

**UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE**

**FAKULTA SOCIÁLNÍCH VĚD**

Institut mezinárodních studií

**Bc. Pavla Voborníková**

**American Eugenics and Its Impact  
on Nazi Germany**

*Diplomová práce*

Praha 2013

Autor práce: **Bc. Pavla Voborníková**

Vedoucí práce: **PhDr. Jan Bečka, PhD.**

Rok obhajoby: **2013**

## **Bibliografický záznam**

VOBORNÍKOVÁ, Pavla. *American Eugenics and Its Impact on Nazi Germany*. Praha, 2013. 50 s. Diplomová práce (Mgr.) Univerzita Karlova, Fakulta sociálních věd, Institut mezinárodních studií. Katedra amerických studií. Vedoucí diplomové práce PhDr. Jan Bečka, PhD.

## **Abstrakt**

Diplomová práce „American Eugenics and Its Impact on Nazi Germany“ („Americká eugenika a její vliv na nacistické Německo“), je studie o vlivu amerického eugenického hnutí na rasovou politiku nacistického Německa. Eugenické hnutí jako takové se začalo formovat na začátku 20. století. V té době hnutí také začalo spolupracovat na mezinárodní úrovni. Po první světové válce byli němečtí eugenici z mezinárodní spolupráce na krátkou dobu vyloučeni a během tohoto období se němečtí eugenici sblížili s americkými. Němečtí eugenici a Adolf Hitler s dalšími budoucími představiteli nacistického Německa našli zalíbení v amerických imigračních zákonech, které omezovaly imigraci „nevhodných“ etnik do USA. Americké eugenické hnutí se pro ně stalo vzorem také pro svůj eugenický výzkum a sterilizační zákony ve většině amerických států. Studie popisuje šíři této spolupráce. Americké eugenické hnutí také spolupracovalo s hnutím eutenickým a s antikoncepčním. I této spolupráci se studie věnuje a vysvětluje, proč antikoncepční hnutí nebylo propojené s hnutím eugenickým ve Výmarské republice, posléze nacistickém Německu, ačkoliv v jiných zemích tomu tak bylo. Časové rozmezí studie je začátek 20. století a konec druhé světové války.

## **Abstract**

The thesis "American Eugenics and Its Impact on Nazi Germany" is a study about influence of the American eugenics movement on the racial policies of Nazi Germany. The origin of the eugenics movement is in the early 20th century. At that time, the movement also began to cooperate at the international level. After World War II, the

German eugenicists were excluded from international co-operation for a while. During this period, German eugenicists began to cooperate with the American movement. German eugenicists and Adolf Hitler with other future leaders of Nazi Germany adored American immigration laws that limited immigration of "defective" ethnic groups to the United States. American eugenics movement became also a model for its research and eugenics sterilization laws in the majority of American states. This study describes the extent of this cooperation. American eugenics movement was also related to euthenics and birth control movement. The study also focused on this connection and explains why the birth control movement was not connected with the eugenics movement in the Weimar Republic, then Nazi Germany, although, the movement cooperated with eugenicists at the international level. The study covers the time from the beginning of the 20th century to the end of the Second World War.

### **Klíčová slova**

imperialismus, eugenika, eutenika, eugenické hnutí, antikoncepční hnutí, rasismus, imigrační zákony, sterilizace, druhá světová válka

### **Keywords**

imperialism, eugenics, euthenics, eugenics movement, birth control movement, racism, immigration laws, sterilization, World War II

**Rozsah práce:** 90 157 znaků

## **Prohlášení**

1. Prohlašuji, že jsem předkládanou práci zpracoval/a samostatně a použil/a jen uvedené prameny a literaturu.
2. Prohlašuji, že práce nebyla využita k získání jiného titulu.
3. Souhlasím s tím, aby práce byla zpřístupněna pro studijní a výzkumné účely.

V Praze dne 17.5. 2013

Pavla Voborníková

## **Poděkování**

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala Normě Hervey, PhD., že si na mě kdykoliv udělala čas, aby mi pomohla.

I would like to thank Norma Hervey, Ph D. that she had always time to help me.

**Institut mezinárodních studií**  
**Teze diplomové práce**

## **Obsah**

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1. CHAPTER: EUGENICS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1. WHAT IS EUGENICS? .....	6
1.2. HOW EUGENICS WAS FORMATTED? .....	6
<b>2. CHAPTER: THE AMERICAN EUGENICS MOVEMENT .....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1. CAUSES .....	8
2.2. ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE .....	10
2.3. EUGENICS AND EUTHENICS .....	12
2.4. IMMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS .....	14
<b>3. CHAPTER: STERILIZATION .....</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1. STERILIZATION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA .....	17
3.2. STERILIZATION IN NAZI GERMANY .....	21
<b>4. CHAPTER: CONNECTION WITH THE BIRTH CONTROL MOVEMENT .....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1. THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA .....	24
4.2. NAZI GERMANY .....	27
<b>5. CHAPTER: THE NAZI GERMANY .....</b>	<b>30</b>
5.1. THE GERMAN EUGENICS MOVEMENT .....	30
5.2. THE LEADERS OF THE NSDAP .....	31
5.3. WHO VOTED FOR THE NSDAP? .....	32
5.4. WHO RESISTED THE NAZI REGIME? .....	32
<b>CHAPTER 6: DIVERSION WITHIN THE AMERICAN EUGENICS MOVEMENT AND END OF THE CONNECTIONS WITH NAZI GERMANY .....</b>	<b>34</b>
6.1. REFORM EUGENICS .....	34
6.1.1. <i>New Direction of the American Eugenics Association</i> .....	35
6.1.2. <i>Social Eugenicists</i> .....	39
6.2. THE ERO .....	41
6.3. THE KWIA .....	42
6.4. SHAME ON EUGENICS .....	43
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>LITERATURE .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>50</b>



## **Introduction**

This study is focused on the American eugenics movement in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It describes the extent to which the movement cooperated with the NSDAP, their shared goals and views, the supporters of each, people who believed in eugenics, why eugenics was accepted in a democratic country, and why opposition in Nazi Germany was so weak.

This topic is not a well-known part of American history and it still needs to be revealed. American eugenics was connected to other movements requiring a research in other fields to understand the origin and goals of the American eugenics movement. The American imperialism developed the roots of eugenics as did the Industrial revolution and colonialism. However, American imperialists and anti-imperialists became ardent adherent of the eugenics movement. Most helpful in this research in the area of the American imperialism was an article “Racism in the Expansionist Controversy of 1898-1900.”<sup>1</sup> This article by an American linguist, Allen Merriam, points out terms of racism that were used equally by American imperialists and anti-imperialists. This created pseudo theories about the superiority of Anglo-Saxons over other ethnic groups. Such theories were common within the eugenics movement. Overall, Merriam’s summarizing study about the early days of American expansionism was valuable for this research.

Sources by Andrew Carnegie and Albert Beveridge clarified the views of imperialists and anti-imperialists.<sup>2</sup> In an article, which was published in *North American Review*, Carnegie wrote about his views of on newly conquered territories. Imperialist Beveridge spoke in front of the Senate in 1900 after his return from the Philippines. He advocated conquering the Philippines as a good source of raw materials and also as a strategic place for trading with China, whose market for American products appeared to be endless.

