a privilege for the well-born or able-bodied, middle-class white women sound-in-mind and married to middle-class white men with the same qualities.¹³

The history of eugenics is intertwined with the history of birth control and reproductive rights in the U.S. Birth control first became an issue of national significance in the late nineteenth century. According to Linda Gordon (2002), "The movement began

implicated within eugenics, and subsequently I look at all of these factors within the proposed research. For more on the importance in viewing gender through an intersectional lens, see Patricia Hill Collins's *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (2000a), Angela Davis's (1981) *Women, Race & Class* and Paula Giddings's (1996) *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*.

¹² While race is particularly important in understanding the history and contemporary reemergence of eugenics, my analysis revolves around the reality that race interacts with a number of other important factors (i.e., class, disability, gender and sexuality) to create meaning. Therefore, I see my research not necessarily as a race project, but an analysis of class, disability, gender and race in ways that make a contribution to racial and ethnic studies. The best way to frame this contribution is Higginbotham's (1992) "metalanguage of race" perspective. According to Higginbotham, "The explication of race entails three interrelated strategies...First of all, we must define the construction and 'technologies' of race as well as those of gender and sexuality. Second, we must expose the role of race as a metalanguage by calling attention to its powerful, all-encompassing effect on the construction and representation of other social and power relations, namely, gender, class, and sexuality. Third, we must recognize race as providing sites of dialogic exchange and contestation, since race has constituted a discursive tool for both oppression and liberation" (p. 252). Therefore, in exploring maternalist eugenics by considering class, disability, gender, race and sexuality in tandem, my work sheds value light on the meaning of racial distinctions within eugenics.

¹³ An important exception to the broad generalizations I am making here are particular ethnic communities re-appropriation of eugenics. For more on eugenics within the African American community see Daylanne K. English's *Unnatural Selections: Eugenics in American Modernism and the Harlem Renaissance* (2004) and Gregory Michael Door's *Segregation's Science: Eugenics and Society in Virginia* (2008). For more on eugenics within the Jewish community, see Raphael Falk's "Eugenics and the Jews" (2010).

in the 1870s as a campaign for 'voluntary motherhood' the slogan for a program that condemned contraception and proposed long periods of sexual abstinence for married couples as the remedy for unwanted children" (p. 1). Indeed, 'voluntary motherhood' gave women control in reproduction and consequently allowed women to better direct the course of their own lives. On the other hand, according to Angela Davis (2003), the history of reproductive rights in the U.S. has not impacted the lives of all women equally:

Birth control—individual choice, safe contraceptive methods, as well as abortions when necessary—is a fundamental prerequisite for the emancipation of women. Since the right of birth control is obviously advantageous to women of all classes and races, it would appear that even vastly dissimilar women's groups would have attempted to unite around this issue. In reality, however, the birth control movement has seldom succeeded in uniting women of different social backgrounds, and rarely have the movement's leaders popularized the genuine concerns of working-class women. Moreover, arguments advanced by birth control advocates have sometimes been based on blatantly racist premises. [However] the progressive potential of birth control remains indisputable. (P. 353-4)

Therefore, while the creation of birth control has great "progressive potential" for women of all races and class backgrounds, the reality of the birth control movement shows that birth control in the United States has been fraught with inequality. In this regard, the reproductive rights movement has been a fragmented movement, where birth control and abortion rights' potential for liberation has sometimes been used to suppress the reproductive rights of oppressed women (Roberts 1997; Davis 2003; Nelson 2003).

One of the most important fragmentary forces within the reproductive rights movement has been eugenics. Eugenicists used birth control measures in particular as a means to control, constrict and in some circumstances completely eliminate the reproductive capacities of women of color and economically-disadvantaged women; contraception by its very nature can be used as a means of population control by which

specific communities are targeted. Hence, reproductive rights far exceeds the liberal-conservative dichotomy that has captured much of the recent debate on contraceptives. Reproductive rights is a complex and protracted history that has occurred along a backdrop of inequalities based on heteronormative conceptualizations of gender, economic disparity and racial injustice. Therefore, contraceptives like the pill, abortion, and more recent injectable contraceptives like Norplant and Depo-Provera have served as instruments of reproductive liberation or reproductive abuse depending on the context (Gordon 1974; Roberts 1997 and 2000). Within this project, I look at how particular aspects of the reproductive rights movement including birth control rights and abortion rights have been used toward eugenic aims.

However, it is crucial to recognize that no women subjected to eugenics benefit freely or without consequence. It is important to acknowledge and analyze the role of middle-class, white women because they too have been manipulated under eugenics. For instance, contemporary eugenics involves the use of genetic procedures such as pregenetic diagnosis (PGD) and selective abortion that constrain women's options (such methods are used by elite, mostly white women (Harding 1990; King 1999; Green 2007; Knowles and Kaebnick 2007; Roberts 2009; Smith et al 2010; Smith et al 2011)). As Roberts (2009) suggests, genetic screening programs, even if they are supposed to be voluntary, create the expectation that women will act on the results. Medical practitioners (Antonak, Fiedler, and Mulick 1993; Antonak, Mulick, Kobe, and Fiedler 1995) and other community actors (Duster 2004; Roberts 2009) can put pressure on parents, especially mothers, to produce perfect babies for the sake of the nation. Eugenics, by its very nature, has a Janus-faced character. Because all groups of women are implicated

within maternalist eugenics, a thorough analysis must address *all* women. Accordingly, I look at maternalist eugenics widely, identifying eugenic campaigns among divergent groups of women and analyzing subjective understandings of class, disability, gender, and race to ascertain how and why women are targeted by eugenic campaigns, as well as how that has changed over time, and what the ebbs and flows of eugenics says about the meanings of these social categories, and their relationship to market and nation.

Critical Scholarship on Eugenics

While eugenics has received scant attention from sociologists, an interdisciplinary body of critical scholarship on eugenics is growing. A number of works have argued that the myth of race as a biological concept is re-emerging in the age of genetics, which has resulted in the creation of race-based medicines, DNA databases that group individuals into racial/ethnic categories, and the treatment of particular diseases and disorders as racial diseases (Duster 2003; Roberts 2011; Kahn 2013). Furthermore, this research argues that the explanatory power of race in genetic research is a new form of early twentieth-century race science (which assigned negative characteristics to marginalized racial groups on the basis that they were "in the genes"). In *Killing the Black Body* (1997), Roberts concentrates on the regulation of black women's reproduction, tracing reproductive inequalities among Black women from compulsory breeding during slavery to eugenic sterilization and child caps on welfare benefits.

The majority of scholarly work on eugenics has offered historically oriented, descriptive accounts (Kelves 1985; Noll 1995; Kline 2001; Cuddy and Roche 2003; Stern 2005; Currell and Cogdell 2006; Winfield 2007; Lombardo 2008; Black 2012). Much of the literature on eugenics emphasizes a different sphere of inequity; take for instance

Kline's (2001) account of the relationship between women's morality and eugenics in the Progressive Era or Winfield's analysis of the intersection of race, disability, education and eugenics (Winfield 2007). In Stern's (2005) early to mid-twentieth century study of eugenics in the American West, she draws together a diverse set of practices under the heading of eugenics including the Border Patrol, school segregation and race-based intelligence tests. Taken together, these different strains of literature on eugenics illustrate that eugenics is a multi-faceted reality with the power to structure social relations. Furthermore, this literature shows that eugenics is not only a state-sanctioned, but culturally inscribed social practice. However, the literature also demonstrates a need for understanding the process by which cultural notions of difference associated with maternalist eugenics become inscribed into national policy. Such analyses would also greatly benefit from attention to "the market" as an important force that shapes state power.

Maternalist Eugenics and the Market

Market-oriented analyses of social phenomena have given scholars looking to move beyond a strictly political understanding of the state a meaningful way of understanding social action. Accordingly, there is a long tradition within the social sciences and humanities which illustrates how the world has been deeply shaped by capitalism (Marx and Engels 1904; Weber 2001 [1905]; Zelizer 1985, 1989 and 2011; Gutman 1987; Ritzer 1993). ¹⁴ In other words, the dimensions of the market are so deeply

¹⁴ One of major foci of Viviana Zelizer's work, according to her self-authored introduction to *Economic Lives: How Culture Shapes the Economy* is the "valuation of human lives" (p. 4). Zelizer looks at how the economy shapes the valuation of human life in *Morals and Markets* (1979) on the moral dimensions of life insurance and *Pricing the Priceless Child* (1985) which provides a historical account of the shift from "treating children as economic assets to considering them as priceless" (p. 4). I see my work as an extension of the research tradition that Zelizer played a key role in crafting. There are few examples as apt

pervasive that it affects cultural experience. In fact, the logic and structure of capitalism is so ubiquitous that the economy influences decisions we may assume outside its reach, such as how society values human life (Zelizer 1985). Yet, capitalism and its relation to the state is not a static enterprise, it is constantly shifting terrain that is impacted by the cultural realm, market dynamics and certain political realities. Comparing the Age of Reform (the golden era of Progressive Era liberalism that includes the politics of the New Deal, ranging from 1890-1940) with the era of Neoliberalism (a new configuration of the state-market relationship that favors transnational businesses, global trade and private property rights in the name of "free" choice, ranging from 1980-2015) allows for an investigation of the multidimensional nature of women's political economy as well as its change over time.

Within this dissertation, I argue that the contours of the state, which are forged through the interplay of national culture, politics and the market (such as commitment to free trade, low taxation for the rich, privatization, the role of government-issued social services, and market regulation) profoundly affect eugenics. Simultaneously, I argue that the patterns of discourse produced by life under these conditions are the driving force behind maternalist eugenics. Or, in other words, I examine the ways in which the relationship between the market and the state, and the vision of the individual enshrined therein, gives rise to decisions to restrict or encourage reproduction among different groups of women.

as eugenics regarding the valuation of human worth, since eugenics has involved preventing the birth of some offspring and encouraging the birth of others, promoting the creation of some families and decimating others. Consequently, my research has the potential to provide a meaningful contribution to cultural and economic sociology, as well as the growing literature on the intersection between these two sub-disciplines.

Past and present examples of maternalist eugenics demonstrate that the state sustains eugenic practice, sometimes overtly and other times by allowing nongovernmental and market forces to practice eugenics without consequence. Therefore, to fully understand the shaping impact of the state-market relationship, I employ an historical investigation into Reform Era eugenics and eugenics in the Era of Neoliberalism. Liberalism is supposedly built on a belief in freedom and equal rights in support of the creation of what Thomas Jefferson termed, "an empire of liberty" (Tucker and Hendrickson 1990). ¹⁵ Therefore, the Age of Reform occupies a special place in the American political imaginary. ¹⁶ Progressivism, a form of liberalism performed during the Age of Reform, is seen as an approach to governing that spread the social good and ensured prosperity for its citizens through "the careful but active use of government to temper markets and enhance individual opportunities" (qtd. in Johnston 2002:69). The politics of the New Deal, which also advocated government regulation coupled with social programs, occupies much the same space in the American consciousness. On the other hand, the neoliberal agenda asserts that markets are most productive when government intervention is minimal. According to Harvey (2005), neoliberalism is "a

¹⁵ I do not attempt to create generalized, static conceptualizations of "liberalism" and "neoliberalism" as two internally-coherent, static and dichotomous approaches to political-economic structure. Instead, I intend to show how different variations of liberal and neoliberal policy formations have launched divergent approaches to the relationship between state power, the role of the state in shaping the lives of women, the influence of the economy, and consequently the reproductive options open to women and the political and economic forces that constrain or restrict such options in favor of shaping an "improved" population. Furthermore, I treat the state as a project, not as ideology. In other words, I view the material conditions of the state and the logic that underlies the maintenance of those conditions.

¹⁶ The Progressive Era, which occurs at the onset of the Age of Reform, marks the beginning of the modern, American state. It is during this time in American history that bureaucratization, social reform, new technologies that advanced travel and communication, and industrial capitalism which created new jobs (often with deplorable work conditions) and new commodities transformed the nation. Therefore, "When historians fight about Progressivism... [they are] struggling over the basic meanings of American democracy. If we could face this fact more directly, and begin to come to grips with the stakes involved, we would not only advance the study of the past but, even in some small and indirect ways, we might improve the practice of our current politics as well" (Johnston 2002:68).

theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (p. 2). Despite the dichotomous juxtaposition of the two eras in the political imaginary and much scholarly work, reform era liberalism and neoliberalism have both undermined freedom, liberty and truly *free* choice in a number of important, albeit different ways (which are explored in the proposed research). These differences portend important variation in how the state regulates and shapes reproductive inequalities created by eugenics.¹⁷

Therefore, to contribute to the interdisciplinary scholarship on reproductive rights and the state, I compare reform era liberalism and contemporary neoliberalism. To evaluate the impact of these divergent configurations of the relationship between the state and the market, I ask the following questions: What mechanisms have sustained eugenics from the dawn of the twentieth century to modern day? And, in the post-Civil Rights Era, how has eugenics come to increasingly target women of color? These more, specified research questions allow me to address these broader, interdisciplinary theoretical questions: How could eugenics continue within a nation where it has been politically condemned and undermined? How does market logic structure cultural logic? And, how does the shifting status of women according to culturally-ascribed notions of race, class, and disability affect national boundary-making?

1992; Winant 2001; Hazard 2012).

¹⁷ Perhaps one of the most widely explored dynamics within the literature on eugenics is the shift from biological understandings of race in the early twentieth century to cultural understandings of race after World War II. The reemergence of difference as "in the genes" has profoundly affected contemporary maternalist eugenics. And, biological understandings of race were the basis of eugenic marriages during the Age of Reform. This topic has been directly addressed in the scholarly literature (Degler 1991; Barkan

To answer these questions, I use historical and contemporary data to compare eugenics in the United States under liberal and neoliberal governance. Accordingly, I use laws, policies, institutional directives, eugenic propaganda, research from research journals and conferences, newspapers and magazines to understand maternalist eugenics within each period and contextualize it within the landscape created through the interaction of politics, the market and culture within each period. By investigating the ways in which the political-market structure of liberalism and neoliberalism constricts, enables or modifies women's reproductive options through the practice of eugenics, my work contributes to the literature on the state and women's reproductive rights as well as the state's relation to gender inequality more broadly.

WOMEN, THE STATE AND REPRODUCTIVE INEQUALITIES: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The feminist creed, *the personal is political*, is the foundation for feminist writing in and outside the academy. Subsequently, academic theory, political strategies, and social agendas often overlap and intersect in important ways for feminist writers. Because of the intentional blurring of lines between academe, politics, and the social experience of women, women's political exercise and women's political writing are inseparable.

Therefore, understanding the feminist approach to the state requires an attention to divergent feminist agendas, which have produced different, although useful, strains of scholarship. Although theorists turning their attention to the relationship between women and the state have made a number of deviating and sometimes contradictory claims, feminist state theorists are united in their effort to explain how the state contributes to gender oppression and what aspects of "the state" contribute to the social position of women. Accordingly, such analyses have focused on the role of women in the policy-

making process (Skocpol 1992), coercive or potentially liberating laws and institutional policies (Menkel-Meadow 1988), and how institutional actors represent or misrepresent the aims of a patriarchal state (Haney 1996).

The radical tradition within state feminist theory theorizes the state through the lens of male patriarchy and the ways that patriarchal political and economic arrangements maintain patriarchal social relations. Therefore, "the state" within this tradition is seen as a masculinist entity. Radical feminist literature on the state can be complicated by understanding the historical trajectory of such work. The first wave of feminist state theory focused on how "the state" reinscribes patriarchy through reproduction and mothering (Boris 1994; Rothman 1994), economic opportunities for women outside the domestic realm (Blumberg 1984, 1988; Chafetz 1990), or political structure (Collins 1972). While these insights sowed the seeds for a feminist imagining of the state, radical feminist state theorists have been charged with constructing the state as a maledominating monolith (Haney 1996).

Radical feminist state theorists' inclination to view "social relations of patterned disparity" as "internally rational" (MacKinnon 1982:516) tends to obscure the political and social gains women in the U.S. have made throughout the 19th and 20th centuries and the considerable differences between the lived experience of women based on other, socially constructed, mitigating factors such as class, disability, and race. Subsequently, the second wave of feminist state theory has made further progress toward a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between gender inequality and the state by focusing on institutional actors and the reproduction of state power (Haney 1996 and 2000), emphasizing women's agency in resisting male dominance (Gordon 1988), and

exploring the ways in which "public patriarchy" (women's reliance on the state, an arbiter of patriarchy) and "private patriarchy" (women's reliance on men within the family) mutually reinforce each other (Nelson 1990; Gordon 1994).

Radical feminist state theory sometimes draws heavily on Marxism (Rosaldo and Lamphere 1974; Leghorn and Parker 1981; Hennessy 1993), resulting in Socialist feminism and Marxist feminism which simultaneously interrogate the relationship between the means of production and the reproduction of gendered oppression. 18 These analyses have envisioned capitalism, not only as patriarchal, but as a system of power and exchange, in which subsistence (or work) shapes gendered subjectivities. For Marxist feminists, the material means of reproduction and the subsequent reproduction of social life is the driving force of history. For Socialist feminists, capitalism is an inherently corrosive and oppressive structure for women that produces unequal social relations. More nuanced insights are apparent in recent scholarly treatments that explore the capitalist relations and gender outside a rigidly Marxist or Socialist frame, including international marriage as a transnational exchange whereby intimacy, family and gender norms are contingent upon one's position within the global-capitalist system (Thai 2008), domestic work as a three-tiered system of reproductive labor between middle-class women in receiving nations and migrant domestics who in turn employ women too impoverished to migrate as domestics (Parreñas 2000), and pornography as a corporate structure aligned with hotels, cable television operators and banks (Dines 2010). Such

¹⁸ Although there is a great deal of overlap between Marxist feminism and Socialist feminism, there is tension regarding which axis of oppression possesses more explanatory power, "...feminist socialists believe that gender and class play an approximately equal role in any explanation of women's oppression, Marxist feminists believe that class ultimately better accounts for women's status and function(s)" (Tong 1989:39).

analyses reveal some of the ways the global, capitalist system exploits and submerges many women. Furthermore, all of these works situate social phenomena within the arena of global, capitalist relations while showing their cultural effect.

However, of equal importance to the theorization of subordination and exploitation within the state and the global capitalist relations in which it plays a part, are the ways in which women exercise their agency within the state and sometimes reap benefits from state policies. This is the agenda of liberal feminism. "Liberal feminism refers to that strand of feminism which was and indeed still is concerned with ending legal discrimination against women and removing all barriers which prevent their entry into the public sphere on equal terms with men" (Dale and Foster 1986:5-6). Historically, then, the liberal tradition has been concerned with legal protections for women after divorce, women's suffrage, and educational access for women and girls. Liberal feminist theory has offered two important challenges to radical feminist state theory: (1) its attention to processes of allocation rather than a one-sided focus on deprivation and (2) an inherent deconstruction of the public/private dichotomy through a concentration on women's impact in the public sphere as, "electors, policy makers, bureaucrats, and workers, within and outside the home" (Koven and Michel 1993:3). Thusly, liberal feminist analyses have pointed toward the ways in which welfare policy, despite important limitations, helps women in need by reducing poverty (Kamerman 1984; Ruggie 1984) and aiding women in surviving times of extreme deprivation (Piven 1990; Edin and Lein 1996).

In her 1990 piece, Judith Allen asks, "Does feminism need a theory of the state?" She argues that, "'The state' is a category of abstraction that is too aggregative, too

unitary and too specific to be of much use in addressing the disaggregated, diverse and specific (local) sites that must be of most pressing concern to feminists" (p. 22). She adds, "The state is too blunt an instrument to be of much assistance (beyond generalizations) in explanations, analyses or the design of workable strategies" (p. 22). To the contrary, while feminist state theorists have, at times, obscured the state with adjectival concepts, such as "patriarchal" or "masculinist", feminist state theory has contributed a great deal of insight into the nature of capitalism and its relation to gendered subjectivity. However, the strengths of the major strains of feminist state theory need to be synthesized and new theoretical and methodological tools need to be utilized to better access the state within feminist scholarship. By integrating insights from the liberal, radical and Marxist/Socialist traditions, the inquiry of feminist state theory can be shifted to investigate how the social, biological and political positions women occupy serve as sites of coercion, control and sometimes advantage within different politicoeconomic contexts or policy-logics. Accordingly, I examine the literature relevant to maternalist eugenics (which consists of literature on maternalist politics, reproductive rights, women's relation to the welfare state, and inequality therein). ¹⁹

Within the liberal feminist state theory literature, the maternalist state thesis (Skocpol 1992; Koven and Michel 1993; Kline 1993) argues that America's welfare system, which is typically considered one of the main arbiters of gendered state oppression, was created in the early twentieth century to meet the interests of mothers and their children. According to Koven and Michel (1993), "During periods when state welfare structures and bureaucracies were still rudimentary... female reformers,

¹⁹ There is, of course, considerable overlap between the topics I list here.

individually and through organizations, exerted a powerful influence in defining the needs of mothers and children and designing institutions and programs to address them" (p. 2). Accordingly, early women reformers' successes have been used as evidence of a "maternalist welfare state" (Skocpol 1992), some of the first measures to transform, "...women's primary *private* responsibility into *public* policy" (Koven and Michel 1993:2). ²⁰ While these measures are the result of women reformers who successfully made their case for legislation on the behalf of women, the progressive potential of these measures were stymied by eugenics. Accordingly, I argue that the stratification within welfare policy is evidence not of a static, homogenous *maternalist* welfare state but a bifurcated system of maternalist policies which serve as a consequence of eugenics.

Feminist scholars have focused on infringements on women of color's reproductive freedoms as a failure of the women's reproductive rights movement (Roberts 1999; Davis 2003). Furthermore, scholars highlight the disparate range and availability of contraception among different women based on race and socio-economic status (Kluchin 2009) and the racialization of welfare politics (Gordon 1990 and 2002; Roberts 1999; Nelson 2003). Scholars have also critically examined the role of Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood, in the eugenics movement (Roberts 1999; Ordover 2003; Franks 2005). All of this work has been extraordinarily important in exposing the historical and contemporary assault on women of color's reproductive activities. While this work begins to incorporate women of color into an analysis of

²⁰ The maternalist welfare thesis has received a great deal of criticism within the feminist academic community from feminist scholars who highlight how deeply stratified these social welfare measures truly were. However, it is also important to note that women's rights advocacy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was influenced by eugenics, for examples other than what I offer in this excerpt consider Margaret Sanger and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. For critical accounts of Skocpol's (1992) approach to the maternalist welfare state thesis, see Gordon (1993).

maternalist politics and the state, it does not explain shifts in the number of black women targeted under such programs.

Consequently, these scholars tend to construct women of color, especially black women's oppression, as a "steady stream" flowing with regularity throughout American history. In my analysis, I look at racialized oppression not a steady stream but a river with a sometimes rising and sometimes lowering tide. In other words, instead of presupposing racism and gendered oppression as constants, I look at the cultural inscription of particular political/market conditions that produce reproductive injustices against white women and women of color with different effects. By looking at all women affected by state policies, I attempt to breakdown the binary between liberal and radical feminism and between work on the "maternalist welfare state" and scholarship on welfare, race and inequality.²¹

While few analyses have explored reproductive inequalities by investigating eugenics, those that do specifically highlight the role of welfare policy. According to Mottier (2010), who concentrates on eugenics in Switzerland and the U.K., argues that:

The emergence of modern welfare policies and the presence of a favorable political context offered an institutional framework for the translation of eugenic science into policy practice. The emerging welfare-state also added an additional motive to the eugenic aim of preventing degeneracy of the nation: limiting public expenditure. (P. 142)

²¹ Because I look at divergent groups of women with different claims to power and the cultural, political and market forces that impact their reproductive autonomy, I see my analysis in line with a pluralist understanding of the state. According to Cole, Figgis and Laski (2005), "... American pluralism has avoided the abstract conceptualization of much Anglo-Saxon political theorizing. American pluralism considers associations as part of a process of political competition and tends to treat the state and government as intermediary networks through which the objectives of the dominant organized interests on any particular interest are [generally] carried out" (p. 3).

Furthermore, many of the women sterilized in the early-to-mid twentieth century were welfare recipients. As Nelson (2010) points out, "...in the mid-1970s welfare recipients with three or more children were sterilized at more than double the rate of non-welfare recipients" (p. 140). Many other victims of sterilization were children of welfare recipients. While the connection between welfare and eugenics is worthy of analysis, such an analysis would be more powerful if the focus were on the macro-political and market forces that structure the state (in which the welfare system plays an important role), rather than a single state apparatus, as I explain further below.

As the literature on maternalist politics shows, feminist state theory has traditionally understood gender within institutional boundaries including female jurisprudence (Roberts 1991; Clapp 1998) and the welfare system (Gordon 1990 and 1994; Koven and Michel 1993; Fraser and Gordon 1994; Edin and Lein 1997). Yet, a single institution does not reflect "the state". Such analyses have presented a "disassembled state", where institutions appear to operate separately of one another and cross-institutional connections are rarely made. Through the lens of a "disassembled state" the continued practice of eugenics would seem inexplicable. Attentiveness to the inter-play of state apparatuses is crucial in understanding the state. Furthermore, because some feminists have focused exclusively on the law, others on politics, and yet others on the welfare state, much could be gained from cross-fertilization between these subfields that has been left unexplored.

Theorizing within feminist state theory has resulted in new theoretical ways of understanding gender. Within the literature, gender has been understood along a patriarchy/vulnerability dichotomy (MacKinnon 1989), or at times, a differentiation

between public and private patriarchy (Brown 1981; Nelson 1990; Gordon 1994). Later work has added the concepts of "gendered policy logics" or approaches to gender difference in the law (O'Connor, Orloff, Shaver 1999) and "gender regimes" or gendered social relations within a particular institutional and organizational contexts (Connell 1987 and 2006), and an expanded conceptualization of gender regimes that includes cultural signs (Adams and Padamsee 2001). Whether gender is conceptualized as a regime, or a legal policy-logic, gender refers to the patterned ways in which the social worlds of women and men diverge and the ways in which each of these spheres is not internally consistent.

Thusly, feminist state theory suffers from a lack of conceptual tools regarding the contextual meanings of gender. Additionally, feminist state theory suffers from a partial understanding of the state. Expanding the conceptualization of the state within feminist state theory, in turn, has the potential to offer a more valuable way of understanding the relationship between the state, culture, the market and women's reproductive options. Furthermore, because the radical tradition within feminist state theory is often charged with conceptualizing the state as a static monolith, I ground my analysis in two distinct eras, the Age of Reform (1890-1940) and the Era of Neoliberalism (1980-2015), with specific policies pertaining to the relationship between policy and the market. Therefore, my analysis will help to move feminist state theorists from treating the state as an abstraction to conceptualizing the state as a historically contingent paradigm with particular political and market dynamics. Feminist literature on the state has operated within institutional boundaries; therefore, more fully realizing the state as a political-

economic whole has the potential to reveal interconnections and internal contradictions within the state.

In this project, I turn a critical eye toward the relationship between maternalist eugenics and its relation to liberal and neoliberal governance. This investigation reveals the relationship between gender, inequality, politics and culture within each of these eras. Much of the literature on feminist state theory lacks the insight gained from comparative analysis. Accordingly, such scholarship explains how gender relations are shaped by state power, but not how changes in the configuration of institutions, laws, and policies necessarily produce different results. By comparing maternalist eugenics within different political-market configurations, I aim to fill this theoretical hole. I utilize dual systems theory to conduct a macro-level analysis of the relationship between public policy and the market underlying eugenics, which includes the material conductions of capitalism and the cultural relations capitalism produces that have sustained eugenics within liberalism and neo-liberalism. In the following section, I discuss dual systems theory and offer a framework for applying this theory to maternalist eugenics.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: A FEMINIST APPROACH TO CULTURE AND ECONOMY

The "discursive turn" in the social sciences has produced analyses that often explore the socio-cultural dimensions of inequality and injustice. While the discursive turn has been fundamental in parsing out the complexities of identity formation and identity politics, much of the discursive turn has failed to directly confront problematic public policy. Furthermore, much scholarship has approached the political dimensions of group identity, but ignored the economic realities of advantage and disadvantage. The resulting policy absent and economically uninformed nature of academic feminism has

left a critical void in the literature. Again, much like feminist literature on the state, feminist theory is entangled with feminist political strivings. Indeed, according to Nancy Fraser (1985), "A critical social theory frames its research program and its conceptual framework with an eye to the aims and activities of those oppositional social movements with which it has a partisan though not uncritical identification" (p. 97). And, therefore, "The questions it asks and the models it designs are informed by that identification and interest" (Fraser 1985:97).

According to Chafetz (1997), a truly "feminist" theory must meet four criteria: (1) it must make gender central within the analysis, (2) it must view gender relations as problematic, (3) it must view gender relations as mutable, and a feminist theory must (4) mount a challenge to the status quo by attempting to alter or dismantle those systems that disadvantage, devalue, exploit or violate women. Therefore, feminist theory and epistemology are an outgrowth of the asymmetrical power relations between men and women; feminist theory takes this reality as its starting point. Under such a framework, "the everyday world [becomes]... problematic" (Smith 1989). Therefore, the unequal, gender dynamics found outside the ivory tower are the starting point of feminist theorizing. Accordingly, in order to dismantle masculinist epistemology, conceptual tools, and theory, feminist theory challenges the status quo in regard to mainstream theoretical insights.

Women's social position is determined by the nexus of both problematic cultural gender relations (oftentimes subsumed under the term "patriarchy") and capitalism.

However, specific mechanisms for understanding the relationship between culture and the market are few within feminist epistemology. And, problematically, capitalism and

patriarchy are often treated as static, totalizing entities within the feminist literature.

Understanding the specific mechanisms that underlie and presuppose patriarchy is crucial because, "'Patriarchy' is often reified by the use of an active verb, as in 'patriarchy causes/creates/requires...". And, "When this happens, the explanatory content evaporates completely" (Chafetz 1997:194). To understand and parse out the multifaceted relationship between cultural and economic forms of gender relations regarding maternalist eugenics, I employ dual systems theory.

Dual systems theory is a theoretical framework within the feminist tradition that "synthesizes the Marxist analysis of capitalism and the radical feminist theorization of patriarchy to demonstrate the importance of both social systems in the structuring of gender relations" (Cook 2000:207). Within this framework, "...some argue that there has been a fusion of capitalism and patriarchy into a single capitalist-patriarchy while others conceptualize these structures as mutually independent, yet interactive, systems of gender oppression" (Cook 2000:207). I view state power and capitalism as two interrelated and overlapping entities. This approach serves as a springboard for the investigation of the paradoxes of state rule, namely the collision between democratic politics and a growingly capitalist world system. Likewise, the state is also characterized by the collision of two other "contradictory impulses", in that, "The state...[is] necessarily both a universal, representing the interests of society against the market, and a class state, pursuing the agendas of the capitalist class, since the reproduction of capitalist relations was necessary to preserve society." (Block and Somers 1984:68) Therefore, the state, to a large degree, is shaped and organized by market principles. Yet, politics are not merely a mirror of market processes.

Dual systems theory arose out of many feminists' contention and frustration with Marxism. Marx's "economic reductionism," or Marx's view that culture and politics are epiphenomenal to the economic system, poses a challenge for those who see state politics, for instance, as sometimes disjointed from the economic interests of the state. Dual systems theory allows for an analysis of culture and capitalism that recognizes that women are embedded in complex social, cultural and political relations there create important ties beyond class position. In other words, Marxism privileges class position, without fully conceptualizing the ways in which durable, institutionalized social systems such as ableism, gender, class, and race serve as equally important social positions. Dual systems theory, then, aims to understand the relationship between gender, culture and capitalism with an understanding that women are being pulled in these multiple directions and thusly do not act as would *homo economicus*.

In recent years, as feminists have attempted to "bring the state back in" to their analyses, they have sometimes neglected the relationship between politics and economic realities such as the distribution of goods, wealth distribution, and the division of labor. Indeed, modes of appropriation and exploitation are a crucial starting point in understanding the relationship between state power and inequality of any sort. While all these issues can be resolved within the framework of dual systems theory, dual systems theory has not gone without important criticisms. Syntheses that see culture and capitalism as dichotomous have been charged with employing a polarizing strategy that does not correspond to reality. I see the relationship between the economic system and culture, not as a dichotomy, but as overlapping and intersecting systems that create complicated social, cultural and economic positions for women within the state.

However, using this bifocal lens allows my work to avoid economic reductionism (i.e., Marxist frameworks) and cultural reductionism (i.e., non- historically or politically situated "discursive" analyses). It is crucial that the analytical weight of each system be explored, so that neither disappears, nor fades into the background, within the analysis.

Furthermore, dual systems theory has been critiqued on the grounds that such analyses have often constructed a monolithic and ahistorical notion of the state and static conceptualizations of capitalism and patriarchy. By exploring and comparing the contours of liberal and neoliberal regimes, I attempt to improve upon static conceptualizations of capitalism and gendered societal relations. Dual systems theory has also been charged with paying too little analytical attention to, "...how other oppressive structures, such as sexuality, violence, racialization and imperialism, contribute to contemporary gender inequalities" (Cook 2000:207). I attempt to attend to these systems within my analysis of the cultural dimension of maternalist eugenics.

My analysis also contributes a great deal of complexity to the larger body of feminist studies, which too often makes "strong claims for the causal autonomy of gender" (Adams and Padamsee 2000:4). In my analysis of the mutually constitutive systems of culture and capitalism, I aim to surpass economically reductionist analyses that fall short of understanding how law, policy, civil society and culture interact with market dynamics. Along these lines, I look at different fields of allocation and exploitation (i.e., institutions, the functioning of the free market, NGOs, other Civil Society Organizations or CSOs (also sometimes referred to as NGOs (non-governmental organizations) or NPOs (non-profit organizations)). Recognizing that political economy is cultural and culture is economic but that neither category can be completely subsumed,

or collapsed into the other, I aim to provide a synthesis of women's cultural, legal, political and economic positions in relation to maternalist eugenics.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This dissertation, as a sociological analysis of historical data and contemporary data inherently synthesizes sociology and history, a worthwhile synthesis, since as Sewell (2005) suggests, "...social scientists and historians have always been interested in the same fundamental problems: the functioning, reproduction, and transformation of social relations" (p. 2). In fact, historical sociology offers a crucial contribution to the social sciences, because sociology often "...focuses on some combination of an illusory present and an even more illusory set of universal laws" while history often ignores "crucial patterns, processes, trajectories and cases of social change" (Calhoun 2003:383). In an effort to fill the theoretical gaps left by the distance between the two disciplines, I employ an historical/comparative methodology where I analyze and compare contemporary and historical data.

My research also interrogates political and market processes within specific epochs. Secondly, my work transcends a mere retelling of historical record through the comparison of different time periods. By comparing these time periods, which have yet to be contrasted regarding their relationship to maternalist eugenics, my analysis is structured in a way that makes a theoretical impact. In comparing the configuration of the political structure and the market within different periods, I have utilized theoretical sampling, a strategy often used within historical/comparative methods for theory generation.

In my work, I move beyond investigating the historical correctness of historical claims and unveiling forgotten historical realities to generate theory, more specifically to expand dual systems theory by specifying the relationship between gender, inequality, national politics and market forces. In the following section, I specify what counts as data for the proposed project and where this data has been (or will be) obtained. Regarding both contemporary and historical data, I use documentation to explore the contours of reproductive eugenic inequalities within the two periods under investigation. Through exploring these documents (propaganda, research and other organizational materials from eugenic CSOs/NGOs), I access the connections between eugenics and liberal and neoliberal formations of the state (i.e., laws, public policy, institutional policy, approach to the free market system, etc...).

Data

Data for this project involves the unification of two distinct categories. The first type of data consists of the *contemporary* data. Contemporary, primary data consists of laws, policy papers, scientific research, conference proceedings, congressional reports, reports from other government agencies, reports developed by CSOs, eugenic propaganda (*e.g.* newsletters, pamphlets and flyers) and any documents which expose critical linkages between eugenic advocacy organizations or scholars (e.g. newspaper articles, letters, etc...).²² I identified research, policy papers and conferences of interest by utilizing three complementary strategies: by first identifying eugenic civil society organizations (CSOs) and working outward to the conferences hosted by such organizations as well as the

²² In my analysis, I treat historically situated documents as primary sources and I treat sources that comment on or reconstruct that history *a posteriori* as secondary sources.

policies advocated within journals (or research conferences) associated with these organizations. ²³ Secondly, I used published research that takes a critical stance on eugenics as a guide to revealing eugenic research within the social and biological sciences and eugenic government policies. Thirdly, I used newspaper articles to find and consequently investigate potential eugenic policies. Once material was uncovered through these interrelated strategies, I reviewed the material to decide if it warranted inclusion as data for this project.

The second type of data included in this project is archival data. The chapters in which I trace the historical background of eugenic practices rely on data obtained from libraries, especially archival holdings. Archives that serve as the basis of this study include archival data from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia; the National Library of Medicine, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the National Holocaust Museum Library and the archives of the Carnegie Institution all located in or near Washington, DC. Here, again, I used the extensive body of historical research as a guide in identifying potential archives and consequently data for the project. Much of the material for this dissertation is public record and therefore internet accessible and widely available without permissions. Additionally, some archives have been created by social scientists and activists to bring attention to the international eugenics movement. ²⁴

²³ CSOs of importance include: the Population Council, the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute, the Galton Institute, the Pioneer Fund, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank.

²⁴ Apt examples include: Eugenics Archives Canada (http://eugenicsarchive.ca/) and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory's Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement (http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/).

Analysis

To analyze this data, I employ critical discourse analysis or CDA. CDA encompasses a number of different approaches to data analysis; additionally, each approach assumes a different theoretical position on the nature of discourse and related epistemological and ontological questions. Critical discourse analysis can also utilize quantitative methods to statistically compare the uses of certain words, phrases or grammatical/semantic devices, but CDA is often used qualitatively in order to reveal the meanings inherent in discourse. All approaches to discourse analysis go beyond the use of language and language use to assess the linguistic properties of social and cultural processes. While CDA is both interdisciplinary and widely used, there is no single, standard way of conducting a critical discourse analysis. Instead, analytical decision-making is the responsibility of the researcher (Lemke 1995); however, this analytical decision-making must be weighed against conducting a systematic and rigorous investigation.

Sociological discourse analysis goes beyond sentence-level meanings (the object of focus in linguistic discourse analysis) to reveal the conditions behind a specific problem and the problem's essence. Discourse analyses essentially deconstruct concepts, belief systems, and values by treating all social action as "text" and looking for conceptual patterns within bodies of text. Because discourse is constitutive, meaning it has aims and is essentially used to "do" things, an analysis of discourse reveals the motivations of social actors just as the dialogical strategies these actors employ reveal their ideological assumptions about reality.

As a constructivist approach, through critical discourse analysis I aim to create a textual account of the social. As Stuart Hall (1997) in his complication of Derrida points out about constructivist approaches:

According to this approach, we must not confuse the material world, where things and people exist, and the symbolic practices and processes through which representation, meaning and language operate. Constructionists do not deny the existence of the material world. However, it is not the material world that conveys meaning: it is the language system or whatever system we are using to represent our concepts. (P. 25)

Therefore, textual analyses must reach further than looking for meaning "in things" and look for what Hall (1997) describes as a "signifying practice" or "a practice that *produces* meaning, that *makes things mean*" [emphasis added] (p. 24). As such, only can an attention to texts as parts of larger bodies of knowledge with inherent power relations reveal meaning.

Definitions and Other Parameters

A narrow definition of eugenics is needed because of the ambiguity of the historical use of the term. As Lombardo in *A Century of Eugenics in America: From the Indiana Experiment to the Human Genome Era* (2011) highlights the abstruseness in which the term was used may have contributed to the concept's currency:

The popularity of *eugenics* over time as a catchword that described the aspirations and fears of those who used it was bolstered by the vagueness of the term itself. It borrowed meaning from the social and political meaning agendas of the people who found practical uses for it no less than from those who first offered it as an idea (P. 7).

As previously stated, Francis Galton, who has been attributed the founder of the eugenics movement, defined eugenics as, "...the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race; also with those that develop them to the utmost

advantage" (qtd. in Winfield 2007). Moreover, in the proliferation of historical texts on eugenics, eugenics has been treated as, "an ideal, a doctrine, a science..., a set of practices (ranging from birth control to euthanasia), and as a social movement (Paul 1998:95). Accordingly, my definition of eugenics draws on a particularly American conceptualization of eugenics in that I focus on the reproductive inequalities inherent in the practice of eugenics in the U.S. (i.e. *maternalist* eugenics). Therefore, my definition of eugenics is narrower and more focused than that utilized by other scholars. Accordingly, I do sometimes use the term population control as synonymous to maternalist eugenics. However, due to the confusion and proliferation of the term "eugenics" it is important to separate eugenics from overlapping phenomena such as scientific racism and Social Darwinism; these terms are often used interchangeably but do *not* necessarily represent the same practices. In the table below, I parse out definitions and historical and contemporary examples of each of these three phenomena in an effort to establish boundaries between eugenics, scientific racism and Social Darwinism.²⁶

Table 1. Interrelated Terms Addressed within Eugenics Literature				
	Maternalist Eugenics	Scientific Racism	Social Darwinism	
Definition	"Eugenics is the science	Scientific racism is	Based on the social	
	which deals with all	the application of	evolutionism of	
	influences that improve	scientific concepts	Herbert Spencer	
	the inborn qualities of a	and/or the scientific	and rooted in	
	race; also with those that	method to	laissez-faire	
	develop them to the	legitimize	politics, social	
	utmost advantage" (qtd.	biologically-	Darwinism	
	in Winfield). Eugenics	deterministic,	involves an	
	involves directly	hierarchal notions	aversion to social	
	reshaping a human		welfare programs	

²⁵ Euthanasia was sometimes suggested by eugenicists in the United States, though eugenics in the U.S. never successfully enacted such a measure. For more on eugenics and euthanasia, see Garver and Garver (1992).

²⁶ Utilizing a more narrow understanding of eugenics means that some instances of eugenic history is beyond the scope of the proposed project.

	population through eliminating supposedly "unfit" members of society through sterilization and enforced birth control and, often, by allocating resources to and encouraging procreation among supposedly "fit" members of society.	of race and racial difference.	and charity, based on the belief that the most fit will survive and those not adapted to thrive in the free market system should not receive aide.
Historical Example	State-sponsored sterilizations	Scientifically-deterministic explanations of intellectual inferiority among people of color (e.g. anthropometry and craniometry)	Dissolution of alms-houses
Contemporary Example	IVF, PGD, and other genetic interventions meant to encourage reproduction among the middle- and upper-classes	Scientifically-deterministic explanations of intellectual inferiority among people of color (e.g. the contemporary IQ debate)	Welfare reform (or ideally, for Social Darwinists, the dissolution of welfare)

The "reproductive dystopias" created by eugenics is central to the theoretical aims of this research. Each reproductive dystopia, or state-market imposed circumstance that limits the reproductive freedoms of women, pertains to a specific group of women and is situated within a particular period. (I argue throughout this research that cultural understandings of race in policy and science in the U.S. along with notions of class play a significant role in shaping reproductive inequalities under eugenics. Therefore, each of these categories represents a simultaneously raced and classed population of women. While both "compulsory reproduction" and "manipulated reproduction" refer to mostly middle and upper class white women, "obstructed reproduction" represents a nationally

representative racial panoply of women and "restricted reproduction" represents the reproductive circumstance of mostly Black women of low income or on government assistance.) A table showing the four "reproductive dystopias" I have articulated in my work is below; I also define each reproductive dystopia below.