Another movement connected to eugenics is euthenics. Devotees of euthenics wanted to solve the problems of overcrowded tenements in cities. The tenements were mostly inhabited by immigrants resulted in eugenicists cooperating with social workers

---

<sup>1</sup> Allen Merriam, “Racism in the Expansionist Controversy of 1898-1900“, *Phylon* 39, No. 4 (1978): 369-80, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed October 28, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Carnegie, “Americanism versus Imperialism“, *North American Review* 0168, .No 506 (Jan. 1899): 1-14, <http://digital.library.cornell.edu/n/nora/> (accessed October 2, 2012); Albert Beveridge, “In Support of an American Empire“, record, 56. Congress, 1. session, 704-12, official website of Vincent Ferrara, professor of International Politics, Mount Holyoke College, USA, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/feros-pg.htm> (accessed October 2, 2012).

many of whom were adherents of eugenics. This cooperation did not last but was important in this period; however, other studies focused on eugenics ignore it. Furthermore, this activity of American eugenicists is almost forgotten and there are few resources on this significant issue. The most helpful literature was a chapter “The Rise and Fall of the First National Housing Movement” by Robert Fairbanks.<sup>3</sup>

The last important movement, which coordinated its policy, was the birth control movement. This cooperation was longer than the connection with eugenics. I found the reasons of the cooperation in primary sources by a leader of the American birth control movement, Margaret Sanger. The sources include her autobiography and her books *My Fight for Birth Control*, *Woman and the New Race*, *Pivot of Civilization*.<sup>4</sup> Sanger explained why she believed in eugenics and then why she ended connections between her *American Birth Control League* and the *American Eugenics Society*. This connection also existed on an international level as is explained in the book *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* by an American historian Daniel Kevles.<sup>5</sup> This excellent book is a comprehensive study of eugenics focuses on the British and American eugenics movement. Kevles also compiled division of the eugenics movement in the 1930s. Other primary books are two comprehensive studies on the American eugenics movement by American historians Nancy Ordover and Anne Winfield. The first woman is the author of *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism*, a long history of the American eugenics movement from its origins until recent years.<sup>6</sup> She describes how the American eugenics movement influenced public policy until the present. Her book lacks adequate commentary on crucial issues. Winfield’s book *Eugenics and Education in America: Institutionalized Racism and the Implications of History, Ideology, and Memory*, first explains eugenics, the causes of its popularity in the USA, and then the major part of her book describes efforts to promote eugenics in biology and also selection of students of Nordic ethnic origins to provide them with better educations than others groups in order

---

<sup>3</sup> Robert Fairbanks, “The Rise and Fall of the First National Housing Movement” in John Bauman, Roger Biles and Kristin Szylvian, eds. *From Better Dwellings to Better Neighborhoods* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Sanger, *An Autobiography of Margaret Sanger* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1971); Sanger, *My Fight for Birth Control* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1931); Sanger, *Woman and the New Race* (Middlesex: The Echo Library, 2006); Sanger, *The Pivot of Civilization* (Middlesex: The Echo Library, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Daniel Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

<sup>6</sup> Nancy Ordover, *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

to enhance Caucasians.<sup>7</sup> It covers the time from the end of the 19th century to the 1950s. The text is presented in short sections, looking like an encyclopedia. Moreover, the author often repeats information.

Another study on the American eugenics movement is a dissertation “A History of the American Eugenics Society, 1921-1941” by an American historian, Barry Mehler.<sup>8</sup> Even though, the work’s name seems to limit the coverage, Mehler paid attention to other American eugenics organizations and Nazi Germany. This helps in comparing goals and measures of the AES, the dominant American eugenics organization, with Nazi ideology. His comparison of sterilization laws gave this thesis a new dimension. His study is detailed comprehensive.

The book, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism*, is the work of a German historian Stefan Kühl.<sup>9</sup> The book is the first study which only discusses connections between American eugenicists and Nazi Germany. It does not bring something new but it is a detailed compilation on this issue.

Among the literature is the book *Tabu v sociálních vědách* by a Czech social scientist Petr Bakalář.<sup>10</sup> This author is controversial. He believes in eugenics and has no hesitation in writing about such issues. There is useful information for the study but only verified facts were included. The book often lacks sources to prove his opinions.

The main studies on the regime in Nazi Germany are “Racism and Sexism in Nazi Germany: Motherhood, Compulsory Sterilization, and the State” by Gisela Bock, “Mother of the ‘Volk’: The Image of Women in Nazi Ideology“ by Leila Rupp, “Women in Nazi Germany” by Charu Gupta, “The Social Composition of the Nazi Leadership” by Ernest Doblin and Claire Pohly, and the two books review, *Who Voted For Hitler?* by Lawrence Stokes.<sup>11</sup> The first three studies are focused on the situation of

---

<sup>7</sup> Anne Winfield. *Eugenics and Education in America: Institutionalized Racism and the Implications of History, Ideology, and Memory* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Barry Mehler, “A History of the American Eugenics Society, 1921-1941” (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois, 1988). 481.

<sup>9</sup> Stefan Kühl. *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, And German National Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> Petr Bakalář, *Tabu v sociálních vědách* (Prague: Votobia, 2003).

<sup>11</sup> Gisela Bock, “Sexism and Racism in Nazi Germany: Motherhood, Compulsory Sterilization, and the State“, *Signs* 8, No. 3, *Women and Violence* (1983): 400-21, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012); Leila Rupp, “Mother of the ‘Volk’: The Image of Women in Nazi Ideology“, *Signs* 3, No. 2 (1977): 362-79, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012); Charu Gupta, “Women in Nazi Germany“, *Economic and Political Weekly* 26, No. 17 (1991): WS40-8, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012); Lawrence Stokes, Review of *Who Voted For Hitler?*, by Richard Hamilton; *The Nazi Party: A Social Profile of Members and Leaders 1919-1945*, by Michael Kater, *The International History Review* 6, No. 3 (1984): 440-53, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012); Ernest Doblin and

women in Nazi Germany and a history of Nazi ideology using females to achieve their goals. The studies clarify the rationale that prompted German women to vote for Hitler. This study pays attention to German feminism to explain why birth control was not popular among German feminists. Moreover, remarkable connection between birth control devotees and eugenics appeared nor in the Weimar Republic, neither in Nazi Germany. The last two works identifies supporters of the Nazi regime and the leaders of the NSDAP, the main promoter of discrimination of non-Anglo-Saxon ethnic groups in Germany.<sup>12</sup> The primary American eugenicists were mostly from different social classes than those leaders of the NSDAP. The review by Stokes is also a quit good compilation including useful data for this study.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first explains what eugenics is and where its roots are. The second chapter describes the American eugenics organizations, the connection between eugenics and euthenics, significant American “scientific” studies supporting eugenics, anti-immigration restrictions. The third chapter describes American compulsory sterilization laws. It includes similarities between Nazi and American sterilization policies. The fourth chapter is focused on the role of women’s emancipation within the American eugenics movement and that of Nazi Germany. It also shows different views of sexuality of feminist activists in each country. It also explains why many German women voted for Hitler. The fifth chapter is about social and geographic origins of leaders of the NSDAP, their supporters and opponents. The last chapter focused on the diversity of the American eugenics movement in the 1930s and why contacts between the Nazis and American eugenicists ended.

The goal of this study is a composition to explore points of view about similarities between the American eugenics movement and Nazi Germany.

---

Claire Pohly. “The Social Composition of the Nazi Leadership”, *American Journal of Sociology* 51, No. 1 (1945): 42-9, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Race also meant ethnicity at that time. This study uses the word race in contemporary meaning.

# 1. Chapter: Eugenics

## 1.1. What Is Eugenics?

Eugenics is a doctrine,<sup>13</sup> a pseudo-science, an ideology, from contraception to euthanasia. It can also be defined as a social movement. The doctrinal definition of eugenics includes race, talent and degeneration.<sup>14</sup> The science of eugenics is control reproduction to prevent genes of those who are declared to be “a burden to a society,” those who are defined to be physically or mentally defective from reproducing.

Eugenics is based on the concept of fear of deterioration of the human gene pool. Its goal claims to reproduce quality human characteristics that are genetically determined, i.e. improved according to agendas of proponents. Among the most important is the quality of character, intelligence and health. It claims that character is innate.

To fully understand eugenics, it is necessary to explain a distinction between negative and positive eugenics. Negative eugenics intends to avoid a dysgenetic<sup>15</sup> process and to sterilize those declared to have undesirable characteristics. Positive eugenics is encouraging those deemed fittest to have many children. Other eugenic measures include immigration laws, artificial insemination, and abortion.

## 1.2. How Eugenics Was Formatted?

Eugenics, or controlled reproduction, was mentioned as early as Plato’s (427 B.C. – 347 B.C.) *Republic* and Thomas Campanella’s (1568-1639) *The City of the Sun*.<sup>16</sup> Among the key figures, who influenced eugenics in the 1920s, is Thomas Malthus (1766-1834). An economist and demographer, he warned of the possibility of human overpopulation and the resulting food shortage. His *Essay on the Principle of Population* proposed control of human reproduction. However, his solution was not contraception, but abstinence and late marriages.<sup>17</sup> Ironically, his disciple Francis Place (1771-1854) was the first advocate of contraception. Place’s neomalthusian movement

---

<sup>13</sup> The doctrine is a specific part of ideology. It is the view of the specific case.

<sup>14</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 4.

<sup>15</sup> This means deterioration of the gene pool of the population, the opposite is eugenic.

<sup>16</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, available on *the Project Gutenberg*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1497> (accessed April 30, 2013); Thomas Campanella. *The City of the Sun*, available on *the Project Gutenberg* <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2816> (accessed April 30, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Malthus. *Essay on the Principle of Population* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

renewed fears of overpopulation. Another scientist, inspired by Malthus, was Charles Darwin (1809-1882). He also wanted to reduce fertility, but only of the unfit that they would abstain from marriage. According to Darwin, natural selection exists in order to avoid degradation of the gene pool. Since 1800, natural selection declined as a result of better nutrition and health care. According to Darwin, it was not only necessary to prevent deterioration of the gene pool of mankind, but also to avoid overpopulation if humans wish to survive.<sup>18</sup> Darwin's thoughts influenced his cousin Francis Galton (1822-1911), an anthropologist. However, Galton is primarily known as the father of eugenics. Galton defined the term eugenics as a science which deals with all influences that improve the native qualities of the humans, promoting influences which develop them in the best way.<sup>19</sup> Galton divided eugenics into positive eugenics and negative eugenics. He believed in inferior of races and natural inequality of human beings.<sup>20</sup> He wanted to "breed" the human genetic pool using an artificial selection model while keep represents of "each class or sect by its best specimens, that done, to leave them to work out their common civilization in their own way."<sup>21</sup> Galton published his ideas in an article for Macmillan's Magazine in 1895 and then, he enlarged his thoughts in the book *Hereditary Genius: an Inquiry into Its Law and Consequences* in 1869. Galton chose some work occupations from the British population and examined two centuries old history of this sample. The occupations were jurists, statesmen, military commanders, scientists, poets, painters, and musicians. He realized that considerable parts of them were blood relatives and claimed that character and talent are innate.<sup>22</sup> Later, ethnic and class played a role in a eugenic hierarchical evaluation system of people in addition to innate characteristics.<sup>23</sup>

The popularity of eugenics is associated with urban and industrial growth and high fertility rates of the poor.<sup>24</sup> Here is a link between the eugenic movement and the birth control movement. This cooperation also worked at the international level as eugenicists

---

<sup>18</sup> Bakalář, *Tabu v sociálních vědách*, 249.

<sup>19</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 5.

<sup>20</sup> Raymond E. Fancher, "Francis Galton's African Ethnography and Its Role in the Development of His Psychology", *British Journal for the History of Science*, 16 (March 1983), 79. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 8.; Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry Into Its Law and Consequences* (New York: Macmillan, 1892), 360-1, 14.

<sup>21</sup> Francis Galton, "Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope, and Aims", *The American Journal of Sociology* 10, No. 1 (Jul. 1904): 1-25, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed May 7, 2013), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Galton, *Hereditary Genius*, 1.

<sup>23</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 5.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

and devotees of the birth control movement met at the *Sixth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference* in 1925.

## **2. Chapter: the American Eugenics Movement**

### **2.1. Causes**

The movement developed in the United States after the Civil War when the development of industry led to migration to the cities causing social problems such as higher crime rates. Additionally, great numbers of immigrants came and many of them settled in tenements in ghettos where living conditions were awful. Eugenics became popular not just as a doctrine, but also as a science at that time because eugenicists blamed urban newcomers for creating the social problems. Their racism targeted not only African-Americans, but also non-Anglo-Saxon peoples.<sup>25</sup>

Racism is also associated with the beginnings of American imperialism but it was not restricted. For example Senator Albert Beveridge, an imperialist, called for conquering the Philippines and described them to be children who had to be taught democratic principles. There were also anti-imperialists such as an industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, who served as the vice-president of the *Anti-imperialist League* (1899-1910). But opponents believed that non-Anglo-Saxon nations were inferior and they should remain in their countries, as otherwise, they were burdens for the USA. American sociologist, political scientist, economist and prominent professor at Yale University, William Graham Sumner, first used the term social Darwinism, a theory based on the application of Darwin's theory of evolution to social conditions.<sup>26</sup> Works critical of the theory appeared in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>27</sup>

From the 19th century to the 1930s, various pseudo theories claiming superiority of Anglo-Saxons were formulated. One such theory justified American imperialism declaring that the so-called tropical nations were unable to govern themselves because, according to anti-imperialist and biologist David Starr Jordan (1851-1931), the equator

---

<sup>25</sup> Then Americans used the term non Anglo-Saxons nations for inhabitants in Eastern and Southern Europe. I use the term in this work in the sense as it is understood today.

<sup>26</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 52-53.