Table 2. Reproductive Dystopias According to Women's Political Economy, Comparing the Age of Reform with the Era of Neoliberalism					
	Low Socio-Economic	Mid-High Socio-Economic			
	Status Class Women	Status Women			
Age of Reform (Liberalism)	Obstructed Reproduction	Compulsory Reproduction			
Era of Neoliberalism	Restricted Reproduction	Manipulated Reproduction			

Obstructed Reproduction-refers to the reproductive circumstances of women with low socio-economic status during the Age of Reform. Obstructed reproduction captures the measures used during this period to stop, or "obstruct", such women from reproducing. The paramount method used to obstruct reproduction among disenfranchised women during this time was sterilization, which occurred in the thousands.

Restricted Reproduction-refers to the reproductive circumstances of women with low socio-economic status during the Era of Neoliberalism. Restricted reproduction refers to the seemingly covert manifestations of eugenics occurring after 1980.

Such restrictions include coerced birth control in a number of different contexts including Norplant sentencing and public health clinics coercing women to use Norplant over other, shorter-term birth control methods.

Compulsory Reproduction-refers to the reproductive circumstances of women with high

socio-economic status during the Age of Reform. During the period, eugenicists were pushing for women within this socio-economic group to have large families in order to "strengthen the nation" with "good stock". Because of this, women in such circumstances were denied rights to birth control and experienced discrimination when attempting to undergo sterilization.

Manipulated Reproduction-refers to the reproductive circumstances of women with high socio-economic status during the Era of Neoliberalism. During this period, eugenicists argue that it is "moral" and "ethical" to use reproductive technologies to enhance potential offspring. This rhetoric coupled with the social denigration of various disabilities, has compelled women to participate in "manipulated reproduction."

In my research I develop a term I refer to as "image-to-policy transmutation" which I mean to represent the process by which cultural representations of particular groups in media and scientific discourse disseminate into public policy. This process attempts to contribute a meaningful way for feminist scholarship to overcome the epistemological gap between cultural understandings of inequality and 'the state' as the arbiter of inequities. ²⁷ While, in my research, I use this term to describe the process whereby cultural understandings of womanhood, mothering, race, class and disability created by the logic of eugenics have impacted public policy in the U.S., I believe the concept has import beyond the study of reproductive inequities. For instance, research on racialization of the prison industrial complex, studies on the racialization of terrorism, or

²⁷ Here, I refer to the problematic discord between cultural accounts of the state and policy focused work on the state within the feminist literature, see the literature review of this piece for a discussion on the topic. The following scholarship addresses the connections between culture and nation without naming this process: Yuval-Davis (1997) and Lister (1997).

the immigration debate in the United States could all be understood by drawing attention to "image-to-policy transmutation".

My definition of 'the state' emphasizes the relationship between law, public policy and state institutions with an understanding that the market also shapes the parameters of the state (Block and Somers 1984). Furthermore, it is aligned with a pluralist understanding of the state whereby groups with different interests vie for power (Galston 2002; Cole, Figgis and Laski 2005). By conceptualizing the state as a forum by which multiple interests compete, instead of a monolithic arbiter of inequality wherein hegemony is unfailingly reproduced, I avoid the reductionism of the "patriarchal state" within much feminist literature. Accordingly, by seeing the state as influenced by market forces but not reducible to the workings of the market, I also avoid the pitfalls of Marxist understandings of the state.²⁸

Justification of Historical Periods under Investigation

In this study, I compare Age of Reform liberalism (1890-1940) to our current system of neoliberalism (1980-present). The Age of Reform (1890-1940) captures the onset of eugenics in the United States as well as one of its highest points of practice within the U.S. During this period, many eugenic organizations were founded. Eugenic sterilization laws were enacted in many states, persons suspected of being "feeble-minded" were sterilized, and American institutions acted upon eugenic aims. Moreover, this time period captures the interwar period, where the loss of life during World War I was viewed as a "eugenic crisis". Therefore, several measures were also taken by

²⁸ For a thorough discussion on "the state" and the problematics of feminist and Marxist interpretations of the state, refer to the literature review (located earlier in this chapter).

eugenicists to encourage births among desirables to fill the void left by World War I, and strengthen the population by strengthening potential soldiers in case of future wars. In the proposed research, I compare the industrial past to the post-industrial present, a comparison that highlights the ways different economic landscapes have impacted women's reproductive rights. As feminists have turned their eye toward the state, they have begun to paint a picture of neoliberal inequality, however this work lacks comparative power. Therefore, such analyses have explored the realities of the neoliberal present without understanding how important differences in market structure, political and economic policy produce divergent consequences for women's reproductive capacities. I aim to fill these holes with my scholarship, which is outlined below:

OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Below, I provide a brief summary of the chapters to come in this dissertation. I focus on the major points made within each chapter including theoretical developments, discussion of pertinent historical events and analysis of contemporary phenomena.²⁹

Chapter 2: The Scientific Origins of Eugenics

In this chapter, I focus on the science of eugenics. In subsequent chapters of the dissertation, I argue that scientific discourse plays a significant role in the diffusion of culture into public policy. To build a groundwork for that argue I use the chapter to explore the cultural power of science by attending to the Darwin's influence on Western thought or the "new evolutionary paradigm of life" (Cuddy and Roche 2003: 9).

²⁹ Major concepts either of my own creation or that borrowed from another scholar(s) but extensively elaborated on are in bold.

In discussing this "new evolutionary paradigm of life" (Cuddy and Roche 2003:9) I also examine the ways in which eugenics is a form of what I refer to as "ideological isomorphism". Isomorphism is a scientific term that describes the similarity in organisms of different ancestry resulting from evolutionary convergence, and I argue that isomorphism serves as an appropriate metaphor for eugenics. Eugenic science arose not from the writings of any single author or group of scholars with homogenous viewpoints. Instead, eugenic science is the result of an international confluence of ideas on human "progress" and heredity that developed over time. As a result, what has now come to be called, "social Darwinism," is a result of the collision between Darwin's theory of evolution, British imperialism, and changes in western society as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution of the mid-to late-19th century.³⁰

Although Darwin is typically credited with discovering evolution, Darwin's work occurred after and alongside a number of compatible works, all drawing on some idea of evolution, heredity or competition. In this chapter, therefore, I discuss the importance of Lamarck, Mendel, Spencer and Malthus among others and their significant role in shaping the parameters of eugenic science. Consequently, I use the concept of "ideological isomorphism" to trace different strains of eugenic science. The ideological antecedents to eugenics are of profound importance because all contributed in some way to eugenic thought in the United States during the Age of Reform. Additionally, different scientific orientations toward the nature of biological evolution carried different political consequences and framed human difference in distinctive ways. For instance, early

³⁰ The industrial revolution aroused concerns that modern technology had suppressed the process of natural selection, whereby the weak and feeble-minded were being cared for, surviving and procreating to society's detriment, see Jordan (1908), Davenport (1910) and (1912), and Cole (1914).

theories of heredity developed by Mendel and Lamarck launched different strains of eugenics because of the distinctions in how the two scientists viewed heredity. Likewise, the influence of Sir Frances Galton and Herbert Spencer also launched different approaches, as Galtonians took on a distinctly "interventionist" position toward government pushing for eugenic laws and policies while those who subscribed to Herbert Spencer's view favored a laissez faire approach.

I also chronicle the institutionalization of eugenic science in academia and its role in shaping many disciplines in the social sciences by linking eugenic science with professors in prominent positions and leaders in public policy. I highlight organizations established to promote eugenic science and propaganda. And, I show the dissemination of eugenics in popular books on "science," research journals, and college textbooks.

However, I focus on anthropology and psychology and the establishment of the medical sciences as the disciplines most closely tethered to the history of eugenics.

I also delve into themes within the eugenic literature of the Age of Reform, paying special attention to the construction of race and gender therein. I conceptualize eugenics as both a racist and misogynist pseudo-science. The legitimation afforded eugenics because of its institutionalization in academe, I argue, makes these assertions on the "degenerative" nature of distinct populations, the poor, women, the disabled and people of color *scientifically* real. In the following chapters, I address the consequences of these issues and the significance of class, gender, disability and race within the context of the Age of Reform and the Era of Neoliberalism.

Chapter 3: Eliminating the 'Unwanted Types': Institutionalized Eugenics, Racial Politics and Gendered Inequality during the Age of Reform

In this chapter, I turn a critical eye toward eugenic sterilization laws and other eugenic measures that restricted the reproduction of women during the Age of Reform. Also of interest here is the process by which some women became labeled "feebleminded" and therefore dangerous mothers. By 1930, 30 U.S. states passed laws mandating sterilization for "mentally defective" citizens. Consequently, over 63, 000 persons were sterilized against their will on the authority of such laws. The law was adapted by Henry Laughlin's "model eugenical sterilization law" based on his state-by-state systematic review of eugenic sterilization laws distributed to interested legislatures all over the country.

I argue that the cultural imaginary of feeblemindedness during this time period was heavily biased with classist, racist, and misogynistic assertions of women's worthiness to become mothers. Accordingly, I expose the many mechanisms (tying together political, market-based and cultural mechanisms) by which women were found, condemned to be "feebleminded" and coerced into being sterilized. I use image-to-policy transmutation to look at the role the cultural and scientific construction of "white trash" played in the establishment of eugenic sterilization statutes that formed the basis of "obstructed reproduction" during the period.

I also examine "compulsory reproduction" during the Age of Reform. Again, using image-to-policy transmutation, I trace the cultural dimension of the women's rights movement and maternalist eugenics. I therefore show that despite the effort of birth control advocates, the nation's focus on producing "fit" children played a substantial role in prohibiting birth control during this time. Regarding "compulsory reproduction," I also

look at middle class white women's difficulties in seeking sterilization to limit their fecundity.

Overall, the chapter provides a thorough accounting of the ironies of the birth control movement and reproductive options available to women of the lower and middle classes. While sterilization may be a part of a healthy decision-making process for women who do not wish to have children or have decided to end childbearing, the use of sterilization on women who did not consent to the procedure creates significant inequities. In this chapter, I delve into both "obstructed reproduction" and "compulsory sterilization" as the two main ways women's reproductive autonomy were limited during the time.

Chapter 4: 'Raising the Specter of Eugenics': Contemporary Eugenics and the Perversion of Colorblindness

Negative eugenics has continued in recent decades, mainly through coerced birth control. This aversion to children who, assumedly, may become recipients of welfare is a part of an important, multi-generational aversion to dependency, a logic that equates human worth with survival and self-sufficiency in the free market system. Incentivizing sterilization among mothers convicted of using illegal drugs while pregnant or incentivizing drug-addicted women to undergo a tubal ligation or take dangerous birth control drugs as a condition of parole serve as stark examples of how eugenic assumptions about the urban "underclass" label many women as "unfit" mothers. Such women have been targeted by "eugenic drugs" such as Norplant and Depo-Provera.

Depo-Provera, for instance, has been on the U.S. drug market since the early 1990s even though the injectable contraceptive drug has an extensive track record of causing serious harm to women, including its tendency to trigger the development of cancer (Scully

2004). Both drugs have been offered under sterilization incentive programs, welfare reform measures, and by "free" clinics (Gordon 1974; Roberts 1997 and 2000). I trace the cultural tie of welfare dependency, deviance and black motherhood to show how this cultural construction and its dissemination into scientific discourse legitimates these policies. Therefore, I tie together the racialization of negative eugenics in the post-Civil Rights Era using the concept of image-to-policy transmutation.

Reprogenetics is the field of research that involves the creation, use, manipulation, or storage of embryos. Such techniques used to create, use, and manipulate embryos for *reproductive* purposes. Genius sperm banks or sperm banks that collect samples from men with "superior intelligence and outstanding achievements" have also become an increasing fad in recent years.³¹ New genetic procedures including in-vitro fertilization (IVF), pre-genetic diagnosis (PGD), and genetic counseling as well as the genetic manipulation of embryos have shed a new light on the critical connections between modern genetics and eugenics (Paren and Knowles 2003).

Selecting desirable fetuses constitutes "eugenic abortion." Through genetic screening a couple is able to see if a fetus has a particular "abnormality" and decide whether to abort the fetus based on this information. Such testing is obviously expensive and therefore only available to the affluent. Research has shown that pressure to abort a fetus with certain conditions such as Down-Syndrome can be high, both from doctors and others (such as family, friends, and associates). Communities can put pressure on parents, especially mothers, to produce "perfect" babies for the sake of the whole. Furthermore,

³¹ For example, a sperm bank in Escondido, California, The Repository for Germinal Choice, selected sperm donors on the basis of "scientific achievements and publications" for more on this particular sperm bank see Broad (1980) and Plotz (2006).

the logic of reprogenetics could support the view that childhood illness and disability is the fault of mothers for not making the right genetic choices, marking a new genetically infused, eugenic pressure to produce "fit" children. Consequently, "manipulated reproduction" often includes constraining choices, even among culturally-desired groups, as to what potential offspring are "desirable" and which are not.

Chapter 5: Conclusion: Resisting Maternalist Eugenics

In the final chapter of this dissertation manuscript, I offer several ways in which the U.S. may overcome the practice of eugenics. One of these arguments pertains to broad, socio-cultural change. In this more nuanced argument, I explore the ways in which we can resist the logic of neoliberalism and its accompanying devaluation of the poor and/or welfare dependent. I also examine scientific epistemology and the need for change within academia and several "think" tanks whereby eugenic research continues to be published, and in some cases, goes on to gain mainstream appeal. This dissemination of pseudo-science and poorly conducted science justifies and legitimizes the crude and barbaric science of eugenics. Another of these suggestions helping the U.S. eliminate eugenics is to impose strict economic sanctions for doctors, hospitals and agencies engaged in the practice of eugenics.

I also propose that the growing field of reprogenetics must be regulated and subject to ethical review. In addition to these objectives, I acknowledge the resistance that has already taken place including the courageous women that have shared their stories and allowed the rest of the nation to bear witness to their extraordinary pain. Likewise, I also discuss the importance of organizations that have worked to bring eugenics as an issue into the public sphere and fought on behalf of sterilization victims.

While acknowledgement of the horrors of eugenics in the state of North Carolina, along with some compensation for victims, is a major step forward, there is much work to do to completely eradicate eugenics, in both its overt and covert forms.

CHAPTER 2: THE SCIENTIFIC ORIGINS OF EUGENICS

"Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth radiates under the sign of disaster triumphant."

~The Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments, Horkheimer and Adorno (1947)

"Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living."

~The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, Karl Marx (1852)

Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory marked a profound paradigm shift, not only in the history of science, but in the history of ideas (Greene 1961; Russell 1985). The idea of evolution, especially natural selection and competition between organisms, offered a new way of thinking about plant and animal life and it also changed the way many viewed human society. Consequently, the Darwinian Revolution "...symbolizes a wholesale change in cultural values" (Bowler 1983:1). Indeed, Darwinism has become an integral part of cultural and political history. As Cuddy and Roche (2003) argue:

Darwin's concepts of descent from animal species, of scientific determinism, the struggle for life, adaptation, and progress made their way into all aspects of intellectual production and influenced the development of eugenics and social sciences as part of this new evolutionary paradigm of life. (P. 9)

This "new evolutionary paradigm of life" sparked by Darwin's writings spread widely. Most crucially, Darwin's writings laid the groundwork for an international eugenics movement; indeed, the concept of eugenics "set the world on fire" (Ward 1913:738).

Darwin's theory of evolution was not created in a vacuum but alongside and after a number of other theories on human inheritance. The ideological antecedents to eugenics are of profound importance because all contributed in some way to eugenic thought in the

U.S. In some places, eugenics took up a more Lamarckian form, in others Mendelian (Kelves 1985:5). Eugenics in the early twentieth century grew to an international social movement with "scholars" from all over the world adding to eugenic research and "scientific" writing on eugenics (Glenna, Gollnick, and Jones 2007). Collaboration among these scholars created an "international fertilization of eugenic ideas" with specific, consciously constructed themes. Eugenics was also highly influenced by other aligned ideologies such as social Darwinism, nativism, and racism became ingrained upon the western consciousness. But, how is Darwinian evolution related to eugenics? And, how did eugenics come to mark certain populations as fit or unfit to reproduce? In this chapter, I add to eugenics historiography by investigating the way scientific epistemology, law and institutional policies mutually marked some populations as "dangerous".

Consequently, my work follows in the scholarly tradition of historical work that traces the ideological and epistemological underpinnings of eugenics in the United States, including works that focus on the politics of IQ (Evans and Waites 1981; Gould 1996), hereditarianism (Haller 1984), social Darwinism (Hofstadter 1944; Bannister 1989; Hawkins 1997; Paul 2006), and eugenic family studies (Smith 1985; Rafter 1988). Additionally, my work also adds to historiographic work on eugenics as institutional policy and law (Smith and Nelson 1989; Lombardo 1996 and 2008) by tracing the cultural and epistemological impact of Darwinism in the early twentieth century America. Consequently, I put these five largely separate scholarly trajectories within the

³² For evidence of this see the scholarship published as part of the following journals: *The Eugenics Review* (1909-1968) and *The Annals of Eugenics*, beginning in 1926 and switching its name to the Annals of Human Genetics in 1955.

historiography of eugenics in conversation with each other. Therefore, my work offers an articulation of the ways in which the discourse of eugenics shaped notions of progress in conjunction with the subjugation of those marked as "unfit" by class, gender, race and disability, while simultaneously accounting for the institutionalization of eugenic science. *Eugenic Thought before Darwin*

The history of eugenics predates the existence of the word itself. While eugenic ideals took flight in the United States during the Age of Reform, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the epistemological roots of eugenics stretch as far back as the seventeenth century (Turner and Collinson 2003; Nelson 2010). The Enlightenment, or the "Age of Reason," marked Europe's shift from the medieval world, where monarchs and the church held absolute power over the rest of society to a modern society, where *individual* liberty was of the utmost importance, even if sometimes only ostensibly (Bristow 2011). As scholars sought to understand the external world, they sought also to improve it. The Enlightenment put human progress in the hands of society itself rather than god or nature alone, opening up a new dialogue on how to construct a secular, well-reasoned notion of progress and transformation. The subsequent "science of man," a term widely used by Enlightenment thinkers, stresses the self-directed nature of human consciousness during the period (Bristow 2011). Scientific and philosophical reasoning during the time made everything seem as if could be empirically examined, analyzed and consequently "improved upon" or manipulated. Certainly "...the idea of fundamental transformation, of the whole restructuring of human society, became deeply

lodged in the European mind and, by a later imperialist export, in the consciousness of the rest of the world" (Kumar 1978:20).³³

In many ways, the "enlightenment" of the West marked legitimate and significant progress through paradigm shifts in scientific reason, technological and industrial advances and the political realization of democracy. However, the Age of Enlightenment was far from an egalitarian utopia; many of the nations who contributed to Enlightenment thinking, such as France, Germany, Scotland, and Great Britain, maintained deeply hierarchal societies (Horkheimer and Adorno 1947). It is this paradox which made eugenics possible. Just as the enlightenment opened the opportunity for men not born of nobility to weigh in on pressing societal issues, many of the same forces made the poor and indolent a "problem" to be solved through empirical reason. This problematizing of the poor coupled with a global system where Western nations sought to maintain dominance over the rest of the world set the stage for eugenics, which focused on ways of disappearing the poor and increasing elites in a misled effort to construct stronger nations. Of equal importance, the Enlightenment imperative to utilize scientific reasoning to solve societal problems created a means by which to validate eugenics through statistical treatments of physical ability, IQ and the heritability of vices such as alcoholism, criminal behavior, or lasciviousness.

³³ Western notions of progress were highly influenced by the newly industrializing world around them. Global powers of the West were engulfed in a struggle to encourage industrial growth by maximizing profits. This economic impulse came to color the Western notion of "progress". Relatedly, liberalism stressed the importance of unrestrained economic growth and individual initiative. Both of which were emphasized in Smith (1776), a work which greatly shaped the global economic system. Therefore, liberalism conflated progress in general with the economic progress of the individual. Additionally, during this same period, because of the defeat of absolute rule and the waning power of the church, there was no longer a single unitary entity to dictate one's obligations to others and benevolence, and thus one's moral duties to the poor became a matter of public debate. It is here that eugenics becomes especially salient as a diagnosis of the social ills of poverty and pestilence.

Before Darwin published his theory of evolution in *The Origin of the Species* (1859), the relationship between human progress, heredity and conditions such as poverty had already become matters of national debate in Great Britain (Desmond and Moore 1991). Consequently, Darwin's work has been confused and confounded with Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, Gregor Mendel, Herbert Spencer and Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus, all of whom had a significant impact on notions of heredity and competition for resources. Their impact inherently speaks to the diversity of "scholars" who influenced eugenic thought. Many, like Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus, were regarded as "experts" in political economy and demography and other social and philosophical fields. However, at times, the theories of these "experts" directly contradicted each other. The work of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck and Gregor Mendel is evidence of the discord between some theories of inheritance. Lamarckism, a theory of evolution known as the "theory of adaptation" posited that characteristics acquired by habit or adaptation were inheritable. Though Lamarck's work predated Darwin, Lamarckism rose to greater import and influence in the wake of the Darwinian revolution (Paul 1984). Lamarck's emphasis on the habitual character of evolution sparked debate on the importance of environment (Bowler 1984; Leonard 2005). Most theories of evolution present heredity as strictly biological and inalterable. Instead, Lamarck, through his work on the crossbreeding of pea plants, theorized that organisms pass on features acquired through habitual action, not by genetic makeup. Accordingly, Lamarckism asserted that if a person's environment was changed, so too would their habits and eventually the characteristics they passed to their children. Through the selective breeding of pea plants, Mendel discovered that the plants only exhibit characteristics of their ancestors, unaltered by the environment or habit. Although Mendel's research was published as early as 1866, it went largely unrecognized until the early twentieth century when eugenicists

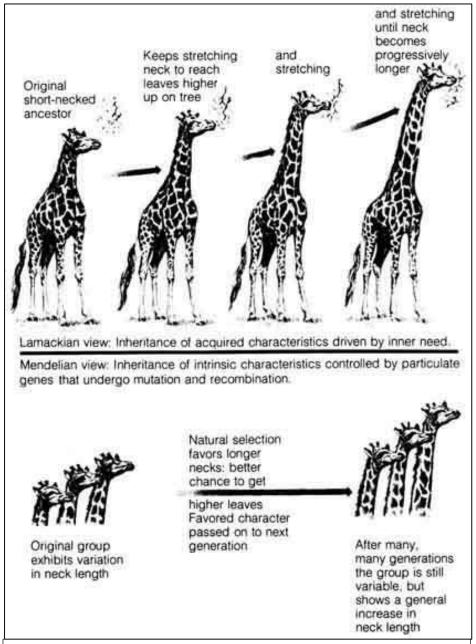


Figure 1. Diagram contrasts Mendelian and Lamarckian forms of evolution. *Source:* The graphic originally appeared in J. M. Savage's *Evolution* (1969).

rediscovered his work (Allen 1983), which provided a stark contradiction to Lamarck's research and served the interests of eugenicists who had no interest in improving the environment of the poor.³⁴

Thomas Malthus's 1798 *Essay on the Principle of Population*, asserted that nature produces far more plants and animals than can survive. As Darwin often wrote, Malthus had a profound effect on his thinking, it was this central idea of survival that Darwin elaborated on to conceptualize natural selection.³⁵ However, Malthus's larger argument focused not on the laws of nature but on the relationship between population, poverty and famine as he viewed them. Malthus believed that procreation would eventually outpace global resources, were it not for famine. He believed the effects of poverty to be a form of divine intervention and a necessary restriction on population growth. Malthus's influence on government and English politics was so great that the poor laws were suspended on the basis of his writings and replaced with reforms called the new poor laws. According to Desmond and Moore (1991), "The new poor law was slated as, 'a Malthusian bill designed to force the poor to emigrate, to work for lower wages, [and] to live on a coarser sort of food" (p. 196). Public opposition to Malthusian politics exploded in riots. Quite obviously, decades before Darwin published his thoughts on evolutionary

³⁴ The Lamarckian and Darwinian forms of evolution may seem similar on the surface but they are actually inversions of each other. Darwinian evolution suggests that organisms (humans, for example) gradually

adapt to their environments through natural selection. Therefore, according to Darwin, only those species who have characteristics that are favorable to their survival will indeed survive and pass on their genes to future generations. The Lamarckian form of evolution suggests that, "organisms acquire new characteristics as the result of a process of active adaptation to their environments" (Paul 2009:232).

³⁵ In an autobiographical sketch written be Charles Darwin, and later compiled by his son Francis Darwin, Darwin wrote: "In October 1838, that is, fifteen months after I had begun my systematic enquiry, I happened to read for amusement 'Malthus on Population,' and being well prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence which everywhere goes on from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants, it at once struck me that under these circumstances favorable variations would tend to be preserved, and unfavorable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be the formation of a new species. Here then I had at last got a theory by which to work…" (p. 68).

theory, the survival of the so-called "defective" lower classes was already a national concern in England. It is therefore not surprising that many "scholars" of the day almost simultaneously applied Darwin's theory of evolution to social problems.

Social Darwinist Herbert Spencer was a towering figure in evolutionary theory. According to Carneiro (1973), "although he did not coin the term 'evolution," it was he who introduced it into scientific discourse, who gave it its first rigorous definition, and who made the concept generally familiar" (p. 441). Indeed, Spencer's work on evolution predated Darwin's Origin of the Species (1859). Later, Spencer rejected the idea of natural selection for a neo-Lamarckian form of evolution. Neo-Lamarckians, then, believed that social welfare had a crippling effect because it undermined people's ability to develop the characteristics needed for the maintenance of a successful society. Therefore, as Paul argues, "For Spencer, competition functioned to make creatures work harder, and thus to exercise their organs and faculties...The mental powers, skills and traits of character fostered by this struggle would be transmitted to future generations, resulting in constant material and moral progress" (p. 227). Spencer's evolutionism was built around competition and for Spencer the ideal society was one that did not inhibit competition. After all, society worked best when it ensured the "survival of the fittest," the term he coined in 1864. The notion of "survival of the fittest" is perhaps most important in the political and economic policies it inspired. For instance, the laissez-faire doctrine, casts inequality not as a problem but a solution to social ills. In fact, Spencer "argued that unfettered economic competition would cull the unfit and also act as a spur to improvement" (Paul 2009:227).

Darwin, Social Darwinism and Eugenics

Historical analyses have generally been divided on the relationship between

Darwin's evolutionary theory and eugenics. Some historians have drawn "a straight line"
from Darwin to eugenics (Weikart 2004; Leonard 2005a) and others have argued that
eugenics is merely some perversion of Darwinian thought (Paul and Moore 2010; Paul
2006). Both of these oppositional perspectives obscure Darwin's relationship to eugenics.

Considering Darwin's evolutionary theory to be a "straight line" to eugenics ignores the
political context of Darwin's writings and the influence of other widely read and highly
regarded figures in biology and other sciences relating to heredity. On the other hand,
arguing that eugenics is merely a perversion or misapplication of Darwin's writings
ignores his later work and alliances with prominent eugenicists. To borrow a term from
evolutionary rhetoric and thought, eugenics is best thought of as an example of
ideological isomorphism.

The idea of isomorphism, the similarity in organisms of different ancestry resulting from evolutionary convergence, provides the metaphoric foundation for understanding eugenics. Eugenics arose not from the writings of any single author, but from a confluence of ideas about human progress and heredity that developed over time and alongside certain political and social realities. As a result, what has now come to be called "social Darwinism" is a result of the collision between Darwin's theory of evolution, Western imperialism, and changes in western society as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution beginning in the mid-18th century and ending in the mid-19th century. Moreover, although Darwin is typically credited with discovering evolution,

Darwin's work occurred after and alongside a number of compatible works, all drawing on some idea of evolution, heredity or competition.

Working as a geologist, Charles Darwin catalogued plants and animals in a multicontinental voyage along the H.M.S. Beagle from 1831 to 1836 (Darwin 1859). The
H.M.S. Beagle journeyed throughout South America, Africa and Australia, exposing
Darwin to a vast array of plant and animal variations and eventually inspiring his now
eminent book, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation*of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life (1859).³⁶ Darwin concluded that the variations
in plant and animal species he experienced in different locals "follow[ed] inevitably from
the struggle for life". In other words, Darwin came to the understanding that all living
organisms developed into more complex organisms overtime, a process he named
evolution, by way of their ability to adapt and survive, which he termed natural selection.

In *The Origin of Species* (1859) Darwin doesn't directly discuss *human* evolution. However, "Darwin's peers were less reticent, and within a month debate focused on the implications of Darwin's theory for human biological and social progress" (Paul 2006:215). Furthermore, "...Charles Darwin, in his great work on Variations of Animals and Plants under Domestication... taught the whole world the marvelous efficiency of artificial selection, it was no wonder that the idea of applying it to the human race should have occurred to many" (Ward 1913:737). Some of his peers credited Darwin as one of the champions of eugenics; in fact, Darwin's figure appeared in the first issue of the American Breeders Association's *Journal of Heredity* of 1910 (Brave and Silva 2007). Such credit was not uncommon because Darwin's work was largely ambiguous, scholars

³⁶ The title of the book was shortened to *The Origin of the Species* in a later edition, published in 1872.

of the day argued radically divergent perspectives based (at least loosely) on Darwin's concepts of evolution and natural selection.

Darwin's conceptualization of natural selection fit closely with the Enlightenment ideal of individuality. Indeed, evolution made it seem as if, "individual effort is rewarded by nature itself" (Bowler 1983:100). Darwin's theory of evolution inherently emphasized the significance of individual strength. According to Mayr (1991):

The whole concept of competition among individuals would be irrelevant if all these individuals were typologically identical—if they all had the same essence. Competition does not become meaningful in an evolutionary sense until a concept has developed that allows for variability among the individuals of the same population. Each individual may differ in the ability to tolerate climate, to find food, and a place in which to live, to find a mate, and to raise young successfully. (P. 80)

Of course, the Darwinian concept of competition, which pitted individuals against each other in a struggle for existence, was reinforced by the transformation of social relations that occurred after the French revolution (Paul and Moore 2010). The French revolution and concurrent changes in other Western countries promoted individual reason and economic self-reliance, which placed the role of family relations and religious loyalties into a precarious position.

The connection between Darwin and eugenics was not only philosophical and epistemological, the link was also solidified by Darwin's position among eugenicists and his family's influence within the international eugenics movement. Although some historians have argued that eugenics and Darwin's evolutionary theory are not closely connected, as Bergman (2011) points out, "Darwin's sons clearly saw a connection between their father's theory and eugenics and for this reason several became leaders in the eugenics movement" (p. 237). Not only did Darwin himself engage with eugenic

ideas, but the Darwin family was so active in promoting eugenics that Bergman (2011) refers to eugenics as "the Darwin family business":

Darwin's son Leonard replaced his cousin Galton as chairman of the National Eugenics Society in 1911.³⁷ In the same year, an offshoot of the society was formed in Cambridge. Among its leading members were three more of Charles Darwin's sons, Horace, Francis and George. The group's treasurer was a young economics lecturer at the university, John Maynard Keynes, whose younger brother Geoffrey would later marry Darwin's granddaughter Margaret. Meanwhile, Keynes's mother, Florence, and Horace Darwin's daughter Ruth, sat together on the committee of the Cambridge Association for the Care of the Feeble-Minded... a front organization for eugenics. (P. 237)

Even more, it was Charles Darwin's cousin, Sir Francis Galton, who coined the term "eugenics". In a personal letter, Charles Davenport, who established the Eugenics Record Office (10/26/1910), expressed his debt to Galton as founder of eugenics:

So you see the seed sown by you is still sprouting in distant countries. And there is great interest in Eugenics in America, I can assure you. We have a plot of ground of 80 acres, near New York City, a house with a fire proof addition for our records. We have a superintendent, a stenographer, and two helpers besides to train field workers. These are all associated with the Station for Experimental Evolution, which supplies experimental evidence of the methods of heredity. We have a satisfactory income for a beginning and have established very cordial relations with institutions.

Sir Frances Galton not only founded eugenics but also contributed to the international eugenics movement as a prominent member of the National Eugenics Society. Galton embarked upon a decade's long attempt to link human variation, heredity, and intellectual capacity after the publication of *The Origin of Species* (1859). In essays such as "Hereditary Talent and Character" (1865) and books such as *Hereditary Genius* (1869),

³⁷ Leonard Darwin published a number of books on the subject of eugenics, see Darwin (1926) and (1929) including *What is Eugenics?* in 1923 and *The Need for Eugenic Reform* in 1926. He also published a number of articles on eugenics, see Darwin (1914), (1915), (1919) and (1921).

Galton argued that intelligence was the result of inheritance and in his "scientific" research where he demonstrated that 'great men' or intellectually distinguished men, were more likely to be related to men of the same sort. In other words, Galton found the elite classes to contain higher levels of intelligence than the lower classes. Relatedly, Galton was also, "first to sound an alarm about the 'differential birthrate'" between the higher and lower classes" (Paul 1998:216), whereby the poor tend to have larger families than the middle and upper classes. In the introduction to *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into Its Laws and Consequences* (1869), Galton asserts:

...it is easy, to obtain by careful selection a permanent breed of dogs or horses gifted with peculiar powers of running, or of doing anything else, so it would be quite practicable to produce a highly-gifted race of men by judicious marriages during several consecutive generations. (P. 1)

Therefore, for Galton, only selective breeding could improve man's collective lot.

Francis Galton coined the term eugenics in 1883 when he combined the Greek word *eu* (good or well) with the suffix *–genēs* (born). Galtonian eugenics, then, supported procreation among the "wellborn" and discouraged the breeding of the "unfit". However, "Galton first published his eugenic ideas in 1865—well before he coined the word itself—in a two-part article for *Macmillan's Magazine* which he subsequently expanded into a book, *Hereditary Genius*, published in 1869" (Kelves 1985:3). Although Galton was not the first to shroud gross human inequalities in scientific reason, his work became an integral part, if not springboard, for many scientific and social scientific disciplines

³⁸ While *Hereditary Genius* (1869) received a great deal of positive scholarly attention, it received some mixed reviews as well. For instance, in Nature, the flagship journal of the biological sciences, the review read thusly: "Many who read it without the care and attention it requires and deserves, will admit it is ingenious, but declare that the question is incapable of proof" (Wallace 1870:502).

such as biology, serology, sexology, genealogy, anthropology, and statistics. Kelves (1985) describes the extent of his Galton's reach:

In the decades between 1890 and 1930, eugenics movements developed in more than thirty countries, each adapting the international Galtonian gospel to suit local scientific, cultural, institutional, and political conditions. In some places eugenics was dominated by experimental biologists, in others by animal breeders, physicians, pediatricians, psychiatrists, anthropologists, demographers, or public health officials. (P. 5)

While then revered figures like Galton played a substantial role in shaping eugenics, eugenics was also highly influenced by the cultural context of which it emerged.

Racism and Misogyny in Eugenic Science

Eugenic discourses in the sciences reflects "symbolic colonialism" or set of symbols, images, and other signifiers that evoke the colonial mindset, the binding of dark skin and anthropomorphic features associated with people of color to low intelligence and barbarism as part of the subjugation of oppressed peoples. The "symbolic colonialism" was merely an extension of the colonial mindset that saw the subjugated peoples of non-European descent as subhuman or less civilized, less modern, less capable, and less *evolved* than Western Europeans. This colonial mindset served as the foundation of American politics which refused citizenship to Native Americans as oppressed racial 'others', systemically denied human rights to African Americans, and often overtly discriminated against members of various immigrant communities. Troublingly, eugenics provided a vehicle by which the colonial mindset could be framed as scientific fact. As Dennis (1995) points out:

³⁹ The colonial aspects of early eugenics are documented in Campbell (2010) and Garton (2010). Here, I use the term "symbolic colonialism" to highlight the overlap between the colonial politics of eugenics and the cultural construction of eugenics in scientific discourse.

Science has often been used as a justification to propose, project, and enact racist social policies. The philosophical and political underpinnings of ideas associated with racial superiority and inferiority were first given scientific legitimacy and credence with the publication of Charles Darwin's (1859) revolutionary book *The Origin of Species*.

Accordingly, eugenicists used the valid "science" of eugenics which borrowed its credibility from evolutionary theory, in the interest of maintaining white racial purity. White purity during this time was achieved by restricting immigration among non-European nations (Barkan 1991), enacting miscegenation laws, and arguing that children born to parents of different races or "mongrels" (in the racist language of the day) were inferior and likely to die out (Brantlinger 2003). Therefore, this particular strain of eugenics, eugenics in service to the interests of white supremacy, is best thought of as "scientific white supremacy" (Dorr 2000). ⁴⁰

These ideas were indelibly colored by the prejudices bound up in the place and time in which these ideas were developed. Therefore, eugenics is inherently bound up in racism and colonialism. People who were not of Anglo or Nordic descent were firmly placed outside the realm of "desirable" human stock and condemned as "lower races". According to Turda (2010): "...the fundamental reality was that eugenics was born into a period when European and American societies thought in terms of racial categories, and believed in the existence of 'superior' and 'inferior' races" (p. 66). Indeed, a hierarchal concept of race, with Europeans as the zenith of high civilization and other subjugated peoples such as Africans, Aborigines, and other "dark races" viewed as subhuman and occupying the bottom strata was long established in the West before Darwin's

⁴⁰ I've borrowed this term, "scientific white supremacy" from Gregory Dorr's (2000). I find it to aptly characterize the racist orientation of eugenics and helps to make the racist strain of eugenics analytically distinct from eugenics predicated on economic elitism.

perspective on evolution became popular. In fact, the evolutionary paradigm justified preexisting racial oppression whereby enslaving West Africans and desolating Native American tribes in conquest through the frame of the evolutionary paradigm seemed like, "... an inevitable consequence of the struggle for existence, an implication of the subtitle of the *Origin of Species*: 'the preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life'" (Bowler 1983:301). This made the brutality of conquering, enslaving, destroying other peoples in the name of building empires mounting evidence of European "fitness" and superiority.

The then-new science of anthropology put eugenic racial hierarchies into scientific practice. While anthropologists in the earlier twentieth century took a number of different positions on race, some more egalitarian than others, a significant amount of anthropologists during this period were associated with the Eugenics Society and closely influenced by the work of Francis Galton (Barkan 1992). According to Baker (1998), anthropological treatments of race not only overlapped with the dominant discourse on racial inferiority during the early-twentieth century, they also justified the gross inequalities of the period:

The rise of academic anthropology in the United States occurred in the late 1880s and was concurrent with the rise of American imperialism and the institutionalization of racial segregation and disfranchisement. [Anthropology]...bolstered proslavery forces during the antebellum period, professional anthropology bolstered Jim Crow and imperial conquests during the 1890s. (P. 26)

Anthropologists used various morphological characteristics—skull length, skull width, position and size of the eyes, size and shape of the nose, lip size, hair texture, skin and color—to divide humanity into separate racial categories. Eugenically-oriented anthropologists used these phenotypical categories to make generalizations about the

tendencies of different races or their "race traits," a way to treat cultural dynamics and environmental circumstances as biologically ascribed based on racial categories.

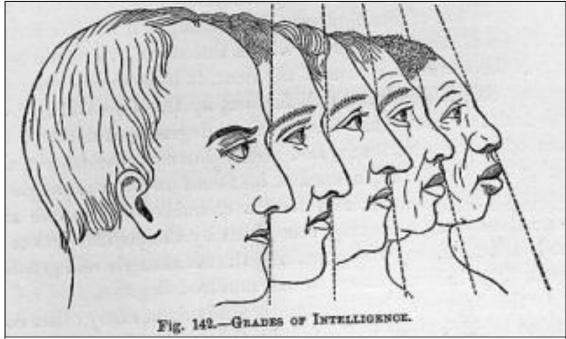


Figure 2. A Depiction of the Relationship between Racial Hierarchy and Intelligence, according to Samuel R. Wells. *Source: New Physiognomy, Or, Signs of Character: As Manifested Through Temperament and External Forms, and Especially in 'the Human Face Divine'* (1876 [1866]).

Anthropologists who were invested in hierarchal racial categorization developed divergent ideas on the relationship between race and evolution (Degler 1991). Some argued that humanity was comprised of one race and that people of color were a more primitive, less evolved form of humanity than whites. This led some to argue that people of color were animalistic or sub-human, closer to primates in the evolutionary chain than to humans. Others, such as German eugenicist Enerst Haeckel, argued a "polygenist" view of race, whereby races were believed to have separate origins. The polygenist view of race directly condemned race mixing on the basis that because the races were of

separate species, interbreeding would produce physically weak, mentally disturbed and/or impotent offspring. ⁴¹ For instance, according to Madison Grant (1916):

Whether we like to admit it or not...the result of the mixture of two races, in the long run gives us a race reverting to the more ancient, generalized and lower type. The cross between a white man and an Indian is an Indian; the cross between a white man and a negro is a negro; the cross between a white man and a Hindu is a Hindu; and the cross between any of the three European races and a Jew is a Jew. (P. 14-16)

Polygenists were entrenched in the view that racially mixed people would in physical traits and character, adhere to what they perceived as the "inferior" races.

Regardless of whether particular scholars argued that humankind is comprised of a single human race with different racial/ethnic groups falling within different spaces on the evolutionary scale or that the different races constitute different species altogether, the notion that races were distinct and unequal was the prevailing mode of thought at the time. In the words of Herbert Spencer (1907):

Whether all the races be or be not derived from one stock, philology makes it clear that whole groups of races, now easily distinguishable from each other, were originally one race—that the diffusion of one race into different climates and conditions of existence has produced many altered forms of it. (P. 29)

Whether eugenicists understood races as developing separately or saw each race representing a link on the evolutionary chain, the view that races were unequal and there was some indelible and enduring characters of the races that make them distinct was common among eugenicists.

While much eugenic work on race fell short of "science," several works were considered scholarly and widely disseminated and used with authority by key decision

⁴¹ Such a view was in service to American eugenicists who were chiefly concerned with protecting the purity of the white race.

makers. For instance, Madison Grant's The Passing of the Great Race (1916) was popular in the twentieth century. According to Spiro (2009), "In the 1920s and 1930s, it had been quite common for congressmen to read aloud from Grant's book in the U.S. Capitol to argue for restricting the immigration for the 'inferior' non-Nordic races and even to justify the lynching of African Americans" (p. xii). Madison Grant exhibited an enormous amount of influence in government, in particular, he was a key figure in convincing Congress to pass restricted immigration legislation, coercive sterilization statutes and miscegenation laws. However, Grant was not the only author to justify the subjugation of African Americans by denigrating the entire race. G. Stanley Hall argued that the lower races are "childlike" and therefore incapable of caring for themselves, E. D. Cope argued that Black's suffered a "retardation of growth," along the same lines, Karl Pearson argued that the "inferior races" would become extinct. Such "scholarly" work justified the denial of human rights and citizenship to Blacks. In the landmark court decision, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, "...Melville Fuller, the chancellor of the Smithsonian Institution and the chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court...stated that 'if one race be inferior to the other socially, the Constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane". 42 However, people of African descent were not the only targets of eugenicists in the early twentieth century, contention amongst Western and Eastern Europeans was also very prevalent in the early twentieth century.

Additionally, particular groups such as the Irish, Italians and people of Jewish descent, who later were constructed as white in Western society, in the early-twentieth

⁴² *Plessy v. Ferguson* established the separate but equal doctrine that maintained racial segregation in the U.S. in 1896.

century were viewed with great contempt as racial/ethnic "others." British embryologist E. W. MacBride, for example, called for the sterilization of the "inferior" Irish. Disdain for Eastern Europeans was endemic in the early twentieth century. Anthropologist Daniel Folkmar and his wife, a medical doctor and supporter of eugenics Elnora Folkmar (1911), argued in the *Dictionary of Races and Peoples*, that Americans should pay special attention to immigration from Eastern Europe because these people added, "new ethnical factors" to the United States whose "true racial status... was imperfectly understood even in communities where they were most numerous" (p. 1). ⁴³ The fear that Eastern Europeans were inferior stock and that their immigration was degrading the American gene pool was popular during the Age of Reform and one of the main concerns of eugenicists during the time.

Eugenics also constructed women as an inferior class. Darwin and scholars whose discourse helped shape eugenics before the work of Darwin, condemned women as intellectually inferior. For instance, in *The Descent of Man* (2009 [1871]), Darwin argues:

The chief distinction in the intellectual powers of the two sexes is shown by man's attaining to a higher eminence, in whatever he takes up, than can woman—whether requiring deep thought, reason or imagination, or merely the use of the senses and hands. If two lists were made of the most eminent men and women in poetry, painting, sculpture, music (inclusive of both composition and performance), history, science, and philosophy, with half-a-dozen names under each subject, the two lists would not bear comparison. (P. 450)

Of course, as this passage illustrates, in Darwin's view women were relegated to a state of immutable inferiority to men.

⁴³ The work of Folkmar and Folkmar (1911) was prepared as a report to the Immigration Commission of the 61st Congress of the United States and presented as such on December 5, 1910. The commission was established in 1907 because of the fear that immigrants were part of "degenerate stocks".

According to Buss (1976), Galton's work on gendered differences in psychological traits "gives him the distinction of being the 'father' of the modern study of sex differences" (p. 283). Galton (1889) constructed women as fretful, mild and docile, while regarding men as violent and masterful (p. 231). However, in his research studies on intelligence and heredity Galton acknowledged that women can be "eminent" and "hereditarily gifted" (Galton 1869:325). But, this "eminence" and the gifts bestowed women should, according to Galton, be put to scant use. Women, for Galton are only treated as valuable regarding mate selection. In other words, women's abilities are relegated to their role as wives and mothers to "great men". In *Hereditary Genius* (1869), Galton not only mentions women solely within the confines of their marriageability and motherliness, he also argues that the intelligence of prominent men is more highly attributable to the male line than the female, therefore limiting women's prescribed role as incubators of genius (which is the *only* utility he affords women) without any discussion of female genius for its own sake.

Other early arbiters of eugenic thought expressed much the same view. As Mabel Atkinson (1910) points out:

Herbert Spencer ... in his essay on education deprecates excessive brain work on the part of women as likely to decrease their natural attractiveness, and last summer Professor H. E. Armstrong at the British Association re-iterated these objections in somewhat strong language, declaring that if a woman had a natural genius for chemistry it was far better that she pass it on to the next generation than that she should develop it for her own individual profit in sterile independence. (P. 51)

This vision of womanhood as entirely in service to bearing "superior" children was grossly limiting to women whose lives were constrained by such logic. However, women

who were viewed as at fault for their inability to produce "superior" offspring were also denigrated by eugenic discourse.

Malthus's eugenic discourse is highly gendered; his particular form of populationism is imbued with gendered narratives (Davenport 1995). Comparing women of nations all over the world, Malthus too relegates women to the realms of courting and child bearing without any greater understanding of their humanity (Malthus 1872). Additionally, because the central theme that runs throughout Malthus's work is that fertility is adversely related to prosperity—that large-scale social problems and failures of resources like disease, pestilence and starvation, and war are caused by a burgeoning population—women are inherently condemned as the source of these problems in marginalized societies (Malthus 1872). Therefore, Malthus's entire eugenic agenda relied on checking the propagation of poor, disenfranchised women.⁴⁴

Women, ultimately, within the eugenic mindset, were viewed as intellectually inferior to men and relegated to a subordinate position where their worth was caught up in their roles as wives and mothers. Despite women having to be of an appropriate level of mental ability to be considered suitable for child bearing, ironically women who were too intelligent were also constructed as a danger to the fabric of society, they were considered too headstrong and independent, and their low rates of marriage and small birthrates made them dangerous to the health and vitality of the nation. Malthusianism,

⁴⁴ This assertion is based on my critical assessment of Malthus's major writing, see Malthus (1872).

⁴⁵ Early eugenicists documented women's intelligence as lower to that of men in numerous studies, including: Hollingworth (1913); Merill (1918); Bassett and Porteus (1920); and Fernald, Hayes and Dawley (1920). For a summary on the history of IQ testing and gender see: Shields (1982).

⁴⁶ For more on the view of eugenicists on women who are very intelligent and/or college educated see the following historical source material: Leslie (1911), Fisher and Stock (1915), Banker (1917), and Winston (1930).

"blamed the poor for their own fate, claiming that the impoverishment of the lower classes is a result of population increase among them and that a check on population growth through birth control would help improve the standard of living of the poor" (Wang 2010:7). These logics of women's "natural" societal roles and their potential worth coalesced in a dialogue with overlapping notions of intellect, fecundity, marriage and mothering that favored women who were of the middle classes and welcoming of child bearing and child rearing as their primary role. "Fit" women of the middle and upper classes who dared not procreate and "unfit" women of the lower classes who dared to procreate were, for eugenicists, the problems at the center of "race suicide."

The Institutionalization of Eugenic Science in the United States

Indeed, there was an international fertilization of eugenic ideas in the twentieth century; international eugenics congresses were held in 1912, 1921 and 1932. The second and third international eugenics congresses were held in the United States, illustrating the important role that the United States played in the international eugenics movement (Bashford and Levine 2010). These congresses allowed like-minded scholars to interact and share ideas on eugenics; in fact, "[i]nternational congresses are organized no doubt mainly with the object of enabling workers in the same field both to become personally acquainted with each other—a far-reaching benefit—and to exchange information and ideas" (Darwin 1921: 313).

The founding fathers of the United States were deeply influenced by

Enlightenment thought. Enlightenment thinking was built upon the, "interdependent
concepts as the dignity and worth of the 'monadic' (socially isolated and self-sufficient)
individual and the interconnections between reason, knowledge, progress, freedom, and

ethical action" along with "...a privileged place for science and philosophy" (Flax 1990:7-8). Indeed, the founding of the United States, considered at the time "the America experiment," was a test to see how a nation established on Enlightenment ideals would fare on the global stage. Just as eugenic ideas arose within Enlightenment thought, eugenics thrived in the United States.

The industrial revolution aroused concerns that modern technology had suppressed the process of natural selection, whereby the weak and feeble-minded were being cared for, surviving and procreating, according to eugenicists, to society's detriment. According to an assemblage of university lectures by prominent eugenicists entitled, *Eugenics: Twelve University Lectures* (Aldrich et al. 1914):

The crude selective processes of nature have through the struggle for existence and the elimination of the less fit gradually led up from lower man to the man of our time. But modern man is a sympathetic being. He tries to prolong the life of the defective and the diseased. Instead of killing the criminal, he attempts to reform him. Instead of allowing children who have a feeble resistance to tuberculosis to die, he keeps them alive and they grow up, perhaps to transmit their weakness to offspring. He prevents epidemics. He limits the exterminating influences of alcoholism, and of poverty. Thus modern charity, modern philanthropy, and modern medicine combine to interfere with that *selective death-rate* which, biologists tell us, has, hitherto, played an important role in race betterment. [emphasis added] (P. x) 47

To correct the progressive potential of modern medicine and governing, eugenicists championed institutionalization and sterilization.

⁴⁷ According to Aldrich et al. (1914) "The lectures contained in this volume were selected from among a number given in various universities and colleges throughout the country in the scholastic year of 1912-1913. Therefore, the purpose has been to have the subject of eugenics—what it means, what the necessities for it are, and what are its aims—put clearly and forcefully before as many undergraduate student[s] as possible" (p. x).

One of the most important figures in the United States when it came to the establishment of eugenic organizations was Charles Davenport.⁴⁸ In fact, Morris Steggerda (1940) in a personal letter, refers to him as the "second Darwin":

Aside from Dr. Davenport's many scientific contributions, he stands as a second Darwin in the field of biology. He has established three large institutions, a station for experimental evolution, the only one of its kind, a Eugenics Record Office, which has definitely furthered the scientific end of eugenics, and Dr. Davenport has been the guiding force of the biological laboratory for thirty years. (P. 1)

Eugenic organizations sprang up all over the country including: the American Breeders' Association, the American Eugenics Society, the Eugenics Research Association, the Galton Society, the Eugenics Records Office, the Human Betterment Foundation, the Race Betterment Foundation and the Carnegie Institution of Washington's (CIW) Station for Experimental Evolution (later becoming the Station for Experimental Evolution), not including state-sponsored eugenic boards. And, of these Davenport headed the Eugenics Record Office and the CIW's Station for Experimental Evolution as well as CIW's department of genetics. Many of these organizations garnered the support of wealthy "philanthropists". According to Black (2003), "Eugenics was nothing less than corporate philanthropy gone wild" (p. 7). The Carnegie Foundation poured millions of dollars into the Eugenics Records Office. The Rockefeller Foundation supported eugenic work through research grants (Black 2003). Some of the richest families of the day supported eugenics through donations and trusts.

Many of these organizations made a profound societal impact through outreach.

For instance, one organization, the Eugenics Record Association, sponsored essay

⁴⁸ Rosenberg (1976) covers both the importance of Davenport and the illogicalities of his research.

contests on eugenics in 1928 and 1929 "in an attempt to get the eugenics word out, [and] to popularize the eugenics mindset" (Ordover 2003:32). Topics included comparing the birthrate between Nordic and non-Nordic peoples and the fall in birthrate among Europeans; prize money ranged from \$1,000 to \$3,500 (Ordover 2003:32). ⁴⁹ The impact of these organizations far exceeded the dissemination of propaganda, they also doubled as educational and/or training facilities. For instance, leading eugenicist Harry H. Laughlin, in a 1925 essay "Eugenics in America," referred to the Eugenics Record Office as a research organization and training school for field workers.

But most crucially, eugenicists impacted society and key decision makers with their research; eugenic organizations were able to impact mainstream society through establishing eugenics as scientifically valid. Framing eugenics as scientifically valid was part of a conscious effort among leaders in the eugenics movement; accordingly, they conducted research according to the scientific method and utilizing cutting-edge research techniques for the time period. According to Barkan (1992):

In his address at the opening session of the International Congress of Eugenics, Davenport advocated more research rather than mere propaganda, because 'People do not have heated discussions on the multiplication table; they will not dispute quantitative findings in any science. (P. 71)

Eugenicists also framed eugenics as scientifically valid through making connections with established disciplines in the social, behavioral and biological sciences. For example, Laughlin (1925) emphasized the ubiquity of eugenics in early American academic and intellectual thought. He commented that eugenics, "is related to biology, psychology,

 $^{^{49}}$ According to the Consumer Price Index (Williamson 2015), this amount would now equal \$13,600 to \$47,600.

physiology, anthropology, medicine, geology, geography, statistics, history and politics; indeed all of these biological, medical and sociological sciences have their very close eugenical bearings" (p. 28). As the connections to such a wide array of academic disciplines illustrates, the connection between eugenics and academia is profound.

Eugenic organizations held academic conferences and meetings with academics and government officials. Some respected academics were leaders in the eugenics movement, including William Graham Sumner (an avid social Darwinist), who held the first professorship in sociology at Yale College. Paul Popenoe held several professorships and Charles Davenport was a prominent zoologist at Harvard University, just to name a few (Ladd-Taylor 2001; Winfield 2007).

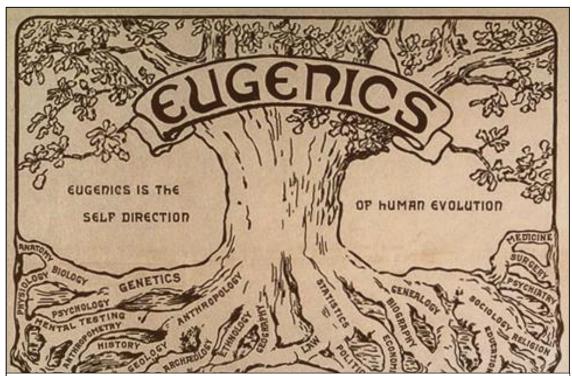


Figure 3. The "eugenics tree" image depicting the multi-disciplinarity of the Eugenics Movement. The image served as a logo for the Second International Eugenics Conference in 1921 and appeared again as a logo for the Eugenics Record Office in 1927. *Source:* American Philosophical Society.

Academic journals such as the *Eugenics Review*, the *Journal of Heredity* and *Eugenical News* were created specifically to provide a forum for eugenic research.

Eugenics was also widely discussed in scientific journals, newspapers and magazines that were not explicitly eugenic. In his college textbook, *Applied Eugenics* (1933[1918])

Popenoe said of eugenics, "it demands the right to speak, in many cases to cast the deciding vote, on some of the most important questions that confront society" (p. 147).

Because eugenics gained scientific legitimacy during the Age of Reform, leaders in the eugenics movement were treated as experts and given positions of considerable influence in government. For instance, Laughlin, Hill and Brown (1919) conducted a study for the Bureau of the Census which produced a publication entitled *The Statistical Directory of State Institutions for the Defective, Dependent, and Delinquent Classes*.

Biologists, psychiatrists and medical practitioners treated "degeneracy" as a biological malady, thus essentially medicalizing eugenics. In fact, eugenics came to be viewed as a moral and ethical imperative for physicians. In his 1938 address to fellow members of The Galton Institute, Dr. John A. Ryle, shared a conversation between himself and a close friend:

...I was recently asked what I consider the primary goal of medicine to be. As an active clinical physician concerned with diagnosis, and teaching of signs and symptoms, and the...[saving] of individual lives, he suspected, perhaps, that I might reply 'the curing of disease when possible and the relief of suffering when cure is out of reach,' or words to that effect. I replied in effect, 'the preservation of and the planning for the greatest possible health, happiness and efficiency for the greatest possible number by prophylactic measures, including eugenics and social reorganization. If this definition of the goal of medicine be acceptable, then medicine may be considered as a sister science...to the science of eugenics. (P. 9)

By envisioning eugenics as "the preservation of and the planning for the greatest possible health, happiness and efficiency for the greatest possible number" many physicians saw eugenics as aligned with the ideals of the Hippocratic Oath. ⁵⁰

Many in the medical field went beyond being sympathetic to eugenics to becoming staunch advocates of the most punitive and restrictive eugenic measures. Doctors didn't just begrudgingly perform eugenic sterilizations in service to the prevailing ideas of the time; on the contrary, many doctors and physicians were advocates of eugenics and played a key role in the implementation of eugenic sterilization as a tool for containing the supposed "unfit". The former Dean of Medicine for the University of Virginia, Dr. Harvey Ernest Jordan, an avid eugenicist, argued, "The ultimate ideal sought is a perfect society constituted of perfect individuals". 51 Accordingly, eugenicists constructed sterilization as "preventive medicine," a way of relieving human suffering by eliminating those with illness or proclivities toward "bad traits" such as promiscuity or alcoholism. Medical doctors did not only merely perform eugenic sterilization as passive actors, some served as advocates of such measures. For instance, the Georgia Medical Society proposed a law on marital "social hygiene" in 1928, though the bill failed to be passed. Furthermore, physicians published research papers in support of sterilization as a solution to medical conditions; papers such as "Sterilization: The Only Logical Means of Retarding the Progress of Insanity and Degeneracy" (Cranford 1981) were part of a conscious effort to bring eugenics under the purview of scientific medicine, and

⁵⁰ This is according to the original "Oath" by Hippocrates. For more information about the English translation of the Hippocratic oath and a lively debate on whether the Hippocratic oath applies to modern medicine see Tyson (2001) or Jotterand (2005).

⁵¹ For more on Dr. Harvey Ernest Jordan's writings on eugenics, see Jordan (1911) and (1912), for coauthored books, see Aldrich et al (1914) and Starr and Jordan (1914). Historians have also written some very sophisticated and revealing analyses of Jordan, see Dorr (2000), and Lombardo and Dorr (2006).

therefore, expand the bureaucratic power of physicians and further legitimize the medical profession. However, medical eugenics was sometimes even more severe than performing sterilization procedures. Physician Dr. Harry Haiselden brought the issue of "eugenic euthanasia" to the national stage in 1915, when he denied life-saving care to a baby, arguing that "defective babies" should be left to die.⁵²

Eugenics, in its condemnation of certain groups as less evolved or intellectually inferior, was, of course, profoundly shaped by the practice of psychology in the early twentieth century. In his 1920 book, *Human Efficiency and Levels of Intelligence*, Henry H. Goddard, the most prominent psychologist of the Age of Reform, quoted the above words of a colleague as an illustrative frame for his work at the Vineland Training School for Feeble-Minded Boys and Girls, one of many homes for the "feeble-minded" that sprang up during this period. However, unfortunately, Vineland was not Goddard's only "human laboratory" (p. 8). Many were subjected to Goddard's research programs, which spanned intuitional settings including hospitals, the military and schools; he also administered IQ tests to immigrants as they entered Ellis Island, as such, all of these sites functioned as "human laboratories" (Trent 1994; Gould 2006). Goddard was interested in applying the scientific method to the study of the psyche and was particularly preoccupied with classifying individuals according to their score on an intelligence quotient (IQ) test (Goddard 1920). However, what is interesting about Goddard's particular form of psychological eugenic science is his conceptualization of mental disability.

⁵² The doctor involved in this case, Dr. Harry Haiselden, wrote and starred in a film entitled *The Black Stork* based on the controversy. Ten years later, *The Black Stork* was renamed *Are You Fit to Marry?* Shifting the focus of the film from negative to positive eugenics, the film had a lengthy run and high attendance. For more on the history of the film, see Pernick and Paul (1996) and Lombardo (2011).

Goddard was preoccupied with the concept of mental age, associating low IQ with mental immaturity and implying that those with low IQ can never function as adults. Along the same lines, Goddard also argued that people are born with the potential to reach a certain mental level, characterized by a mental age, and nothing essentially can change that. Equally important, Goddard's view of intelligence was based on a scientifically ambiguous "nervous mechanism" that, without fully understanding its character, Goddard (1920) nonetheless believed to be "in born" and "unalterable" (p. 1).

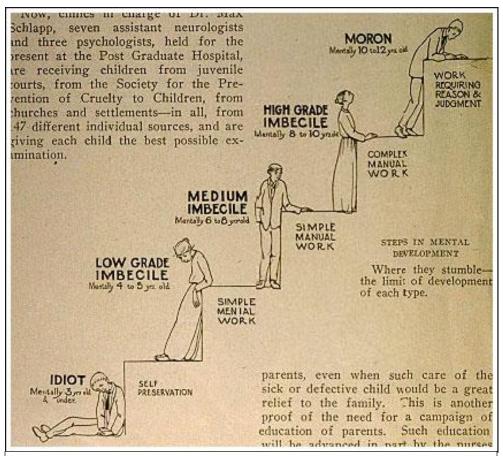


Figure 4. Image depicting the "Steps in Mental Development: Where They Stumble-the Limit of Development of Each Type", ranging from "idiot" to "moron" the chart categorizes and rates levels of "feeblemindedness". The chart first appeared in an article published by the Eugenics Record Office on October 11, 1913. *Source:* Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Goddard described intelligence as an alignment between the chromosomes and the germ cells "that is little affected by any later influence except such serious accidents as may destroy part of the mechanism" (Goddard 1920: 1). Additionally, "As a consequence any attempt at social adjustment which fails to take into account the determining character of the intelligence and its unalterable grade in each individual is illogical and inefficient" (Goddard 1920: 1). This biologically deterministic view of IQ as "unalterable" colored Goddard's science; institutionalized measures built on these ideas, leading to his profound contributions to the field of psychology.

What is most troubling about Goddard's intellectual project is that he is unconcerned in defining his object of study or "intelligence". According to Goddard (1920), "We do not know what intelligence is and it is doubtful if we even know what knowledge is. This however need not frighten us since man works with and makes use of things which he cannot define" (p. 7). In *Human Efficiency and Levels on Intelligence* (1919), Goddard compares his confusion over the nature of intelligence with a scientist who doesn't fully understand all the components of electricity or vanadium but nonetheless use them for particular aims.

However, "intelligence" is not a naturally occurring substance, it is a constructed device used to classify people according to their mental faculties. Goddard even goes so far as to argue that the Binet Scale of Intelligence was not reducible to attention, memory, perception or reasoning (p.17) instead he argued the test only measures intelligence, despite the fact that Goddard could not *define* intelligence. Thus "intelligence" thought to be measured by IQ became the metric, the deciding factor that determined whether people could live freely (or outside of an institution for the so-called "feeble-minded") or

have children. Despite Goddard's inability to properly determine his object of study, his work was heavily funded and respected within academe. According to Lewis M. Terman (1916):

It is safe to predict that in the near future intelligence tests will bring tens of thousands of these high-grade defectives under the surveillance and protection of society. This will ultimately result in curtailing the reproduction of feeble-mindedness and in the elimination of an enormous amount of crime, pauperism, and industrial inefficiency. (P. 7)

Low intelligence was constructed as the root of all social ills at the time.

While Goddard was one of the most prominent names in the psychological arm of the eugenics movement, his ideas were not isolated from the rest of his discipline. In fact, many other psychologists advocated such severe methods as sterilization to "help" the "feeble-minded" based on poorly developed psychology. For instance, in an article in *Psychiatric Quarterly* entitled "The Prevention of Mental Deficiency by Sexual Sterilization" Theodore R. Robie, M.D. argued that "sterilization is a rational method of treating selected method defectives" and that this "treatment" would inevitably lead to "a concomitant reduction in the amount of poverty, State dependency, prostitution, venereal disease and delinquency" (p. 481). The concept that sterilizing the "mentally unfit" was not only sound medicine, but good for the state was widespread throughout the Age of Reform. It was this very notion that justified and validated the sterilization of more than 63,000 Americans beginning in the early twentieth-century. Thousands of Americans were sterilized while being held in homes, hospitals and other state institutions for the "mentally unfit," which sprang up all over the country during this very period. 53

⁵³ For more information on the immense overlap between the institutionalization of the so-deemed mentally "un-fit" early in the eugenics movement and sterilization abuse see Stern (2005). For more on the role of psychological research within the eugenics movement see Kamin (1974) and Samelson and Kamin (1975).

By the Age of Reform, eugenics became a pervasive mode of thought in the United States. In fact, eugenics as a concept was so pervasive and so widely accepted because many believed that eugenics would relieve society of human suffering and alleviate the deplorable conditions of industrial capitalism. In other words, eugenics through decades of discourse linking it to progress and modernization, came to be seen as an answer to poverty, a way to improve inner cities ridden with pestilence and disease; and a means by which to illuminate human vices like alcoholism, criminality and sexual promiscuity. In this light, eugenics became not only "progressive" as a way of moving society forward, a sentiment echoed in Dr. Irving Fisher's (1923) presidential address to the American Eugenics Society, it became a "permanent solution" to societies most vexing social problems:

We must endeavor to show that eugenics supplies the most effective and permanent solution to the problems that have been so ineffectually dealt with hitherto by physicians, public health officers, social workers, clergymen and reformers—the problems of combating disease, disability, defectiveness, degeneracy, delinquency, vice and crime. (P. 78)

In this way, ironically, eugenics was framed as "humanitarian". A comment made by Ludovici (1932) in the flagship eugenics journal *Eugenical News* also expresses this sentiment:

...humanitarians should be attracted to Eugenics because of the enormous reduction in the amount of suffering which would result from its proper application. The life of people with serious inherited defects is one long misery. It would be humane to prevent them from being born. (P. 379)

However, it is important to recognize that while eugenics was widely accepted during the Age of Reform, there was no widespread consensus on how to deal with the supposedly "unfit".

Layers of Dissent: Challenges to Eugenics and the Nature-Nurture Debate, 1890-1940

Many influential scholars who disagreed with eugenics on ethical or epistemological grounds pursued research programs that did not lend credence to eugenics but without publicly condemning its practice (Glass and Stern 1986). In the social sciences as well as biomedical fields, scholars and researchers forged their own strains of research that contradicted eugenics, although eugenics would not be widely condemned as pseudo-science until mid-century. In the social sciences, as Bowler (1983) points out:

The collapse of evolutionary race theory came not because it was scientifically disproved but because the social sciences of the early twentieth century turned their backs on the whole evolutionary viewpoint. In Europe, scholars such as Max Weber and Emile Durkheim pioneered the technique of treating each society or culture as a functioning whole that cannot be evaluated by the standards of any other. (P. 305)

Accordingly, as Glass and Stern (1986) highlight regarding the relationship between eugenics and genetics in the early twentieth century, one of the reasons why "...geneticists of the twenties and thirties did not take a strong position against proposed eugenic policies lay in their absorption in their own [opposing] scientific work and their primary concern to push it forward" (p. 131). This, therefore, explains the absence of a robust and well-defined counter-literature on eugenics and/or social Darwinism.

While eugenics was not widely condemned, dissenting views are a crucial part of the story of eugenics, even in the early twentieth century. One would assume a great deal of dissention would come from sociologists, since sociology as a discipline is inherently at odds with theories of biological determinism (Caplan 1978). And indeed, while some sociologists supported eugenics, others challenged the biological determinism of

eugenics.⁵⁴ For instance, Lester F. Ward in "Eugenics, Euthenics, and Eudemics" (1913) argued that society was not degenerating, but "naturally" improving, that most people are of average intelligence and function and that only a fraction of one percent of the population was feeble-minded or genius (a direct counter-argument to Francis Galton's primary claims). In his view this "organic evolution" was the answer to societal problems, not institutionalizing or sterilizing people deemed "unfit":

...man himself also constitutes an ascending series, and his history, unaided by the efforts of the eugenicists, is one of progress from the lowest nature—men to the highest culture—races. This prolonged spontaneous upward movement of the entire organic world is the result of that form of the universal energy which inheres in the life-principle, and which makes life a progressive agent, mounting 'through all the spires of form'. (P. 746)

As Ward's words demonstrate there was a good deal of debate over the fundamental claims of many eugenicists, namely that the intellectual fiber of society was deteriorating, and that characteristics such as IQ, alcoholism or listlessness were inheritable rather than learned or a complex combination of genetics and environment.

Perhaps even more importantly, some scholars, writers and other intellectuals of the period, although merely a handful, became as Daylanne English (2004) describes as "oddly disparate protestors against the utopian idea that a nation's human stock, like its livestock, could and should be improved on" (p. 1). According to English (2004), among them were G.K. Chesterton, Nella Larsen and Angelina Weld Grimke. 55 However, to view opposition to eugenics in terms of particular individual scholars and writers only

⁵⁴ For historical evidence of overlap between the establishment of sociology and eugenics, see Park, Burgess and Janowitz (1921), a textbook written by several seminal sociologists that delves into eugenics and other notions of progress.

⁵⁵ As English (2004) and others note, some of the most virulent opposition to eugenics during the Age of Reform came from the Catholic Church. For more on the role of the Catholic Church in condemning eugenics, see Rosen (2004).

gives us a glimpse at the contentious politics at the heart of the eugenics movement. To more fully understand opposition to eugenics, we must investigate the rhetoric of eugenic discourse during the Age of Reform. Attending to the discourse of eugenics reveals that opposition to the primary foundation of eugenics occurred along the contours of two wider debates—one centered on the relationship between genetics and environment which has come to be commonly accepted as "nature versus nurture" and another on the significance of the race concept.

Eugenical family studies were prevalent in the beginning of the Age of Reform. These studies consisted of "...genealogical reports that traced criminal behavior, immorality, and mental problems throughout family trees to determine whether the characteristics are inheritable" (Keely 2003:23). The family study was predicated on the belief that if a particular family could be shown to be "degenerate", meaning several members of the family were criminal, living in pestilence, alcoholics or sexually promiscuous, than it was proof that the family's gene pool (or "germ plasm" in the language of the time) was defective. To determine if a family was in possession of defective germ plasm field workers associated with a eugenic organization interviewed family members (and their friends and their neighbors) looking for these negative traits, examined public records such as census reports, birth records, and death records for evidence of arrests or other indecencies all in an effort to construct a "degenerate" family tree. Many of these "scientific" family studies captured agreed-upon or common sense,

stereotypical notions of different *social* groups, and used scientific notions to reify socially hierarchal understandings of difference.⁵⁶

During this period, not only was there a heightened attention to eugenics, but there were also debates over the meaning of eugenics, and consequently what aims would, in the language of the time, strengthen the race. Such debates are indicative of the scientific literature of the time. As Carlson (2011) pointed out, "...the roots of the hereditarian-environmentalist controversy in the United States are often attributed to the pioneer studies of Richard L. Dugdale..." (p. 535). Dugdale, who enjoyed sociology as an intellectual hobby and was avid in his support for prison reform, was compiling reports for the Prison Association of New York in 1874 when he discovered that several members of a county jail were all blood relatives.

He went on to specifically focus on the family, to whom he gave the pseudonym the "Jukes," and Dugdale's report and subsequent book *The Jukes: A Study in Crime*, *Pauperism, Disease and Heredity* (1877) discussed members of the family, the circumstances of their upbringing and their penchant for criminal activity. ⁵⁷ Dugdale specifically focused on what he saw as characteristics of lasciviousness (e.g., harlotry, bastardry, and prostitution), criminal conduct, vagrancy and reliance on alms-houses (private homes for the poor). In his analysis, Dugdale waivers between hereditary and environmental explanations for the abundance of incarcerated Jukeses. His study inherently points to heredity as an explanation for degeneracy, as he traces several

⁵⁶ These points summarize my review of the historical literature relating to eugenic family studies including: Dugdale (1877), Davenport and Danielson (1912), Estabrook (1916), Davenport and Laughlin (1919), Estabrook and McDougle (1926).

⁵⁷ Although the book was originally published in 1877, it was still immensely popular in the early 1900s (Rafter 1997).

generations of one blood line, finding certain strains more or less tainted than others. Yet, he often defers to environmental issues as the central matter keeping Jukeses from becoming "honest", "productive" citizens. Take for instance, a passage from the beginning of the book:

In surveying the whole family ...I find groups which may be considered distinctively industrious, distinctively criminal, distinctively pauper, and specifically diseased. *These features run along lines of descent* so that you can follow them from generation to generation, *the breaks in the line* [emphasis added] at certain points indicating with great precision the modifying effects of disease, training, or fortuitous circumstance which have intervened and changed the current of the career. (P. 16)

This focus on "the line" and simultaneous attention to "breaks in the line" caused by poor environment or exposure to disease, lack of education and lack of training (many of the Jukeses were orphaned in young age) characterizes Dugdale's work. His analysis, in all, is ambiguous enough to inspire both environmentalist formations of eugenics and hereditarian formations. And, unfortunately, because he died an early death due to heart problems, Dugdale was not able to continue to contribute to this debate or respond to how his work was interpreted *a posteriori*.

The Jukes family was surely more than a study of one particular family tree; it had implications for the disadvantaged that were at the heart of public debate at the turn of the twentieth century. In a preface to a later edition to Dugdale's work, William Round (1884) proclaimed: "There is not one 'Jukes' family alone in the state [of New York]—but the 'Jukes' family is the type of a great class" (p. viii). Goddard's study emphasized the ways in which poverty created adverse circumstances that lead to destitution, which in turn encouraged prostitution, alcoholism, and crime among economically-submerged families. However, eugenicists appropriated Goddard's work to argue that some families

were so debased, so lazy, so toxic, so genetically-inferior that they created the circumstances of their own destitution and are doomed to remain a drag on society due to their bad genes. However, hereditarians with a more biologically deterministic view of eugenics responded to Dugdale's study with their own case studies of so-called "cacogenic" families. Notably, Estabrook's *The Jukes in 1915* (1916), a follow-up study on the Jukes funded by the Carnegie Institution, took inventory of the Jukes forty years after the original study. According to Estabrook (1916), the Jukes were not fit "for participation in a highly organized society" (p. iii). ⁵⁸ The forward, written by prominent eugenicist Charles Davenport, summarizes the main point of the study:

... on the whole, the later descendants of the Jukes, in Connecticut, in New Jersey, even in Minnesota, still show the same feeble-mindedness, indolence, licentiousness, and dishonesty, even when not handicapped by the associations of their bad family name and despite the fact of being surrounded by better social conditions. This is because, wherever they go, they tend to marry persons like themselves. (P. iii)

By emphasizing negative qualities within the family (feeble-mindedness, indolence, licentiousness, and dishonesty), and their inability to capitalize on perceived advantages such as no longer being "handicapped by their associations of their bad family name" and living in "better social conditions" Estabrook (1916) argues that the Jukeses are a product of biological inferiority that cannot be improved through a more accommodating social

⁵⁸ According to a *New York Times* article published in 2003 entitled "Bad Seed or Bad Science?". Estabrook's study has been largely discredited due to his official data being uncovered in 2001 (revealing the actual family names behind the pseudonym). According to this data, "It turns out that many family members were neither criminals nor misfits, and that quite a few were even prominent members of Ulster County [rural New York] society". Not surprisingly, Estabrook's analysis makes no mention of these high-achieving members of the 'Jukes' clan. This study is therefore indicative of a great deal of eugenic research, where poorly conducted, incomplete "scientific research" was used to justify and strengthen eugenic political aims.

environment, implying that marrying "persons like themselves" is the problem behind the family's troubles.

In addition to the debate between environmentalists and biological determinists that came to be known as nature versus nurture, eugenics discourse also birthed a significant debate on the meaning of race and cognitive ability. "Scientific white supremacy" or eugenics that, through the guise of colonialism, racism and American nativism, denigrated people of color as less intelligent and less capable of modern life, was challenged by leading intellectuals of the day. Two of the most prominent of those launching a counteroffensive to "scientific white supremacy" were W.E.B. Du Bois, political activist, historian, sociologist, the quintessential "race man" of the twentieth century, author of several books on race and editor of *The Moon Illustrated Weekly* (1905-06), The Horizon: A Journal of the Color Line (1907-10), The Crisis (1910-34), and *Phylon* (1944-45) and celebrated scholar Franz Boas who in addition to authoring several books also "more than any other man defined the 'national character' of anthropology in the United States" (Boas 1974:1).⁵⁹ However, others were also essential in combating scientific white supremacy, including George Washington Ellis, author of several books on race, including Negro Culture in West Africa (1914) and Negro Achievements in Social Progress (1915), and an editor of the Journal of Race Development; and Harvard University Professor Josiah Royce who authored Race *Questions: Provincialism and Other American Problems* (1908).

⁵⁹ For a more critical look at Franz Boas' contribution to socio-cultural understandings of race, see Chapter 3.

As George Washington Ellis rightly pointed out, "In the United States race prejudice is predicated upon the belief that the colored race is *naturally* inferior to the white race, physically, intellectually, religiously, socially and morally" (Ellis 1915:298). This notion of inferiority, Ellis explains, is largely attributable to ethnologists who "place[d] upon ill-founded and erroneous conclusions concerning the white and colored races the stamp and authority of science" (Ellis 1915:301). Ellis extends his critique of scientific white supremacy beyond what he calls "anti-Negro ethnological propaganda" (the tendency of ethnologists and evolutionists to link black men and apes in scientific fact and as a consequence the cultural imaginary as well) to the use of false data and the racialization of black failings (Ellis uses the example of black criminality specifically). Ellis (1915) dismisses this work in favor of a more egalitarian and culturally relativistic view:

We now know that in nature there is only one race—the human race; that physical features, the cephalic angle, the texture of hair, the shape of the head, the color of the skin, the size and shape, or the size and weight of the brain, have little or nothing to do with the capacity of the mind or the moral quality of the soul... [and that] there is no naturally superior and inferior race, and that no race has a monopoly on either beauty, intellect or culture. (P. 312)

Ellis was not the only scholar of the time to condemn taxonomic understandings of race. Likewise, Josiah Royce argued that scientists should not be interested in "...in the study of skulls or of hair, or of skin color" because "all men...appear to us not, of course, the same in mind, but yet surprisingly alike in their minds, in their morals, and in their arts" (Ellis 1915:303).

Notably, anthropologist Franz Boas critiqued eugenics on the basis of its staunch adherence to biological and genetic explanations of human difference. ⁶⁰ In a paper he authored in 1916, titled simply "Eugenics," he argued that, "...the battle-cry of the eugenicists, 'Nature not nurture,' has been raised to the rank of a dogma, and the environmental conditions that make and unmake man, physically and mentally, have been relegated to the background" (p. 472). His position within the debate on nature and nurture is made clear through his position on the studies of so-called "cacogenic" families so prominent during his day:

When we study the family histories in question, we can see often, that, if the individuals had been protected by favorable home surroundings and by possession of adequate means of support against the abuse of alcohol or other drugs as well as against criminality, they would not have fallen victim to their alleged *hereditary* tendencies. (P. 473)

While Boas acknowledged that skin color, hair texture and stature are inherited characteristics, he argued that "all complex activities are socially determined" (p. 473). Consequently, he mounted a counter-narrative to the prevailing racist discourse of his day by asserting that "complex activities" like criminality or alcoholism were not "in the blood" but an outgrowth of poor environments and a lack of social support.

In his writings, W. E. B. Du Bois did not deny the existence of distinct races. In his famed *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), he draws attention to the inconsistencies within ethnological accounts of race while simultaneously maintaining the case for racial difference:

⁶⁰ As Barkan (1993) points out, Boas had a significant influence on a number of his students, who came to be regarded as "Boasians". Among them, according to Barkan, are Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Alexander Goldenweiser, Paul Radin, Melville Herskovits, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead and Otto Klineberg. All of these differing scholars are alike in their approach to race and inequality—an environmentalist and culturalist stance—informed by Boas's scholarly work and worldview (p. 91).

Color does not agree with texture of hair, for many of the dark races have straight hair; nor does color agree with the breadth of the head, for the yellow Tarter has a broader head than the German; nor, again, has the science of language as yet succeeded in clearing up the relative authority of these various and contradictory criteria. The final word of science, so far, is that we have at least two, perhaps three, great families of human beings—the whites and Negroes, possibly the yellow race. That other races have risen from the intermingling of the blood of these two. (P. 179)

However, he virulently opposed the tendency of scholars of his day to use racial difference as an *a priori* assumption about the superiority or inferiority of entire groups. Du Bois argued that the races are characterized by "subtle differences" that divide men into races, "...while they perhaps transcend scientific definition, nevertheless, are clearly defined to the eye of the Historian and Sociologist" (p. 180). And that, "...as Darwin himself said, that great as is the physical unlikeness of the various races of men their likenesses are greater, and upon this rests the whole scientific doctrine of Human Brotherhood" (p. 180). Accordingly, he used much of his clout as a writer, scholar, editor, and political figure to advocate on behalf of African Americans, which in the early-twentieth century meant that he often found himself locked in debate with some of the leading figures on "the race problem" (Du Bois 2007).

Conclusion and Discussion

The Age of Reform was highly influenced by the Enlightenment of the West and the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution changed the material conditions of people's lives by prompting more people to live in big urbanities often fraught with pestilence, violence and pollution; these dynamics changed their relationship to labor and their assertion of their own value. The Enlightenment or "the Age of Reason" marked a rare historical moment, a period where society underwent a rapid political and philosophical transformation. Major political developments during this time spread

democracy, undermining the power of monarchs and simultaneously changing the absolute power of the church. These shifts in authority put government and every other aspect of life (ethics, morality, one's commitment to others) in the hands of the public. However, the "public" was guided by philosophers, scientists and other "learned" men. In this period, scholars relying on scientific reason in the name of "progress" made a profound impact on national objectives. Taken together these overlapping historical paradigm shifts gave birth to new modes of thought that profoundly changed life in the West and through Western imperialism many other countries throughout the world. These major themes and modes of thought set the tone for the Age of Reform. Accordingly, American "reformers" were chiefly concerned with improving the U.S. by carefully applying scientific reasoning to social problems with an eye toward allowing the U.S. to compete in the now global economy.

Alarmingly, though eugenics crippled the human rights of thousands of Americans during the Age of Reform, eugenics was viewed through the guise of utopianism. Several scholars and ideologues of the day couched eugenics in utopian ideals. As Franz Boas, one of the few to denounce eugenics during this time conceded, the idea of eugenics, for many, had become "a beautiful one":

The thought that it may be possible by these means to eliminate suffering and to strive for higher ideals is a beautiful one, and makes a strong appeal to those who have at heart the advance of humanity... We have the right to assume that, by preventing the propagation of mentally or physically inferior strains, the gross average standing of a population may be raised. (P. 471)

Eugenics could be viewed as "beautiful" only in its farcical framing as a crude solution to all social ills, as Jennings calls attention to in his book *The Biological Basis of Human*Nature (1930):

The troubles of the world, and the remedy for these troubles, lie fundamentally in the diverse hereditary constitutions of human beings. Some men are strong, healthy, wise, virtuous. Others are weak, foolish, diseased, immoral, criminal; and it is these that cause the troubles of the world. (P. 223)

By supposedly eliminating the "troubles of the world", America could rid itself of unproductive, ineffective and corrosive behaviors. Therefore, the "eutopia" created by eugenics was one in which the progressive ideals of efficiency, economic prosperity and global dominance could be fully realized and maintained. The image of the Nietzschian "Superman", the Galtonian man of learning and intelligence, and Madison Grant's racially and culturally superior Aryan stood as formulations of the modern man *par excellence*.