<sup>27</sup> An American historian, Richard Hofstadter, focused on social Darwinism in the 20th century and wrote a critical book *Social Darwinism in American Thought, 1860–1915* (1944).

lacked oxygen, so those people over there were choking.<sup>28</sup> Jordan is also known as one of the leaders of the eugenics movement promoting sterilization.<sup>29</sup> Theories doubted that inhabitants of the newly acquired territories could comprehend the principles of American democracy. Later theories questioned the intelligence of non Anglo-Saxon citizens. A well-know study is by Robert Yerkes (1876-1956) in 1917 administered intelligence tests to soldiers.<sup>30</sup> His colleague, Professor of Psychology Carl Brigham (1890-1943), used the results of these tests in his book *Study of American Intelligence* (1923)<sup>31</sup> to conclude that Anglo-Saxons were the smartest people and blacks were the most intellectually inferior. He also questioned claims of high intelligence of Jews.<sup>32</sup>

Brigham included Europeans in his study. He used the racial theories of Lothrop Stoddard (1883-1950) and Madison Grant (1865-1937) in his research. They divided the whites into Nordic, Alpine, (Eastern-European), and the Mediterranean. The most intelligent individuals were members of the Nordic race. Brigham divided Europeans according to his racial theories. He said that Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, England and Scotland were countries whose inhabitants were primarily of Nordic origin. The lowest number of Nordic population was in Russia, Poland, Portugal, Italy, Romania, Greece and Turkey.<sup>33</sup> This highly prejudiced unscientific book became the mantra of American eugenicists and served as means to promote anti-immigration legislation. Other works that influenced not only legislation, but also influenced opinions of ordinary Americans, were a bestseller, *The Passing of the Great Race* (1916) by Madison Grant, and *The Rising Tide of Color* (1920) by Lothrop Stoddard. These two authors promoted myths regarding the Anglo-Saxons, racism and anti-Semitism.<sup>34</sup> Grant and Stoddard were often cited by eugenicists, not only in the U.S., but also in Germany.<sup>35</sup> In 1934, Grant received a letter from Adolf Hitler in which Hitler thanked him for writing the book because it became his Bible.<sup>36</sup> Stoddard met Hitler when working as a journalist in Germany. The Minister of Propaganda,

---

<sup>28</sup> Allen Merriam, "Racism in the Expansionist Controversy," *Phylon* 39, No. 4 (1978): 369-80, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed October 28, 2012), 378.

<sup>29</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 55.

<sup>30</sup> Clarence Yoakum and Robert Yerkes, *Army Mental Tests* (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1920).

<sup>31</sup> Carl Brigham, *Study of American Intelligence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1923).

<sup>32</sup> Ordover, *American Eugenics*, 25 -27.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 - 28.

<sup>34</sup> Madison Grant. *The Passing of the Great Race or the Racial Basis of European History* (Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1916); Lothrop Stoddard. *The Rising Tide of Color Against White World Supremacy* (Charles Scribner's Sons: New York, 1921).

<sup>35</sup> Winfield, 73-74.

<sup>36</sup> Kùhl, *The Nazi Connection*, 85.



Joseph Goebbels, described Stoddard as an anthropologist. His studies about races were included in Nazi textbooks.<sup>37</sup>

## 2.2. Organizations and Their Influence

The eugenics movement formed organizations to organize and promote research. Eugenicians published their research in newspapers and monographs. They also presented their research at scientific meetings including three international eugenic congresses. The last two congresses, 1921 and 1932, were highly prestigious events.<sup>38</sup> The most well known organizations were eugenics organizations the *Eugenics Record Office* (ERO, 1910-1939), the *American Eugenics Society* (AES, 1922-1994) the *Race Betterment Foundation*, the *Eugenics Research Association* (ERA), and the *Galton Society*. The *Race Betterment Foundation* was founded by John Kellogg in 1906 and was the biggest eugenic organization in Michigan. The ERA was established in 1913 to focus on research. The *Galton Society* was established by Madison Grant, Charles Davenport (1866-1944) and Henry Osborn (1857-1935) in 1918 as an anthropological society. The eugenics organizations raised money from various foundations, such as the *Carnegie Institute* and the *Rockefeller Foundation*, the *Pioneer Fund* and John Kellogg's (1852-1943) *Race Betterment Foundation*.<sup>39</sup>

The ERO and the AES are significant. ERO published a magazine, the *Eugenical News*, from 1920 to 1938. It was, at that time, the dominant medium for spreading racist and anti-immigration policies based on eugenics research. The magazine *Eugenics*, published by the AES for only three years, 1928 to 1931, was more moderate.<sup>40</sup> Then the AES published the *Eugenical News* from 1939 to 1953.<sup>41</sup> However, the magazine was not as radical as it had been under the ERO.

The ERO was the largest eugenics organization and the most active in eugenics research. For example, as previously mentioned, Yerkes worked for the ERO. From

---

<sup>37</sup> William Shirer, *Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent, 1934-1941* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1941), 257.

<sup>38</sup> David Micklos, "Eugenics Research Methods," *Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement*, official website of Dolan DNA Learning Center, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, <http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/html/eugenics/essay3text.html> (accessed October 31, 2012).

<sup>39</sup> "Funding the Eugenics Movement," *Eugenics Watch*, website on eugenics, <http://www.eugenics-watch.com/roots/chap12.html> (accessed October 31, 2012).

<sup>40</sup> Micklos, "Eugenics Research Methods," *Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement*, official website of Dolan DNA Learning Center, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, <http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/html/eugenics/essay3text.html> (accessed October 31, 2012).

<sup>41</sup> "The American Eugenics Society Inc.," *Eugenics Watch*, website on eugenics, <http://www.eugenics-watch.com/aeugensoe/aeback.html> (accessed October 31, 2012).

1910 to 1921, Harry Laughlin (1880-1943), a teacher, was the Head of Department of Genetics of the ERO. He then became the Director of the ERO, a position, he held until 1939. During these years 1921-1931, Laughlin served as an “expert on eugenics” for the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization of the U.S. House of Representatives. In his position, Laughlin could easily lobby for anti-immigration laws on the basis of research results of the ERO. According to these surveys, immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe were genetically defective and had disproportionately higher percentage of the feeble-minded, criminals and socially dependent peoples.<sup>42</sup> As a result of Laughlin’s lobbying, the restrictive *Immigration law of 1924* was approved. The law favored immigrants from Anglo-Saxon nations.

Laughlin also wrote numerous articles and books on eugenics. His book, *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States* (1922),<sup>43</sup> established him as an expert on sterilization. His model of sterilization laws inspired a majority of American states which approved sterilization laws. Nazi Germany was inspired as well.<sup>44</sup> Sterilization laws defined who was unfit to be parents. These included the feeble-minded, the insane, criminals, epileptics, alcoholics, drug addicts, persons suffering from chronic or infectious disease, the blind, the deaf, the physically handicapped and dependents such as orphans, the homeless, beggars, tramps and idlers.<sup>45</sup>

Laughlin was a member of other eugenic organizations as well. In 1927-1928, he was President of the AES. He edited the *Eugenical News* from 1916 to 1939.<sup>46</sup> He admired the National Socialists in Germany because of their sterilization ideology even before the party came to power in 1933. In addition, Laughlin once mentioned: “Hitler should be made honorary member of the ERA (*Eugenics Research Association*, note of the author).”<sup>47</sup> Laughlin also disseminated Nazi racial propaganda when serving as assistant director of the ERA. He was especially impressed by Nazi films which promoted eugenics goals such as sterilization. A good example of his activities is

---

<sup>42</sup> Micklos, “Eugenics Research Methods,” *Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement*, official website of Dolan DNA Learning Center, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, <http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/html/eugenics/essay3text.html> (accessed October 31, 2012).

<sup>43</sup> Harry Laughlin, *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States* (Psychopathic Laboratory of the Municipal Court of Chicago: Chicago, 1922).

<sup>44</sup> “Harry H. Laughlin,” official website of the library of *Truman State University*, USA, <http://library.truman.edu/manuscripts/laughlinbio.asp> (accessed October 31, 2012).

<sup>45</sup> Elof Carlson, *The Unfit: A History of a Bad Idea* (Cold Spring Harbor: Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 2001), 447. In: Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 86.

<sup>46</sup> “Harry H. Laughlin,” official website of the library of *Truman State University*, USA, <http://library.truman.edu/manuscripts/laughlinbio.asp> (accessed October 31, 2012).