There was an international cross-fertilization of ideas among eugenicists. The international eugenics congresses and other conferences on eugenic science brought eugenicists from around the world together to share ideas, success and strategy. Eugenic organizations all around the world developed propaganda masked as "research". Such research can be separated into a few main themes including: studies of IQ and "genius", statistical inquiries into diverse populations and, most popularly, the eugenical family studies. The eugenical family study was another way in which eugenicists attempted to justify sterilization and institutionalization and bolster public support for biologically deterministic eugenics, arguing that improved social conditions nor a more favorable environment could do anything for the "feeble-minded" or morally debased.

Eugenics in the United States is the result of "ideological isomorphism".

Isomorphism or the similarity in organisms of different ancestry resulting from evolutionary convergence metaphorically describes the convergence of different ideas

about heredity, resource distribution, intelligence and human worth circulating in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries throughout much of Europe. Many ideas offered by popular theorists of the time, most notably by Darwin, but also including Malthus, Mendel, Lamarck and Galton, all in some way contributed to eugenic thought. Darwin's work on natural selection was an important paradigm shift and added popular credibility and scientific validity to eugenics. Galton's emphasis on differential birthrate and the heredity of genius became major themes in eugenic research.

By arguing the world's population would outpace the resources necessary to sustain modern life, Malthus's writings heightened concern over the distribution of resources and competition with foreign "others". Eugenicists were highly influenced by horticulturalists and pastoralists as they improved upon plant and animal life through selective breeding. There was tension between the Lamarckian form of eugenics and eugenics that employed the work of Mendel. Lamarck's work suggested that evolutionary change was the result of habit that an action repeated over and over again could lead to a change in the organism itself. Lamarck's work was popular in early nineteenth century, but it quickly fell out of favor with American eugenicists, because it suggested that some change in environment that prompted change in the habits of the poor and "feeble" might change their offspring for the better, while American eugenicists were invested in biological determinism. Mendel's work, on the other hand, showed that offspring exhibit the characteristics of their ancestors, no matter what environment they're in or what habits they acquire – a concept that quickly overtook Lamarckian thought.

H. L. Bruner (1921), in his presidential address to the Indiana Academy of Science, argued that evolution and eugenics had endowed science an elevated status, even in popular culture:

By the aid of science man has acquired such control over nature as his imagination formerly attributed only to the gods. Today, he mounts into the air with Mercury, dives into the deep with Neptune, and when he speaks from the summit of some Mt. Marconi, his voice is heard in the uttermost part of the earth. These discoveries, and especially the great services of the scientist in the world war, have won for science a high place in popular esteem. (P. 51)

However, eugenics as a "science" was fraught with problems. Most of eugenics during this time was overtly racist, employing "symbolic colonialism" or the use of symbols (words and images) to portray non-Nordic Europeans as a subspecies, less evolved, or less equipped for modern life than whites. This intellectual undertaking, to submerge people of color by "proving" their genetic inferiority is "scientific white supremacy" and pervaded mainstream ideas about race from the Enlightenment through the Age of Reform. Eugenicists also viewed disability in alarming and scientifically invalid ways without knowing what intelligence is or how IQ tests relate to intelligence. Yet that did not stop many from using IQ as a metric for deciding and stifling people's lives through sterilization and institutionalization.

However, despite these now glaring epistemological issues, eugenics gained legitimacy through academe as a science and consequently became institutionalized. Eugenics had a foothold in most major disciplines in the sciences, including anthropology, medicine, biology, economics and sociology. Eugenics was further institutionalized through the establishment of research centers and academic journals. Many prominent professors and high-post academics were active in the eugenics

movement. And eugenicists purposely employed statistical techniques to validate their beliefs as "science". ⁶¹

Opposition to eugenics within the scholarly community was scant. Many scholars whose research did not overlap or even directly contradicted the major concepts behind eugenics stuck to their research trajectories without outright condemning eugenics. Even though opponents were few, there were scholars who wrote against eugenics in the early twentieth century. These scholars argued that developments in technology and medicine that prolonged life were beneficial to society and by improving the living conditions and economic circumstances of the poor society would grow even stronger. However unfortunately, this debate between nature and nurture would rage for another century, having yet to be solved.

While a complete denunciation of eugenics in all its forms was rare during the Age of Reform, there was lively debate among scholars, intellectuals, and ideologues over the meaning of eugenics for American society or more precisely, which populations were inferior and how to deal with so-called "degenerate stock," including: (1) the role of environment regarding human tendencies, in other words, whether conditions and behaviors such as criminality, promiscuity, alcoholism, "feeble-mindedness", etc... are "in the genes" or a consequence of a more complex interaction between environment and constrained choices, and (2) the meaning of racial difference and subsequently, the humanity of people of color who through the language of eugenics had been condemned as sub-human, degenerative or otherwise not fit for modern, Western life. These heated

⁶¹ Among the illustrious faculty are Stanford University President David Starr Jordan, Dean of Medicine for the University of Virginia, Dr. Harvey Ernest Jordan and Ernest Hooten the Head of Harvard's Biology Department. Paul Popenoe and Roswell Hill Johnson even created a textbook on eugenics, entitled *Applied Eugenics* (1918).

and on-going debates on eugenics reveal that there are two major conceptual frameworks operating sometimes simultaneously—eugenics as a mechanism of scientific racism and eugenics based on economic elitism.

While each represents a distinct eugenic perspective, the two perspectives often overlapped. Much of eugenics was a brutal form of economic elitism concentrated on poor whites. Eugenic family studies that claimed to trace "degenerative" blood lines did much of the cultural work required to condemn poor whites as biologically inferior, as Matt Wray argues in *Not Quite White: White Trash and the Boundaries of Whiteness* (2006):

A large part of the cultural success of the eugenics movement lay with the way in which it used this chain of associations to group together the local images of poor rural whites in New Jersey, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and everywhere else. It incorporated and expanded upon the shared perceptions of southern poor whites as immoral, lazy, dirty, criminal, filthy, and perverse and offered an explanation that could be generalized to the entire group. That the stigmatyping images of poor rural whites was, by the late nineteenth century, firmly established as a cultural schema...The power of this shared perception, coupled with the rising reformist power of the professional middle class, resulted in efforts to achieve a rare and extreme form of exclusion: the biological eradication of an entire population through coercive reproductive control. (P. 95)

However, eugenic family studies were also sometimes directed at people of color or persons of mixed race, including Oscar McCulloch's "The tribe of Ishmael: A Study in Social Degradation" (1888), Caldwell's "The Bunglers: A Narrative Study in Five Parts" and several studies aimed at "proving" the lowliness of "mongrel" populations.

However, while these studies sometimes turned their gaze toward racial "others," they never focused on proving the defectiveness of Black families, who were assumed inferior on the grounds of their race alone.

Numerous works of pseudo-science and political propaganda confirmed this "fact," that Blacks were an inferior class. Scientific racism resulted from the collision of the twentieth century "Negro problem" and centuries of Western imperialism, which already saw white conquering nations as superior to Non-Aryan nations. The resulting "symbolic colonialism" surrounding African Americans painted their nature as childlike; their intellect as inferior; and their African features as crude, brutish and ugly. Therefore, decades of "enlightened" and "progressive" thought created a duality of eugenic rhetoric, labeling two populations as "dangerous classes," economically-disenfranchised whites and the black population in its entirety. Eugenicists exploited pre-existing fears and prejudices to mark these populations as "dangerous classes" in the American consciousness, a strategy which allowed eugenicists to make a number of political gains which will be explored in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: Eliminating the 'Unwanted Types': Institutionalized Eugenics, Racial Politics and Reproductive Inequality during the Age of Reform

In a free republic the ideal citizen... must be the father of many healthy children. A race must be strong and vigorous; it must be a race of good fighters and good breeders, else its wisdom will come to naught and its virtue be ineffective.

~Theodore Roosevelt, "The Good Citizen" (1883)

Those least fit to carry on the race are increasing most rapidly. People who cannot support their own offspring are encouraged by Church and State to produce large families. Many of the children thus begotten are diseased or feebleminded; many become criminals. The burden of supporting these unwanted types has to be borne by the healthy elements of the nation. Funds that should be used to raise the standard of our civilization are directed to the maintenance of those who should never have been born.

~Margaret Sanger, The Pivot of Civilization (1922)

The Age of Reform, a period "running from about 1890 to the second World War," (Hofstadter 1955: 3) incorporates the politics of the Progressive Era and the New Deal. This time period included a number of important reforms including the Pure Food and Drug Act which required companies to accurately label the ingredients in processed food, the Meat Inspection Act which subjected meat-processing plants to inspection and the establishment of the Federal Trade Commission to end corporate monopolies and investigate unfair business practices (Hofstadter 1955). The nostalgia for the period is also based on the formation of the welfare state, which included welfare benefits for needy mothers and the widowed wives of soldiers (Koven and Michel 1993; Kline 1993; Skocpol 1995), as well as the fight against children's labor (Cravens 1985; DeTardo-Bora 2014). Due to the willingness of leaders during this time to grant government provisions and temper the ravages of the market through public policy, the Age of Reform is considered an enlightened age of American democracy. Indeed, the Age of Reform embraced many of the ideals of the enlightenment. Reform Era leaders envisioned a modern government as one in which scientific reasoning could be applied to national

problems. Consequently, U.S. government during the Age of Reform was highly bureaucratized and data-driven.

However, as Steven J. Diner (1998) explains, the era is best viewed not purely as a time of enlightenment but as a series of contradictions and complexities that birthed modern America:

Americans of the Progressive Era watched new technologies, exploited by giant corporations, produce ever larger amounts of wealth, create millions of new jobs, offer a stunning array of consumer goods, and open life choices previously unimagined. And they watched the forces of change sweep away familiar hierarchies of social status, and redefine their relationship to their government. ... Living increasingly in an interdependent society comprised of large institutions, individual Americans made numerous choices and competed with each other as never before to control their own lives. From those choices and contests, from the new institutions, from the losers as well as the winners, from the actions of both the powerful and the powerless, modern America emerged in all its complexity. (P. 1)

The Age of Reform, which included Progressive Era and New Deal politics, was not, in actuality, more "progressive" than other ages in America's history. Consequently and contrary to mainstream historiography, it was not a golden age of reform, but a national agenda built on maintaining industrial capitalism through social welfare provisioning for "deserving" working class whites, national standards for the workings of industry, enforcement of constrictive notions of morality and family values (i.e., prohibition and miscegenation laws), and the systemic exclusion of immigrants and people of color from welfare and public health provisions. ⁶²

⁶² The majority of the historiography on Progressivism and the New Deal tends to obscure the inequities of the period (Hofstadter 1955; Leuchtenberg 1963; Schlesinger 2003). However, a small counter-literature is emerging that highlights the racial and class prejudice inherent in the period (Diner 1998; Katznelson 2005). In this chapter, I extend the counter-literature on inequality during the Age of Reform by connecting biased policy and bureaucratic research gathering to the practice of eugenics.

Social programs and welfare provisions during the Age of Reform were decidedly not egalitarian; to the contrary, public policy during this time had a Janus-faced character, ensuring that the 'socially desirable' were equipped to succeed while simultaneously relegating other Americans to the margins (Diner 1998; Katznelson 2005). Therefore, much of the federal aid dispensed during this period, such as public health efforts to help mothers in need of financial assistance and public health measures that improved child mortality rates and well-being, only reached 'deserving' whites. For instance, as Gwendolyn Mink (1995) brings out:

Although mother-directed policies aimed to universalize the quality of motherhood, they did not create universal entitlements for mothers. They claimed only certain kinds of women as their subjects...mothers' pension programs typically distinguished between deserving and undeserving mothers, restricting benefits to morally worthy, assimilable mothers who [assumedly] bore no blame for the plights of their families. (P. 31)

Those outside the bounds of 'acceptability' were denied the full rights of their citizenship including access to social programs and other forms of financial aid. The ruling ideology of the time was that all citizens were *not* fit to participate in the activity of nation-building. Therefore, while not all citizens were worthy of investing in the nation, the inverse was also true, not all citizens were deemed worthy of the nation's investment.

Reform era capitalism was heavily invested in political exclusion (Katznelson 2005).

Scientific racism and eugenics were the central mechanisms of nation-building during the Age of Reform.⁶³ As the aforementioned quote from Theodore Roosevelt demonstrates, many believed that a wealth of strong, mentally "fit" Americans were urgently needed to lead the country in the right direction. A new and highly exclusionary

⁶³ Eugenics during the Era of Progressivism has been addressed by Leonard (2002) and (2005). However, I extend this literature by going beyond the politics of Progressivism to incorporate the entirety of the Age of Reform which incorporates the politics of Progressivism and the New Deal.

welfare state ensured that the nation wouldn't be overburdened with providing financial assistance to all struggling Americans. And eugenics, through sterilizing women representing the "unwanted types" and advocating the procreation of "wanted types" supposedly ensured that Americans would grow stronger, smarter and more moral by way of a good genetic heritage. Thusly, the Age of Reform enacted two forms of maternalist eugenics: (1) "obstructed reproduction" or the obstruction of reproduction performed upon 'unworthy' mothers and potential mothers by sterilization (both tubal ligation and hysterectomies), and (2) "compulsory reproduction" or limits of the reproductive autonomy among women thought to be eugenically sound, whereby they were discouraged from seeking birth control.

To accomplish "obstructed reproduction" and "compulsory reproduction," eugenicists constructed images around the poor and indolent that labeled them morally debased or mentally incapable of leading a productive existence while simultaneously encouraging middle class women to save the nation by way of their promulgation. The discourse of eugenic "science" during this time advocated a view of human ability and worthiness as "in the genes". Consequently, different populations of women, based on some combination of their race, class and disability status were thusly labeled genetically sound or genetically inferior.

Explanations of biological inferiority among the poor distracted from an interrogation into the workings of industrial capitalism; instead, biological determinism blamed the victims of industrial capitalism for their own condition. Consequently, many groups were completely stripped of their individuality through gross stereotyping and scapegoating: blacks were scientifically 'proven' to be cognitively inferior to live in a

modern society as free persons and subjected to virulent racism from whites (Dennis 1995; Roberts 1997; Alland 2002; Muhammad 2010), white southerners who had previously worked in agriculture and other trades were outpaced by the mechanisms of industry were labeled lazy and backwards for their destitution (Rafter 1988; Wray 2006), and immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe and everywhere in Asia, Africa and the Middle East were 'othered' and considered inferior to native, white Americans (Ordover 2003; Stern 2005). Women were judged harshly by their position within this system, leading to constrained reproductive options.

Explanations of biological superiority among the middle classes suppressed women's right to reproductive autonomy. A critical look at the early birth control movement is addressed within this chapter. I argue that the birth control movement was highly intertwined with eugenics as a social movement, but that even that alliance led to its failure due to the fact that advocates of the movement could not successfully argue that birth control would lower birthrates among the poor at a more substantial rate than among the middle classes. ⁶⁴ Additionally, middle class women seeking to undergo a tubal sterilization during this time were routinely turned away (Luna and Luker 2013). The difficulty in limiting one's fecundity for middle class women during the Age of Reform makes it clear that being labeled "biologically superior" subjected women to the reproductive dystopia of "compulsory reproduction."

Though the Age of Reform was an overtly racist period in America, marked by the influence of the Ku Klux Klan and a profusion of "scientific white supremacy" that

⁶⁴ A number of scholars address the role of eugenics in the birth control movement (Gordon 2002 [1974]; Davis 2003; Nelson 2003), but these analyses do not argue (as I do later in the chapter) that the failure of eugenic appeals among birth control advocates was a primary cause of its defeat during the period.

commanded national attention, "obstructed reproduction" applied to blacks and whites; indeed, blacks were subjected to "obstructed reproduction" at approximately the same rate as whites. Consequently, because the population of whites outnumbered the population of blacks in the U.S., the majority of those sterilized were poor, white women. This fact creates a certain mystery: Why are rates of sterilization roughly similar among Black and white women during a time when anti-Black racism and violence was at an apex?

I believe this question can only be addressed by paying attention to a process I call "image-to-policy transmutation". "Image-to-policy transmutation" is the process whereby cultural constructions of "the other" in scientific discourse and media disseminate into public policy. Accordingly, I examine the ways in which the construction of "white trash" led to the targeting of poor, rural, white women as a central threat to the "national stock". In this chapter, I explore the complex system of signifiers by which particular groups of women came to bear the label of "fit" or "unfit" and were sterilized or denied access to birth control as a result. I also critically examine how market thinking shrouded in fear of decline or collapse underscored maternalist eugenics during the Age of Reform.

Eugenics during the Age of Reform

Eugenics had a heterogeneous character in America during the Age of Reform.

Early ideas of evolution and heredity reflect not any singular or unitary idea but a panacea of divergent theories that is best thought of as "ideological isomorphism." Eugenics was an amalgam of concepts of the 19th and early 20th centuries, loosely based

⁶⁵ I develop this concept in Chapter 2.

on the idea of evolution and other parallel ideas such as Malthusianism, Spencer's ideas on "the survival of the fittest," and the writings of Francis Galton, the founder of the eugenics movement. An understanding of eugenics during the Age of Reform thus reveals a wide range of different political and cultural agendas, shaped by the contextual realities of the day and divergent claims to scientific truth.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, theories of evolution coupled with the new uncertainties of industrialization and urbanization aroused fears over the direction of society. However, evolutionary theory offered a possible solution for these new, complex problems; accordingly, eugenics promised that the nation could be improved through human intervention. According to the eugenicists' view, people with mental issues should be labeled "feebleminded", and those with physical problems like epilepsy or moral and behavioral issues such as promiscuity, alcoholism or a penchant for criminal acts, shouldn't even be born (Paul 1992). As a result, social problems such as poverty and crime would be greatly reduced, if not completely overcome (Popenoe and Johnson 1918). Eugenics as the solution to the social problems caused by modernization appealed to many Americans, but there was no clear consensus on exactly what should be done with, as Sanger (1922) put it, the "unwanted types" (p. 279).

Eugenics, in its various manifestations, was widely supported during the Age of Reform, but political and scientific elites took widely divergent positions on major law and policy issues regarding eugenics, and launched different policies and political initiatives in its name. Eugenics, then, took varying forms based on how one saw

⁶⁶ See Chapter 2, wherein I assert that eugenics is the product of "ideological isomorphism," or a confluence of Western ideas of social and economic "progress".

⁶⁷ See the following historical sources, which highlight the anxieties of industrialization and urbanization in the American consciousness: Hankins (1923), Thompson (1925), Thompson (1929), and Wolfe (1929).

society's problems, what one thought were appropriate solutions and one's position within overlapping issues such as the birth control movement or racial inequality. During the Age of Reform, eugenics discourse was two-pronged. Scholars of the time used the dual typology of 'positive eugenics' and 'negative eugenics'. According to Ward (1913) a prominent sociologist and eugenicist of the time:

Negative eugenics relates to the problem of preventing the mental and physical defectives of society from perpetuating their defects through propagation. Positive eugenics relates to the problem of improving the mass of mankind by the selection of the superior in the process of reproduction. (P. 738)

Consequently, negative eugenics launched compulsory sterilization laws and the institutionalization of the supposedly "unfit" in mental hospitals, while positive eugenics launched marriage counseling initiatives directed at the middle class as well as increased resources for the white middle class in the form of government aid.

However, the "positive" and "negative" typology often evoked by ideologues at the time (Ward 1913; Hamilton 1916; Fisher 1917) does not fully cover the range of policies that make up the history of eugenics in America. This dichotomy is also used ubiquitously within the eugenics literature. Eugenics during the Age of Reform became comingled with a number of other important national debates of the time. The overlap between nativism, racism and eugenics led to restrictive immigration policy (Barkan 1991; Roberts 1998; Daniels 2005), and efforts among white supremacists to ensure the "purity" of the white race led to miscegenation laws (Pascoe 1996). In addition, the eugenics movement was sometimes at odds with and other times aligned with women's movements in complex ways during the Age of Reform (Roberts 1997; Davis 2003; Nelson 2003; Franks 2005). Most important, the pejorative nature of these terms implies

that eugenics can have "positive" effects. To the contrary, whether subjected to negative or so-called positive eugenics, I argue that maternalist eugenics suppresses women's reproductive autonomy.

The most important political agendas regarding women's reproductive rights to come out of the Age of Reform was the birth control movement, led by Margaret Sanger. Several authors have exposed Sanger's role in the eugenics movement and this is not without warrant (Roberts 1997; Davis 2003; Franks 2005). Sanger was an active eugenicist and even wrote extensively on the subject in several articles and books. However, the relationship between the birth control movement and the eugenics movement is far more complex than the mere reality that Sanger was a eugenicist. Birth control politics inspired debates in and outside eugenics. Many eugenicists worried that birth control would only be properly and widely used among educated women of the middle class and therefore decrease the birth rate among the very population they wanted to encourage to reproduce in larger numbers. I argue that this fear played a significant part in the suppression of birth control during the Age of Reform.

"Three Generations of Imbeciles are Enough": Buck v. Bell and Poor Whites as Spectacle

In *Not Quite White: White Trash and the Boundaries of Whiteness*, Matt Wray (2006) argues that eugenicists opted to "treat" so-called defectives of a *higher grade* with sterilization rather than institutionalization in mental asylums: "Increasingly, in the eyes of many reformers, the chief value in sterilization was that 'higher grade morons' could be safely released back to their families and communities, easing the economic burden on the state and freeing up institutional space and resources for more severely defective patients" (p. 90). Indeed, this sentiment is reflected in the writings of some of the leaders

of the eugenics movement during this time. According to Wray (2006), chief among them was the then-Director of the Eugenics Records Office Harry Laughlin who in 1926 argued:

...[our] primary purpose is to prevent reproduction by the most degenerate and defective human family stocks of the particular state which is applying it. As the principles of eugenics become more definitively incorporated into the general policy of the state, eugenical sterilization will have to be applied still more consistently to the lowest natural or hereditary physical, mental, and temperamental or moral levels; because, as a rule, such inadequacies and producers of inadequacies in the body politic are not capable of obeying, on their own initiative, laws concerning mate selection and human reproduction. These lowest human strains must, therefore, be taken in hand by the state, for the promotion of the general welfare. (P. 91)

Therefore, being considered a 'higher grade defective' made such persons subject to the more economical solution of sterilization.

This paternalism spread beyond Harry Laughlin to other important figures within the eugenics movement during the Age of Reform. As documented by Cynkar (1981), Dr. John H. Bell, the doctor who would champion the sterilization of Carrie Buck (in place of Dr. Priddy, who began the crusade to sterilize Buck) also evoked this form of paternalism, which transforms the infringement of reproductive rights to as an extension of "freedom" as well as an expression of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness":

We maintain that the parole of mental defectives without sterilization is, on account of their propensity, for the production of defective children, fraught with considerable danger both to the individual and to the State. We further feel that it is vastly more humane to relieve these individuals of a function which they cannot properly use and allow them to return to their homes or society, than to keep them confined in an institution for the greater part of their young lives. Freedom to many of these is a priceless possession and they have an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. [Therefore]...it naturally follows that sterilization and liberation, under certain supervision and safeguard, if necessary, is a

just and human procedure, and aside from any ethical, moral, or humane consideration, which may justify eugenical sterilization, it is also sound economic policy in that it converts a definite liability into a reasonable asset. (P. 1430)

While Bell and others masked eugenic sterilization as "liberation," what is more telling is the stalwart belief in eugenic sterilization as "sound economic policy".

As these examples show, there was a strong economic rationale for eugenics. Firstly, eugenicists argue that the poor would destroy the nation by giving birth to children with the same proclivities as those which made them poor (Davenport 1909; Popenoe and Johnson 1918; Thompson 1925 and 1929). Secondly, eugenicists also wanted to deal with the "unfit" in the most cost-effective manner possible. In this way, the market logic of eugenics was two pronged. However, in both instances, the discourse of eugenics unites biological determinism and economic reductionism. The seminal court case *Buck v. Bell* is further evidence of this dynamic.

The *Buck v. Bell* case was the result of a conscious decision made by leaders within the eugenics movement to make eugenic sterilization more widespread throughout the United States (Bruinius 2006).⁶⁸ Carrie Buck was a white woman from Charlottesville, VA, who had spent the majority of her young life living with foster parents. She was committed to the Virginia Colony for Epileptics and the Feebleminded after becoming a single mother at eighteen. Shortly after her committal, she was judged by the superintendent of the Virginia Colony for Epileptics and the Feebleminded, Dr. A. S. Priddy, to hold a mental age of nine. Her biological mother, Emma Buck, at age thirty-

⁶⁸ *Buck v. Bell* has never been formally overturned. According to Silver (2004), the Supreme Court has never overruled *Buck*, but "...in Roe v. Wade, [the court] cited *Buck* as an example of the limits to the constitutional right to privacy under the Fourteenth Amendment....Furthermore, individuals who challenged the constitutionality of state sterilization laws encountered lower courts which, bound by *Buck* as precedent, focused primarily on procedural issues" (p. 863).

five was said to hold a mental age of seven years and eleven months and was committed to the very same mental institution that Carrie Buck found herself in.⁶⁹ As Lombardo (2008) describes, it was Dr. Priddy who connected Carrie and Emma Buck on the grounds of their supposed "feeble-mindedness" and hyper-sexuality and it was Priddy who initially sought to sterilize Carrie Buck on the grounds that such dispositions were hereditary. "Upon [Carrie Buck's] arrival, Priddy immediately made the connection between mother and daughter: both poor, both judged feebleminded, both accused of sexual misconduct" (p. 106). Additionally, Priddy, "...quickly began collecting information to demonstrate the hereditary defects he was certain linked Emma and Carrie" (p.106).⁷⁰

In the early decades of the twentieth century, eugenic sterilization was not yet lawful. Prior to 1925, although several states adopted some sort of law allowing for eugenic sterilization, most of the state statutes that allowed eugenic sterilizations to be performed legally were eventually found unconstitutional (Popenoe 1929). Undaunted, eugenicists continued to push for state statutes that made eugenic sterilization a common and lawful practice. As early as 1892, the president of The American Association on Mental Deficiency, asked, "What state will be first to legalize this procedure?" By the early decades of the twentieth century, Harry Laughlin published a book entitled *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States* (1922) which contained research on the "feebleminded" population of each state and the legislative history of eugenic sterilization. Laughlin included a "model eugenical sterilization law" which he devised to

⁶⁹ The mental age of Carrie and Emma Buck was determined by their scores on the Stanford Revision of the Binet-Simon test administered by the Virginia Colony for Epileptics and the Feebleminded (Cynkar 1981; Lombardo 1985).

⁷⁰ This information is all contained within the case brief for *Buck v. Bell* (1927).

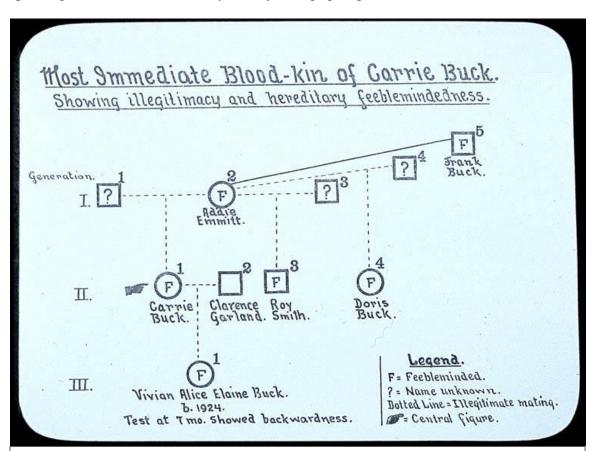
withhold scrutiny on the basis of constitutionality. The state of Virginia adopted a law based on Laughlin's model in 1924, but since other such laws had been struck down in other states, the law had to be tested at the state and national level before it could be viewed as a legal success for "obstructed reproduction". Accordingly, the *Buck v. Bell* case was arranged as a test case by officials within the State Colony in an effort to make sterilization constitutionally viable (Popenoe 1929:22).

The trial would provide a spectacle for a grotesque form of whiteness which manifested in decades of research on poor whites in the rural South (Wray 2006). Several "experts" testified before the Supreme Court for the defense including Dr. De Jarnette (then superintendent of Virginia's Western State Hospital in Staunton, Virginia), Dr. A. S. Priddy, Arthur Estabrook (of the Carnegie Institute of Washington), and Harry H. Laughlin (head of the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) at Cold Spring Harbor and "Eugenics Associate" with the Psychopathic Laboratory of the Municipal Court of Chicago) who did not attend the trial but whose sworn testimony was nonetheless read into evidence. The trial relied on the pseudo-science of eugenical family studies to make the case that Buck's offspring, and the offspring of any other "defective" within reach of the state, were not fit for society and therefore not even fit to be born.

Arthur Estabrook testified as an expert on genealogical accounts of degeneracy, speaking on his previous studies of the Nam family, the Jukes, and the Tribe of Ishmael. As a supposed expert on hereditary degeneracy, Estabrook examined Carrie Buck's mother, father and siblings in the same manner in which he examined the subjects of the eugenic family studies he conducted. He argued that both of Carrie Buck's parents were feebleminded, which meant they were doomed to produce children who were mentally

and socially inadequate. Dr. Priddy argued that "feebleminded" women were sexually-promiscuous and lacked discernment and therefore likely to mother many children, a high percentage of whom would also be feebleminded. He used the Kallikak family, the subjects of an late eighteenth-century eugenical family study, to argue this point, asserting that John Kallikak's child with a feebleminded woman resulted in 480 subsequent offspring, 143 of which were feebleminded, 44 'normal' and 493 'undetermined' (p. 67).⁷¹

Laughlin condemned Carrie Buck as a woman of "social and economic inadequacy" with a record of "immorality, prostitution and untruthfulness" (p. 33). In speaking on Carrie Buck's family history, using "pedigree" as a marker for human



Retrieved from Harry H. Laughlin's collection of papers, "Most Immediate Blood-Kin of Carrie Buck. Showing Illegitimacy and Hereditary Feeblemindedness" (1925). *Source:* Truman State University.

potential, Laughlin condemned Buck's daughter Vivian and any other children Carrie Buck may have if she were able as "debits to the future population of the State" (p. 34). Indeed, in speaking of the Buck clan, Laughlin proclaimed, "These people belong to the shiftless, ignorant, and worthless class of anti-social Whites in the South" (p. 33). Taken together, the testimony of many key witness in the *Buck v. Bell* trial marked what Watson (2011) referred to as "the social specter and racial riddle of deviant whiteness" (p. 21) in which rural whites were marked as racial outsiders, a threat to the prosperity of the nation and ultimately inassimilable and beyond help.

The court was swayed by the "evidence" and expert testimony presented at trial.

In the Supreme Court's official majority opinion, Justice Holmes upheld the constitutionality of sterilizing someone at risk of parenting "socially inadequate" offspring. Therefore, Justice Holmes wrote:

The judgment finds ... that Carrie Buck is the probable potential parent of socially inadequate offspring, likewise afflicted, that she may be sexually sterilized without detriment to her general health and that her welfare and that of society will be promoted by her sterilization...

Continuing to defend the decision to uphold the legality of sterilizing someone thought to give birth to someone "inflicted" with "feeblemindedness," Justice Holmes continued to defend his decision by framing eugenic sterilization as a noble, national sacrifice:

We have seen more than once that the public welfare may call upon the best citizens for their lives. It would be strange if it could not call upon those who already sap the strength of the State for these lesser sacrifices...in order to prevent our being swamped by incompetence. It is better for all the world, if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or let them starve from their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind....

Three generations of imbeciles are enough.

An article written after the Supreme Court's ruling, which ran in the Richmond Courier on May, 26, 1927 quotes the then Commissioner of Public Welfare for the state of Virginia:

The problem of the perpetuation of imbecility and unfitness by the birth of children to the feeble-minded parents is one that is giving sociologists serious concern.... In the face of this problem, the Virginia sterilization law aims to strike at those mental defects which are hereditary and incurable and thus to check as far as possible any further growth of that part of the population, which must constantly be in one way or another a charge upon the State.

Concerned by these "charges upon the state" and emboldened by the Buck decision, Virginia continued sterilizing U.S. citizens, the majority female under the guise of "feeblemindedness". Other states followed suit. As Ferster (1966) points out, *Buck v. Bell* "was followed by an abundance of eugenic sterilization legislation. Twenty statutes were passed in the ensuing ten years, most of them closely patterned after the Virginia law" (p. 595). Many people were wrongly and unfairly labeled "feebleminded". 72 Many victims of eugenic sterilization had no knowledge of what was being done to them at the time because sterilizations were performed as women sought medical treatment for other maladies. However, forced sterilizations were not the only regrettable consequence of the trial.

⁷² Lombardo (2008) argues that much of the evidence against Carrie Buck was manufactured and that the Buck family did not constitute as Justice Holmes referred to them "three generation of imbeciles". He also offers a thorough account of how poor the defense mounted on behalf of Buck was. Gould (1985) dovetails with Lombardo's core argument that neither of the women pronounced to be an "imbecile" by Justice Holmes actually was. Nonetheless, it is a core assumption of this dissertation project that any person, regardless of mental or physical capacity, deserves the right to freedom from unwanted medical interventions and should have the right to bodily integrity.

According to Matt Wray (2006), eugenicists' portrayal of Southern poverty culminated in the currency of 'white trash' imagery and rhetoric that could be extended beyond southern states:

What had begun as a distinctively regional term emanating from the upper South soon became transregional, with meanings that were recognized in faraway places. As *poor white trash* traveled and entered into local dialects, it formed a chain of associations that symbolically linked local poor whites to those in other rural places. A large part of the cultural success of the eugenics movement lay with the way in which it used this chain of associations to group together the local images of poor rural whites in New Jersey, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and everywhere else. It incorporated and expanded upon the shared perceptions of southern poor whites as immoral, lazy, dirty, criminal, filthy, and perverse and offered an explanation that could be generalized to the entire group. (P. 95)

The image of the Buck family as presented in the trial as shiftless, lazy, ignorant people that were so "feeble," so biologically inferior that they were beyond the help of the state became one of many such portraits of "white trash" used by eugenicists. This image existed not only in court rooms, but in pseudo-scientific eugenic family studies on particular "cacogenic" families who were often poor Southern Whites and the images created within popular books, films and stage shows of the incurable poor white menace, a threat to the race and an assault to the notion of white supremacy. However, white supremacy would be maintained through eugenics during the Age of Reform through other measures.

Linking Cultural Imagery and Institutional Realities: Eugenics and Tobacco Road

Eugenics was a major part of the cultural landscape of the time period. Eugenic themes
found their way into films during the Age of Reform. Horror films like *Dr. Jekyll and*Mr. Hyde (1920), Dracula (1931), Frankenstein (1931), and Freaks (1932), drew from
the public's propensity to gawk at a spectacle of deviance and deformity inherent in the

"monsters" constructed in these films, whereby, "the threat posed by such deviance and its likely reproduction is measured in its effect on the social body" (Smith 2011:2).^{73 74} Eugenics was also found its way into a number of literary works, much of it authored by what were then and continue today to be considered some of the finest writers of the twentieth-century.⁷⁵ Erkshire Caldwell was among these authors, and his work presents a powerful example to explore the relationship between eugenics in American culture during this time and eugenics as a political reality. After all, Caldwell was an advocate of eugenics whose use of degeneration theory as a theme in his novels and plays gained him unprecedented fame and notoriety (Keely 2002; Cuddy and Roche 2003; Lancaster 2007).

In this section, I illustrate how through the process of image-to-policy transmutation, Caldwell's construction of "white trash" became incorporated into state law. Accordingly, I begin by exploring the symbiotic relationship directly through Erkshire Caldwell's work on *Tobacco Road* and the role of his work within the eugenics movement. This example most fully captures the complex way in which all three realms—politics, culture and science—fed in to each other regarding eugenics in the Age of Reform. Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* coupled with the science and politics surrounding the

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⁷³ Other films during the era displayed a decidedly pro-eugenics sentiment including: *The Power of Heredity* (1913), *Eugenics at the Bar "U" Ranch* (1914), *Eugenics versus Love* (1914), *The Second Generation* (1914), *Wood B. Webb and the Microbes* (1914), *Snakeville's Eugenic Marriage* (1915), *The Black Stork* (1915) (later renamed *Are You Fit to Marry?*), *Tomorrow's Children* (1934), and *College Holiday* (1936).

Fitzgerald (Gidley 1973; Nies 2013), and Virginia Woolf (Childs 2001; Glover 2006).
 Fitzgerald (Gidley 1973; Nies 2013), and Virginia Woolf (Childs 2001; Glover 2006).

rural poor in the South show a powerful connection between cultural imagery, eugenic science and the institutionalization of eugenics.

In the 1932 novel, *Tobacco Road*, Caldwell uses literary realism to set the scene of rural poverty. The novel follows the Lester family, sharecroppers who have fallen on hard times and are unable to continue to raise tobacco for money. The family is so desperate for food that Jeeter Lester and Ada Lester, the patriarch and matriarch of the family respectively, are willing to trade their daughter for turnips. The family of fifteen are portrayed as shiftless beggars who lack the ambition or common sense to pursue new forms of employment. The size of the family, the abject poverty they live in, which consists of a dilapidated cabin on an obscure dirt road, the lack of industriousness or fortitude among members of the family and their generally unrefined nature paint the family as a hallmark of "bad stock." Therefore, Tobacco Road is inherently bound up with eugenics, more specifically in the politics of degeneracy, heredity and "bad" breeding. According to Keely, due to Caldwell's portrayal of the family as hopelessly poor and ignorant, "In the end, Caldwell argues that the poor—in both money and breeding—will be always with us and that we are doomed to witness the full horror of their degeneration without the possibility of either relieving their plight or eradicating them [without eugenic intervention]" (Keely 2002:24).

The connection between *Tobacco Road* (1932) and eugenics is not merely contextual or aesthetic. Erkshire Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* was based on a study conducted by his father, Ira Caldwell, in 1928 and published in a series of articles two years later in a 1930 issue of the scientific journal *Eugenics: A Journal of Race*

⁷⁶ This summary is the result of my reading and analysis of Caldwell (1932).

Betterment. Ira Caldwell's piece (in totality), "The Bunglers: A Narrative Study in Five Parts" (1930) is strikingly similar to Erkshire Caldwell's *Tobacco Road*. In fact, according to Lombardo (2011), the connections between "The Bunglars" and Erkshire Caldwell's main characters are startling: "Jeeter and Dude Bungler found a new, fictional life as Jeeter and Dude Lester. Other characters from the eugenics journal reappeared in the novel with barely masked physical marks of defect and behaviors that mirrored the real people Ira Caldwell had described" (p. 55). The blurring between the literary world of the Lesters and reality runs far deeper than Erkshire's heavy reliance, and at times regurgitation, of his father's work.

Erkshire Caldwell's involvement in the eugenics movement far exceeds his literature alone. For instance, "The New York Post published... [Caldwell's] four articles, beginning with a scene of a 'poverty-swept' Georgia landscape, where 'children are seen deformed by nature and malnutrition, women in rags beg for pennies, and men are so hungry that they eat snakes and cow-dung." These articles delved into the deplorable conditions facing sharecroppers who no longer could cultivate crops in the rural South. However, instead of launching an effort to relieve the environmental conditions of poverty or to find new forms of employment for those whose former livelihood had been destroyed by industrialization and urbanization, Caldwell's writing gave rise to a sterilization bill, introduced in Caldwell's home city of Augusta in 1937, which made Georgia the final state to adopt such a measure. According to Keely (2002),

"...the novel [and subsequent news articles] can be read as an argument addressed to the state legislature to push forward such sterilization legislation" (p. 26).⁷⁷

Georgia's sterilization law remained in effect for nearly 30 years, from 1937 to 1963. Under the guise of mental illness and mental deficiency, the state of Georgia forced approximately 3,284 Georgians to endure surgical sterilization. The targets of eugenics in Georgia were mainly white and a majority of sterilizations were carried out against women in the state (Larson 1995).⁷⁸ The connection between Caldwell's literary work and his involvement in policy matters in Georgia clearly shows that eugenics in the cultural realm was not separate or disconnected from eugenics in science or policy. To the contrary, eugenics in the cultural and scientific imaginary of the Age of Reform disseminated into politics through "image-to-policy transmutation".

Caldwell's literary work, much as the family studies used to defame Carrie Buck, were caught up in the derogatory raced and classed archetype of "poor white trash".

According to Newitz and Wray (1996), "The term 'white trash' points [out]...the hatred and fear which undergird the American myth of classlessness. Yoking a classist epithet to a racist one, as 'white trash' does, reminds us how often racism is in fact directly related to *economic* differences" (p. 57). Therefore, of the most crucial analytical significance, "As a stereotype, 'white trash,' calls our attention to the discourses of class and racial

⁷⁷ Caldwell's novel *Tobacco Road* (1932) was hugely successful and by-and-large Caldwell's most revered work. The novel was later adapted to a Broadway play in 1933, which ran for eight years, and made into a film in 1941.

⁷⁸ Thousands more were institutionalized in state mental hospitals based on these eugenic notions of mental degeneracy, without sterilization. For instance, in 1932, over 6,000 people were institutionalized in the Milledgeville State Hospital and Georgia Training School for Mental Defectives alone. Therefore, the policy impact of Caldwell's image of "degeneracy" affected thousands of lives through restricted reproduction and compulsory institutionalization.

difference tend to bleed into one another, especially in the way they pathologize and lay waste to their 'others'" (Newitz and Wray 1996:57).

It is ironic, given the complex and overlapping relationship between race and class in the American consciousness, that so much of eugenics discourse during the Age of Reform was directed toward whites. A major component of eugenics after all, is white supremacy. However, poor whites, who were not fully incorporated into society either economically, geographically or culturally, were viewed as a threat to the human gene pool, a scourge that contributed to the growing inferiority of the national stock. People dehumanized under the weight of the cultural and political image of "white trash" were constructed as degenerate, backward, sloth-like and morally corrupt. This image, the stereotype of "white trash," was used as a rhetorical and aesthetic device during the Age of Reform. The cultural image of white trash played an important role in the pseudo-scientific treatment of eugenics in cacogenic family studies, in cultural rhetoric and aesthetics and subsequently, in policy decisions.