<sup>47</sup> The Laughlin Papers, “Hitler and the Jews,” Clippings, 1933-34. In: Kühn, *The Nazi Connection*, 48.

purchase of the movie *Erbrank, Hereditary Defective*, which promoted sterilization. He bought the film in 1936 and wanted to educate the American public about eugenics and its goals. The distribution of the movie was financed by the *Pioneer Fund* which collaborated with the ERA and the ERO and showed the movie in 3 000 high schools. The film played in 1937 and 1938 and was declared to be a success in the United States by the Nazi press. However, the movie was never nationally distributed.<sup>48</sup> Still, the eugenics propaganda in schools was effective as over 90% of high school biology textbooks contained information about eugenics in the years 1914 to 1949.<sup>49</sup> Many of them described and endorsed the Nazi eugenic program.<sup>50</sup>

The AES was founded as the *Eugenics Society of the United States of America* in 1922, and then changed its name to the AES in 1925. There were structural changes in the organization under the control of leading American eugenicists such as Laughlin and Grant in 1926. The organization used this name until 1973 when it was renamed the *Society for the Study of Social Biology*.

The AES became famous across the United States holding contests for the best genetically equipped families – the *Fitter Families Contests*. The contests were held in the 1920s and were conducted in order to identify desirable parents, encourage them to reproduce and rewarded the winners. Thus, “the best genes” would be contributed to the future of the nation.<sup>51</sup> The winners were awarded medals which confirmed their positive origins and the front pages of local newspapers often featured them.<sup>52</sup> Another activity of the AES was to promote eugenics studies in biology in schools after 1925.<sup>53</sup> Eugenics generally was seen by the AES as a “racial preventive medicine” and sterilization “had to be seen as an integral part of preventive medicine.”<sup>54</sup>

### 2.3. Eugenics and Euthenics

Eugenics is well-known for immigration restrictions but the movement also tried to help immigrants living in slums. However, this short period is often ignored. In the beginning, the American eugenics movement was connected to euthenics. Both of these

---

<sup>48</sup> Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*, 48-50.

<sup>49</sup> Steven Selden, “Education Policy and Biological Science: Genetics, Eugenics, and the Colleague Textbook, c. 1908-1931,” *Teachers Colleague Record* (Teacher Colleague, Columbia University), 87, No.1 (Fall 1985), 35-51. In: Mehler, “A History of the American Eugenics Society”, 245, 481.

<sup>50</sup> Mehler, “A History of the American Eugenics Society”, 245.

<sup>51</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 8.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

movements tried to improve the horrible living conditions of the poor, especially immigrants, and advocated proposed solutions.

Euthenics is also about improvement of human beings but it is distinguished from eugenics that it does not declare other ethnic groups to be genetically inferior. The followers of this movement wanted to improve immigrants' lives through Americanization, especially through education, health care, and better environment and housing. As American historian, Ellen Richards, described both movements, eugenics improves the future generations through heredity and euthenics improves the present generation.<sup>55</sup>

The most significant followers of euthenics were housing reformers Jacob Riis (1849-1914), a journalist from Denmark, and Lawrence Veiller (1872-1959), organizer of the *Tenement House Committee* and the *National Housing Association* (NHA).<sup>56</sup>

Slums were seen as failures of speculators, entrepreneurs, and “inferior” immigrants. Thus, a will to diminish overcrowded foul apartments intended to eliminate criminal behavior of immigrants as newcomers were blamed for higher crime rates. The primary eugenicist in housing reform was Dr. Charles Reed (1856-1928) from Cincinnati, Ohio, who saw a connection between poor immigrants and slums as he asked: “Is degeneracy the cause of the hovel or is the hovel a cause of degeneracy?” Reed answered that “with certain limitations each may be considered as cause and each as effect.”<sup>57</sup>

Eugenics and euthenics shared a goal – the Americanization of newcomers. However, euthenics leaders wanted to help the poor by improvement of their environment, not by planned breeding. In other words, euthenicists cared about educating the masses when eugenicists expected to create intelligent people. These movements had different means to achieve the same goals as they shared the idea of better conditions in housing for immigrants and this led to cooperation. For example, the *First National Conference on Race Betterment* held in Battle Creek, Michigan on January 8-12, 1914, was a meeting of social workers, doctors, scientist, educators, and other activists today seen as euthenicists or eugenicists. The discussion at the

---

<sup>54</sup> Mehler, “A History of the American Eugenics Society”, 246.

<sup>55</sup> Ellen Richards, *Euthenics: The Science of Controllable Environments: A Plea for Better Conditions As a First Step Toward Higher Human Efficiency (Public health in America)* (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1910), viii.

<sup>56</sup> In 1936, when Congress was creating first peacetime federal housing policy, Veiller disbanded the NHA and gave all its data and libraries to the federal government's Central Housing Committee.

conference was about how to end human deterioration of the American stock. Prominent eugenics leaders such as Dr. Charles Davenport (1866-1944) and Dr. John Kellog, were present. Kellog was an organizer of the conference. Among less radical participants were Riis and Booker T. Washington (1856-1915), an African-American political activist and educator.<sup>58</sup> Thus, these movements worked closely together. But the eugenics movement believed that housing policy was only a cul-de-sac for a human betterment and continued in lobbying for immigration restrictions and sterilization of the unfit.

#### 2.4. Immigration Restrictions

U.S. immigration laws were approved from 1875 to 1924. Initially, the restrictions were against Asians, specifically Chinese. Americans saw Asians as to be inferior. After 1910, the eugenics movement lobbied lawmakers for restrictions on other immigrants. The movement also exerted pressure on lawmakers to completely ban immigration from Asia and to favor immigration of Anglo-Saxons.

The first law was against Chinese immigrants. The *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882* suspended the influx of cheap labor from China for ten years. Only a few Chinese, not laborer, could enter the USA. Those, who already lived in the United States, had to obtain re-entry certification, if they left the country, they could not become citizens. The act expired in 1892 but Congress extended the act through the *Geary Act of 1892*. The new act required all Chinese-Americans to register and have a certificate of residency. The act became permanent in 1902 and was not repealed until 1943. Basically, the *Chinese Exclusion Act* overturned the *Burlingame-Seward Treaty of 1868* which had favored Chinese immigrants to build railroads. Additionally, the treaty had established formal relations between China and the USA.

The next step in anti-immigrant policy was the *Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907*. The agreement was in response to segregation of Japanese in California which caused tensions between the empire and the American government. Japanese had become a superpower after the war with Russia in 1905. Therefore, it was necessary to cool the tensions. The American side promised no immigrant restrictions on Japanese citizens and the latter side confirmed that would not allow emigration to the USA. However,

---

<sup>57</sup> "First Round Table Report", *Proceedings of the Third National Conference on Housing* (1913) (Cambridge: National Housing Association, 1914), 315. In: Fairbanks, "From Better Dwellings", 25.

<sup>58</sup> Samuel Armstrong, *The Southern Workman, Volume 43*. (Hampton: Nabu Press, 2010), 208-209.

there was a loophole for Hawaii. The island was still only a territory and the Japanese government did not suspend immigration to Hawaii allowing newcomers to easily reach American soil. Furthermore, the agreement was never ratified by Congress and its effect ended in 1924. The agreement highly was defensive to Japanese people and government.