Eugenics and the Color Line: The Submersion of the Racial "Other" and the Simultaneous Maintenance of White "Purity"

America is fraught with a racist history. The enforced slavery and degradation of enslaved blacks has widely been acknowledged as "America's most profound and vexatious problem" (Stampp 1967). Slavery carved out different roles for blacks and whites in the ante-bellum south. For blacks, this role was consumed with racial violence, uncompensated labor, and the psychological toll of surviving within a system that treated the enslaved as less than human (Stampp 1967). For whites, from the prominent slaveholder to the impoverished, their societal role of privilege was maintained by the absence of forced free labor and the dehumanization of living as a slave. Additionally, in

the decades to follow Emancipation, the Jim Crow code of discrimination and segregation would take slavery's place in maintaining the American racial system of stratification, dividing the nation into a hierarchy with blacks socially, economically, and legally submerged beneath whites. In the words of James G. Hollandsworth (2008), "The United States has been grappling with questions stemming from the economic, social, and political relationship of white people with Black folk since a Dutch trader docked at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 and exchanged his cargo of African slaves for food." (p. 1)

During this time, blacks were not considered fully human, nor fully citizens of the United States. After emancipation, as Hollandsworth (2008) points out, the Negro Problem arose:

The idea that Black people in the South were a serious liability instead of a valuable labor force surfaced shortly after the Emancipation Proclamation. Black people had not been a problem during slavery because the legal and social prohibitions of the South's "peculiar institution" kept African Americans in what was assumed to be their rightful place and clearly specified the "rights and duties" of their masters. (P. 5-6)

Therefore, black freedom was constructed as a problem; not only was it seen as a potential threat to white superiority, but it also raised important questions about how African Americans would fit in to American society as free persons, and if bestowed with such rights, citizens. These questions and concerns became the basis of the "Negro Problem," a national discourse that captivated the nation in the first decade of the twentieth century. Just as W.E.B. Du Bois proclaimed in 1903, because the United States was built on such a deeply stratified racial hierarchy, one that in the twentieth century only started to show signs of change, the problem of the time was indeed the color line.

With the Negro Problem at the forefront of the nation's imagination, the national discussion gained new importance with "evidence" coming from eugenicists in the social

and behavioral sciences which, simultaneously: (1) aimed to show that Blacks were physically and morally too inferior to survive and were bound to extinction, therefore solving the Negro Problem, (2) attempted to justify slavery by arguing that African Americans were unruly people who had been tamed through slavery and would revert to their "primitive" nature in freedom, and/or (3) characterized African Americans as so morally debased and criminal as to be dangerous to their own progress and the progress of the nation. Therefore, eugenic propaganda on "race suicide" due to race mixing and degeneration among non-whites, blacks in particular, was common during this age.

Certainly with the Negro Problem at the forefront of the American imagination, anti-black propaganda and rhetoric circulating around the nation, and eugenic pseudo-science condemning African Americans, it is not difficult to believe that the Age of Reform did little to improve the lives of blacks. As Dittmer (1977) points out about the first part of the Age of Reform, progressive era politics:

The term 'progressive era' has not served well to define the United States during the early twentieth century. The initial view of a period marked by governmental reform, trust-busting, and moral uplift is, upon closer scrutiny, giving way to a more realistic picture of a time when progressive change was often more cosmetic than real. Where black America is concerned, however, there remains a consensus that the progressive era was 'for whites only.' Race violence, urban ghettos, and Jim Crow laws, along with continuing economic exploitation and deprivation, made this the nadir of Afro-American history. (P. xi)

The nadir of black history, which historians place around the dawn of the twentieth century (Logan 1954; Bruce 1992), represents a time when racial violence and hatred against blacks reached a zenith, and is also indelibly linked to the racialized logic of eugenics. Eugenics was not only used to denigrate African Americans as they strove to

become full members of the society they helped create, but eugenics also justified the era's violence.

Using her intellect to mount a counter-claim to white superiority and brutality, Ida B. Wells (1892) frequently commented on the situation of Blacks in the South. Wells emphasized the relationship between violence and subjugation:

Her white citizens are wedded to any method however revolting, any measure however extreme, for the subjugation of the young manhood of the dark race. They have cheated him out of his ballot, deprived him of civil rights or redress in the Civil Courts thereof, robbed him of the fruits of his [labor], and are still murdering, burning and lynching him. (P. 36)

In fact, as an extension of this subjugation, eugenicists even viewed racial antagonism as an evolutionary response:

The prevalence of lynching, [sociologist] Ward (1914) explained, was a by-product of evolution. Whites lynched the black man because he insisted upon raping white women. The black man raped white women in response to the 'unheard but imperious voice of nature commanding him at the risk of 'lynch law' to raise his race to a little higher level.' Whites reacted violently because of an equally instinctive determination to protect their race from inferior strains. (P. 452)

While some eugenicists argued that any brutal act was justified to "protect their race from inferior strains" others like Dr. Shirley Wynne of the New York Department of Health, more passively assumed that blacks were so deeply inferior they would surely die out without the aid and guidance of whites.

Although racial hatred was at times more extreme in the American South, racial problems between blacks and whites and eugenic propaganda against Blacks was in no way a strictly "Southern" problem. Racism in the North was escalating during this time because of the great migration of blacks from the South to the urban North that occurred during Reconstruction. For instance, in "Progressive Economists and Scientific Racism"

(1979), Mark Aldrich points out that several eugenicists affiliated with the American Economic Association received a "warm reception" from Northerners. According to Hollandsworth (2008), the career of Alfred Holt Stone, eugenicist and chairman of the state tax commission for Mississippi, provides an apt example of Northern support for Jim Crow eugenics:

The well-read intellectuals, most of whom had probably never ventured south of the Mason-Dixon Line, seemed to like what Stone had to say when he said strict segregation coupled with white paternalism was the only practical solution to the host of problems resulting from two distinct races living in close proximity. (P. 130)

However, eugenicists far exceeded mere rhetorical arguments on so-called "practical solutions" for the Negro Problem; eugenicists also made a lasting policy impact.

Eugenicists are responsible for miscegenation laws, which forbad the union of blacks and whites throughout much of the nation (Pascoe 1996). Organizations established by eugenicists played a leading role in the adoption of miscegenation legislation:

Perhaps the best-known American eugenicist, Charles B. Davenport of the Eugenics Record Office, financed by the Carnegie Institution, outlined their position in a 1913 pamphlet, *State Laws Limiting Marriage Selection Examined in the Light of Eugenics*, which proposed strengthening state control over the marriages of the physically and *racially* unfit. [emphasis added] (P. 58)

Eugenics organizations also led state-level initiatives for miscegenation laws. The Anglo-Saxon clubs of America, a white supremacist eugenics organization based in Richmond, Virginia, passed Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924 with the aid of eugenicists who had acquired clout and influence on the national stage, such as Harry Laughlin, Lothrop

Stoddard, and Madison Grant. As Dorr (1999) argues, the Virginia Act of 1924 broke new ground in the maintenance of white racial purity:

Ostensibly, enacted in response to growing fears of moral decay, Virginia broke new ground in racial legislation with this act. The act did not determine the "race" of blood itself; instead, eugenicists were concerned with ancestry. The bill defined a white person as one with no discernable trace of nonwhite (including African American, Native-American, Malaysian or Asian) blood, ideally preventing near whites from claiming white status. ... In addition, the bill required all newborns and adults born before 1912 to be registered by race at the Bureau of Vital Statistics, the state agency assigned the task of implementing and policing compliance with the act. (P. 144)

"Implementing and policing the act" as Dorr (1999) further illustrates had a dual purpose, it served as a tool of containment by restricting white women's independence and free choice and defended "whiteness" as a pure and untainted racial category:

Debate surrounding the passage of the Racial Integrity Act, a law forbidding a white person to marry anyone of another race, reveals how eugenicists manipulated ideas about race, class, and gender to create a social crisis that apparently could only be solved through their policies. [White] [w]omen's growing independence, they feared, would lead to increasing sexual relations between white women and black men. ... Justified by eugenicists' desire to protect and improve white genetic stock, and ostensibly enacted to prevent racial mixture, the law ultimately served to prescribe the attitudes and behavior of Virginia's white women. (P. 133)

The efforts of the Eugenics Record Office and other eugenic organizations success reached beyond Virginia. In fact, "[a]t one time or another, 41 American colonies and states enacted them; they blanketed western as well as southern states" (p. 49).

The enactment of miscegenation laws in the U.S. can also be viewed through the lens of "obstructed reproduction." As Dorr (1999) makes clear, miscegenation laws were put in place not only out of fear of cross-race affections, but out of fear that if blacks and whites were allowed to marry, the white race would be diluted by mixed race children.

While these laws could not fully stop blacks and whites from having children together, they did a great deal to discourage it, much the same as Jim Crow laws south of the Mason-Dixon Line and de facto segregation throughout the rest of the country.

Consequently, this eugenic legislation serves as another way in which women were obstructed from particular choices regarding their reproduction.

Giving Birth to Eugenic Fears: Eugenics and the Birth Control Movement in Compromise and Conflict

Eugenics as a form of human-directed evolution is not based on the natural "survival of the fittest" as Spencer put it, but in creating a society based on biased legislation and policy practices. Therefore, eugenicists set out to reverse "differential birthrate", the hypothesis that middle- and upper-class families tend to have fewer children than poor families. Of course, the propagation of the middle class and upper classes and the simultaneous obstruction of reproduction among the lower classes is caught up in the politics of motherhood, including marriage, childbearing and birth control politics. Women's movements during the Age of Reform were able to leverage the political visibility of women that came with women's suffrage.

One movement in particular was especially crucial in understanding the eugenics movement during this period: the birth control movement, which had the potential to, for the first time in America's history, allow women a substantial amount of control over their reproductive lives. Leaders in the birth control movements were affiliated with the eugenics movement; some were even staunch advocates of virulent measures like eugenic sterilization. However, the connection between birth control movement and eugenics goes much deeper than the affiliations of its members. The overlap between eugenics and

the movement at hand is complex and reflective of the thorny entanglement of America's interest as a world superpower, classism, racism and women's rights.

As Haaland (1993) points out, according to birth control advocate and lecturer Emma Goldman, women were saddled with reproduction, not as a choice, but as a cultural imperative, a way to ensure the health and vitality of the nation:

The woman, physically and mentally unfit to be a mother, yet condemned to breed; the woman economically taxed to the very last spark of energy, yet forced to breed; the woman, tied to the man she loathes, whose very sight fills her with horror, yet made to breed; the woman worn and used up from the process of procreation, yet coerced to breed even more. What a hideous thing this much-lauded motherhood. (P. 82)

Goldman and other women like her were strong proponents of the New Woman movement which rallied for Women's Suffrage, women's right to work outside the home and earn a wage equivalent to their male counterparts, the liberty of birth control and the general rights associated with women living freely, outside constricted roles as wives and mothers (Haaland 1993). The Age of Reform was not only marked by key issues in women's political rights, but a general change in lifestyle whereby women strove to become, "a complete physical and mental organism, which can exist and function without the active aid of man" (Nearing and Nearing 1912:2). The "New Woman" because of the restrictive conventions of the time, were considered radical, a threat to the status-quo and romanticized notions of family within the Age of Reform. While women's voting and working outside the home were deeply controversial issues, birth control was one of the most vexatious problems facing the nation (Gordon 1976 and 2002; McCann 1994).

Although Sanger's involvement in the eugenics movement is hotly contested, it demands critical consideration. Firstly, although Sanger was an active participant in a virulently racist form of eugenics (Roberts 1997; Davis 2003; Franks 2005), it is crucial to recognize that Sanger was interested in family planning and limiting family size out of a legitimate concern for women's health and general wellbeing, as she makes clear in her writing:

...unregulated fertility affects the health of thousands of mothers for whom one pregnancy follows another with excessive rapidity. If the physical resources of the mother are depleted, the previous child is inadequately nourished and the one on the way will start with the double handicap of reduced vitality and inefficient nurture. Under the stresses of modern life, especially in our great urban centers, family limitation is a necessity in the interest of both mother and child in a multitude of cases. Here the problem becomes primarily a medical problem and the line of advance is in the improvement of contraceptive technique. Such improvement is an essential feature of the preventive medicine of the future. Closely associated is the dreadful problem of hundreds of thousands of abortions from which thousands of women die annually. (P. 15)

Sanger was in no way exaggerating. Reproductive politics during the Age of Reform were a crucial factor in women's freedom. Unwanted conception posed a significant threat to women physically, economically and emotionally. Abortions, which were illegal and unregulated at the time, could result in grievous physical harm or death. Therefore, Margaret Sanger's efforts to reconstruct motherhood as "conscious and controlled" (p.

⁷⁹ The legacy of Margaret Sanger is contested in the literature on women's reproductive rights, see Gordon (1974), Valenza (1985), Franks (2005), and Sanger (2009) for an accounting of the tension between Sanger's work on behalf of women and her role as a eugenicist. My own review of Sanger's writings (Sanger 1920, 1921 and 1922) reveals Sanger's involvement in the eugenics movement and the racist and classist overtones of her birth control advocacy.

⁸⁰ For documentation on the high risk of abortions during this period, including maternal and infant mortality, see Gutierrez (1899) and Beckman (1916).

27) gave women the opportunity to control their reproductive lives and avoid the risks and pitfalls associated with terminating a pregnancy at the time.



Illustration of woman burdened by "unwanted" babies. Source: *Birth Control Review* (1923)

As Frank H. Hankins, thenprofessor of sociology at Smith
College wrote in a paper entitled,
"Birth Control and the Racial Future":
"Birth control is, without question, one
of the most momentous movements
now affecting the evolution of western
peoples" (p. 11). Birth control was a
central American debate during the
Age of Reform and integrally tied to
the politics of eugenics, which was the
leading paradigm of the time regarding

the future of the races? As Hankins goes on to say, the politics of birth control would become a leading concern of eugenicists:

...the differential fertility of the different stocks contains the key to the future traits of the American people, both anthropologically and eugenically viewed. The future American will be darker in complexion, shorter in stature and stockier in build. Will he be as gifted in general abilities? Will he be richer, or poorer, in special talents? (P. 11)

These concerns were inextricably tied to the politics of motherhood. For as Haaland (1993) points out: "The breeding of men lies largely in the hands of women. That is why the question of eugenics is to a great extent one with the woman question" (p. 18).⁸¹

Birth control, the woman question and eugenics all coalesced in rhetoric on "family limitation". The concept of "family limitation," the obvious consequence to birth control rights, was a particularly threatening concept to many. As a judge involved in a high profile trial involving birth control argued, "If some of the women who are going around and advocating equal suffrage would go around and advocate women having children they would do a greater service" (Kennedy 1970:73). Family limitation was particularly threatening to eugenicists who believed in positive eugenics. For instance, in "A Practicable Eugenic Suggestion," W. McDougal (1907) argued that:

[The] [i]nfluences and measures affecting the future composition of the population...may be conveniently classed in four groups, according as they affect the rate of reproduction of the following four classes of persons: (1) The worst elements of the population, the hereditarily criminal and degenerate; (2) all those, or the bulk of those, below the average civic worth; (3) the bulk of those above the average civic worth; (4) the best elements of the population, those of eminent civic worth.⁸²

McDougal (1907) argued that the promulgation of the third and fourth classes or what he refers to as those "above the average civic worth" and the "best elements of society" are "urgently needed".

Margaret Sanger was highly influential in her embrace of positive and negative eugenics whereby desirables should take advantage of opportunities for family planning

 ⁸¹ The entanglement of the birth control movement and eugenics has been addressed by Hardin (1969) and Gordon (1974). The comments I highlight here are merely reflections of this historically contingent reality.
 82 W. McDougal's paper "A Practicable Eugenic Suggestion" (1907) was presented before the Sociological Society at the School of Economics and Political Science at the University of London.

and undesirables were to be restricted from procreating through sterilization. In "The Pivot of Civilization," a book she authored in 1922, Sanger wrote:

Everywhere we see poverty and large families going hand in hand. Those least fit to carry on the race are increasing most rapidly. People who cannot support their own offspring are encouraged by Church and State to produce large families. Many of the children thus begotten are diseased or feeble-minded; many become criminals. The burden of supporting these unwanted types has to be bourne by the healthy elements of the nation. Funds that should be used to raise the standard of our civilization are diverted to the maintenance of those who should have never been born.

The fear that "unwanted types" or "those who should have never been born" would draw critical resources or "funds that should be used to raise the standard of our civilization" from the state in the form of social welfare programs was common in her time. As Sanger (1922) illustrates, many important political figures, even Reform Era leaders, harbored deeply problematic ideas about the relationship between poverty, heredity and government action commonly referred to as eugenics. Indeed, if America was deteriorating because of bad breeding, birth control eugenically applied could ensure the health and prosperity of the nation. This is not the only time Sanger framed eugenics as a primarily economic issue.

Margaret Sanger gave visibility to women's reproductive rights during the Age of Reform; thusly, as a political figure she was able to occupy the national spotlight and she published articles in widely read newspapers and magazines. Although Sanger embraced the eugenics concept, eugenicists were largely skeptical of the birth control movement and its impact on the nation. Many thought that birth control would ensure the survival of the unfit or increase the differential birthrate between classes as the middle and upper classes utilized birth control to have even smaller families and the lower classes failed to

secure or properly use birth control. For instance, in 1932, the *New York Times* reviewed a paper H. F. Osburn presented at the Third International Eugenics Congress on the potentially calamitous consequences of birth control on eugenics. ⁸³ A comment he offered for the *New York Times* article, which reflects the major argument of his presentation reads as follows: "Whatever its benefits in limiting the unfittest, birth control is always in danger still more of limiting the fittest and thus becoming positively dysgenic or against the interests of the race as a whole in which it is practiced" (DNA Learning Center 2003).

However, Sanger countered such criticisms with her own political agenda which involved birth control as a complement, and not a substitute, to eugenics. An article entitled, "The Eugenic Value of Birth Control Propaganda" (1921), published in the *Birth Control Review*, Sanger argues that birth control should not supersede eugenics in limiting the reproductive options of the "lower classes" who are assumed to be "mentally and physically defective":

As an advocate of birth control I wish...to point out that the unbalance between the birth rate of the 'unfit' and the 'fit,' admittedly the greatest present menace to civilization, can never be rectified by the inauguration of a cradle competition between these two classes. In this matter, the example of the inferior classes, the fertility of the feeble-minded, the mentally defective, the poverty-stricken classes, should not be held up for emulation. ... On the contrary, the most urgent problem today is how to limit and discourage the over-fertility of the mentally and physically defective. (P. 5)

Ultimately, while the historical record on Sanger has either cast her as a hero of reproductive rights or a eugenicist bent on the destruction of the lower classes and blacks

⁸³ Dr. H. F. Osborn was a leader of the eugenics movement; consequently, he served as President of the Second International Congress of Eugenics, held in New York City in 1921.

in particular, she was, simultaneously, however contradictorily, both. Indeed, she advocated for smaller families and the relieving of the burden of unwanted pregnancy at a time where women's reproductive choices were primarily controlled by men. However, Sanger's view on the birth control movement was stifled by her strong ties to the eugenics movement and invested interest in white supremacy (Roberts 1997; Davis 2003; Franks 2005). Certainly, she wanted to improve life for women, but her views of true womanhood meant that only middle-class, white women occupied the category of respectable women. For populations of women outside this group, birth control politics at Sanger and others' behest was restrictive and generally focused on destroying any chance of reproduction among these supposed "unwanted types" rather than allowing them to choose the size of their own families.

Sanger was not the only birth control advocate to launch an appeal to eugenicists. As Baird (1996) points out, birth control advocate Marie Stopes was also "caught up in the eugenicist agenda to 'improve' the human race" (p. 28). Accordingly, when eugenicists argued against birth control on the grounds that it would enlarge the birthrate between classes, Stopes claimed, "Constructive birth control will fill the comfortable cradles, and empty the gutters." (Baird 1996: 28) However, there is no historical evidence that eugenicists were thusly convinced by such claims that birth control would reduce the population of the lower classes at an increased or equal amount as it would limit the size of families in the middle and upper classes.

The prevailing concern about "family limitation" directly countered the argument of Sanger and other birth control advocates. Sanger believed that "family limitation" could improve women's lives cross-class. According to Sanger (1920), "The most serious

evil of our times is that of encouraging the bringing into the world of large families. The most immoral practice of the day is breeding too many children" (p. 57). Sanger (1920) goes on to attribute every pressing social ill to large families: "The immorality of large families lies not only in their injury to the members of those families but in their injury to society" (p. 57).

Eugenicists had significant legislative successes during this time period, including miscegenation laws, Jim Crow laws, restrictive immigration policy and sterilization laws. Indeed, eugenicists, through law and policy, aligned national politics with their agenda. All of these measures played a substantial role in controlling the population demographics of the young nation. Because of the breadth of eugenic legislation, had eugenicists bought into the claims of birth control advocates like Sanger and Stokes, and had birth control used as a tool of eugenics, the birth control movement would likely have had greater success during the period. However, of course, had birth control advocates successfully made a eugenic appeal and overtly tethered birth control with population control, the infringement on women's reproductive rights would have been even more tremendous.

The logic of "family limitation" not only impacted women through the birth control movement, it also played a role in discouraging willing white, middle-class women from undergoing tubal-ligation. Therefore, the difficulty and in some cases

⁸⁴ There were some minor successes regarding birth control during this period in the history of the United States. Birth control advocates helped to make condoms legal and ensure that women had access to them. Consequently, there were birth control clinics during this time, though their primary focus was to distribute condoms, and diaphragms (which is the oldest temporary form of birth control in the United States) and providing counseling on family planning (Gordon 1976; McCann 1994; Tone 2001; Chesler 2007). When I speak on the "failures" of the movement during this time, I refer to the movement's inability to secure abortion rights.

inability of these women to secure elective sterilization is another manifestation of "compulsory reproduction" during this period. The common practice of hospitals at this time, was to follow the "120 rule" whereby a woman could not volunteer to be sterilized unless her age multiplied by the number of children she had already borne was more than 120 (Campbell 1999; Kluchin 2009; Luna and Luker 2013; Richie 2013). The rule was generally applied when white middle class women thusly considered "eugenically fit" opted for sterilization (Campbell 1999; Kluchin 2009; Luna and Luker 2013; Richie 2013) and placed an undue burden on being able to voluntarily utilize sterilization. **Intersecting Inequalities: Black Women and Eugenics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Maternalist eugenics, the explicit and constrictive control of a woman's fertility, began with the story of black women in America. According to Jones (2010):

Black women in the United States, have since enslavement, suffered from control of their reproduction as they were forced to bear children to increase their masters' property by bearing slave children. Additionally, in order to breed slaves who had superior physical abilities such as strength, 'Masters frequently practiced a form of eugenics by withholding their permission for certain marriages and arranging others. (P. 32-3)

Furthermore, this control over black women's fertility in the slave states served a dual function. Slave master's domination of black slave women's body not only served their economic interests, but also, according to Dorothy Roberts (1997), "[d]omination of reproduction was the most effective means of subjugating enslaved women, of denying them the power to govern their own bodies and to determine the course of their own destiny" (p. 55).

⁸⁵ This issue came to national attention in the 1970s with several lawsuits which led to a removal of these restrictions in 1972 (Kluchin 2009).

However, after slavery, black enslaved women were no longer the "property" of white slave owning men, and subsequently black women en masse, for the first time in the history in the United States, were able to begin controlling their own fertility.

However, while African-Americans gained more control over the size of their families in freedom, eugenicists used any fluctuation in fertility amongst Blacks to justify racist claims of "degeneracy" and impending doom amongst Blacks (Muhammad 2010). In fact, the shrinking fertility rates of blacks post-slavery fueled racist eugenicists who saw this change, "...as proof of blacks' general inferiority and poor health" (Hill 2005:126). Black women's experience would continue to be marked by a particularly virulent form of white supremacist eugenics in the Age of Reform.

In "The Damnation of Womanhood" (1920) W.E.B. Du Bois proclaimed, "All womanhood is hampered today because the world on which it is emerging is a world that tries to worship both virgins and mothers and in the end despises motherhood and despoils virgins" (p. 164). The centuries long history of Black women in America has shown that black women have been cut off from the Victorian ideals of "proper womanhood" and consequently "proper motherhood" in addition to being constrained to gendered categories such as "virgins" and "mothers" (Carlson 1992; Collins 2004). This denigration as sexually promiscuous, "bad" mothers mixed with the extreme racism of the period extended the legacy of eugenics against black women.

Intersectionality serves as an appropriate frame for not only the abuses they suffered as black women, but also for their political marginalization and the complexity

of inequalities that characterized their reproductive lives. 86 Politically, black women were excluded from women's movements and marginalized within race-based advocacy movements rooted in the black community (Roberts 1997; Nelson 2003). Therefore, black women took initiative on their own behalf, simultaneously rallying against racial oppression and gender inequality (Nelson 2003). African American women's reform efforts during the Age of Reform included a number of regional black women's clubs that combatted racism while they simultaneously addressed "women's issues" such as women's and infant health, women's right to education, woman's suffrage and issues related to childbearing and motherhood. Many of the club's joined forces under the leadership of Mary Church Terrell to create the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs (NACW). Other notable national reform movements led by Black women continued to fight gendered and racial oppression, including the National League for the Protection of Colored Women and the National Council of Negro Women. Black women were also pivotal in the founding and the initial successes of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Black feminist organizers contended with and struggled against the complex inequalities that shaped the reproductive lives of Black women.

Regarding reproduction, black women during the Age of Reform had to contend with three distinct and conflicting political agendas, none of which served the interests of true reproductive freedom. The first involved eugenicists who believed in white supremacy, labeled the black race inferior and lamented their propagation (Roberts

⁸⁶ Intersectionality as a useful heuristic for understanding inequality, especially the political subjugation of black women, was developed by Crenshaw (1989; 1991). Other feminists (Collins 1999a; Yuval-Davis 2007; McCall 2014) have also contributed a great deal to the formation of "intersectionality" as a concept.

1997). The second political agenda relates to black elites who attempted to adapt eugenics to the black community by discouraging procreation among the economically disenfranchised and uneducated (English 2008). The third group, reacting to the other two, is composed of individual black men who limited the reproductive options available to their wives and militant groups who viewed all birth control available to black women as a form of white-sponsored genocide (Roberts 2000; Nelson 2011). According to Shirley A. Hill (2005):

Birth control clinics—often sponsored directly or partially by black community organizations—proliferated in African American neighborhoods between 1925 and 1945, despite protest among a handful of black male militants who vociferously condemned these clinics as white efforts to promote black genocide. [Accordingly] the black press supplied an abundance of birth control information, including reporting cases of abortion that had resulted in death and the arrests of physicians who had performed them. (P. 126)

To manage their reproduction, Black women had to navigate this complex and contemptuous terrain.

During the Age of Reform, this 'nadir' for black America, infringements upon Black women's reproductive lives was one of many injustices felt by a population that was not truly free. Black women, after all, were subject to the same racial violence as men during the era including lynching, race riots, Jim Crow segregation in the South and de jure segregation in Northern states, institutionalized racism, wage and work discrimination in addition to poor schools (Fredrickson 2002). Therefore, the institutional makeup of the United States and the culture of violence toward African Americans produced a disenfranchised people with few opportunities for betterment and little options to secure a stable family life. Eugenicists with their dogged adherence to biological rather than social or environmental explanations of human difference attributed

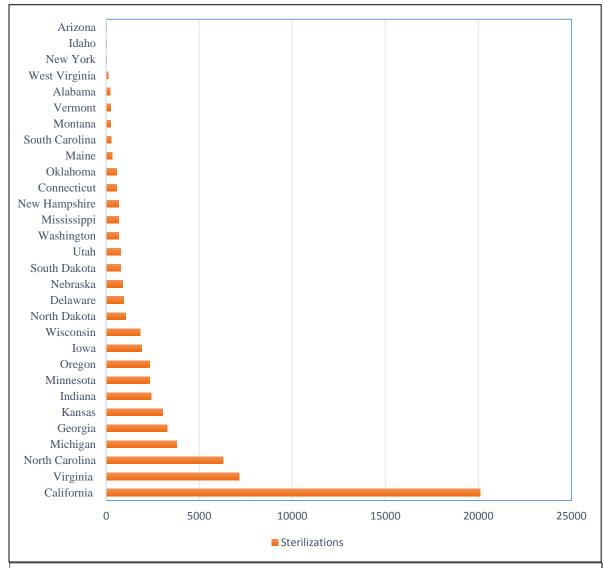
the inequities blacks faced as evidence of their genetic inferiority (Roberts 1997; Muhammad 2010). Therefore, eugenics during the Age of Reform affected black women's lives through miscegenation laws that forbad them to marry outside their race, coercive politics that made their reproductive decisions a matter of racial politics instead of individual liberties and eugenic sterilization. Unfortunately, the legacy of reproductive injustices manifested in reduced and sometimes nonexistent choices for black women would remain nearly one hundred years later. These dynamics and the interrelated issues associated with restrictive reproductive options or "reproductive dystopias" for women of color and white women in the Era of Neoliberalism will be explored in the next chapter. *Conclusion and Discussion*

According to Gramsci (1971), "the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as 'domination' and as 'intellectual and moral leadership'..." (p. 57). Gramsci's words certainly apply when carefully examining the political complexity of eugenics during the Age of Reform. Although shocking by modern standards, eugenicists were prominent intellectual and moral leaders of their day; many are even regarded as heroes for their moral and liberal contributions to the politics of their time. Margaret Sanger, Alexander Graham Bell, and Theodore Roosevelt among other liberals supported eugenics at one time or another. And they were not alone, eugenicists came from both political parties and some of the most influential families in the country like the Carnegies, the Kellogs, and the Rockefellers financed eugenic research and propaganda campaigns.

According to Thomas C. Leonard (2005), "American economics transformed itself during the Age of Reform. In the three to four decades after 1890, American

economics became an expert policy science and academic economists played a leading role in bringing about a vastly more expansive state role in the American economy" (p. 207). The four decades of the Age of Reform saw a number of "progressive" economic policies including the establishment of income tax, the creation of the Federal Reserve, the regulation of the food and drug industries, and the institutionalization of the "welfare state" by providing some war widows and other needy women with "women's pensions." Some reform era policies protected U.S. citizens from a growingly industrialized, capitalist society; however, part of the liberal agenda also involved obstructing the reproduction of those groups that were considered incapable of contributing to it.

The Age of Reform regulated behavior and the moral character of citizens as much as it regulated the reach of capitalism. While part of the Reform Era political agenda meant protecting American citizens from capitalism, an equally important part of the progressive agenda meant ensuring capitalism thrived by developing "good" and "productive" citizens, people who produced more than they consumed, people who contributed to society economically. Therefore, those deemed unfit for American life during the Age of Reform were labeled "unemployable," "parasites," and "industrial residuum" (Leonard 2005:208). The poor and destitute were major targets of eugenicists. Therefore, impoverished women were subjected to "obstructed reproduction" in the form of surgical sterilizations. By 1964, sterilizations totaled more than 63,000 (see the preceding graph depicting the number of sterilizations during this time frame by state).



Graph 1. Cumulative Sterilizations by State, 1907-1964, Totaling 63,643. *Source:* Wellerstein (2011), graph by author.

These economically marginalized women were selected on the basis that their potential contribution to society did not justify their place in society, in other words eugenicists targeted people Sanger referred to as the "unwanted types". These women, through "obstructed reproduction" had their human rights and individual freedoms suspended in service of culturally constructed images that labeled them "other" and "genetically inferior".

While eugenicists targeted those thought to be a welfare risk for forced sterilization, eugenics also inspired "compulsory reproduction" whereby the eugenically "fit" were discouraged from limiting reproductive activities. "Compulsory reproduction" was a part of the reproductive landscape of the Age of Reform in two ways: (1) through the failure of the birth control movement which made long-term birth control an impossibility for all women during the time, and (2) difficulty in securing sterilizations among "fit" women. Consequently, "compulsory reproduction" can be understood as one of the most vexatious reproductive issues facing Reform Era women.

In contrast, economically problematic populations were constructed in American culture through a synthesis of distinct cultural realms that includes the political domain, the scientific discourse and mainstream media. Poor whites, especially those living in the rural South, who threatened the industrial economy by living outside its boundaries and refusing (or being unable) to bring their lifestyle in line with the demands of industrial capitalism, drew a great deal of attention from eugenicists. Regarding science, eugenicists created an entire genre, complete with its own methodology, to "prove" the inferiority of "white trash" families living throughout the United States, referred to as "family studies" or "genealogical studies". These studies used public birth records, jail and prison records, the testimony of neighbors, teachers and sometimes physicians to construct entire bloodlines as hapless, inefficient, hopeless individuals prone to crime and pestilence. This image was used as evidence in the Buck v. Bell trial, where Carrie Buck was sterilized without her consent on the basis that she was mentally deficient and genetically predisposed to mother genetically inferior offspring. Poor whites were also marked as trash in mainstream media. For instance, Caldwell's Tobacco Road, a novel turned play

and later the subject of a film, is one of the most well-known and long resonating screeds about white degeneracy.

Eugenicists did not exclusively target poor whites. "Scientific white supremacy" was widely read and considered valid science by many during the Age of Reform. This work established racial hierarchies with people of color, especially, people of the African diaspora, aborigines, and the native peoples of North America at the bottom and Caucasians as the top as the height of civilization. The Age of Reform was a time of extreme racial hatred and violence toward African Americans, Lynchings, racial mobs of whites who burned entire towns of blacks and Jim Crow racism all contributed to the upheavals that marked this period as the "nadir" of black history. While eugenics sometimes targeted blacks, eugenics further harmed the black community by justifying and legitimizing the myriad of injustices perpetrated against African Americans. Eugenicists of the period sought to maintain this racial hierarchy by which African Americans were not full citizens of the United States and enjoyed few rights. Accordingly, eugenicists enacted miscegenation laws that forbad the marriage of blacks and whites in order to discourage the birth of mixed-race children. Most eugenicists argued that race mixing led to inevitable degeneration and the end of white civilization.

Indeed, racial politics during this chapter in the extensive history of eugenics in the United States, were complicated. Restrictive policies followed for the "dangerous classes" who were constructed within the cultural and scientific realms through "image-to-policy transmutation". Among these dangerous classes were poor Southern whites labeled "poor white trash", blacks who were dehumanized as brutes and thought to be so inferior that they might die out without the manipulation of eugenicists, racially-mixed

persons (or, as racists of the day referred to them, "mongrels"), Asians and other global "others" (who due to eugenicist-sponsored immigration control policies were not permitted to enter the U.S.).

Around the beginning of the twentieth century, the politics of childbirth and family planning captivated a nation concerned with "progress" and moralistic reform. Key figures within the birth control movement entered into the national dialogue on eugenics and used eugenics to justify their aims and bolster support for the objectives. Therefore, women's reproductive politics of the Age of Reform were, in many ways, aligned with eugenics. However, the very notion of birth control, which many assumed was more likely to be utilized by the affluent, flew in the face of the two modes of eugenics operating during this time: the focus on closing the gap between family size between the middle and lower classes known as "differential birthrate" and the concern over the declining numbers of the middle class as a result of "family limitation". Women's reproductive rights activists who were invested in birth control and eugenics, Margaret Sanger chief among them, attempted to make the case that birth control would limit the number of undesirables born to American mothers. So, in essence, she and other activists tried to mesh birth control with the politics of eugenics.

While much of women's politics during the day overlapped with the eugenics movement, the two movements also came into direct conflict. One of the biggest failures of eugenicists was their inability to completely stamp out widely accessible birth control, which they believed would be used with more frequency by the affluent and thus cause an even wider gap in differential birthrate, where more children are born to poor parents than parents of the middle and upper classes. Birth control advocates' inability to tie birth

control to the eugenics movement, during a time in which the latter exerted a great deal of political influence, is a major factor in the birth control movement's limitations during this time.

CHAPTER 4: NEOLIBERALISM AND THE EUGENIC CREED IN THE TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES

"It would be naïve to suppose that our ideas are entirely shaped by the objects of our contemplation which lie outside of us or that our wishes and our fears have nothing whatever to do with what we perceive or with what will happen... The most important thing, therefore, that we can know about a man is what he takes for granted, and the most elemental and important facts about a society are those that are seldom debated and generally regarded as settled."

~Ideology and Utopia, Karl Mannheim (1936)

"Reproductive freedom is a matter of social justice, not individual choice." ~ *Killing the Black Body*, Dorothy Roberts (1999)

The Holocaust exposed the genocidal potential of scientific racism within a human rights context (Bromley and Russell 2010). Additionally, the Nuremberg Trials publicly laid bare the connection between war crimes and unethical, race-based scientific research (Weindling 2004). Beginning in 1950, with the assistance of a global panel of scientific experts, the United Nation's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released a series of reports delegitimizing the use of science to prove the biological superiority of any particular race (Barkan 1996; Brattain 2007; Singh 2010). Likewise, a "cultural shift" in the social and humanistic sciences also shifted a great deal of scientific discourse away from discourse on race as a biological fact to treatments of race as *social* and *cultural* (Kelley 1998; Muhammad 2010; Teslow 2014). Because of new socio-cultural understandings of race, and in recognition of human rights violations then associated with "eugenics," the term itself became culturally indecorous. These dynamics led Cravens (1988), Degler (1991) and Barkan (1992), to declare the "retreat" of scientific racism.

However, two strains of pro-eugenics scientific race research continues today.

One strain of scholarship applies the science of eugenics to contemporary social problems

(Murray 1984; Rushton 1990; Shockley 1992; Herrnstein and Murray 1994; Wright 1994; Rushton 1995; Lynn 2001; Kitcher 2003; Pinker 2003). Another strain of scholarship argues in favor of an optimization approach to human reproduction, addressing disease prevention and the termination of genetic disorders and other disabilities while ignoring the political and socio-cultural dimensions of genetic "enhancement" (Zimmerman 1990; Jones 1993; Lynn 1996; Agar 1996 and 1998; Silver 1997; Glannon 1998; Stock and Campbell 2000; Savulescu 2001; Stock 2003; Naam 2005; Savulescu 2005; Green 2007; Harris 2007; Bostrom and Savulescu 2009; Savulescu and Kahane 2009; Erler 2010). Taken together, both of these strains of research argue in favor of a "new eugenics," a return of the science of the wellborn. ⁸⁷

Eugenics has not only continued in scientific rhetoric, but in practices supported by public policy as well. Coerced birth control and the genetic manipulation of the reproductive process are a part of today's eugenic landscape, I refer to these two contemporary reproductive dystopias as "restricted reproduction" and "manipulated reproduction" respectively. Incidents of coerced birth control have continued to surface in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Take for instance, the targeting of predominately black high schools for the controversial contraceptive Norplant in Baltimore in 1993 (Hanania-Freeman 1993; Beilenson, Miola and Farmer 1995) or parole agreements with low-income women of color that include mandatory, long-term contraception (Roberts 1991; Burrell 1995). These restrictions, generally directed at women of color on public assistance or with low-incomes, constitutes "restricted"

⁸⁷ The debate between eugenicists and environmentalist has been documented by Fraser (1995) and Jacoby and Glauberman (1995).

reproduction". Technological advances in reproductive health coupled with the advent of The Human Genome Project, which was developed with the goal of decoding humanity's genetic blueprint, opened up new possibilities to manipulate the reproductive process (Harding 1990; King 1999; Green 2007; Knowles and Kaebnick 2007; Roberts 2009). However, the social pressure placed on middle class, affluent mothers to utilize these technologies creates the other reproductive dystopia I speak about in this chapter, "manipulated reproduction".

In light of both of these reproductive dystopias, an analysis of eugenics must address not only the paradoxical nature of the persistence of eugenics, but the shift in the demographics affected by maternalist eugenics. While eugenics in the Age of Reform affected blacks and whites in proportionately equal measure, black women have made up a disproportionately large share of those affected by coercive birth control in the Post-Civil Rights Era. Consequently, I argue that neoliberalism in contemporary America has actually entrenched white supremacy within the practice of maternalist eugenics. Indeed, eugenics is now more racialized than during the Age of Reform where racial hatred was at an apex and the KKK had immense power, racial science went nearly unchecked and the human rights of people of color were not, even ostensibly or rhetorically, met.⁸⁸

Four complex, social dynamics contribute to this argument: (1) strains of "scientific" literature that justify eugenic population control by painting people of color as culturally deviant or biologically and cognitively inferior, (2) the political racialization of poverty which constructs black motherhood as problematic to the growth and progress of the nation, (3) the freedom of government agencies and civil society organizations

⁸⁸ See footnote 9 for an in-depth explanation of the evidence in this regard.

(CSOs) to promote eugenics as public policy, and (4) the privatization and accompanying deregulation of industries that promote reproductive interventions on behalf of economic elites without limits. In this chapter, I discuss each of these issues in light of the continuation of maternalist eugenics. In doing so, I explore the various ways that neoliberalism has maintained eugenics in modern America as well as the diffusion of cultural/scientific constructions of "fit" and "unfit" motherhood, transmitted through image-to-policy transmutation, that continue to limit women's reproductive autonomy. Neoliberal Inequalities: The Not-So-Free Market and the Rhetoric of Colorblindness Neoliberalism, simply understood, is a way to structure an economic system that builds on the principles of free trade in an effort to maximize efficiency and profitability (Harvey 2005; Steger and Roy 2010). Under neoliberalism, market economies allow "the market" itself to provide economic balance and stability which inherently limits the role of government interference with market activities (Chomsky 1999; Harvey 2005; Steger and Roy 2010). Therefore, the basis of neoliberalism includes several policies including the deregulation of industry; the minimization of labor union power; the marketization of agriculture and resource extraction; a calculated control of inflation; cutting public expenditure on social services; and fostering the use of finance among corporations, institutions, and individuals (Pierson 1994; Harvey 2005; Heyen et al. 2007). I argue that neoliberalism has perpetuated positive eugenics through its embrace of a market mentality that denigrates social welfare. Furthermore, the perpetuation of colorblind racial philosophy, a part of the neoliberal creed, coupled with the deregulation of industry and civil society organizations allows reproductive abuses to continue without consequence.

Neoliberalism, as demonstrated by the adoption of such policies, simultaneously began to take shape in several global epicenters including the UK, China and the U.S. in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Harvey 2005). Ostensibly, neoliberalism was meant to unleash a new level of individual freedom through uninhibited market participation, without interference or constraint from "the state". As Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of the UK and early proponent of neoliberalism, once explained: "Let me give you my vision: a man's right to work as he will, to spend what he earns, to own property, to have the State as servant not as master...[these] are the essence of a free country and on that freedom all other freedoms depend" (Hall 2011:705).

However, this vision of freedom has been challenged by intellectuals who see the free market system as an arbiter of oppression rather than a liberator. According to Chomsky (1999), neoliberalism is characterized by, "...a massive increase in social and economic inequality, a marked increase in severe deprivation for the poorest nations and peoples of the world, a disastrous global environment, an unstable global economy and an unprecedented bonanza for the wealthy" (p. 8). This "bonanza for the wealthy" has manifested itself in neoliberal policies, which instead of giving the average citizen greater freedom uninhibited by the state, have actually increased the gap between the rich and the poor (Chomsky 1999). Such policies as the undermining of unions, global industrialization and privatization have resulted in a loss of job protection for the middle and working-classes while deregulation and unchecked resource extraction often exposes poorly paid workers to adverse environmental conditions (Chomsky 1999; Heyen et al. 2007). Moreover, a contracted welfare state that limits government expenditure for social services means that economic strife endured by the lower echelons of society, created by

neoliberalism, are unlikely to be resolved (Pierson 1994; Navarro 1998). All of these processes are aimed to support global corporations with the accumulation of capital and all have contributed to a society where everything is defined by its market value.

With the "marketization of everything," policies undermine the rights and freedoms of entire populations in an effort to grow the economy in favor of megacorporations. Therefore, under neoliberalism, "the role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices" (Harvey 2007:48). Neoliberalism not only profoundly affects the parameters of state power, but it also deeply structures the subjective experience of all those living within the neoliberal system. Indeed, neoliberalism is seen as a totalizing paradigm that constantly structures and re-structures people's lives (Harvey 2005; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001). Marketization extends far beyond the commodification of traditional market objects; it has led to a commodification of social relations, modes of thought and the body (Foucault 1997; Martin 2002; Giroux 2005; Peck 2010; Dardot and Laval 2014). Neoliberalism dictates subjective experience by entering into the everyday lives of people through structuring the spheres of work people inhabit, what aid or lack thereof they make expect from their government, the amount of taxes they will pay, their livelihood and therefore the type of material existence they and their families can live, their monetary responsibilities to others, and in a society dominated by the logic of market value, often their self-worth as well. As Peck (2010) points out, the conventional wisdom of neoliberalism is "ubiquitous" and "all-encompassing" (p. 1). Therefore, as David Harvey (2005) also highlights, "Neoliberalism has, in short, become hegemonic as a mode of discourse. It has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become

incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world" (p. 3).

The relationship whereby neoliberalism shapes and reshapes social relations is complex and cyclical (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Peck 2010). Market processes play a significant role in shaping how we think, how we live and how we view our role in society. Furthermore, how people act on those perceptions continues to structure political, social and economic systems. For instance, the culture of neoliberalism holds individual economic success as the cornerstone of national prosperity. Therefore, under the logic of neoliberalism, individuality, self-actualization and self-reliance shapes how people negotiate their everyday lives. According to Stephen Gill (2003), neoliberalism has encouraged the "social deepening of economic liberal definitions of social purpose and possessively individualist patterns of action and politics" (p. 256). Another of the most pervasive ways that neoliberalism affects how many understand the world, is the neoliberal myth of colorblindness (Giroux 2003; Bonilla-Silva 2014). "Colorblindness" emanates from neoliberalism's concentration upon the individual, by equating the economic struggles of people of color with personal failings rather than macro-level structural and political issues (Andrews and Andrews 1999; Wise 2010).

Far from becoming a color-blind society, American racism has persisted, although in many ways it is more covert and more insidious than ever before. In *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*,

Bonilla-Silva (2014) speaks of "colorblind racism," which allows racism against blacks and Latinos to continue in a country where most whites claim that they are anti-racism

and pro-equality, and among prolific cultural and political arguments that racism is an outmoded relic of the past that does not persist today. According to Bonilla-Silva (2014):

Whereas Jim Crow racism explained blacks' social standing as the result of their biological and moral inferiority, color-blind racism avoids such facile arguments. Instead, whites rationalize minorities' contemporary status as the product of market dynamics, naturally occurring phenomena, and blacks' imputed cultural limitations. (P. 2)

Therefore, contemporary America is ruled by a "new racism" in which "practices ...are subtle, institutional, and apparently nonracial" (p. 3) while simultaneously keeping populations of color submerged underneath whites. In other words, colorblindness has rendered white privilege invisible and explained racial inequities by drawing attention to the supposed failures of people of color in the market, deviance from mainstream standards of familial relations, and crime rates as an explanation for racial differences without drawing attention to the systemic problems that create these inequities. In this system, the denial of racism works just as much as racism does to maintain a hierarchal racial order (Bonilla-Silva 2014; Omi and Winant 2015). The view of people of color as deficient because of widespread poverty in urban "ghettoes" and deviant because of alternative family construction has dominated the culture of neoliberalism. These ideas, these ways of making sense of the world, these illusionary images, represent and simultaneously distort and fabricate reality.

Race, Gender and Poverty in the Scientific Imagination

Some historians have claimed that scientific racism disappeared after World War II when the horrors of the Nazi Holocaust exposed the relationship between biased, racial scientism and genocide. As Barkan (1993) argues, "the opposition to Nazism shaped in a dramatic fashion the refutation of racism as a legitimate intellectual stance. Politics

mobilized many respectable intellectuals and scientists" (p. 345). Barkan (1993) goes on to argue that anti-Nazism among academicians has since WWII become a "scientific consensus" that is a "result of the interdisciplinary cooperation which enhanced the egalitarian [racial] argument" (p. 345). But the narrative that racialized, biologically deterministic science dominated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries only to be completely eradicated in the mid-twentieth century, post-war period is inaccurate. To the contrary, since the nineteenth century, academicians and other intellectuals have debated the merits of environmental versus biological explanations of difference and the debate between nature and nurture continues today.

Indeed, there was a significant backlash against biological explanations of racial difference and other forms of race-based scientism after World War II. In 1950, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) released the controversial report, "No Scientific Basis for Race Bias Found by World Panel of Experts" (Barkan 1996; Brattain 2007; Singh 2010). The report, spear-headed by forward-thinking Ashley Montagu (author of *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (1942)), asserted that there was no scientific basis for race or "race was less a biological fact than a social myth" (qtd in Barkan 1992:97). In the post-war period, the United States found itself within a political moment where eugenics or the race-based science of eliminating the unfit became synonymous with the horror of mass euthanasia and death camps, which led to a rise in socio-cultural and environmental understandings of difference.

However, biosocial attempts at explaining racial differences have, since World War II, persisted. Contemporarily these explanations appropriate new language for the

same biologically deterministic ideas. The publication and subsequent popularity of Herrnstein and Murray's *The Bell Curve* (1994) and Levitt and Dubner's *Freakonomics* (2005) has shown that scientific racism not only persists within the academy, but that it can be repackaged for mass appeal. Accordingly, I argue that scientific racism that underlies eugenics has continued in the social and humanistic sciences, through two research traditions: cultural accounts that rest on the perceived deviance of people of color and the continued debate over racial difference and IQ.

Cultural Understandings of Difference in the Social Sciences: A Subtle Return to the Rhetoric of Eugenics

In *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination* (2003), Robin G. Kelly refers to social movements among peripheral groups as "poetry" and "poetic knowledge". He explains:

Progressive social movements do not simply produce statistics and narratives of oppression; rather, the best ones do what great poetry always does: transport us to another place, compel us to relive horrors and, more importantly, enable us to imagine a new society. We must remember that the conditions and the very existence of social movements enable participants to imagine something different... (P. 9).

However, "something different" is difficult to imagine and even more challenging to realize in a society deeply stratified by understandings of racial difference and economic disparities. Too often, in fact, efforts to combat racism and classism are tainted by asymmetrical power relations and ultimately put to use within mainstream (racist, classist, sexist) political discourse where they serve to reify concepts of difference and deviance, rather than deconstruct them. ⁸⁹ Such has been the case with the economic

⁸⁹ This problem, whereby even discourses and political measures meant to be egalitarian reify problematic understandings of difference, has been addressed conceptually by Lorde (2007) and Mohanty (1988).

politics of the civil rights movement as well as *cultural* and *social* treatments of difference as part of a greater movement against biological determinism in the social and behavioral sciences following World War II.

After the Second World War and the vilification of the Nazi Holocaust, the biological determinism of the early twentieth century was disputed by a number of academic scholars with cultural sociologists and anthropologists among the most fervent (Muhammad 2010). 90 These scholars, in attempting to develop an answer for Black deviance that didn't imply the inherent inferiority of African Americans, cast Black culture as deviant. For instance, cultural anthropologist Franz Boas, in his attempt to shift crime among Blacks from a problem of biology to a social problem, furthered a conceptualization of Black culture as the problem. In replacing culture with biology, Boas and other liberal scholars essentialized racial difference and cast *Black culture* as inherently problematic which ultimately recapitulated, "a focus on the unproductive behavior of the unassimilated as a dominant perspective... [signaling] a return to viewing the Negro as a problem." (p. 100). 91 The same can be said of the Moynihan report (1965), which also pointed to cultural rather than biological causes for social problems encountered by urban blacks (Collins 2004; Hill 2005). This discourse only bolstered strength for an image of Blacks as culturally inferior, and, ironically, did little to the underlying facets of the racism that created the basis for eugenics, which never denied

⁹⁰ Muhammad's (2010) chapter "Incriminating Culture: The Limits of Racial Liberalism in the Progressive Era" offers a thorough account of the inception of the culture concept and its inherent problems in terms of marking blacks as "culturally" inferior.

⁹¹ Muhammad (2010), Baker (1998) and Kelley (1997) offer critical accounts of Boas' contribution to the literature on race and cultural difference, claiming that the work of Boas was limiting to the development of an anti-racist approach in the social sciences and humanities. However, this is an area of some debate amongst scholars. Some have highlighted Boas' humanitarian achievements (Hyatt 1990; Putnam 2001) and theoretical work (Stocking 1974) to uphold his legacy as an anti-racist culturalist. For more on the controversy surrounding Boas, see Lewis (2008).

that cultural inequality exists, but treated cultural traits as an outgrowth of one's biological makeup.

Robin D. G. Kelley (1998) argues that the "'culture concept' has severely impoverished contemporary debates over the plight of urban African Americans and contributed to the construction of the ghetto as a reservoir of pathologies and bad cultural values" (p. 17). He states that:

Much of this literature not only conflates behavior with culture...[but also] ignores what these cultural forms mean for practitioners. Few scholars acknowledge that what might also be at stake here are aesthetics, style, and pleasure. Nor do they recognize black urban culture's hybridity and internal differences. (P. 17)

Not only do such studies misinterpret what Black culture truly is, but they also focus almost exclusively on deviant and pathological behaviors as a justification of the poverty and other social ills urban Blacks sometimes face. Therefore, black urban culture is seen as inherently pathological, because the problems that plague communities of color such as high crime rates, single parenthood and poor education rates become a stand-in for blackness in the cultural and scientific imagination. Unfortunately, "The cold-blooded "neutrality" of these depictions—the absence of any humanizing sympathy—enabled the devaluation of the humanity of their African American objects of study" (Ross 2004:150). These analyses, divorced from the authors' intentions, tend to shrink the importance of larger structural conditions that shape poverty and create marginalized racially groups in America while they simultaneously paint a negative image of the individuals trapped by these structural constraints. The result is a conflation of broad

social and political problems with personal failings, turning poor urban blacks into hapless caricatures.⁹²

Social scientific concepts, especially when it comes to race, are not merely writings from an ivory tower completely divorced from the "real world". On the contrary, the dissemination of social science research into laws, policies, and various news outlets gives such analyses an impact much broader than academia alone. According to Anthony Giddens (1990), social sciences "[do] not develop cumulative knowledge in the same way as the natural sciences might be said to do... yet the practical impact of social science and sociological theories is enormous, and sociological concepts and findings are constitutively involved in what modernity is" (p. 16). The process by which social science concepts developed by scholars as they research societal dynamics then, ironically, having an impact on society, is referred to as the double hermeneutic, a term developed by Anthony Giddens. As Giddens (1990) further explains, "...notions coined in the meta-languages of the social sciences routinely reenter the universe of actions they were initially formulated to describe or account for...Sociological knowledge spirals in and out of the universe of social life, reconstructing both itself and that universe as an integral part of that process" (p. 15-16). In this case, the rhetoric created by well-meaning "culturalists" within the academy ultimately failed to completely undermine racism because through framing racial inequality as a cultural problem they marked communities of color as culturally troubled and pathological. While these analyses have been detrimental to the image of people of color, what has been even more detrimental to the

⁹² For an example of this, that is highly relevant to my work, see Collins's (1999a) work on "controlling images".

image of people of color within the Western mindset is the continued presence of pseudoscientific explanations of inequality.⁹³

The Social and Behavioral Sciences and Eugenics: The Reification of Racial Hierarchies in the IQ Debate and Other Biosocial Explanations of Difference

The sociobiology of eugenics has persisted in a more blatant form within the discourses of the social and behavioral sciences. While the meaning of biological difference continued to play a major role in sociology, after World War II the discourse on sociobiology reflected a lively debate rather than a near consensus. The IQ debate continues within humanistic and biological fields as does biologically deterministic racism that too closely binds race, genetics and IQ (Gottfredson 2005; Murray 2006 and 2007; Rushton and Jenson 2006). 94 Rushton and Jenson (2010) two prolific and influential authors on the hereditability of IQ and race, continue to argue that the distribution of intelligence is based on a system of racial stratification with Jews at the zenith of intelligence, followed by East Asians, Whites, Hispanics, South Asians, African Americans and Sub-Saharan Africans in that order. Nowhere in Rushton and Jenson's (2010) article on the cognitive ability of racial groups do the authors mention that these groups cross-cut each other and fail to reflect distinct "genetic" races. The authors also fail to fully recognize a great deal of disconfirming data on race and IQ including studies that find minority and white IQ to be comparable within the same environment or social

⁹³ There is a long tradition in the social sciences to label the Black family as dysfunctional and deviant. And, such literature has historically placed a disproportionate and unfair amount of the blame on Black mothers. This literature is known as the "black matriarch thesis" which pre-existed the Moynihan report but became more politically real after it. For more information on the history of deviant black motherhood in the social sciences, consult Staples (1970) and Dill (1979).

⁹⁴ It is important to note that Linda Gottfredson is a sociologist by training, receiving a Ph.D. in sociology from Johns Hopkins University in 1977.

milieu (Eyferth 1961) or high-achieving and genius persons among disadvantaged groups (Willerman et al 1974).

Taken together biosocial research and research on the politics of IQ have recreated a scientific community whereby undesirable behavior is biological and racial groups are unequal in their mental capacities and therefore their ability to thrive in an increasingly technological, modern world. While much of the research on race and IQ in particular is highly disputed and not recognized within many scientific circles, this research continues to be funded and to have a policy impact. Regardless of status within academia, the very existence of these strains of research, which are ideologically and epistemologically linked to the eugenics movement, embolden and legitimize eugenics as a concept today, even without actually using the word.

Some of the most notable pseudo-scientific treatments of racial difference is

Herrnstein and Murray's 1994 bestselling book, *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class*Structure in American Life, which according to the authors examines the "intellectual capacity among people and groups and what those differences mean for America's future" (p. xxi). 95 Tracing the validity of the intelligence concept back as far as Darwin's

⁹⁵ Herrnstein and Murray (1994) received a great deal of scholarly and political attention despite obvious flaws in the authors' arguments. For example, while some scholars have argued that there is a racial hierarchy in regards to IQ there is not agreement on how to classify "race" into categories, the order in which races should be ranked, and racial categories are often ill-defined or overlapping. For instance, to assume that Asians are inherently more intelligent than any other racial group, "...ignore[s] the fact that American Indians score lower than whites on IQ tests although they are also of Asian origin" (Alland 2002:122). Thirdly, biological determinism would suggest that difference is static or fixed along categories and impervious to change. To the contrary, observing IQ scores by race over time shows that these scores vary and, consequently, are "neither genetically preordained nor otherwise immutable" (p. 349). The IQ gap between races is generally closing and is dependent upon a number of *environmental* factors (Nesbitt 2009). In fact, according to Alland (2002) IQ tests are deeply problematic because they are "subject to artificial errors" because they do not account for cultural attitudes towards specific tests or test-taking in general, educational background, preparedness, and the structure of exams. Therefore, IQ tests, which claim to test IQ as a biological fact, actually test these social and cultural factors.

Origin of the Species (1859) and Galton's Hereditary Genius (1869), the authors argue that intelligence is a real, measurable indicator of innate cognitive ability and the most potent stratifier in the U.S. According to the authors, the 1960s and 1970s saw a leveling of the social landscape whereby race no longer granted historically privileged groups such as middle-class white men preference, instead intelligence determined one's performance in school and consequently their occupation and subsequent lifestyle. The authors also argue that intelligence plays a key role in whether a person can succeed in marriage, parent "illegitimate" children, serve as a competent or incompetent parent, be prone to criminal acts and/or be capable of responsible citizenship through civic participation. Therefore, Herrnstein and Murray's (1994) explanation of social difference has revitalized a form of IQ-reductionism as immutable biological difference. 96

Welfare dependency is also a central focus of the book, which argues that mothers seeking government assistance do so as a consequence of their inferior intelligence.

According to the authors:

People have had reason to assume for many years that welfare mothers are concentrated at the low end of the cognitive ability distribution, if only because they have generally done poorly in school. Beyond that, it makes sense that smarter women can more easily find jobs and resist the temptations of welfare dependency than duller ones, even if they have given birth out of wedlock. (p. 191)

The authors are careful not to directly mention racial differences in welfare usage, using data collected from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) on white women

⁹⁶ A number of scholarly works oppose Herrnstein and Murray (1994), arguing against IQ testing as an accurate measure of intelligence and arguing in favor of understanding inequality as a socio-environmental problem (Fisher et al 1996; Devlin, Feinberg, Resnick and Roeder 1997; Fish 2001). My research has validated these critiques; however, I also work to extend their arguments by not only drawing attention to the flawed epistemological underpinnings of works of scientific racism but how their inherent logic shapes the black female subject in contemporary American thought. Therefore, such work is not only a biased and flawed account of inequality, it is itself an arbiter of inequality.

to argue that women who use welfare are more likely to come from the quartile representing those of the lowest "intelligence" rather than higher intelligence groups. According to the perspective of Herrnstein and Murray (1994):

Having a baby without a husband is a dumb thing to do. Going on welfare is an even dumber thing to do, if you can possibly avoid it. And so it would seem to be among the white women in the NLSY. White women who remained childless or had babies within marriage had a mean IQ of 98. Those who went on welfare but did not become chronic recipients had a mean IQ of 94. Those who had become chronic welfare recipients had a mean IQ of 92. (p. 200)

However, the authors' use of "white women" as an illustrative example of their general argument that all social ills are disproportionately propagated by people of low intelligence and that intelligence is something immutable and innate has significant racial overtones since people of color make up a disproportionate amount of the welfare population. Additionally, preceding chapters that supposedly deal with "ethnic differences in cognitive ability" but really deal with racial differences in IQ testing, also label people of color, Blacks in particular, as cognitively and intellectually inferior to Whites and Asians. Herrnstein and Murray (1994) use data from the NSLY to report that, "the average white person tests higher than about 84 percent of the population of blacks and that the average black person tests higher than about 16 percent of the population of whites" (p. 269). Herrnstein and Murray's (1994) argument against black women who seek welfare is two-pronged. Firstly, the authors argue that only women of low intelligence, which they conceptualize as an innate quality only augmented by environment, raise a child out of wedlock, a "dumb thing to do" (p. 200). Secondly, using culturally biased IQ assessments, they also argue that blacks are generally less intelligent than Whites or Asians. Taken together, these arguments paint women of color on welfare

as so mentally inferior that they represent a cognitive underclass which is presented as an un-savable drain upon the rest of society.

The 2005 bestselling book *Freakonomics* makes its condemnation of black motherhood more clear, as in this book Levitt and Dubner argue that abortion cuts crime rates. ^{97 98 99} The authors make the argument that crime falling around the turn of the twenty-first century is attributable to the legalization of abortion:

Decades of studies have shown that a child born into an adverse family environment is far more likely than other children to become a criminal. And the millions of women most likely to have an abortion in the wake of *Roe v. Wade*—poor, unmarried, and teenage mothers for whom illegal abortions had been too hard to get—were often models of adversity. They were the very women whose children, if born, would have been much more likely than average to become criminals. But because of *Roe v. Wade*, these children *weren't* being born. This powerful cause would have a drastic, distant effect: years later, just as these unborn children would have entered their criminal primes, the rate of crime began to plummet. (P. 3)

Because African Americans make up a disproportionately large portion of those convicted of crimes and serving prison sentences and a disproportionately large portion of aborted fetuses, the underlying claims of the book are that fewer African American children being born betters society through reducing crime. In other words, in 2005, Levitt and Dubner used abortion to advocate for ethnic cleansing; they rhetorically argued for legalized abortion, not as a woman's right, but as a population control policy

⁹⁷ These arguments were presented in academic journals before they were published as part of Levitt and Dubner's *Freakonomics* (2005), see Donohue and Levitt (2001). An article of the same title, listed as a working paper, can be found on the National Bureau of Economic Research's (NBER) website at: http://www.nber.org/papers/w8004. A follow-up article can also be found at NBER's website, see Donohue and Levitt (2003) which can be retrieved at the following web address: http://www.nber.org/papers/w9532. ⁹⁸ Much of Levitt's publishing record coalesces around themes that suggest some sort of scientific racism, see Levitt (2003; 2004 and 2006).

⁹⁹ The work of Levitt and Dubner (2005) was so wildly popular that it is thought to have created a "*Freakonomics* effect" or an upsurge in students majoring in economics after millions read and revered the book, see Siegfried (2009; 2010 and 2011).

that limits crime. While Dubner and Levitt (2005) are less preoccupied with IQ directly, their work implies that Black women are a problem population, rather than a population enduring socio-structural problems. Their choice to ignore or set aside environmental and social solutions for inner city problems is indicative of a return to scientific racism and sets the ideological groundwork for eugenics. However, an equally important, and perhaps even more powerful political campaign against black women has constructed a monolithic category for black motherhood that is caught up in the image of the "welfare queen".

The image of the welfare queen has become a scientific construct as much as a political and cultural trope. As Stepan (1986) points out, metaphor is central within the scientific imagination:

Metaphor occupies a central place in literary theory, but the role of metaphors, and the analogies they mediate, in scientific theory is still debated. One reason for the controversy over metaphor, analogy, and models in science is the intellectually privileged status that science has traditionally enjoyed as the repository of nonmetaphorical, empirical, politically neutral, universal knowledge. During the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, metaphor became associated with the imagination, poetic fancy, subjective figures, and even untruthfulness and was contrasted with truthful, unadorned, objective knowledge—that is, with science itself. (P. 261)

Metaphoric language is typically identified as extrinsic to science, "Because science has been identified with truthfulness and empirical reality, the metaphorical nature of much modern science... [continues] to go unrecognized" (Stepan 1986:262). However, within the world of "science," stereotypes and stigmas associated with black women lay the metaphoric basis of maternalist eugenics today.

The Vilification of Black Motherhood in the American Consciousness

On the surface, one would logically assume that civil rights, having ensured a greater degree of political rights and protections for both African Americans and women as distinct groups, would undermine eugenics. Of course, at least a novice understanding of civil rights makes it seem as though women should have more freedom over their reproduction and that African Americans should be less likely to be targeted for racebased hatred during the latter half of the twentieth century onward, including whitesupremacy eugenics among a myriad of other injustices. To the contrary, eugenics continued during and after the civil unrest and consequent expansion of basic rights that occured in the 1960s. Indeed, white supremacy eugenics only grew stronger around this time, resulting in the escalation of eugenic infringements upon the reproductive rights of Black women. In truth, paradoxically, a larger percent of women of color have been sterilized or coerced into taking long-term contraceptives in the post-civil rights era than ever before. The same logical mind that might have assumed eugenics, especially in its most virulently racist form, would be in decline in post-Civil Rights era America would also ponder exactly how eugenics continued and the reasons behind the upsurge in white supremacy eugenics in particular. Unraveling this paradox requires understanding what civil rights is and was, as well as the multi-faceted dynamics that underlie it.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 achieved the removal of Jim Crow barriers to racial integration in schooling and public places, legal protections against racial discrimination, and expanded (even if in some ways only ostensibly) the political rights and political power of Blacks as a constituency (Klarman 2004). These rights were granted by the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth amendments to the U.S. Constitution. The landmark

Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Open Housing Act of 1968 all represent different aspects of the legal struggle to protract racism and discrimination, to move America away from a caste system based on race and toward a true democracy. While these measures fell far short of their aims, they defeated Jim Crow in its most virulent forms (Klarman 2004).

Far beyond the highly visible struggle for rights in the 1960s that erupted in protests, demonstrations and sit-ins, civil rights was a long and protracted struggle beginning in the last decades of the nineteenth century for African Americans and other marginalized groups to achieve equality in the United States. Progressivism and the New Deal of the 1930s and 1940s played a significant part in widening the poverty gap between whites and Blacks (Katznelson 2005). Because Blacks so rarely passed eligibility requirements for government aide including social security, the GI Bill and welfare, Blacks did not benefit from the supposed safety net afforded to whites at the time (Katznelson 2005). Consequently, Blacks were not added to welfare rolls until the Departments of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) and other early civil rights forces mobilized to aid racial minorities and protect them from racial discrimination in the administration of welfare. In *The White Welfare State: The Racialization of U.S. Welfare Policy*, Deborah E. Ward (2009) describes the shift between the majority white pre-Civil Rights welfare and the disproportionately Black post-Civil Rights welfare:

In the 1960s, when it became difficult for administrators to exclude on the basis of race, the rapid influx of African-Americans into ADC, or the 'welfare' rolls, resulted in the growing negative association of race with ADC. By 1961, 43 percent of all families receiving ADC were African-American. The intended beneficiaries of ADC, as with mothers' pensions, had been white, widowed mothers, so the increase in the number of

African-American mothers and unwed mothers receiving ADC began to generate negative publicity. (P. 135)

Therefore, white supremacy eugenics, which began to become even more emboldened in the late 1960s, can be framed as a cruel response to civil rights agitation.

While the racial makeup of welfare programs reflected a profound shift in racial demographics, understanding the complex interplay of race and poverty helps us to make sense of this change. The racial demographics of welfare shifted so drastically when Blacks were able to successfully apply for welfare because a disproportionate amount of Blacks were (and still are) living in poverty. From the Age of Reform to the Era of Civil Rights, most ethnic whites that had been the targets of severe discrimination including Jews, Italians and the Irish, assimilated into the white American mainstream. This assimilation process afforded these groups better jobs and government subsidies, allowing previously disenfranchised whites a greater opportunity to share in American prosperity (Muhammad 2010). Blacks, on the other hand, could not assimilate (Muhammad 2010). Blacks remained a highly visible and highly marginalized ethnic community, and their continued status as second-class citizens did not allow African Americans to collectively achieve the same successes. The joining of these two interrelated factors, the continued economic disadvantage felt by African Americans as a consequence of exclusion from the American mainstream and New Deal provisions along with civil rights agitation that allowed blacks to start receiving welfare benefits led to, for the first time, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a disproportionately high number of blacks on welfare rolls (Mink 1996; Ward 2009).

Since then, welfare in the United States has been stigmatized and racialized. As Mink (1996) points out, welfare became culturally degraded when the majority of welfare recipients stopped mirroring the mainstream:

As long as welfare recipients were morally supervised and culturally regulated, as long as they assimilated their gender lessons, as long as they for the most part bore their children in marriages, as long as they could 'melt' into the dominant culture—in short, as long as they were white—welfare recipients were not stigmatized as such. ... Today, by contrast, the stereotype of the welfare mother is Black: she cannot 'melt'. Equally important, today's welfare mother is stigmatized for needing it: for having children outside marriage, for not earning wages, for not choosing to depend on men. One reason for today's stigma is the deeply embedded stereotype of the Black single mother and slurs of matriarchy, dependency, and promiscuity from which it springs. Another reason are the abiding cultural images in white America that hold African American women beyond the pale of domesticity as Mammies, Jezebels, and chattel. (P. 176)

Furthermore, Patricia Hill Collins (2000) describes how African American reproduction is not only subject to degradation because it departs from the mainstream, middle-class white ideal, but the equally damning effects of being treated as a monolith whereby welfare motherhood has come to stand for all black motherhood:

Whereas working-class white women's fitness for motherhood is measured against the assumed norms of middle-class white women, African American women experience a reversal of this process. Specifically, working-class African-American women's experiences are stereotyped and labeled as deviant from those of middle-class white women and are simultaneously considered normative for African American women as a collectivity. In policy discussions of reproduction, middle-class African-American women are compared not to middle-class white women, but to working class African American women, when they are rendered visible at all. (P. 276)

Therefore, the culturally entrenched image of welfare has become indelibly black and female.

In When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold Story of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America (2005) Ira Katznelson makes it clear that even in the historiography of welfare in America, the tendency of scholars to focus on welfare after civil rights labels welfare a "black issue". Indeed, Katznelson acknowledges that:

Ordinarily, chronicles of affirmative action begin in the early 1960s. They focus on the critical moment between 1963 and 1969 when such policies 'moved from obscurity to become the single most important federal policy for dealing with employment discrimination,' and extend forward to encompass the four decades when affirmative action was black.

Despite the reality that Blacks have only been added to entitlement programs in the last 60 years, the cultural placement of the black maternal figure in America (and to a larger extent Western culture) is caught up in debates over poverty, poor family values, and, increasingly, population control. Through image-to-policy transmutation, the cultural degradation of the black female maternal figure seeps into public policy and scientific discourse.

Contemporary Eugenic Infringements on Black Women's Reproduction

These ideas that controlling black female fecundity could be used to combat social problems and that black welfare mothers were a drain on the rest of the nation was used as a political device, a "controlling image," (Collins 1999a) that justified strict and restrictive social welfare programs. This image went hand-in-hand with the continued invisibility of severe white poverty and the reframing of joblessness and underemployment among whites as a problem of reverse discrimination (Pincus 2003). Ronald Reagan, arguably the President behind the full realization of the neo-liberal state, told stories of "welfare cheats" and "welfare queens" as part of his strategy to appeal to disenfranchised, working-class white voters (Hancock 2004). In a speech he made in

1976 during his presidential run, Reagan told the story of a Black woman who received aid she was not eligible for and flaunted her fraud by driving up to the welfare office driving a Cadillac and wearing furs and expensive dresses. He used her estimated "income" from these programs for shock value, Reagan said:

In Chicago, they found a woman who holds the record...She used 80 names, 30 addresses, 15 telephone numbers to collect food stamps, Social Security, veterans' benefits for four nonexistent deceased veteran husbands, as well as welfare. Her tax-free cash income alone has been running \$150,000 a year.

Black women had already been culturally and scientifically marked as deviant; the charge that many were unrightfully receiving aid added another dimension to the already insidious image of the poor black woman as the quintessential "underserving mother". In evoking the image of the "welfare queen," Reagan used an anomaly, the story of the fraudulent, career criminal Linda Taylor to mark an entire population as lazy, immoral, and debased. 100

Reagan emphasized the dysfunction of the welfare state and argued that, as president, he could fix it. His strategy worked and he went on to serve two terms as president of the United States. Using rhetoric about families, poverty and government dependence to justify a protracted welfare state was one of the defining characteristics of his presidency (Hancock 2004). For instance, in a February 15, 1986 presidential radio address (Caputo 2011:30), Reagan blends welfare politics with the politics of family:

The irony is that misguided welfare programs instituted in the name of compassion have actually helped turn a shrinking problem into a national tragedy. From the 1950s on, poverty in America was declining. American society, an opportunity society, was doing its wonders. Economic growth was providing a ladder for millions to climb up out of poverty and into

¹⁰⁰ Taylor used more than 80 false identities to commit welfare fraud (allegedly) among a host of more serious crimes including burglary. For more on Linda Taylor's life of crime, see Levin (2013).

prosperity. In 1964 the famous War on Poverty was declared and a funny thing happened. Poverty, as measured by dependency, stopped shrinking and then actually began to grow worse. I guess you could say poverty won the war. Poverty won in part because instead of helping the poor, government programs ruptured the bonds holding poor families together.

His words are a revitalized form of Social Darwinism, depicting a government-programsas-charity model, and arguing that welfare makes people less equipped to become responsible citizens.

A derivative of the welfare queen, the crack-smoking black mother also became a potent symbol of deviant black motherhood (Humphries 1998; Zerai and Banks 2003; Gubrium 2008). Consequently, poor black women alleged to be drug abusers are labeled unfit parents, have their children taken away and are sometimes made to participate in court-ordered birth control. Women increasingly face charges for giving birth to infants who have been exposed to drugs in-utero, and in a codification of racial issues, women who have abused crack cocaine have become the targets of "restricted reproduction" whereby they have been coerced into using long-term birth control. Largely due to the focus on crack cocaine in exclusion of other harmful narcotics and substances (such as powder cocaine; crystal meth; abused prescription drugs like Adderall, Oxycodone and Morphine, Methadone; or alcohol), most of these convictions have been against poor, black women. As Jacquelyn Monroe and Rudolph Alexander, Jr. (2005) point out, crack cocaine has long carried a racial stigma in the United States:

American society has long demonstrated an illogical, unfair, and sometimes racist posture towards African Americans and drugs. In the early 1900s, there were concerns about African American males using cocaine. Allegedly, they were prone to sexually assaulting White women while under the influence of this drug. Consequently, laws were passed to make the penalty tougher for cocaine use. In the 1980s, Congress declared war on "crack," penalizing those caught in possession of it with longer prison sentences than those arrested with similar weights of powder

cocaine. ...[A]n individual arrested for the possession for crack cocaine could conceivably serve a 20 year sentence, whereas another individual arrested with a similar amount of powder cocaine could serve considerably less time if convicted. (P. 19)

While exposure to any drug or alcohol (or a number of other substances) may be harmful to newborns, as Pamela Schram (2014) points out, the myth of the "crack baby" has been exaggerated. According to the authors, research has deemed the stigmatized "crack baby," "an urban legend, not a medical diagnosis," because, "medical experts have not identified a distinctive condition, syndrome, or disorder that merits the label crack baby" (p. 452).

As Dorothy Roberts (1991) explains, prosecuting women for drug use while pregnant began with the conviction of a young Black woman in Florida struggling with a cocaine addiction:

In July 1989, Jennifer Clarise Johnson, a twenty-three-year-old crack addict, became the first woman in the United States to be criminally convicted for exposing her baby to drugs while pregnant. Florida law enforcement officials charged Johnson with two counts of delivering a controlled substance to a minor after her two children tested positive for cocaine at birth. Because the relevant Florida drug law did not apply to fetuses, the prosecution invented a novel interpretation of the statute. The prosecution obtained Johnson's conviction for passing a cocaine metabolite from her body to her newborn infants during the sixty-second period after birth and before the umbilical cord was cut. (P.1420)

However, Jennifer Clarise Johnson was not the only young, black woman to be charged with a crime for consuming crack cocaine while pregnant. A systematic review of cases where women were arrested or prosecuted for their behavior while pregnant found 348 cases from 1973 to 2005 that were the result of alleged drug abuse (Paltrow and Flavin 2013:316). The majority of the women undergoing this violation of basic rights are poor women of color. According to Lim (2008), "The continued prosecution of pregnant

women is a modern form of eugenicism in that it amounts to a policy of reducing the spread of "bad" traits by preventing a certain class of women from reproducing" (p. 129).

Ultimately, punishing mothers with substance abuse problems with jail and prison sentences and incentivizing women with addictions to sterilize themselves or seek long-term contraception under duress is a reincarnation of eugenicist logic whereby "deviant" mothers are unworthy of procreation and poor women of color are responsible for the main social issues of the country by producing "deviant" offspring. Such reactions to the problem of drug use during pregnancy carries clear racial and economic dimensions by focusing specifically on the use of crack cocaine, which is cheaper than other street drugs and flooded urban communities of color in the 80s and 90s. As Lim (2008) argues, penalizing pregnant women who use drugs is not good policy but is instead yet another means of population control:

With no definitive evidence showing that prosecutions have improved the problem of drug addiction during pregnancy, these strategies no longer serving the original purpose, and instead have become a means for furthering other ends. In particular, some states use these prosecutions to control the reproductive choices of a class of women deemed *socially undesirable*. (P. 133-134)

Instead of addressing such concerns as complex public health issues, these issues are too often stigmatized and stereotyped.¹⁰¹ Politicians and other stakeholders then make policy that responds to racial stereotypes and widespread fear, fertile ground for maternalist eugenics.

¹⁰¹ Aside from its racist, classist and eugenicist agenda, punishing pregnant women with substance abuse problems is also poor public policy. Instead of attacking the root problem of drug addiction with useful solutions such as drug counseling and treatment, punishing drug-abusing pregnant women actually exacerbates health problems by making these women less likely to seek medical help and other types of assistance. Additionally, children who may be affected by drug use are also adversely affected by parental incarceration.

News media has also portrayed black motherhood as problematic, sometimes making claims connecting birth control for the black community and the reduction of social ills explicit. On December 12, 1990, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* ran an article, "Poverty and Norplant: Can Contraception Reduce the Underclass?" The article referred to two distinct stories published in the newspaper the day before: (1) one on Norplant becoming available after approval by the FDA and (2) another based on a report on black children which revealed that almost half of the Black children in the United States are living in poverty and that a large amount also live with a single mother on welfare. In light of these two articles, the author wrote:

As we read those two stories, we asked ourselves: Dare we mention them in the same breadth? To do so might be considered deplorably insensitive, perhaps *raising the specter of eugenics* [emphasis added]. But it would be worse to avoid drawing the logical conclusion that foolproof contraception could be invaluable in breaking the cycle of inner city poverty—one of America's greatest challenges.

The article argued that, "The main reason more black children are living in poverty is that the people having the most children are the ones least capable of supporting them," adding that while the black middle class is growing, the birthrate among middle class blacks is "very low". The solution according to the author was that poor Black women should be incentivized, not forced, to use Norplant. As he writes:

No one should be compelled to use Norplant, which involves a doctor implanting matchstick-size capsules in a woman's upper arm. But there could be incentives to do so. What if welfare mothers were offered an increased benefit for agreeing to use this new, safe, long-term contraceptive? ... At any minimum, Norplant, which will probably cost \$600 to \$1,000, should be made available for free to poor women.

For the author of this article, the central of "the impoverishment of black America and its effect on the nation's future" is a problem that can most easily and cost-effectively be

dealt with by regulating poor black women as the mothers of offspring labeled degenerate by crime and poverty statistics. In other words, blacks were unfit for modern American life because, collectively, they could not survive the tests of the market and black mothers were unfit for bearing them.

Indeed, the advent of Norplant spawned a wave of proposals to curtail the reproduction of poor women, with economically disenfranchised women of color serving as the primary targets. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU):

In 1991, 1992, and 1993, legislators in more than a dozen states introduced measures that, had they passed, would have coerced women to use Norplant. Some of the bills would have offered financial incentives to women on welfare to induce them to use Norplant. Other legislation would have required women receiving public assistance either to use Norplant or lose their benefits.

While these proposals failed, legislators still used Norplant to curtail the reproduction of poor and welfare-dependent women by making Norplant available through Medicaid.

Although ostensibly offering women a "choice" whether they will have the device implanted, the availability of Norplant through Medicaid is only another manifestation of

a disdain for the promulgation of the poor.¹⁰² ¹⁰³This disdain would eventually lead to the end of long-term state-sponsored welfare.

In 1993, bipartisan support "to end welfare as we know it" helped Bill Clinton win the presidency. President Clinton's 1996 welfare reform bill, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act limited welfare payments to no more than five years, requires recipients to find work within two years of receiving payments, established "family caps" to discourage welfare recipients from having children while on welfare and gave state's the power to set up their own systems of welfare (a profound shift for the previously federally controlled program). As Hancock (2004) points out, part of the success of this legislation depended on the cultural denigration of mothers needing welfare:

[.] ___

¹⁰² As Hanania-Freeman (1993) points out, "Norplant clearly is not the contraceptive device of choice among medically insured women or women otherwise capable of covering their own medical costs" (p. 21). According to the National Survey for Family Growth (NSFG), from 2006 to 2010 only 4.9% of hormonal contraceptive users had private insurance while 17.8% had public insurance or no insurance at all (Jones, Mosher, and Daniels 2012). Problematically, while the Norplant contraceptive has been made available to low-income women through Medicaid, Norplant removal has not been given the same funding priority. Women may use Medicaid to pay for the cost of inserting Norplant, but it is far more difficult to get the device removed. It may be difficult to find a doctor skilled in removing these devices and Medicaid only covers the removal when the life span of the device's effectiveness has ended or if side effects become so severe that a woman's life is in danger (Arnow 1996). Some states, Oklahoma, South Carolina and South Dakota, completely restrict the removal of the device (Arnow 1996). Evidence has also surfaced arguing that high rates of Norplant use among low-income women of color is largely attributable to the influence of family planning workers (Dehlendorf et al. 2010) and the provision of care in hospitals and doctor's offices (Malat 2000).

Furthermore, Norplant is not without significant health risks. "The medical side effects of Norplant include headaches, depression, nervousness, enlargement of the ovaries and/or fallopian tubes, inflammation of the skin, weight gain, inflammation of the cervix, nausea, dizziness, acne, abnormal hair growth, tenderness of the breasts, and prolonged or irregular bleeding. Norplant is contraindicated for women who suffer from heart disease, kidney disease, liver disease, diabetes, or high blood pressure. Furthermore, Norplant capsules that are not removed after their five-year contraceptive life put the woman at risk of ectopic pregnancy and continue to interfere with the woman's fertility" (Albiston 1994:10). Norplant is also technically difficult to remove and removal comes with other medical risks, see Dunson, Amatya and Krueger (1995), Blumenthal et al. (1997), Adkinson and Talsania (2012) and Patel et al. (2014).

103 Notably, Isabel Sawhill's recommendation that LARC (long-acting reversible contraception) be subsidized so that it can be made available to poor women has stirred a great deal of controversy (Sawhill 2014). While making LARC available to all women at more affordable prices would be a move toward reproductive justice, recommending so as part of an argument that poverty and a host of other social ills will dissipate, again, raises the specter of eugenics.

Even those who usually demonstrate solidarity with welfare recipients were hard pressed to argue against the bill in a way that suggested any allegiance to welfare beneficiaries. Acting in solidarity 'requires regarding others as capable of taking an interest in the world and speaking for themselves, capable of political action and therefore meant to be listened to...'. The politics of disgust lacks this notion of solidarity, an absence that was reflected in the 1996 welfare reform debate. (P. 13)

Although Clinton did not, like Reagan, evoke such acutely racial images to pass the legislation, welfare politics had already been tightly tethered to black women, so much so that the very idea of welfare conjures the image of the poor single black mother who cannot properly take care of herself or her children. As Patricia Hill Collins (2000) points out:

Racialized discourses exist around themes that serve as proxies for race, themes such as poverty, crime, immigration, affirmative action and urban policy. While none of these terms directly refers to people of color, all have been used as codes to indicate how the presence of people of color is problematic for national unity or national aspirations. (P. 271)

Accordingly, even though racially explicit images were not used by Clinton, welfare had already become a stand-in for deviant, black motherhood in the American consciousness.

George W. Bush once again changed the nature of welfare in the United States by involving local churches under faith-based initiatives, building family-strengthening programs and upping the requirements for beneficiaries to work in order to receive benefits (Wiseman 1993). Today, while benefits shift from state to state, there is a 60 month (5 year) lifetime limit on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits and beneficiaries are typically required to find work within their first two years of receiving assistance (even if they are single parents). Welfare reform has completely overhauled the previous system of the New Deal (and the later Fair Deal) by including these requirements. Welfare benefits to needy families are no longer provided by the

government for years on end, and welfare recipients can no longer elect to remain outside the labor force for long. Nonetheless the lazy, scheming "welfare queen" remains a powerful cultural image despite the curtailing of the welfare state in both the amount of benefits an eligible person may receive and the limited length of time in which someone can receive benefits without working.