In the years 1900-1914, the number of immigrants averaged eighty thousands of newcomers per year. They were mostly Jews from many countries, Russians, North Italians, and Greeks.<sup>59</sup> All considered to be inferior. During the First World War, there were worries about newcomers from Europe because of a fear of Communism and the potential of a cheap work force to cause American unemployment. An overwhelming majority in Congress passed the *Immigrant Act of 1917* in Congress.<sup>60</sup> The act banned all immigrants from South Asia and the Pacific Islands. Additionally, the act excluded everyone who was mentally or physically ill and could become dependent on the state or could be contract labor. Even though many politicians supported eugenics, the anti-immigration law was not approved only as a result of eugenics ideas, but also for social reasons. Newcomers provided cheap labor and, therefore, they were attractive to employers. They not only took jobs from local workers, but they also caused reduction of average wages, or so many believed. However, the act was not enough for stalwart eugenicists and other groups such as organized labor, still worrying about low wages and postwar unemployment, entrepreneurs due to the Red Scare, or social workers, who saw newcomers as additional burdens for overcrowded cities.<sup>61</sup> The problem of the act for eugenicists and others was the qualification of people by geography and not by ethnicity. So, a new anti-immigrant act was enacted. The *Emergency Quota Act of 1921* established a three per cent quota on immigration from any country.<sup>62</sup> The quota was based on the number of residents from the same country already living in the USA according to the U.S. Census of 1910. Albert Johnson, the head of the House Immigration Committee and Naturalization, was the sponsor of the act, chose the census of 1910 because there was a smaller number of Jews living in the country. He considered Jewish immigrants as “filthy, un-American, and often dangerous in their

---

<sup>59</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 78.

<sup>60</sup> The act is also known as the *Asiatic Barred Zone Act*.

<sup>61</sup> Kenneth Ludmerer, *Genetics and American Society* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1972), 95-6. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 96.

<sup>62</sup> Another well-known name of the act is the *Johnson Quota Act*.

habits.”<sup>63</sup> Other new immigrants from Central, Eastern, and, Southern Europe did not have a better image in Johnson’s eyes. Johnson was a member of the ERA and the *Galton Society*.<sup>64</sup>

The new act did not fully satisfy eugenicists, and so, they continued in lobbying for a tougher anti-immigrant act. Johnson appointed his friend Harry Laughlin as an “Expert Eugenic Witness” to the House Committee who talked for three full days in favor for further restrictions and he succeeded. Congress easily approved the *Immigration Restriction Act of 1924* which exactly limited immigration from those areas that Laughlin qualified as a nest of “genetically inferior stock.”<sup>65</sup> Congressional sponsors of the act were Congressman Albert Johnson and Senator David Reed.<sup>66</sup>

The *National Origins Act*, which greatly restricted immigration of non-Anglo-Saxons on basis of quotas based on the origin of American citizens. The new quotas allowed only two per cent of the 1890 composition of American citizens to enter the USA. The U.S. Census of 1890 when the majority of American citizens were descendants from Anglo-Saxon countries. The act also included an *Asian Exclusion Act* that completely banned immigration from Asia. Hitler praised the *Immigration Restriction Act of 1924* in *Mein Kampf* and European Jews would feel the harshness of the act after 1933 when they were trying to escape from the Nazis.<sup>67</sup>

The national origins quota was effective until 1965 when the *Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965* was passed.<sup>68</sup> The new immigrant policy focuses on newcomers’ skills and family relationships to American citizens.

### **3. Chapter: Sterilization**

Today, it seems to be believed that state sterilization of so-called unfits was only done in Nazi Germany, but this inhumane practice existed almost everywhere in the so-called civilized world. Sterilization was legal in certain European countries before the

---

<sup>63</sup> Mehler, “A History of the American Eugenics Society”, 200-1.

<sup>64</sup> Ordovery, *American Eugenics*, 24.

<sup>65</sup> Mark Adams, Garland Allen and Sheila Weiss, “Human Heredity and Politics: A Comparative Institutional Study of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor (United States), the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity, and Eugenics (Germany), and the Maxim Gorky Medical Genetics Institute (USSR)”, *Osiris*, 2nd Series, No. 20, *Politics and Science in Wartime: Comparative International Perspectives on the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute* (2005): 232-62, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed May 10, 2012), 238.

<sup>66</sup> Therefore, this law is also called *Johnson-Reed Act*.

<sup>67</sup> Lothrop Stoddard, *Into the Darkness: Nazi Germany Today* (New York: Deull, Sloan & Pearce, 1940), 192-6. In: Kühn, *The Nazi Connection*, 26.

<sup>68</sup> The act is also known under a name the *Hart-Celler Act*.

Nazis took power in Germany. The first in Europe was the Swiss Canton de Vaud in 1928. The first European state to adopt sterilization laws as a therapy for sexual delinquents was Denmark in 1929 and other European states, including Sweden, Norway, Finland, Danzig, and Estonia legalized sterilization before 1936.<sup>69</sup>

### 3.1. Sterilization in the United States of America

There were voices calling for castration of gays, prostitutions, criminals and other persons considered defective before the first compulsory sterilization laws were passed. In 1893, F.E. Daniel, M.D., of Austin, Texas, demanded “substitute castration as a penalty for all sexual crimes or misdemeanors, including masturbation” in a paper “Should Insane Criminals or Sexual Perverts Be Allowed to Procreate?”<sup>70</sup> Four years before, Superintendent of the Pennsylvania Training School for Feeble-minded Children at Elwyn, Dr. Isaac Newton Kerlin, obtained a parental permission to castrate some of his charges. At the same year, a physician at the Indiana State Reformatory at Jeffersonville, Dr. Harry C. Sharp, firstly performed vasectomies on criminals.<sup>71</sup> Later in 1907, Indiana enacted compulsory sterilization law as the first American state. The law sterilized those who were considered to be unfit. Indiana was followed by over thirty American states. The states practicing sterilization were supported by the Supreme Court’s decision on sterilization of a white feeble-minded girl, Carrie Buck (1916-1983) of Virginia, in the case of *Buck v. Bell* in 1927.<sup>72</sup> Compulsory sterilization laws were not constitutionally clear prior to 1927. Virginia enacted the law based on eugenics model in 1924.<sup>73</sup>

Carrie Buck was a seventeen-year-old girl determined “defective” and was forced to live in the Virginia Colony for Epileptics and Feeble-minded in Lynchburg.<sup>74</sup> Her mother Emma was also allegedly feeble-minded and lived at the same colony. Carrie was

---

<sup>69</sup> Mehler, “A History of the American Eugenics Society”, 227.

<sup>70</sup> Jonathan Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.* (New York: Avon Books, 1976), 209. In: Ordovery, *American Eugenics*, 77.

<sup>71</sup> Arthur Fink, *The Causes of Crime: Biological Theories in the United States, 1800-1915* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1938), 188-9, 196; “Is Vasectomy Cruel and Unusual Punishment”, *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*, 3 (January, 1913): 784-5; Julius Paul, “State Eugenic Sterilization History: A Brief Overview”, in Jonas Robitscher, ed., *Eugenic Sterilization* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1973): 28-9. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 93.

<sup>72</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 9.