Eugenics that intrudes upon the reproductive liberties of women, women of color in particular, has not stopped in the age of welfare reform (sometimes also referred to as workfare). Birth control clinics that push for the use of contraceptive injectables that stymie women's reproduction for months at a time through the regulation of hormones have been charged with targeting black women outright by offering Norplant to teenage girls enrolled in high schools serving predominantly black, low-income communities (Burrell 1995). One such program in Baltimore offered Norplant to high school and junior high school girls as young as age 12 in school-based health centers without parental consent in 1993 (Hanania-Freeman 1993; Beilenson, Miola and Farmer 1995). To make it worse, these drugs come with a multitude of severe side-effects, including the development of certain types of cancer. ¹⁰⁴

Project Prevention (formerly named Children Requiring a Caring Kommunity or C.R.A.C.K.), "a U.S. based organization that offers \$300 dollars to addicted individuals who agree to either undergo surgical sterilization or use long acting forms of contraception" continues to promote the sterilization of crack mothers long after the

¹⁰⁴ In addition to these contraceptives causing certain forms of cancer, Norplant and Depo-Provera also pose a health risk in terms of the spread of sexually-contracted infections and diseases: "Neither Norplant nor Depo-Provera provides any protection against STDs, and both are associated with decreased condom use. This is particularly troubling because HIV/AIDS is now the leading cause of death among African Americans between the ages of twenty five and forty four—with a disproportionate toll experienced by low income African American women in the rural South" (Scully 2004:179).

media hysteria about such mothers has subsided (Lucke and Hall 2012:107). Project Prevention's founder "started the organization in 1997 after a failed attempt at getting legislation passed in California that would have required women giving birth to drug addicted babies to use long-term birth control" (p. 21). According to Project Prevention's website, the organization has paid for the sterilization of 5,011 persons (1,607 were sterilized by tubal ligation, 431 were given the birth control implant implanon, 1,768 women received the IUD, 1,059 women received the Depo Provera injection and 38 women received Norplant). The website also posts information on the race of those sterilized under their program. According to the website, 2,956 whites, 1,022 blacks, 578 Hispanics and 455 persons of some other race have either been sterilized or taken long-term contraception through Project Prevention. Project Prevention shows the ways in which a non-governmental or civil society entity may illicit voluntary sterilization, even though evidence of coercion is apparent.

In California, the recent sterilization of a group of women shows that the U.S. government is capable of comparable behavior, albeit even more blatant. Kimberly Jeffrey was one of the over two hundred women sterilized in a California detention center in 2013 (Johnson 2013). While Jeffrey was pregnant, she served a six-month sentence for petty theft at a state prison. When it came time to deliver her daughter, Noel, through a caesarean-section, Jeffrey was also confronted with the prospect of sterilization. She later told reporters, "As I was laying on the operating table, moments before I went into surgery, [medical staff] had made a statement," Jeffrey recalls (Bartolone 2013). "I'm not

¹⁰⁵ Men are also sterilized under Project Prevention's program, although at a much smaller rate than women: 108 men have been sterilized by vasectomy to date.

even quite sure if he was actually talking to me or if he was just making a general statement to all the medical staff — that, 'OK, we're going to do this tubal ligation.' And I said, 'Hey, I don't want any procedures done outside of the C-section.' However, in addition to performing the C-Section needed to safely deliver her daughter, doctors also performed a tubal ligation on Jeffrey, grossly undermining Jeffrey's ability to have any more children (Bartone 2013). Investigators have revealed that Jeffrey was one of nearly 250 women within the California prison system (Bartone 2013; Johnson 2013). Doctors were paid approximately \$147,460 to perform the procedures from 1997 to 2010 (Johnson 2013). Dr. James Heinrich, who performed more than two-thirds of the procedures himself, claimed that the price of the procedure paled in comparison to the price of supporting unwanted children through welfare (Johnson 2014). This incident represents a meaningful departure from the majority of maternalist eugenics now directed at black women, which is covert, relying on "restrictions" and coercion rather than the more explicit forms of maternalist eugenics prominent in the Age of Reform. However, it reaffirms the argument that maternalist eugenics continues to be practiced in the United States.

The suppression of poor women's reproductive rights, especially Black women, has occurred along the backdrop of a technological revolution to increase the fertility of middle and upper-middle class white women with procedures like in-vitro fertilization (IVF). While the potential children of impoverished and economically disenfranchised women have been labeled deviant, criminal and ultimately biologically unfit citizens, genetic technologies like pre-genetic diagnosis (PGD) promise a new genetic elite among the upper classes. However, this "promise" has been misleading. While the genetic

manipulation of the reproductive process, may, on the surface seem to offer women more choices regarding the reproductive process, and the added benefit of being able to improve potential offspring, I argue that genetic technologies have created "manipulated reproduction," yet another reproductive dystopia that constrains women's reproductive choices.

Genetics and Eugenics: The New Technocratic Order

In the introductory essay to the 50th anniversary edition to Thomas Kuhn groundbreaking work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Ian Hacking (2012) points to the continued relevance of Darwin's work on adaptation and inheritance:

In 2009, the 150th anniversary of Darwin's *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* was celebrated with great fanfare. With all the books, shows, and festivals...[it is not far-fetched to assume] many bystanders, if asked what was the most revolutionary scientific work of all time, would very reasonably have answered *The Origin of the Species*. (P. xv)

Indeed, *The Origin of the Species*, the major concepts underlying the work, and even the gross misunderstandings and over-simplifications of those concepts, have survived the test of time. The continued worship at the cathedral of Darwin has manifested itself in contemporary "science" in biosocial explanations of human behavior and genetic manipulation and in biomedicalization.

Biomedicalization is a broad social dynamic that incorporates a number of important, although often problematic, medical and genetic interventions. In critically accessing eugenics of the twenty-first century, one component of biomedicalization becomes especially important, the emergence of biosocial explanations of human

behavior or a view that characteristics such intelligence, alcoholism, drug use, criminality or aggression are "in the genes." As Clarke et al (2009) describes:

At its most basic, biomedicalization is about technoscientific transformations of health, illness and identities. It is a historical concept. In the U.S. and U.K., by the end of World War II, the professionalization and institutionalization of medicine had fully established scientific medicine as a legitimate, state-authorized politico-economic sector (P. 21)

This technoscientific view of human behavior is a consequence of the legacy of eugenics and subtly picks up on many of the problematic themes therein. Such proclamations of genetic inferiority deny the role environmental factors play in human behavior and ultimately label some as mentally "fit" and others as mentally "unfit". This hierarchy, whereby some are mentally predisposed toward deviance and others are not, creates a gap known as "biocapital" or a biologically based organization of worthiness that gives the genetically elite an ascribed advantage over the less genetically equipped. Importantly, much of the work on biomedicalization centers on the neuro-chemistry of the brain. "Using sophisticated technology, cognitive neuroscience claims to be upon the threshold of unraveling the mysteries of the mind by elucidating the mechanical nature of the brain" (Erickson 2009). In addition to neuroscience research, the biological linkage between the brain and negative behavior and/or poor outcomes, or one could even say "degenerative" behavior, has also been fueled by the phenomenal growth of genomics, culminating in the Human Genome Project. 106 107

¹⁰⁶ According to the homepage for the Human Genome Project, "The Human Genome Project (HGP) was one of the great feats of exploration in history—an inward voyage of discovery rather than an outward exploration of the planet or the cosmos; an international research effort to sequence and map all of the genes—together known as the genome—of members of our species, *Homo sapiens*. Completed in April 2003, the HGP gave us the ability, for the first time, to read nature's complete genetic blueprint for building a human being" (National Human Genome Research Institute 2014).

¹⁰⁷ From the conception of the immense project, the Human Genome Project, chiefly through leading scientist James Watson, co-discoverer of the structure of DNA, saw the need to confront the dark history of

These scientific and technological developments have occurred against a backdrop of a set of assumptions about race deeply ingrained into American culture. Duster (2005) shows this link within the criminal justice system. He points out that a myriad of social factors (like the surveillance of black neighborhoods and racial profiling) have led to a disproportionate number of incarcerated African Americans. Problematically, studies that look for the supposed "criminal" gene take the prison population as its base, assuming that imprisonment accurately reflects deviant or criminal mentality without considering the *social* factors that label someone's behavior criminal (Duster 2005; Wolpe 2014). Consequently, to seek a "criminal gene" among the racially disparate prison population is to seek out a socially constructed, highly racialized form of genetic inferiority. And Duster (2005) warns, "These [developments] are poised to exert a cascading effect—reinscribing taxonomies of race across a broad spectrum of scientific practices and fields" (p. 1051). Therefore, problematically, genetic research is likely to play an increasingly significant role in the creation of "at risk" populations comprised of people of color by translating socio-environmental inequities into neurological, genetic, and biological inferiority.

While biosocial research "scientifically" constructs "biologically inferior" and "biologically superior" subjects, the field of reprogenetics uses genetic manipulation to manipulate reproduction on the behalf of the elite. Reprogenetics is essentially a form of embryology, whereby embryos are stored for future use. More problematically, reprogenetics has the potential to create or manipulate embryos for specific aims:

eugenics. In an effort to move forward with the project, without being tarnished by the legacy of eugenics, the HGP, at least ostensibly, set out to study the legal, social and ethical implications of genomic research. Part of the project's massive three billion dollar budget was set aside for this very aim.

including altering the DNA of embryos in an effort to eliminate a particular medical condition, changing the gender of an embryo, altering the appearance of an embryo or changing proclivities toward socio-biological behaviors such as alcoholism or aggression by manipulating the genes. ¹⁰⁸ While reprogeneticists have not yet altered embryos for appearance, IQ or temperament, such developments are on the horizon. Reproductive cloning and genetic engineering, which supposedly enhance the genetic makeup of an embryo, will be developed in the near future (Irving 2000; Sadler and Zeidler 2004; Mameli 2007). In fact, as early as 1962, at the Ciba Foundation conference, "Man and His Future," leaders in the field of bio-genetics agreed that molecular biology had the capacity to help humanity master its own evolution. As Irving (2000) points out:

Sir Julian Huxley opened the conference with a wide-ranging lecture entitled, 'The Future of Man—Evolutionary Aspects.' He painted a picture of evolution that for the first time had become conscious of itself in human kind and thus was responsible for its population, economics, education, and above all, for the exploration of "inner space—the realm of our own minds and the psychometabolic processes at work in it." The problems of overpopulation and the dysgenic effects of progress had to be overcome to assure the realization of human fulfillment: 'Eventually, the prospect of radical eugenic improvement could become one of the mainsprings of man's evolutionary advance.' Man was, he triumphantly proclaimed, 'the trustee ... of advance in the cosmic process of evolution.' (P. 6)

Therefore, as the genetics pushes forward with new technological possibilities, never before considered questions arise: "Are we in danger of allowing the market mentality to colonize childbearing, as it has already colonized so much of our lives? ...Could it aggravate some forms of unfairness, or complicity with unjust norms?" (p. S3). If we are

¹⁰⁸ Reprogenetics, while often used for reproductive purposes or specifically to bring about offspring or offspring with specific, valued traits, can also be used for medical reasons that fall outside the scope of this research but should be of interest to anyone wishing to critically analyze its medical ethics. Such issues include the creation of an embryo or manipulation of an embryo as a source of embryonic stem cells used to treat a family member's illness, often another child.

to take as any guide the present inequalities bound up in pre-genetic diagnosis (PGD) and in-vitro fertilization, which are already widely practiced throughout the developed world, new genetically modified forms of reproduction are likely to gain favor in the future.

Many within the scientific community argue that reprogenetics should either not be considered a form of "eugenics" or is so radically different as to be a positive form of eugenics, free from the oppressive nature of Reform Era eugenics (Lynn 1996; Agar 1996 and 1998; Silver 1997; Stock and Campbell 2000; Savulescu 2001; Stock 2003; Naam 2005; Savulescu 2005; Green 2007; Harris 2007; Bostrom and Savulescu 2009; Savulescu and Kahane 2009; Erler 2010). For instance, in "Eugenics and the Ethics of Selective Reproduction" Stephan Wilkinson and Eve Garrard (2013) argue that PGD and IVF are part of a "second wave eugenics" whereby the human gene pool can be improved and decisions about the future of a child lie in the hands of parents rather than the state. The authors argue that because decisions about genetics are made by parents, they are inherently free of state coercion and therefore unfairly denigrated by the history of Nazi eugenics. However, the negative consequences and injustices of eugenics are not exclusively endemic to the "Nazi" regime. As part of the legacy of eugenics in the United States, the writings of pro-eugenics scientists suggest a paradigmatic shift in the discourse of eugenics in which eugenics has fused with the logic of neoliberalism to become a "free choice" and a techno-modern, utopian ideal.

Sperm banks have become a major industry as reprogenetics have taken root in the U.S. Sperm banks and egg donation, inherently, treat the human body as commodity and in the Era of Neoliberalism, subject human material to the practices of the free market. Consequently, sperm banks and clinics specializing in facilitating egg donation seek reproductive material from particular populations defined by race, class and health status. Both egg donors and sperm donors are disproportionately white and Asian (Daniels and Heidt-Forsythe 2012; Daniels and Golden 2004). For instance, according to Daniels and Heidt-Forsythe (2012):

Sperm and egg bank marketing practices perpetuate idealized norms of masculinity and femininity intertwined with stratified norms of race and class. Sperm is hawked on websites with reference to attributes of masculinity, class, and race: the "tall, strapping handsome donor with a PHD and of English/Irish heritage" is a "best seller." Egg donor marketing, reminiscent of beauty pageants, relies on images of modeling head shots and references to the grace, beauty, and "polite behavior" of potential donors. (P. 719-720)

Donations of sperm and eggs are often set from educated and athletic people, implying that such traits are "in the genes," a recurring theme of eugenics (Daniels and Golden 2004).

Social constructed notions of "intelligence" represents a highly favored characteristic in the world of cryogenics (Daniels and Golden 2004; Plotz 2006; Sandel 2004). For instance, some sperm banks in California only accept sperm from Nobel Laureates and/or men of "genius" as demonstrated by high IQ and advanced degrees. In a review of 27 California sperm banks, Daniels and Golden (2004) point out:

...23 sperm banks provide information about a donor's years of education (years in college, highest degree), sometimes including college major, college grade point average or SAT scores. Some of the largest banks require that donors be college students or have completed a college degree at a 4-year major university. Cryobank reports that the majority of their donors come from UCLA, USC, Stanford, Harvard and MIT. Two sperm banks sell specimens specifically designed as "Doctorate Donors" for donors with advanced degrees (J.D., Ph.D, M.D.), charging more for such semen (at Fairfax Cryo \$265 per straw vs. \$195 per straw of semen from "ordinary" donors). Hereditary Choice, specializing in sperm from high IQ donors, provides detailed reports of SAT and GRE scores, musical ability, [and] academic achievement... (P. 23-4)

An emphasis on intelligence or genius as directly heritable through sperm selection is a modern return to Galtonian "science". Furthermore, cryogenics plays a role in making the poor (Katz 2013) and people of color (Roberts 1995; Berkowitz and Snyder 1998; Fox 2009) into a techno-modern biological underclass.

Another controversial procedure referred to as "eugenic abortion" provides an analytically important point of access in weighing whether these new reproductive technologies are indeed a form of "free choice". Eugenic abortions occur when through genetic screening a couple is able to see if a fetus has a particular "abnormality" and decide whether to abort the fetus based on this information. Such testing is obviously expensive and therefore only available to the affluent. This is what scientists in favor of PGD and eugenic abortion (or selective abortion) argue constitutes a "free" choice. However, research has shown that pressure to abort a fetus with certain conditions such as Down-Syndrome can be high, both from doctors and others (such as family, friends, and associates). As Roberts (2009) suggests, genetic screening programs, even if they are supposed to be voluntary, create the expectation that women will act on the results.

¹⁰⁹ Agar (1996) and (1998) argues that "liberal eugenics" or the choice whether to use genetic based biotechnologies, marks a wholesale shift in eugenics from the compulsory sterilization methods of the early twentieth century, and is therefore politically and scientifically ethical. However, several scholars have criticized the extent to which "liberal eugenics" offers a "free choice" (Degener 1990; Prusak 2005; Fox 2007; Roberts 2009). I argue that "liberal eugenics," or reprogenetics, does not represent a free choice but a constrained reproductive dystopia for middle and upper class women.

¹¹⁰ According to the last published report of the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's annual report of nationally representative fertility clinic data, the "Assisted Reproductive Technology Fertility Clinic Success Rates Report (2012), for women under 35, 46.6% of one cycle of assisted reproductive technology (including IVF and single embryo transfer) results in pregnancy, 37.8% for women 35-37, 29.6% for women 38-40, 19.6% of women age 41-42, 9.6% for women 43 and 44 years of age, and 4.6% for women over 44.

Nationwide, only 20-25% of private health insurance plans cover IVF treatments, which cost approximately \$9,226-12,513 per cycle (Drazba, Kelley and Hershberger 2014). PGD, which costs \$2,500-6,000 per cycle, is rarely covered by insurance providers (Drazba, Kelley and Hershberger 2014).
 Choi, Ryper and Thoyre's (2012) review of articles publishing data on PGD and selective abortion found that 89-97% of women receiving a positive pre-natal diagnosis of Down syndrome terminated the pregnancy.

Communities can put pressure on parents, especially mothers, to produce perfect babies for the sake of the whole. Therefore, is the procedure or the choice to undergo selective abortion really a "free" choice? Theresia Degener (1990) complicates the free choice paradigm and, subsequently, labels PGD a new technologically advanced manifestation of eugenics:

These technologies do not help women to decide whether or not to give birth to a disabled child. A woman might have an abortion because her doctor has diagnosed a chromosomal disorder which might cause the child to have Down's syndrome. Yet there are thousands of other disabilities which cannot be detected by prenatal diagnosis and even if a nondisabled child is born s/he may subsequently become disabled. So if these technologies offer no [true] safeguards against disability, why do many women demand access to them? ... Prenatal diagnosis and genetic counseling are based on the ideology of eugenics according to which a disabled person is less valuable than an able-bodied person. (P. 1)

Furthermore, the logic of reprogenetics could support the view that childhood illness and disability is the fault of mothers for not making the right genetic choices.

With genetic counseling clinics springing up all over the country, the genetic revolution is in no danger of disappearing (Knowles and Kaebnick 2007). The exorbitant costs associated with pre-genetic diagnosis alone makes it available only to the affluent; consequently, the pool of those being able to utilize such technologies is constrained by racial barriers to the appropriation of wealth. In fact, recent research has found that Blacks and Latinos are less likely to utilize PGD not because of cultural or moral issues, but economic barriers (Singer, Antonucci and Hoewyk 2004). Therefore, even if the reprogenetics movement—which includes PGD, IVF, human genetic engineering and other new techno-scientific ways of re-structuring the genetic makeup of human beings or rejecting human embryos on the basis of their genetic structure—is not inherently eugenic in its intent, it may have eugenic consequences. The majority of these tests focus on

socially denigrated conditions and disorders and are most often utilized by affluent whites. 113 A thin line separates the correction of potential health problems and enhancement based on cultural notions of desirability. These technological developments have re-ignited ethical and moral debates over "designer babies" and the relationship between genes and race.

Advocates of the "new" eugenics or "liberal" eugenics argue that technological advances that can be used to manipulate human genes are not only advantageous, but a moral imperative. This shift to reform eugenics within the discourse of liberalism, emphasizing freedom of choice for individuals and significant (potential) personal and societal gains is the latest link in a long historical chain of eugenics. The concept of genetic enhancement as part of eugenics is not new and its framing as a "moral imperative" is also part of a historically contingent paradigm by which eugenicists framed eugenics as an answer to humanity's problems. However, by weeding out people based on socially constructed ideas of disease and disorder, eugenics mirrors societal discord and re-inscribes socially constructed notions of difference. The modification of the human species, especially when it goes beyond weeding out certain disorders to selecting for "desirable" characteristics, not only raises the specter of eugenics, but it makes eugenics more efficient, more controlled and more tangibly real than ever before. As science continues to push forward, "designer babies" are on the

¹¹³ Luna and Luker (2013) bring up a very apt point regarding the use of reprogenetics that affirms its connection with the logic of eugenics. As the authors state, "In 2009, the public learned that Nadya Suleman had become pregnant with octuplets through in vitro fertilization that she obtained while unemployed... The outcry over Suleman's multiple births demonstrated that social anxieties about reproductive technology and 'fitness' to reproduce remain even in seemingly progressive political circles" (p. 343).

¹¹⁴ For work on the historical nature of eugenics and genetics in the biological sciences see Kelves (1985), Kerr and Shakespeare (2002).

horizon and the accompanying ethical and moral debates about how far science should go will be one of the most vexing techno-scientific questions of the twenty-first century.

Conclusion and Discussion

The concept of human enhancement, in a world so profoundly shaped by capitalism, inevitably draws on market logic to access what is a desirable or undesirable characteristic. The "new eugenics," or "newgenics," is structured by the logic of the marketplace regarding what characteristics are valued, and the realities of the marketplace regarding who will be able to use these procedures. Genetic counseling, pre-implementation genetic diagnosis, in-vitro fertilization and genetic modification all inherently favor the affluent because the procedures, which either aid the infertile in bearing children or alter the characteristics of future offspring, are very costly. These dual market forces, and the impact they will continue to exert on reproduction do not represent purely "free" choices but societal and economic constraints on the process of reproduction.

Therefore, notions of liberalism do not characterize newgenics. Instead, newgenics is best conceptualized as a new "privatized ritual of inequality" whereby market forces are restructuring the contours of modern life. This "privatized ritual of inequality" I describe as "manipulated reproduction" reinscribes cultural notions of "worth" in the selection (and soon the creation) of offspring. The state is also implicated in this "reinvigoration" of eugenics, as Speektorowski and Ireni-Seban (2010) point out: "The ability of governments to subsidize genetic technologies or familial lifestyle choices also gives them the ability to choose who has access to these technologies and in so doing the ability to favor the procreation of one group over another" (p. 1391).

While deregulation of reprogenetics and other aligning procedures constitutes one of the ways that eugenics has been shaped by the state in the twenty-first century, eugenics has been more directly imposed upon poor women, especially poor black women, by government-sponsored programs. When examining state-sponsored sterilizations, African Americans compromised a disproportionately high percentage of sterilized women beginning in the 1960s. The tendency to sterilize black welfare mothers emerged, not coincidentally, after Civil Rights organizations were able to change the eligibility requirements for government aid so that impoverished black women could receive the same provisions that impoverished white women had been entitled to since the initial implementation of the welfare state. Therefore, eugenics targeting poor black women has continued, and grown more robust, after state-sponsored sterilization was overturned in most states. Or, in other words, as the more explicit "obstructed reproduction" transformed into the more covert "restricted reproduction," the brunt of maternalist eugenics shifted to increasingly target black women. Furthermore, the workings of neoliberalism, especially its alignment with color-blind ideology, its vilification of dependency and the poor options available to working and lower-class people for gainful employment, have all contributed to an overtly anti-black version of "maternalist eugenics".

Coercing women who give birth to "crack babies" to sterilize themselves or take long-term birth control is one of the ways that poor black women are being targeted as part of a broad, culturally insidious, contemporary eugenic campaign. To target "crack babies" in particular, at the expense of other children born with drug-related conditions caused by the abuse of prescription medicine or any other narcotic, lays bare the racial

and economic dimensions of eugenics today. This is not to defend women who make regrettable choices, choices that may hurt their children and stymie their development, but to draw attention to the ways in which poor, black women who make these choices are more likely to be subject to reproductive restrictions afterward. A disproportionate number of poor black women have been targeted by eugenics through policies that discourage welfare mothers to have additional children and make harmful contraceptives like Norplant widely accessible to poor women through Medicaid without funding removal. Underlying these harmful policies is research that justifies the maltreatment of poor blacks on the basis of "mental inferiority" and a widespread political and cultural discourse that condemns black motherhood as deviant and deplorable. The cultural relevance of the scheming welfare mother and the constant surfacing and resurfacing of arguments that place all the ills of the nation—crime, pestilence and so-imagined cognitive degeneracy—on black mothers is at the core of eugenics today.

While the disdain for perceived long-term welfare recipients remains a constant between the reform era and the neoliberal moment, Bauman (2005) suggests that the impetus for cultural disdain of the poor has shifted in the post-industrial West 'from a society of producers' to a 'society of consumers', and accordingly from "a society guided by the work ethic to one ruled by the aesthetic of consumption" (p. 2). In the Age of Reform, or early modernization as Bauman refers to it, the poor fail to participate in the mass labor needed to sustain industrial capitalism. Currently, the poor are marked by their inability to participate in consumer culture, which is central to the maintenance of post-industrial capitalism. In both instances, the poor "lack a social function" (p. 2).

The contemporary dynamics of eugenics have largely been shaped by neoliberalism. While neoliberalism has affected the lives of all non-elites in problematic ways, the policies of neoliberalism have disproportionately affected people of color. Indeed, the policies of neoliberalism have led to the emergence of an informal economy whereby racialized populations serve as low-paid day laborers or service workers (Roberts and Mahtani 2010). And, even more importantly, neoliberalism itself, through its emphasis on economic competition, operates on its own crude form of Social Darwinism where "the survival of the fittest" has grown to mean that only the affluent can and should survive. Today's market logic further implies that those who do not survive the ravages of the neoliberal market place are indeed not fit for life at all. Through complementary policies that both encourage and optimize the reproduction of the rich and well-off (reprogenetics) and policies that restrict and constrain the reproduction of the poor or disabled who are vilified by racist images, modern population policies in the U.S. have continued the legacy of early twentieth century eugenicists.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS ON RESISTING MATERNALIST EUGENICS

Consider the following five personal experiences:

Charlottesville, VA, 1927: Carrie E. Buck is sterilized after entering the Virginia Colony for the Epileptic and Feebleminded. Her mother, who was also institutionalized in the Virginia Colony, had been sterilized years earlier. Carrie Buck's sterilization occurred despite extensive legal action taken on her behalf.

Sunflower County, MI, 1961: Fanny Lou Hamer is sterilized against her will at Sunflower County Hospital after seeking treatment for a small uterine tumor. Black women, beginning in the late 1950s, were commonly sterilized involuntarily while under anesthesia for another surgical procedure, especially in the South. As a result, eugenic sterilization performed in the South were commonly called the "Mississippi appendectomy". 115

Montgomery, AL, 1973: Mrs. Minnie Relf was illiterate and could not read the forms public health officials asked her to sign in order for her girls to receive some necessary "shots". She unwittingly signed forms consenting to the sterilization of her two young daughters, Minnie Lee Relf (14 years of age) and Mary Alice Relf (12 years of age). They are sterilized by tubal ligation. Later, after a lawsuit is filed and an investigation ensues, it becomes clear that the sterilization was at the behest of a sterilization clinic, the Montgomery Family Planning Clinic, which was funded at the federal level by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). The clinic targeted several minors for sterilization, all of them young female children of black welfare families.

Southern California, 2003: Layiah Vitina Wakan Cook was born; her mother names her "Layiah," a Swahili name that means "born at night." The child, who has Down syndrome, was almost never born. Her mother, a 44-year-old white nurse, is advised by several doctors to abort the child because of her age and risk factor for having a child with a genetic abnormality. Her mother, inspired by the birth and strength of her daughter, becomes an advocate for children and adults with developmental disabilities. ¹¹⁶

Winston Salem, North Carolina, 2011: At a hearing organized by North Carolina's eugenic task force, Karen Beck mourns the violation of her grandmother and great aunt who were both sterilized in the 1930s. Regarding compensation for survivors of sterilization abuse or their families, Beck laments, "My grandmother and great-aunt were victims...For years they lived inside the mirrored walls of shame and guilt erected by this

¹¹⁵ The "Mississippi Appendectomy" has been documented by Suite, Bril, Primm and Harrison-Ross (2007) and Davis (2009).

¹¹⁶ Story taken from Reist (2006).

state. But here's the irony, those walls the state built? They don't reflect on my grandmother or my great-aunt. Those walls reflect only on the state of North Carolina. 117



Photographs of Survivors of Eugenics. From left to right, clockwise: sisters Mary Alice and Minnie Lee Relf; Carrie Buck and mother, Emma Buck; Elaine Riddick and Fanny Lou Hamer.

This research confronts the irony of the continued practice of maternalist eugenics in the U.S. Eugenics in the contemporary United States is ironic because several national and international political milestones seem to contradict its practice: (1) the Nuremberg trials of 1945 in which Nazi criminals were tried for their crimes which tied eugenics with genocide, (2) the general cultural and scientific condemnation of eugenics and genocide post World War II, (3) laws allowing or promoting eugenics have been repealed in nearly all states, (4) several states have apologized for eugenics which further politically and culturally cements eugenics as "in the past," and (5) gains in human and civil rights that were intended to provide disenfranchised populations with more protections under the law should, in theory, stave off any such abuses.

¹¹⁷ Story taken from Fain (2011).

Maternalist eugenics includes infringements on women's reproductive liberties that include forced sterilization and birth control as well as the inability to effectively limit one's reproduction and make other reproductive decisions free from coercion. Throughout my analysis, I show that maternalist eugenics is the result of biased laws and policies that place limits on women's reproductive autonomy. Importantly, I show that these biased laws and policies are the result of "image-to-policy transmutation" whereby culturally constructed notions of difference (and often degradation) apparent in scientific rhetoric and other forms of media influence laws and public policy. These constructions are based on the intersection of gender, race, class and disability. But they also occur as the result of the political landscape in relation to the contours of the market.

Using a meta-analysis of texts of various types (scientific journal articles and books, research reports from government agencies, legal documents, policy papers, magazine articles and newspaper articles) in two distinct eras, the Age of Reform (1890-1940) and the Era of Neoliberalism (1980-2015), I identified the groups affected by eugenics, the specific reproductive inequalities suffered as part of eugenics and mechanisms (including the themes present in pro-eugenic rhetoric) that sustained eugenics. I found that the Age of Reform produced two distinct "reproductive dystopias": (1) "obstructed reproduction," whereby women of low socio-economic status were targeted with the aim of completely stopping or "obstructing" their reproduction through forced sterilization. Thousands of women were affected, and although women of color were sterilized during this time, the eugenic rhetoric of "white trash" ensured that the majority (a statistically representative amount) of those sterilized were white women; and

(2) "compulsory reproduction," whereby white women of middle or high socio-economic status were highly discouraged from limiting their reproduction and as a result often denied access to sterilization on a voluntary basis. The birth control movement was largely affected by its inherent misalignment with "compulsory reproduction" which, I argue, played a significant role in the failure of abortion rights during this period.

In the Era of Neoliberalism, where black women have now become the primary targets for the most virulent and restrictive forms of eugenics, I found evidence of two more "reproductive dystopias": (1) "restricted reproduction," whereby mostly black women of low socio-economic status have had their reproduction restricted through more covert manifestations of maternalist eugenics. Such restrictions include coerced birth control in a number of different contexts including Norplant sentencing and public health clinics coercing women to use Norplant over other, shorter-term birth control methods, and (2) "manipulated reproduction" which refers to the circumstances of affluent, primarily white women, who are highly likely to participate in "reprogenetics" which includes altering a fetus or aborting a fetus deemed "unfit" because of disability, not as the result of "free" or "individual" choice but pressure from geneticists and medical professionals in addition to a wider cultural condemnation of disability.

Limitations

While a meta-analysis of scientific research, laws, policies, and other culturally-relevant documents (e.g. newspapers and magazine articles) allowed me to access the cultural underpinning of maternalist eugenics in both of the periods under investigation, qualitative meta-analysis as a method comes with certain limitations. As Ritzer (1990) points out, meta-analyses are affected by "the charge that metatheorizing is sterile

because it is largely a critique of the work of others" (p. 9). And, while, Ritzer (1990) argues that such a charge carries little weight because the "critical review of the work of other scholars is, after all, a basic form of scholarship in virtually all disciplines," in some ways this critique is valid. Meta-analysis of the sort I have performed within the confines of this research is inherently limited by the availability of data, what inferences can be drawn from available data (as opposed to what may be uncovered by additional empirical investigation) and the bias of the research in weighing the importance of such evidence (p. 9).

Furthermore, the use of historical data within a meta-analysis presents additional challenges. This research was limited by an unavailability of historical data that may have been useful. Most pressing is the incomplete nature of historical records on procedures relating to maternalist eugenics. For instance, there is little way to know exactly how many tubal ligations and hysterectomies were the result of coercion, since survivors of such injustices sometimes choose not to share their stories and hospitals and other government agencies tend to keep minimal records that neglect issues of state abuse.

Even more, differences in records keeping and institutional policies between historical periods can make for a comparative analysis that is inherently unequal in the depth and breadth of documentation available. However, such issues are commonly associated with the study of complex, unstructured social problems. While our understanding may be inherently and uncontrollably incomplete, there is much to gain in terms of knowledge accumulation and theory generation.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should further expose the implications of this study. My comparative analysis of maternalist eugenics in the Age of Reform and the Era of Neoliberalism raises the following inquiry: What other complex policy measures can be better accessed and dismantled with critical attention to the process of image-to-policy transmutation? The implications here are significant and potentially of use to researchers of the criminal justice system, racial profiling and the politics of policing; affirmative action policies in work places and places of higher education; or policies pertaining to national security and threats of terrorism.

The ineffective relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina serve as a salient example of the dynamic at issue here: the extent to which a social problem that affects both blacks and whites in near equal measure can be effectively "raced" and the policy implications of this racialization. These examples and the concept of image-to-policy transmutation shows that matters of public policy are rarely presented with an accurate attention to the demographics affected by such measures, but actively and purposefully tied to specific, typically disenfranchised, populations. This concept has particular import for policies that specifically focus on the citizenship rights of particular racial, ethnic or national groups such as Native American sovereignty, schooling and right to federal aid; and immigration laws and policy.

Additionally, the project directly confronts several paradoxes that call for further research. The first crucial paradox is racial, as more African American women were negatively impacted by maternalist eugenics in the post-Civil Rights Era than at the nadir of bloody, violent race relations in the U.S. Not only does this reality counter the prolific

rhetoric that America is "post-race," they expose the complexities and contradictions of contemporary race relations. Importantly, these findings suggest a "backlash effect" in terms of procuring resources from social "entitlement" programs, leading to broader forms of discrimination. Further research should investigate this "backlash effect". More broadly, these dynamics tell social scientists that, in some ways, racism and oppression have become more entrenched. My research also reveals the near invisibility of poor whites in some policy arenas (e. g. the discourse on the "welfare queen"), the consequences for whites living in poverty and other race/class groups should be a focus regarding social issues caught up in the politics of class and race in particular.

Human Rights, Reproductive Liberty and Maternalist Eugenics

The experiences of the women mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the pain expressed by women who have undergone sterilization, have been coerced into seeking long-term contraception, or have aborted a fetus based on its risk for chromosomal disorders such as Downs Syndrome, makes the feminist creed, "the personal is political" abundantly clear. Taken together, these stories detail a shame-filled history of population control in the United States. They chronicle the history of lives unlived, or nearly unlived, as eugenicists weed out offspring that are socially and economically "unfit" for inclusion in the American "master race". And, because race and class status has throughout American history too often determined a human being's worthiness, eugenics often operates as a cruel form of "ethnic cleansing," eliminating particular populations that pose a threat to the nation, either because they seek aid from the state or because they do not fully participate in modern industrial capitalism.

Eugenics in the form of "obstructed reproduction" has targeted the poor with forced sterilizations since the dawn of the twentieth century, and since the 1950s, "restricted reproduction" or coerced birth control has increasingly targeted black women. Many of the women targeted for sterilization were chosen because they were part of a family that collected welfare benefits or had a child out of wedlock when they were young. Some, like the nearly 250 women sterilized in a California prison just last year, were incarcerated and, consequently, may have had poor employment options after their release. Therefore, not only do eugenicists target women with low socio-economic status (which is connected to race and gender), they also adversely disadvantage these women, further submerging them. Maternalist eugenics, during the Age of Reform as well as today, depends on understandings of a woman's economic merit. Therefore, images of economic failing and inadequacy in science, politics and the wider American culture has played a significant role in eugenics.

These images, whether directed at poor white women living in the rural South or the modern, racialized "welfare queen", have stood as the basis for poor public policy that corrodes the reproductive liberty of economically disenfranchised women in the United States. After *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court case that ensured women had the right to abortion, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg commented: "Reproductive *choice* has to be straightened out. There will never be a woman of means without choice anymore. The states that changed their abortion laws before *Roe* are not going to change back. So we have a policy that only affects poor women, and it can never be otherwise." To the contrary, women from all walks of life have been affected by the insidious manner with which eugenics has interrupted, complicated and at times

obliterated, women's reproductive choices. In fact, from its inception, eugenics has included a panoply of reproductive abuses.

These reproductive abuses are best captured by the terms I have offered throughout this analysis, including "obstructed reproduction" and "compulsory reproduction" which serve as the conceptual framework for understanding maternalist eugenics during the Age of Reform, and "restricted reproduction" and "manipulated reproduction," which describe the Janus-faced character of eugenics in the Era of Neoliberalism. These concepts coalesce around the idea of "reproductive dystopia," highlighting the historical and contemporary liminality created by maternalist eugenics. As my research makes clear, even affluent women, who are thought to have the most unchallenged reproductive freedoms, are, increasingly, having their reproductive freedom challenged by eugenics.

New genetic technologies have made the eugenic dream of directly manipulating the human gene pool more real, and many women suffer from social pressure (especially when it comes from doctors, nurses, clinical geneticists, genetic counselors and other reproductive health professionals involved in the reproductive process) to abort fetuses who are suspected of having a developmental disability such as Down syndrome or genetic disability like Epilepsy (Kerr, Cunningham-Burley and Amos 1998; Wertz 1998; Cunningham-Burley and Kerr 1999; King 1999; Meisenberg 2008). As technology becomes more sophisticated in predicting the characteristics of potential offspring and as genetic technologies are disseminated so that they become available to more obstetricians

¹¹⁸ Interestingly, pressure to produce genetically "normal" children may goes beyond pressure from healthcare professionals and one's social milieu. According to Billings et al. (1992), discrimination exists against people carrying the genes for a genetic disorder, even though they are asymptomatic. Their work further underscores the advent of a new genetic underclass created by the logic of eugenics.

and in more fertility clinics, this technocratic infringement on affluent women's reproduction is likely to grow.

While reprogenetics (the genetic manipulation of fetuses as part of the reproductive process) is a form of reproductive abuse, in the future it may also give the affluent an unfair advantage to the poor in crafting genetically superior offspring (Rajan 2006; Franklin 2006; Rose 2008). Genetic reproductive technologies, despite their potential abuses and health risks, are opening up a new market of genetic improvement that Birch and Tyfield (2012) refer to as a "bioeconomy". The lure of this bioeconomy is likely to be strong because "the promise of genetic science... appeals to that in humans which strives for perfection—perfection in oneself, one's life, one's children" (Harding 1990:471). Additionally, "Genetic manipulation offers the dream of controlling disease, extending life, and providing one's offspring with super-human strength, intelligence, and beauty" (Harding 1990:471). Consequently, social scientists have warned a future where "biocapital" plays a significant role in societal relations (Harding 1990; Allen 1999; Helmreich 2008). However, only time will reveal the extent to which bio-genetics determine one's life-chances and if the possible advantage of such technologies will outweigh the risks.

In this dissertation, I have traced the cultural iconography and political foundation of maternalist eugenics during the Age of Reform and our current neoliberal era. In all cases, the way a particular group was culturally perceived and constructed as a set of economic actors had a profound effect on their position within the spectrum of eugenics. I refer to this process as "image-to-policy transmutation." In *Modernity and the*

Holocaust, Zygmunt Bauman (1989) hints at the connections between eugenics and *modern* life:

The unspoken terror permeating our collective memory of the Holocaust (and more than contingently related to the overwhelming desire not to look the memory in its face) is the gnawing suspicion that the Holocaust could be more than an aberration, more than a deviation from an otherwise straight path of progress, more than a cancerous growth on the otherwise healthy body on the civilized society; that, in short, the Holocaust was not an antithesis of modern civilization and everything (or so we like to think) it stands for. We suspect (even if we refuse to admit it) that the Holocaust could merely have uncovered another face of the same modern society whose other, more familiar, face we so admire. And that the two faces are perfectly comfortably attached to the same body. (P. 7)

Much as Bauman (1989) argues that the Holocaust was not an anomaly detached from the historical and political conditions from which it sprang, I argue that American eugenics is not an assemblage of isolated incidents but indicative of larger cultural trends and historical trajectories. Bauman adds a proposal, "to treat the Holocaust as a rare, yet significant and reliable, test of the hidden possibilities of modern society" (p. 12). Likewise, dealing with the U.S. arm of eugenics, I argue that eugenics in the United States is a significant and reliable test of the often-unconsidered possibilities of modern capitalist society, coalescing in notions of "progress". In what remains of this chapter, I offer ways to overcome the continued practice of eugenics in the United States and highlight the important ways that women have resisted eugenics in an effort to shed light on this crucial issue.

Resisting the Logic of Neoliberalism

Imagine, for a moment, that you are participating in a virtual game. The game is nearly impossibly complex and difficult, there are few winners, but many, many players. The game incorporates different kinds of play and levels of risk depending on the player.

Some players enter the game with points and other begin the game at a deficit.

Remember, the game is *virtual*, so it operates within a system of representations in the form of images. An image in the game is meant to represent you, just as images represent others that may not perfectly adhere to their true appearance. There is some sense of good and some sense of foreboding evil, with some characters representing "the good" and other characters representing "the bad." The good characters are a welcome sight, bad characters appear to you as monsters. You can only play the game as an individual, alliances have no necessity. As you play the game, there are barriers to your success and obstacles you must overcome to get to the next level in the game. Unlike most games though, the rules of this game are constantly changing and no one can accurately predict the workings of the game. Now, imagine, that your livelihood and the livelihoods of those that depend on you were based on how well you perform in this virtual game, this unpredictable universe of false representations.

To imagine a virtual world of this type, where the stakes and risks can be so overwhelmingly high, where some players enter at an advantage and others at a disadvantage, where monsters are lurking at every turn, is to imagine our current condition within neoliberalism. The extent to which neoliberalism has created a system of representations in modern life has been taken up by a number of cultural theoreticians (Chomsky 1993; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001; Peters 2001; Giroux 2002 and 2005; Harvey 2007; Hall 2011). The basic point in using a theme park (Baudrillard 1988) or a virtual game as a metaphor for neoliberalism is to draw attention to the ways in which capitalist thinking has colored our world. And while neoliberalism has certainly heightened the tendency to view ourselves and others through the eyes of the market, this

dynamic is not completely "new", the seeds were sown in the reform era's liberal economic policy. Even then, the U.S. did not allow all of its citizens to reap the benefits of the "New Deal," but chose the most "fit" citizens to invest in with the hopes that these people would go on to lead the nation and generate more wealth and prosperity. At the same time, the monsters of the game, those socially or racially "othered," were denigrated on the basis that they were not fit to play the economic game and win, they were institutionalized or sterilized because they or their offspring might bring down our national score.

There is some perversion in viewing the global exchange of capital, national politics, complex reproductive dynamics and the devaluation of human life as a "game". However, the metaphor has some utility in helping us to get our heads around that which we take for granted. It is difficult to see, in the mundane lives we live, this system that is constantly shaping and reshaping how we see the world. The representations created within the game, or our economic structure in its entirety, constructs various groups of women as "worthy" or "unworthy". However, this evaluation of the "worthiness" of any particular person as a contributor to society, is based on perceptions, projections and distortions of reality. In other words, the basis of maternalist eugenics is not objectively "real," and an acknowledgement of this unreality starts to deconstruct the tendency to label women accordingly.

Recall the many cases of eugenics discussed throughout this manuscript; many women were sterilized because their parent or parents received welfare benefits. Others were sterilized because they are currently in a situation that may hurt their chances of future success because they were imprisoned or addicted to crack cocaine. These are

projections, they are ideas about how a woman who comes from a particular family or finds herself in poor circumstances will behave in her life and an accompanying judgment that she and her potential offspring are unacceptable. Eugenics cannot be undone until we understand the game being played, and work to deconstruct these images. Deconstructing neoliberal images is a difficult task because these images have become so heavily ingrained in our culture, as they are part of a global neoliberal system. However, it is crucial to become cognizant of the fact that popular imaginings of the poor have diffused throughout society, upheld by the logic of neoliberalism, and as a consequence become the basis of biased law and institutional practices.

By exposing the assumptions and metaphors upon which conventional economic discourse rests, we can begin to subvert the ways in which economic thinking codifies in cultural meanings. However, neoliberalism cannot be resisted solely by envisioning alternative modes of thought; instead, people must envision alternative modes of being and create alternative economic spaces. According to Leyshon, Lee and Williams (2003), accomplishing such resistance begins:

...by re-imagining capitalism as a network that has constantly to be achieved, it becomes possible to identify those places within space economies where the network is very weak, and where potential exists for new forms of alliances, social formations and economic geographies first to take root, then to become established, and finally to flower and bloom.

The new social formations and alliances of post-neoliberalism, to be more effective and just, must include new ways of understanding those historically "othered" and new ways of interrogating institutional discrimination.

Fighting Fire with Fire: Economic Policy for the Eradication of Eugenics

Beyond understanding neoliberalism on the level of semantics, which is an allencompassing project with the potential to undo many problems of neoliberal modernity,
there are several economic policy provisions that can be taken in the near future that
would greatly temper maternalist eugenics. Firstly, the U.S., if it is to be a state that
respects the dignity and freedom of its citizens, must offer some restitution to those who
have suffered forced sterilization. Only North Carolina, has passed legislation, namely
the Eugenics Compensation statue, which will ensure that survivors of eugenics will each
receive \$20,000. The state has approved 220 survivors to receive this compensation,
though at least 768 claims have been made. The money they receive can in no way take
away the pain and anguish that they have endured, nor can it allow them to lead different
lives where they may have chosen to mother children. However, this money can allow
survivors to seek counseling and medical treatment in an effort to repair their lives, and
furthermore, puts the state on record as having wronged them.

Secondly, there must be tough economic penalties for sterilizing non-consenting persons. As this research has revealed, eugenics is driven by a perverse sense of profitability. From the founders of eugenics, including Francis Galton, Karl Pearson and Charles Davenport to name a few, eugenicists argued that eugenics would save the state money by rolling back welfare rolls. And now, roughly one hundred years later, that logic is still used to justify the sterilization of disenfranchised women. The doctor in California who performed 74 unauthorized sterilizations on incarcerated women from 2006 to 2014, Dr. James Heinrich, said that the money spent to sterilize these women was nothing, "compared to what you save in welfare paying for these unwanted children". However,

the state is responsible for a hefty sum in liability charges if these women are able to successfully file a civil suit. One way to counteract this logic is to impose strict economic penalties for those who perform sterilizations on non-consenting adults and minors, removing some of the economic barriers to launch malpractice claims against offending physicians and nurses.

Lastly, the field of reprogenetics must be regulated. The field is destined to continue to grow as The Human Genome Project marches forward with its objective to identify and characterize each human gene, and technologies to augment these genes become widespread. Currently, there are too few limits on the procedures performed by doctors and geneticists in the field of reprogenetics, which, according to the Hastings Center, is "dangerous":

For a variety of reasons, research involving the use, creation, alteration, and storage of gametes and embryos is subject to little regulation in the United States. This situation is potentially dangerous. Unlike older in vitro fertilization (IVF) techniques, many new reprogenetic techniques make structural changes to cells, and with structural changes arise concerns about the safety of the children produced by the technology. (P. S3)

Reprogenetics has been able to operate with so few limits because of the technological and scientific sophistication and relative invisibility of the field to mainstream media and policy elites. According to Knowles and Kaebnick (2007):

...most U.S. Americans, including, of course, most lawmakers, do not know how to navigate their way around issues like somatic stem cells, oocyte transplantation, genetic modification of the germline, and preimplantation genetic diagnosis, to list only a few of the dizzying technologies of the emerging field of reprogenetics. And most do not know that reprogenetics is a burgeoning growth industry, estimated at \$2-\$4 billion annually, and an integral part of our complex health care economy. (P. 90)

More to the point, the risk of medical trauma for the women upon these procedures are performed upon as well as their potential offspring, whose genetic makeup has been altered, have not been adequately researched. These related issues—the lack of public awareness, restrictions and research on the effects of reprogenetics—could be solved through increased media attention to the subject in a way that is palatable to non-experts, as well as the advent of non-partial third parties to perform research on reprogenetics and provide an ethical review of procedures undertaken.

While these sanctions and rules would not address the underlying cultural problem regarding the vilification of the poor, it would make eugenics difficult to perform without consequence. They would also ensure that overcoming eugenics and attempting to in some way right some of the past injustices associated with eugenics become policy priorities. As the neoliberal agenda continues to press forward and leave massive inequities in its wake, inequities that are not only economic but the result of political disenfranchisement and violence afflicted on the economically marginalized, policy measures that impose regulations and safeguards are urgently needed, as are those that seek to right past wrongs.

Challenging Science: Discussion of the Scientific Epistemology of Eugenics and Suggestions for Future Academic Research

Eugenics, both in the Age of Reform and today, operates in conjunction with a robust pseudo-scientific literature. While many academics have claimed that racist scientism pre-World War II was all but abolished after the atrocities of the Holocaust were revealed to the American public, to treat racist science as a thing of the past overlooks a literature that continues to degrade people of lower socio-economic status and people of any nonwhite racial population. Therefore, to properly overcome eugenics, to resist eugenics

in all of its forms, is to call attention to the underlying arguments and illogicalities of pseudo-science, which unfortunately, is still funded (by think tanks like the Heritage Foundation and the Pioneer Fund), distributed by popular media and widely read in the U.S. (e.g. *The Bell Curve* and *Freakonomics*) and throughout other parts of the world in our present era. ¹¹⁹ Even major universities continue to allow dissertations and theses based on pseudo-science with racist, gendered or homophobic undertones to be published. For instance, in 2008, Richard Richwine's dissertation entitled "Immigration Policy and IQ" was accepted and Richwine was awarded his PhD in Government at Harvard University. His dissertation, which was funded by the Heritage Foundation, argued that the supposed lower IQ of Hispanic Immigrants compared to non-Hispanic Whites should be the springboard of a tough immigration policy in the U.S. ¹²⁰

Due to the continued presence of pseudo-science and the profound role pseudo-science has played in the history and current presence of eugenics, I take a critical, diachronic view of science. This view relies on two theoretical and epistemological positions: (1) "science" is subjective in nature and, therefore, is considered ideologically aligned with the political, cultural and social contexts from which it springs, and, (2) scientific discourse always reflects (and according to the double hermeneutic then also contributes to) a power dynamic or a relationship between a privileged group and a

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¹¹⁹ In 1937, The Pioneer Fund was created "to conduct or aid in conducting study and research into problems of heredity and eugenics... and problems of race betterment with special reference to the people of the United States" (Kenny 2002:259). For a historical account on the relationship between eugenics and The Pioneer Fund, see Lombardo (2001), Kenny (2002) and Tucker (2002). For a discussion of The Pioneer Fund's continued participation in racist eugenic research, see Miller (1994), Rosenthal (1995) and Mehler (2010).

¹²⁰ While Richwine's work eventually met a great deal of negative press, the very fact that his dissertation was approved at one of the most prestigious universities in the country and his overtly racist claims explained away by members of his dissertation committee as inferences drawn from "sound" and "carefully collected" data raises some important questions about the connection between racism and pseudo-science in academia today, particularly in regards to the IQ debate.

marginalized group. Science can never achieve objectivity, especially in scenarios where scientists, just as any other person within a particular society, have some idea of the subjects under study and the social categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, etc...) they inhabit. Therefore, science conveys a subjective reality based on socio-cultural understandings of group difference. Since before the Age of Enlightenment, some scientists and intellects have exposed the inherent relationship between knowledge and power. In one of the earliest pronouncements of this link, Sir Francis Bacon (1597) declared "ipsa scientia potestas est" or knowledge itself is power. Regarding maternalist eugenics, the very knowledge of disenfranchised women as "feebleminded," of "low IQ" or "welfare queens" has precipitated state actors, bureaucrats and civil society to exert power over their lives and their bodies.

Foucault makes the relationship between knowledge, power and subjectivity quite clear; in a 1978 interview with Pierre Boncenne (Kritzman, 1988), he remarked:

Philosophers or even, more generally, intellectuals justify and mark out their identity by trying to establish an almost uncrossable line between the domain of knowledge, seen as that of truth and freedom, and the domain of the exercise of power. What struck me, in observing the human sciences, was that the development of all these branches of knowledge can in no way be dissociated from the exercise of power...the fact that societies can become the object of scientific observation, that human behavior became, from a certain point on, a problem to be analyzed and resolved, all that is bound up, I believe, with mechanisms of power—which, at a given moment, indeed, analyzed that object (society, man, etc.) and presented it as a problem to be resolved. So the birth of the human sciences goes hand in hand with the installation of new mechanisms in power. (P. 106)

According to Foucault, not only is knowledge power, but to hold a particular population as a "question" is to inherently label them a problem. This is why the history of maternalist eugenics is caught up in national discussions of problematic populations: the

immigrant question, the Negro question and the Woman question, which all gained national attention in the mid-late nineteenth centuries and continued into the twentieth century. All of these "questions" codified in a discourse of what rights these people were entitled to as marginalized populations, as potentially dangerous "others". Science, through its lack of objectivity and proclivity for reproducing systems of power, tends to mark disenfranchised groups as deviant or deficient. More research needs to explore and compare the periphery and the center, the oppressed and the oppressor, in equal light. Such research should call attention to the complexities of social problems that adversely affect marginalized communities without scapegoating and victim-blaming.

When speaking on the relationship between science and gender, Virginia Wolfe (1938) wrote: "science, it would seem, is not sexless: he is a man, a father and infected too" (p. 360). Accordingly, many scholars within the social sciences have argued that scientific rhetoric constructs and ultimately reproduces male domination (Keller 1984; Harding 1986), and is therefore an important extension of how the state shapes female subjectivity. As I have shown with maternalist eugenics in the United States, both in the Age of Reform and in our current era of Neoliberalism, pseudo-science often justifies severe and inhuman treatment toward those labeled "other". There is also an important and fairly substantial literature that looks at the complex interplay of racism, racial categorization and scientific epistemology (Ladner 1973; Du Bois and Green 1978; Mckee 1993; Bonilla-Silva and Zuberi 2008). While both the feminist critique of science and the critique of racist scientism are equally important, there is more work to be done that continues to explore how pseudo-science and poorly conducted science shapes complex, intersectional subjectivities simultaneously along the lines of race, gender,

sexuality, age, aesthetics, physical and mental ability. In other words, the small literature on biomedicine and technoscience operates along a single-axis framework of oppression (whether it takes up gender or race as its primary focus), instead of utilizing a multi-dimensional framework in which to understand the way multiple barriers of oppression—race, gender, class and disability per se—are simultaneously constructed within scientific discourses.

Too many, within the worlds of academia and public policy, not to mention lay receivers of social science, assume that science is objective or true by way of being published in scientific journals or accepted as an academic thesis or dissertation without further reflection on the underlying assumptions of the research. Therefore, research that is published in scientific journals or approved as part of Masters and Doctoral programs at universities (especially universities of prestige), whether it is or is not accepted by the wider academic community, can still cause harm by legitimizing poor public policy. Indeed, science is integral to the function of the state, as governments use scientific rhetoric to justify policies and civil society organizations push for legislation based on scientific claims. Additionally, as Albaek (1995) draws out, scientific knowledge can influence government in less direct ways as well:

Scientifically generated knowledge constitutes an important, but on the whole unquantifiable part of the enormous store of knowledge which participants in the politico-administrative decision-making process apply to their practical tasks. To understand the complex interfaces between social science research and the political-administrative decision-making process, it is necessary to be aware that research is transferred to, and becomes part of, a discourse of action, in the philosophical as well as the everyday practical sense—a discourse in which (self)reflecting participants deliberate on and debate norms and alternatives with a view to concrete action. This makes the contribution of science to policy making

both less tangible and potentially more influential than is usually assumed. (P. 79)

Therefore, I argue that a small literature which justifies and advocates eugenics, though not accepted within many scholarly circles, has the potential to do grievous harm and should be rigorously debunked.

When considering the epistemological foundations of science and its inherently subjective nature it is essential to draw attention to sources of scientific funding. Many works are the result of funding by think tanks, non-profits, foundations and other organizations with particular political aims and policy agendas. Therefore, understanding the context of a particular research project and the particularities of the project's funding are also essential to receiving science critically. Large corporations and philanthropists are sometimes behind "research" that clearly furthers their interests and should be judged accordingly. This is why, as Spivak (1988) draws out, western intellectual production is complicit with Western economic interests, a sentiment that echoes throughout a number of philosophical traditions.

To be fair, for every eugenic account there has been a significant counter-literature; much work in the social sciences set out to debunk biological determinism in all its forms, pointing out the gross inconsistencies and inaccuracies within IQ studies that assert that whites are intellectually superior to people of color (Kamin 1974; Lawler 1978; Dennis 1995; Chitty 2001; Alland 2002). Increasingly, accounts are now critiquing the epistemological basis of genetic research (Duster 2003; Kahn 2003; Knowles and Kaebnick 2007, Roberts 2009 and 2011; Comfort 2012). But funding disparities retard these efforts. Eugenic research has become institutionalized with funding coming from various sources; to the contrary, research working against eugenics has not been

institutionalized in the same manner and is not supported by various streams of revenue that will ensure its future creation. Therefore, the protection of vulnerable groups has rested squarely on the shoulders of independent researchers and academicians who are in no way bound to continue this particular research trajectory. Focused funding in the areas of scientific epistemology and eugenics could remedy this rather dismal landscape. Furthermore, academicians and independent researchers who critically investigate eugenics may place themselves at risk because doing so involves a critical investigation of structures of power in particular academic traditions, government and politics. Lastly, and very importantly, the influence of eugenics has largely been ignored in sociology which creates a grievous barrier to its eradication. This omission is troubling since historical record has illustrated eugenics' tremendous influence on American society and culture. Sociologists, in our sophisticated understandings of the workings of culture, the state and economic systems and the ways in which they interact and overlap, should, moving forward, take the lead in a critical examination of eugenics. Eugenics and its many arms, is best discussed within a discipline that lends itself to multidisciplinarity on the one hand and a thorough and systematic empiricism on the other hand.

Current Political Resistance and Suggestions for Future Public Policy

Much as eugenic science has served as a hotbed for important debates among scholars, eugenics within the political realm has drawn a number of competing viewpoints and political agendas. For feminists, the motto "the personal is political" is no truer than when dealing with the community perspectives, mainstream political discussions, emotional and personal beliefs caught up in the issues touched by eugenics. However, the barrier to political progress is addressing the pressing issue of whose "personal problems" become

"political problems". As Melanie Lee (2000) points out in her book, *Defining the Agenda: A New Struggle for African-American Women in the Fight for Reproductive Self-Determination:*

Different cultural histories create a 'definitional divide' in social understandings of reproductive rights. Historically, women or 'womanhood' has held certain legal implications not available to women of color. Real women are expected to be pious, pure, submissive, domestic, middle-class and white. Because it was impossible for African-American women whether slave or free to meet this standard, they had no reproductive rights or womanhood to protect. (P. 91)

Therefore, it is important to recognize that the way women experience "the personal" is structured by race, class, sexuality, physical and mental ability, along with the history that accompanies these ascribed characteristics.

Entangled within the practice of maternalist eugenics is a panacea of politically-charged and divisive issues. Such contention makes battling eugenics complicated and difficult, as some seek to advance their anti-abortion and/or anti-birth control agenda by calling attention to eugenic injustices and others in their stalwart support for abortion rights or birth control rights tend to ignore eugenics out of a fear that the history of eugenics somehow tarnishes the hard-fought battle for contraception and women's ability to terminate a pregnancy legally. Eugenics not only rests at the center of debates over abortion rights, access to birth control, and when life begins, but eugenics is also bound by racial strife, gendered inequality and the practice of religion. While the tensions created by the clash of these competing and overlapping issues have been brewing for decades, a few recent examples provide an apt means for exploring these divergent viewpoints.

In 2009, a documentary set to reveal the details of "black genocide in the twenty-first century" entitled "Maafa 21". Maafa is a Swahili word that means "great tragedy" or "disaster" and the term is widely used to describe the period of black history characterized by the Transatlantic Slave Trade. The film makes several points including the racist history of eugenics and the politics surrounding the legalization of abortion and birth control with a particular focus on "the pill". While some sound points are made in the film regarding the racism expressed by many eugenicists and blacks being the target of population-planning policies in many instances, the film also distorts facts and lays bare an obvious anti-birth control, anti-abortion agenda. And, problematically, the film downplays the role of eugenic population control in non-black communities. Even more troublingly, the film and the website that promotes the film uses illicit language to incite racial tensions, terms like "Klan Parenthood" and "womb lynching" in an attempt to label all family planning activities as "black genocide".

The film is not the first to pick up on the ways in which population control in the U.S. has been "black population control". When eugenicists began primarily targeting blacks for coerced birth control and sterilization in the 1960s, politically active and influential groups in black communities began to publicize and speak out against eugenics. However, instead of focusing on eugenics as obstructed or restricted reproduction, many began to be suspicious of all birth control and family planning measures. A history of racial abuses including slavery; discrimination in work, housing, education and social aide; racial profiling and mass incarceration in addition to medical experimentation among others have given African Americans cause for suspicion regarding major U.S. institutions. In fact, there is some truth to the argument that abortion

rights and birth control are highly influenced by eugenicists, some even with racist intent. In the words of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, "Frankly, I had thought that at the time *Roe* was decided, there was concern about population growth and particularly growth in populations that we don't want to have too many of." However, by depicting birth control and abortion politics as "black genocide" in its entirety instead of a field in which many competing interests play out, these activists actually perform a form of "positive" eugenics (or compulsory reproduction), arguing that black women, regardless of their circumstances or beliefs or preferences, should continuously reproduce to strengthen the race.

Some liberal feminists have fiercely argued, on the other hand, that founder of Planned Parenthood Margaret Sanger was not a racist or a eugenicist and that birth control and abortions have never been tinged by racism. Much like extremists who equate any birth control and family planning among African Americans with genocide, they commit a regrettable error in their omission of the racist history and sometimes problematically racist practice of birth control in the United States. Birth control and abortion have been framed within liberal political discourses that emphasize "free choice". However, when young Black girls in high school become targets for Norplant campaigns; when Black women, who are disproportionately imprisoned for petty drug offenses and other crimes become the target of unwanted sterilizations, when drugaddicted black women are sterilized while white drug abusers are not, we can no longer call birth control and sterilization in the United States a "free choice". Furthermore, to deny the role racism played in the history of eugenics and in national debates over

2003). Ironically, it is the denial of liberal feminists together with the current revealing of the history of eugenics that gives credence to conspiratorial claims of genocide.

Despite these difficulties, many individuals and organizations have combatted eugenics both past and present. Among those currently fighting on behalf of women who have been unfairly sterilized or coerced into taking long-term birth control in some capacity are the American Civil Liberties Union, the Center for Reproductive Rights, the Center for Investigative Reporting, the Hastings Center, the Chicago Committee to End Sterilization Abuse, the National Black Women's Health Project, the Committee for Abortion Rights and Sterilization Abuse (CARASA), the SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Health Collaborative and National Advocates for Pregnant Women. 121 However, these organizations could not work on behalf of women who have had their reproductive rights suspended and in most cases obliterated without the strength and courage of women who came forward as survivors of eugenic programs. Among those that have shared their stories, fought to be heard and demanded reconciliation for what happened to them, include Ida B. Wells, Elaine Riddick and Janice Black. These women are not hapless victims of circumstance, not accepting "victims," but agentic actors. And as they tell their stories, we need only bear witness to their experience.

Of equal importance in defending the rights of women's reproductive autonomy is defending the rights of the "disabled". Cross-fertilization between the women's rights and or racial equity movement and disability rights could result in much needed reform.

¹²¹ This list was developed through the course of my research in addition to supplementary material from Luna and Luker (2013) and Nelson (2003).

Indeed, the very idea of "disability" and the "otherness" attributed to such conditions deserves a radical re-evaluation. According to Arras, Fenton and Kukla (2015):

Many characteristics are considered disabilities. Paraplegia, deafness, blindness, diabetes, autism, epilepsy, depression and HIV have all been classified as 'disabilities.' The term covers such diverse conditions as the congenital absence or adventitious loss of a limb or a sensory function, progressive neurological conditions like multiple sclerosis, chronic diseases like diabetes or arteriosclerosis, the inability or limited ability to perform such cognitive functions as remembering faces or calculating sums, and psychiatric disorders like schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. (P. 218)

Furthermore, as Arras, Fenton and Kukla (2015) go on to add, to label people with these conditions under one umbrella term is misleading:

There seems to be little about the functional or experiential states of people with these various conditions to justify a common concept; indeed, there is at least as much variation among 'disabled' people with respect to their experiences and bodily states as there is among people who lack disabilities. (P. 218)

Not only is the stigmatization and homogenization of 'disability' worthy of reflection, so too is the growing trend of medicalization whereby an increasing number of behavioral traits and other minor differences are being treated as a medical condition.¹²² If these two trends converge, a significant part of the population will be labeled disabled in one form or another and socially degraded as a result.

As we move forward in our understanding of the complex history of eugenics and the current threat it poses to women's bodily integrity and truly "free" exercise of reproductive choices, more coalition building that brings together different groups of feminists and non-feminists and unites women of various political perspectives is key to

¹²² For a discussion on biomedicalization in reference to maternalist eugenics see Chapter 4.

political success. Eugenics cannot be overcome until various groups truly understand and embrace reproductive justice.¹²³ As Roberts (1997) so eloquently argues:

Reproductive liberty must encompass the full range of procreative activities, including the ability to bear a child, and it must acknowledge that we make reproductive decisions within a social context, including inequalities of wealth and power. Reproductive freedom is a matter of social justice, not individual choice. (P. 6)

Eugenics will not end until reproductive politics are situated within the lived histories and everyday realities of women in the U.S.

Reform in the political realm will not be complete without reform in the worlds of technology, medicine and the growing fusion of the two fields. Often, technological advances in reproductive health that can help those women wanting to stave off procreation have been used against the socially and economically disenfranchised. This happens often without the intent of those that developed the technology in question. For instance, "The team that worked on Norplant had been concerned that a government would misuse the device to enforce birth control. But, they were worrying about China, not California" (Burrell 1995:403). Consequently, more education on this issue that alerts all of those involved in the technological development of contraceptives as a human rights issue would surely help to alleviate some instances of eugenics. Maternalist eugenics is essentially a public health issue, therefore, strict protocols and regulations regarding the proper conduct of doctors, geneticists, nurses and other healthcare

¹²³ According to Luna and Luker (2013), even "the term reproductive justice itself is relatively new, conceived in 1994 by feminists of color to conceptualize reproductive rights struggles embedded in social justice organizing that simultaneously challenged racism and classism, among other oppressions" (p. 327). For more on reproductive justice, especially as it pertains to women of color and other marginalized groups, see Nelson (2003) and Ross (2006).

professionals in addition to social workers and social welfare caseworkers are also urgently needed.

Conclusion

The individual narratives from the beginning of this chapter help us to reconcile individual anguish and pain with a capitalist system that is off-kilter, which entices and persuades those within it to act in favor of national *economic* interests. Such a system casts as the "other" those that might pose a threat to the well-being of the whole, while at the same time it creates and exacerbates poverty. The growth of the service economy, the digital divide between the poor and the wealthy and the lack of social programs to help the poor and indigent will continue to drive inequality in America's consumer-driven, technology-based economic sphere. At the same time, the boom-and-bust economic tradition will continue in the U.S. This cycle of boom-and-bust will continue to generate fear and uncertainty as Americans struggle to succeed economically in a system that is ultimately unpredictable for all but financial elites.

This work is essentially the culmination of three separate conversations, three topics that scholars, ideologues and even the general public tend to keep distinct. It is at once a nationalist political history, a cultural history that explores images and rhetoric and, above all, a comparison and analysis of complex market dynamics. However, I have tried to show that these three dynamics are always overlapping and consistently shaping one another. No political history is complete without a general accounting of market dynamics. The American "state" is a political-economic state, and is thought to be a major world power through an expression of its political-economic prowess. Nor can we have a discussion about politics and economics without a detailed accounting of cultural

dynamics. The workings of the market, and especially politics, are based on shared understandings, cultural images and rhetoric in the public sphere.

The history and contemporary practice of eugenics lays strictly at the intersection of culture, politics and socio-economic state regimes. It inherently creates not only a dialogue, but a binding relationship between the body politic and the individual. As our nation continues to practice eugenics, we are, as Justice Wendell Holmes stated in the Supreme Court decision that cemented eugenics into federal law in 1927, in the interest of public welfare calling upon citizens for their very lives. What makes it worse is that we, as a nation, do this based on cultural narratives that aren't true. We assume that a woman who grows up in a family where her mother relied on public assistance for any amount of time will grow to be welfare-dependent, we assume that people with developmental disabilities cannot lead full and productive lives and we assume that a young girl who has a child out of wedlock will have child after child with no means of taking care of them. These assumptions are most often wrong and always dehumanizing to the women that are so labeled. Until, as a society, we free our thinking from labeling women in this way instead of dealing with the larger structural issues that actually cause gross disparities in income and wealth among different groups of Americans, women like Carrie and Emma Buck, Fanny Lou Hamer, Minnie Lee Relf, Mary Alice Relf, Karen Beck will never be free either, and until they are free, none of us are.

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ADENDUM I

Major Works on Eugenics and Eugenic Themes, 1850-1930

1850: Herbert Spencer publishes *Social Statistics*. In this work, Spencer discusses "fitness" in his application of Lamarckian evolution. This position would later become a source of great debate within eugenics.

1853: "The Inequality of Human Races" by Joseph Arthur Comte de Gobineau is published. The essay is an early example of scientific racism that examines "degeneration" among the races. In the text, the author considerations global events in light of three racial classifications: white, yellow and black. Gobineau places whites as the pinnacle of modern civilization and blacks as the 'degenerate' race. Accordingly, he argues that racial miscegenation would threaten the superiority of the white race.

1859: Darwin's *The Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* is published. The work articulates Darwin's theory of evolution involving heredity, natural selection and the "struggle for existence" as nature only allows those species most aligned with their natural environment to survive. Darwin's theories are, in the book, backed up by his understandings of plant and animal life throughout the world, as a consequence of his voyage on the HMS Beagle, with a preoccupation with the extraordinary plant and animal life on the Galapagos Islands. While Darwin's master work was controversial because it challenged major modes of thought in the nineteenth century, especially creationism, it was also held in great esteem by a number of nineteenth-century intellects. Even today, despite continued controversy, it is considered one of the most influential books of all time.

1864: Herbert Spencer publishes *Principles of Biology* and coins the phrase "survival of the fittest". The book is very as a founding text for Social Darwinists.

1866: Mendel publishes *Principles of Inheritance*. Mendel developed many rules of inheritance based on his work with pea plants including his concept of dominant and recessive genes. His concepts were later used to speculate on the inheritance of skin color, hair color and texture, eye color and other human traits thought attributable to race.

1867: Richard Dugdale publishes *The Jukes: A Study in Crime, Pauperism, Disease and Heredity* after studying the prison population of New York and finding that several members of the same family had been imprisoned. Although Dugdale's work gives analytical weight to environmental factors affecting the family's high prevalence of criminals, the work spawned a panacea of other "family studies," which were used by proponents of eugenics to prove the genetic inferiority and degeneration of 'inferior' family strains.

1876: Charles Darwin publishes *The Descent of Man*, a now little known follow-up to *Origin of the Species*. In this book, Darwin defends his work against opponents and explores the work of other leading hereditists of the time. He also more directly addresses issues of race and sex within his evolutionary scheme, than in *Origin of the Species*.

1880s: Oscar McCulloch authors the "The Tribe of Ishmael," a eugenic family study that asserts a family marked as racial "others" are socially isolated and so degenerate that they are a danger to American society.

1883: Sir Francis Galton coins the term eugenics. He publishes, *Inquiry into Human Faculty and Its Development*, in which he covers a number of themes that would later be expanded upon by leaders in the eugenics movement including: statistical treatments of population characteristics, analysis of anthropometric data, early statistical methods of comparison and psychometric experimentation. All of this is used in service of greater eugenic ideals of white and male superiority, European cultural superiority and the denigration of races thought to be "unfavorable" such as the Aborigines of Australia and West Africans.

1889: Sir Francis Galton's work, *Natural Inheritance*, takes up "the inheritance of moderately exceptional qualities of brotherhoods and multitudes rather than by individuals" by using statistics to assert that mental superiority is hereditary.

1892: Sir Francis Galton writes his eugenic masterwork, *Hereditary Genius*. In this work, Galton argues that "genius" is a heritable trait. He uses examples of what he refers to as "great men" to help make his case. Although his work was received with some doubt, it becomes a seminal text for eugenicists and continues to be cited by scholars arguing that IQ is the sole indicator of intelligence and superiority in the modern world.

1900: Mendel's work, culminating in his book *Principles of Inheritance*, is rediscovered and put to use by eugenicists.

1902: David Starr Jordan's (former President of Stanford University) book, *The Blood of a Nation: A Study in the Decay of Races by the Survival of the Unfit* argues that the American race was "decaying" because the population married and begat children without considering eugenics and that the dysgenic effect of many conflicts during the time had resulted in a loss of the nation's best in mind and body.

1904: "Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope, and Aims" is published in *The American Journal of Sociology*, within this text Galton defines eugenics as "the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race; also with those that develop them to the utmost advantage". Galton also discusses the concept of eugenic "improvement" in this text and asserts five aims for the eugenics movement: (1) dissemination of knowledge on heredity, (2) historical inquiry into various factions of society, (3)

systematic collection of facts, (4) exploring the "influences affecting marriage", and (5) "persistence in setting forth the national importance of eugenics".

1909: Sir Francis Galton's—*Essays in Eugenics*—contains many essays that Galton published in earlier years. According to Galton, the essays "help to show something of the progress of Eugenics during the last few years". The book includes chapters explain the definition of eugenics, marriage restrictions, national eugenics, and probability.

Karl Pearson's *The Problem of Practical Eugenics* includes several lectures delivered as part of a course on the Science of National Eugenics delivered at the Galton Laboratory, which focuses on the major tenets of eugenics and how best to make eugenics palatable to the general public.

1910: *American Breeders Magazine* is established.

1911: Gina Lombroso's English translation of *Criminal Man* by Cesare Lombroso (first published in 1876 in Lombroso's native Italian) is published. Cesare Lombroso is widely considered the father of criminology for this early work on criminal behavior. However, Lombroso's concept of the "born criminal" and focus on "deviance" as a defining characteristic of the criminal population fueled the treatment of criminals as a 'degenerate' population.

In *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*, Charles Davenport offers an overview of the eugenic conceptualization of heredity. Davenport's book was well received and used as a college textbook for classes on medicine, health or eugenics specifically.

1912: *The Kallikak Family* by Henry Goddard represents another of the eugenic family studies, expanded into a book. Goddard's work set the standard for many subsequent studies of this type by using Mendelian genetics to argue that feeblemindedness was a recessive gene. It is within this work that Goddard coins the term, "moron" which is based on the Greek word for "foolish". "Morons" according to Goddard, were "high grade defectives" that are particularly dangerous to society because they appear "normal" and consequently may marry into previously "normal" families.

1913: *The Science of Human Behavior: Biological and Psychological Foundations* by Maurice Parmelee, exposes a position on the evolution of human behavior. Parmelee draws upon modern biology, evolution, neurology and psychology to argue that social and cultural traits are merely an outgrowth of biological evolution.

1914: *Eugenics: Twelve University Lectures*, includes the work of twelve university professors and other ideologues who were active in the eugenics movement including Morton A. Aldrich, William Herbert Carruth, Charles B. Davenport, Charles A. Ellwood, Arthur Holmes, W.H. Howell, Harvey Ernest Jordan, Albert Galloway Keller, Edward L.

Thorndike, Victor C. Vaughan, Herbert John Webber and Robert H. Wolcott. Designed with the aim of "awakening a eugenic conscience" the book offers an overview of eugenics through the guise of a number of different disciplines (e.g. genetics, zoology, psychology, etc...).

1915: *American Breeders Magazine* becomes the *Journal of Heredity*.

1916: Madison Grant's The Passing of a Great Race or The Racial Basis of European History, a book of white supremacy eugenics that asserts Nordic superiority. Grant's work was highly quoted in both print and in speeches by eugenicists and other white supremacists during the early twentieth century. Adolf Hitler even referred to the book as his "bible".

1917: In *Principles of Anthropology and Sociology in their Relations to Criminal Procedure*, Maurice Parmelee takes up the tradition begun by Cesare Lombroso of viewing criminality as a sign of biological inferiority. He focuses on the anatomical characteristics of criminals and the nature of punishment.

1920: *Defects found in Drafted Men* by Charles Davenport is the result of a study of World War I draftees. The study was conducted on behalf of the War department of the United States and headed by Charles Davenport who was employed as the department's "eugenic specialist". Davenport measured the drafted men along a number of physiological and psychological indictors before concluding that an alarming amount of the men were physically and mentally 'unfit'. In fact, according to Davenport, not only were these men not fit for military service, they lacked the basic skills to contribute to a participatory democracy.

1921: Margaret Sanger publishes "The Eugenic Value of Birth Control Propaganda" in *The Birth Control Review*, the article argues that birth control will enhance, not obstruct, the eugenicist agenda.

1922: Margaret Sanger's *The Pivot of Civilization* is published, the highly controversial book lays bare Sanger's views on reproductive issues, poverty, disease and the eugenics movement in the U.S.

Serving as the "Expert Eugenics Agent" for the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, Harry Laughlin argued that immigrants, particularly those from Southern and Eastern Europe, were inferior and therefore causing the degeneration of America. His work led to the restrictive immigration bill of 1924 which limited greatly limited immigration into the U.S. His work was also published as a book, *Eugenical Aspects of Deportation*.

In Eugenical Sterilization in the United States, Harry Laughlin accessed the state of sterilization laws state-by-state. The work included a "Model Eugenical Sterilization Law," meant to aid states in the adoption of compulsory eugenic sterilization. Virginia's sterilization law was adapted from Laughlin's model and, with the help of a test case, became the subject of the 1927 landmark Supreme Court decision.

Mongrel Virginians: The Win Tribe is the result of a eugenic study of a family of white, black and Indian ancestry, conducted by Arthur Estabrook. Estabrook argued that the family was socially undesirable and inferior. The work serves as a piece of antimiscegenation propaganda.

1929: *Race Crossing in Jamaica* by Charles Davenport and Morris Steggerda, using a psychological test called the Knox Moron Test to access difference in cognitive ability between blacks, whites and "browns" or black-white biracials. The authors argue that brown people, people with some mixture of white and black ancestry, struggle more than "pure" blacks and perform well behind their white counterparts. The book argues that miscegenation leads to mental degeneration.

ADDENDUM II

Eugenics in Government, Law & Policy, 1850-1930

1903: The American Breeders' Association forms in the United States.

1906: The American Breeders' Association establishes a committee on eugenics.

1907: Indiana passes first sterilization bill.

1909: California passes sterilization law, California is the second state to pass a eugenics law.

1910: The Virginia State Colony for Epileptics is established in Madison Heights, VA.

1911: The Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor is established.

1912: First International Eugenics Congress is held at the Imperial Institute at the University of London. The conference was organized by the Eugenics Education Society of England, the conference included scientists and leaders in law and public policy from around the world, especially Sweden, Germany, England and the United States.

1913: The American Breeders' Association's committee on eugenics is established as the American Genetic Association.

1914: Harry Laughlin is named Superintendent of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor.

First National Conference on Race Betterment is held at Battle Creek, MI.

The Race Betterment Foundation is established.

1916: The General Assembly approves legislation that calls for the commitment of the mentally ill. Sterilization is not specifically mentioned, but because the legislation allows medical procedures that "tend to the mental and physical betterment of said patients," sterilization can be used for "therapeutic" reasons.

1918: The Galton Society is established.

In *Mallory v. Virginia Colony*, the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals upholds the sterilization of Willie Mallory, but orders that her and her daughter be released from the Virginia Colony for Epileptics.

1921: The Second International Congress on eugenics is held in London. Major Leonard Darwin, son of Charles Darwin and Karl Pearson, protégé of Sir Francis Galton, took an active role in crafting the conference and recruiting its participants. The conference was held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

1924: Restrictive Immigration legislation which limited immigration to countries in Eastern and Southern Europe and ended immigration from East Asia and India, was passed largely at the behest of Harry Laughlin whose research labels immigrants mentally 'unfit'.

Virginia's Act to Preserve Racial Integrity was passed. The act established the "one drop rule" in the United States, whereby one drop of African blood established someone as black. On the basis of this system of classification, the law required every Virginian to be classified as "white" or "negro" upon birth and for their race to be recorded on their birth certificate. The law also established an anti-miscegenation doctrine whereby whites and blacks could not marry. It would not be overturned until *Loving vs. Virginia* in 1967.

1927: In the landmark Supreme Court decision, *Buck v. Bell*, the constitutionality of the Virginia law allowing state-enforced sterilization is upheld.

1929: The Human Betterment Foundation is established in Pasadena, Ca.

1930: Pope Pius XI releases *Casti connubii* (*On Christian Marriage*), which criticizes eugenics.

1932: The Third International Eugenics Conference was again held at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. It was led by Charles Davenport, Director of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory and founder of the Eugenics Record Office.

ADDENDUM III

Major Events Related to Eugenics, 1980-2015 (i.e., Law, Government, Scientific Developments and Significant Scholarly Works)

1980: The Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act gives the U.S. Justice Department grounds to file lawsuits on behalf of institutionalized persons enduring harsh or inhumane treatment. The act is considered a major achievement in ensuring the human rights of the institutionalized are preserved.

The American Civil Liberties Union files the civil lawsuit *Poe v. Lynchburg Training School and Hospital* on behalf of all sterilization victims, male and female, in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Virginia. The suit is unsuccessful. Final hearing were held in 1985 and no financial recompense was granted.

1981: The parents of "Baby Doe" in Bloomington, Indiana were advised by their doctors to decline surgery to unblock their newborn's esophagus because the baby had Down's syndrome. Although disability rights activists tried to intervene, "Baby Doe" starved to death before any legal action could be taken.

1984: Infant "Baby Jane Doe" was denied needed medical care because of a disability. The case eventually resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Bowen v. American Hospital Association*, which led to the passage of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Amendments of 1984.

1985: The Mental Illness Bill of Rights Act required states to provide protection and advocacy services for people with psychological disabilities.

1990: The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed by George W. Bush. The Act provided comprehensive civil rights protection for people with disabilities. Closely modeled after the Civil Rights Act, the law still stands as the most sweeping disability rights legislation in U.S. history.

Norplant, the first contraceptive implant, is introduced in the United States. This drug is later charged with eugenic abuses.

1992: Depo-Provera, an injectable form of birth control is introduced in the United States. Much as Norplant, this drug is also widely documented as a tool of modern eugenics.

1993: The American Indian Disability Legislation Project was established to collect data on Native American disability rights, laws, and regulations.

1994: *The Bell Curve* is published by Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray. It is a New York Times bestseller.

1995: In *Pate v. Threlkel*, the Florida Supreme Court rules that a physician is only required to inform a patient—not his family—that a disease is genetically transferable.

1997: The first child is born using cytoplasmic transfer, an assisted reproduction procedure where cytoplasm from a donor egg is injected into the egg of another woman. Cytoplasmic transfer allows a woman who is thought to be incapable of sustaining a pregnancy, a genetic connection to a child conceived with donor eggs. Because cytoplasm contains mitochondrial DNA, the embryo carries genetic material (DNA) from the sperm and both women, the egg donor and the woman with fertility difficulties.

1998: A scientist at the University of Wisconsin isolates and grows embryonic stem cells for the first time. Embryonic stem cells may be used for "therapeutic" treatments such as the regeneration of tissue to treat disease, it is also a technological step toward cloning a child.

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) begins the Environmental Genome Project (EGP) in an attempt to improve scientists' understanding of human genetic susceptibility to various environmental factors over time.

Congress passes the Fertility Clinic Success Rate and Certification Act. This legislation is implemented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and requires clinics to collect and publicize the outcome of their treatments. The CDC publishes an annual report with data on this data.

The Secretary of Health and Human Service's Advisory Committee on Genetic Testing is formed to aid the public with understanding genetic knowledge and genetic testing.

2001: The Commonwealth of Virginia House of Delegates approved a resolution expressing regret for its eugenics practices between 1924 and 1979.

2001: Scientists are able to create designer sperm.

2002: Virginia Governor Mark Warner apologizes for Virginia's eugenics program, and a state historic highway marker in Charlottesville is dedicated to *Buck v. Bell*.

2003: The Human Genome Project is completed. The entire human genome sequence is finished, two years ahead of time.

2013: Investigators uncovered the coerced sterilization of nearly 250 women within the California prison system. Doctors were paid approximately \$147,460 to perform the

procedures from 1997 to 2010. One doctor claimed that the price of the procedure paled in comparison to price of supporting unwanted children through welfare.

North Carolina passes a law to compensate those sterilized under its sterilization laws \$20,000. The laws were in effect from 1929 and 1976 and affected at least 7,000 Americans. Survivors are currently working to be included in the compensation efforts.