<sup>73</sup> Harry Laughlin, *The Legal Status of Eugenic Sterilization*, 58-59; Donna Cone, “The Case of Carrie Buck: Eugenic Sterilization Realized” (unpublished manuscript), 6; Robert Cynkar, “*Buck v. Bell*: Felt Necessities v. Fundamental Values?” “*Columbia Law Review* 81 (November 1981), 1435. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 110.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*



born out of wedlock and got pregnant as an unmarried girl. This qualified her as unfit. Just a few months after passing the sterilization law, Carrie was ordered to be sterilized by the Board of Directors of the Colony. Carrie's guardian appealed against the superintendent of the Colony, Albert Priddy.<sup>75</sup> The Virginia officials discussed the issue with Harry Laughlin who investigated Carrie's pedigree and claimed that Carrie, her mother and daughter Vivian, seven months old, belonged "to the shiftless, ignorant, and worthless class of anti-social whites of the South."<sup>76</sup> The judge of the Circuit Court of Amherst County sustained the sterilization order. During the court proceedings, Priddy had died and John Bell had become his successor who continued the battle for upholding the order and therefore, the case became to be called *Buck v. Bell*. The case then moved to the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia which stated that the court decision did not violate the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment. In 1927, the case was carried to the Supreme Court where Buck's advocate, former member of the board of directors of the Colony, opposed the decision saying that a "reign of doctors will be inaugurated and in the name of science new classes will be added, even races may be brought within the scope of such a regulation and the worst forms of tyranny practiced." The court upheld the decision by a vote eight to one.<sup>77</sup> The majority opinion, written by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841-1945), stated: "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, often not felt to be such by those concerned, in order to prevent our being swamped with incompetence. It is better for all the world if, instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind. The principle that sustains compulsory vaccination is broad enough to cover cutting the Fallopian tubes." Then Holmes underlined that Carrie, her mother and her daughter were feeble-minded saying the most remarkable sentence of the decision: "Three generations of imbeciles are enough."<sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> Laughlin, *The Legal Status of Eugenical Sterilization*, 16-17; Cone, "The Case of Carrie Buck: Eugenic Sterilization Realized", 9-10; Cynkar, "*Buck v. Bell*", 1437-38. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 110.

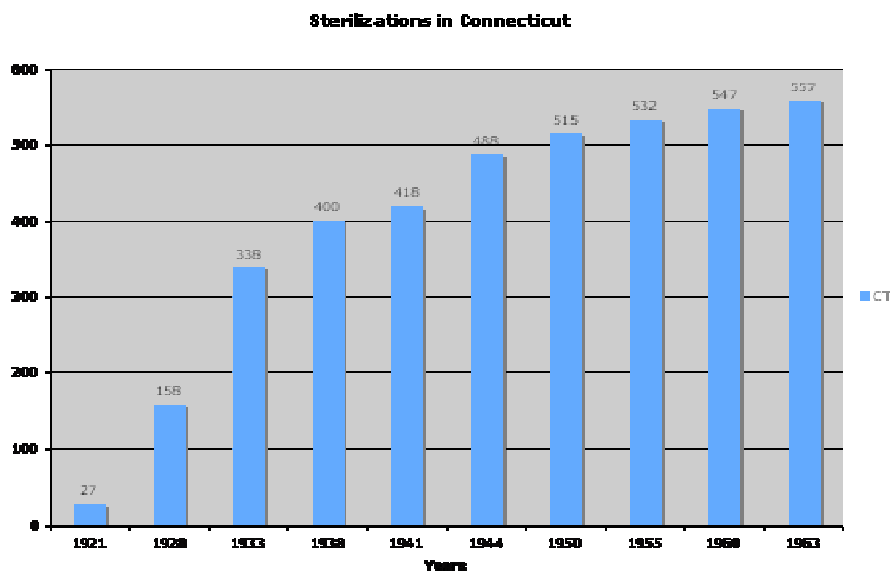
<sup>76</sup> Laughlin, *The Legal Status of Eugenical Sterilization*, 16-17, 8; Cynkar, "*Buck v. Bell*", 1439. In: *Ibid.*, 110-111.

<sup>77</sup> *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 201-3 (1927), "Justia.com", *US Supreme Court Center*, <http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/274/200/case.html#207> (accessed May 1, 2013) ; Cynkar, "*Buck v. Bell*", 1439-40, 1446-48, 1450-53. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 111.

<sup>78</sup> *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 207 (1927), "Justia.com", *US Supreme Court Center*, <http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/274/200/case.html#207> (accessed May 1, 2013).

The compulsory vasectomy of Carrie Buck was easily done against her will because Virginia sterilization laws empowered medical institutions to do so. It was almost impossible to appeal against sterilization because the initial hearing was held in the health institutions to limit the costs.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, it was normal that American patients were not informed about their sterilization because of the belief that the poor, often black people, were not smart enough to control their fertility.<sup>80</sup>

Figure no.1: The number of sterilizations increased after 1929 because of the Great Depression. They were not only based on eugenics, but on economics as well. Care for the poor and the disabled became a bigger burden for federal and budgets. This idea was officially promoted by the AES. Specifically, the AES declared that sociological factors were the same as genetic factors. This thesis was also a part of Nazi sterilization policies. Many states rescinded their sterilization laws during the war, but sterilization increased in some states, where the laws remained as seen at the graph of performed sterilization in Connecticut.<sup>81</sup> This shows how much influential was the American eugenics movement.



The best example of this trend was North Carolina where the number of sterilization dramatically increased after the war making that the state third in the number of sterilizations behind California and Virginia as can be seen at the graph

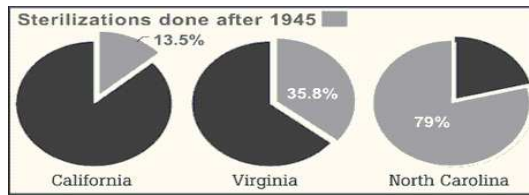
<sup>79</sup> Mehler, "A History of the American Eugenics Society", 242.

<sup>80</sup> Ordoover, *American Eugenics*, 161.

<sup>81</sup> Figure no.1: Lutz Kaelber, "Eugenics: Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States", official website of the University of Vermont, USA, <http://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/> (accessed November 1, 2012); Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 87.

below.<sup>82</sup> It happened because sterilizations were based on economic issues and racism. Attention turned to poor different ethnic families, especially black single mothers who were forced to be sterilized.<sup>83</sup>

Figure no.2: The graph showing all sterilizations preformatted due to sterilization laws in three states. Sterilizations done after the Second World War are representing grey, so, majority of sterilizations were preformatted in California before 1945 and North Carolina sterilized more people after 1945:



But why did North Carolina's numbers increase? In the 1950s, the state statistics indicated that 20% of African-American children were born to single mothers or couples married in non-legal ceremonies. A law stating that a birth of a child outside wedlock is a sign of imbecility of the mother. While the law was not passed, doctors followed the intent bill and sent more African-American women to the eugenics committee that approved sterilization. The result was 65% of sterilized African-American women in North Carolina in 1964, while in the years, 1929 -1940, the eugenics sterilization committee had selected 78% of women recommended by physicians but only 21% were African-American women.<sup>84</sup>

This focuses on another reason for sterilization, racism. For example, in 1944, Nils Larsen, a director of the Queen's Hospital in Honolulu in Hawaii, sterilized mothers of large families after childbirth. Larsen concluded that contraception did not work for Hawaiian females because they were unable to understand how to use it. Sterilization, including postpartum sterilization,<sup>85</sup> was carried out on women and men too in *Queen's*

<sup>82</sup> Figure no. 2: "Against Their Will: North Carolina's Sterilization Program," [http://extras.journalnow.com/againststheirwill/graphics/partone\\_astateapart.html](http://extras.journalnow.com/againststheirwill/graphics/partone_astateapart.html) (accessed November 1, 2012).

<sup>83</sup> Ordover, *American Eugenics*, 166-7.

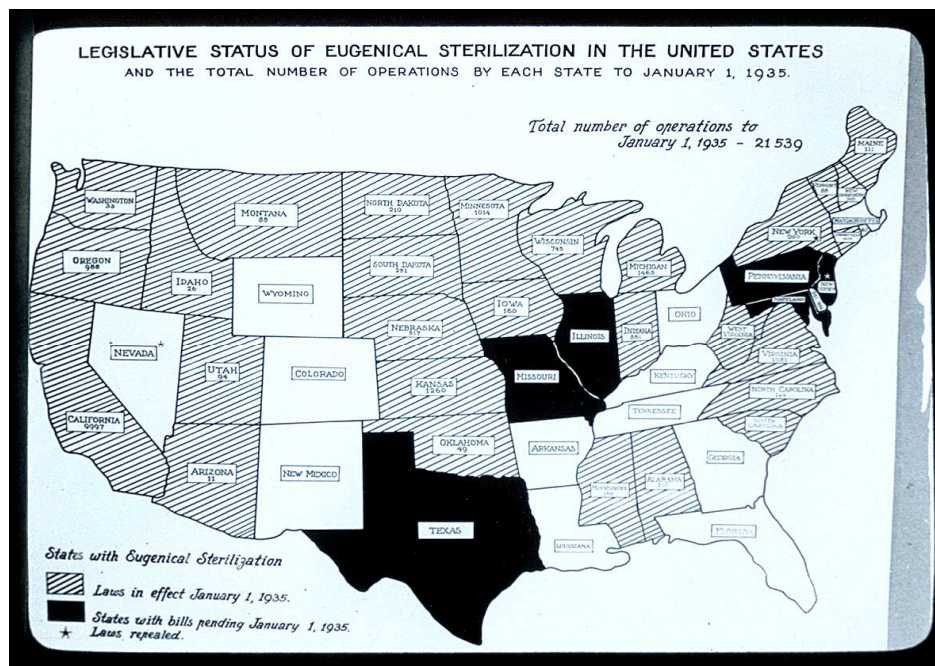
<sup>84</sup> Biennial Report of the Eugenics Board of North Carolina, July 1, 1939 – June 30, 1940; Adelaida Del Castillo. "Sterilization: An Overview", in Magdalena Mora and Adelaida Del Castillo, eds. *Mexican Women in the United States: Struggles Past and Present* (Los Angeles: Chicano Studies Research Center Publications, University of California, Los Angeles, 1980), 67. In: Ordover, *American Eugenics*, 165.

<sup>85</sup> Means sterilization after giving birth.

*Hospital*. Moreover, Larsen performed sterilization without legal support because sterilization laws were never approved in Hawaii.<sup>86</sup>

Japanese-American women from the West Coast were often sterilized during World War II. In 1943, there were over 110 000 Japanese-American mothers in the detention camp at Tule Lake sterilized without their knowledge by *Executive Order 9066*.<sup>87</sup>

Figure no.3: The map showing shaded states shows those that adopted compulsory sterilization laws:<sup>88</sup>



### 3.2. Sterilization in Nazi Germany

American eugenicists promoted sterilization on specific groups in their population. Other countries were inspired by American eugenic studies and also sterilization laws which were in majority of American states in 1935, but this happened earlier than it is generally thought.

According to Dr. Marie Kopp, an American scientist, who visited Nazi Germany, their sterilization laws were inspired by the American laws.<sup>89</sup> There is no doubt that the

<sup>86</sup> Julius Paul, "Three Generations of Imbeciles Are Enough': State Eugenic Sterilization Laws in American Thought and Practice" (study, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Washington, D.C., 1965), 565, 824.

<sup>87</sup> Ordoover, *American Eugenics*, 160-161.

<sup>88</sup> Official website of Clarkson University, USA, <http://people.clarkson.edu/~sheila/fw/classes/hp201/grayscience/images/States%20with%20eugenics%20aws.jpg> (accessed November 1, 2012).

American and German eugenicists admired each other. The AES officially supported the Nazi eugenics program at its conference on “Eugenics in Relation to Nursing” in 1937 and promoted the program during the 1930s.<sup>90</sup> The movements translated German and American literature and promoted them in their countries. The American eugenicists visited Germany in the 1930s, even during the Second World War. For example, Harry Laughlin visited Germany in this period as a journalist but he was still curious about the eugenics program. Before the war, in June 1936, Heidelberg University celebrated 550 years since its founding and Laughlin, received an honorary degree for his service to eugenics.<sup>91</sup>

The German sterilization law was passed on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1933 and was enforced on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1934. The law also forbade voluntary sterilization. Even though, the law was based on the sterilization laws of some American states, according to Paul Popenoe, a director of the *Human Betterment Foundation* and member of the Board of Directors of the AES, the majority of American eugenicists saw the German sterilization laws to be “better than the sterilization laws of American states.”<sup>92</sup> The German laws were inspired by Laughlin’s model. The law sterilized feebleminded people, alcoholics, and schizophrenics, people with manic-depressive disorder and Huntington’s chorea, insanity, epileptics, and, those with hereditary blindness, deafness and malformation.<sup>93</sup> The American and German laws sterilized the same segments of their populations. Unique in German law were the Court of the Wards and the Eugenic Court. A family member of an afflicted person or a guardian could ask the Court of the Wards for the permission to sterilize their relatives or public health officials for inmates of hospitals, custodial institutions, and penitentiaries could apply to the District Eugenic Court for sterilization. The Eugenic Court was composed of three members: a judge, to be the chairman, a public health physician, and a physician who was educated in eugenics. This court replaced regular courts and their sentence was based upon a majority vote. There was also the Supreme Eugenic Court where it was possible to appeal within a month. This court had three members as well: a judge from the *District Superior Court*, a public health physician, and another physician with knowledge of eugenics. The

---

<sup>89</sup> Mehler, “History of the American Eugenics Society”, 236.

<sup>90</sup> Frederick Osborn, “Conference on Eugenics in Relation to Nursing: Summary of the Proceedings,” *AES Papers*, 2/24/1937. In: *Ibid.*, 244.

<sup>91</sup> Mehler, “History of the American Eugenics Society”, 228.

<sup>92</sup> Paul Popenoe, “The German Sterilization Law,” *Journal of Heredity* 25, No. 7 (July 1934), 257-260. In: *Ibid.*, 233-34.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 235.

Supreme Court's decision was final. If sterilization was approved, it was performed in a hospital by a licensed physician. All the participating persons in the court were required to keep decisions in secret. Otherwise, they could be punished with a fine or imprisonment for a maximum of one year. This law became effective on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1934.<sup>94</sup> The Eugenic Court might be seen as a court protecting civil rights, but the reality was quite different. Approximately two-thirds of sterilized victims were not institutionalized which means that the sterilization law was not followed. Whoever suffered from any "hereditary" disability could be sterilized and it did not matter that the sterilization law did not specify his or her disability.<sup>95</sup> Such cases happened from 1936 to 1939 when "asociality" became a new criterion for compulsory sterilization, even though, it was not mentioned in the German sterilization law. As Gisela Bock wrote in her essay "Racism and Sexism in Nazi Germany", after World War I "sterilization was widely and strongly recommended as a solution to urgent social problems: shiftlessness, ignorance, and laziness in the work force; deviant sexual behavior involving prostitution and illegitimate births; the increasing number of ill and insane; poverty; and the rising costs of social services."<sup>96</sup> This significant change in definition of the unfit happened in the USA as well.

The German sterilization law permitted the legal system to control sterilizations in hospitals. The Virginia sterilization law, according to which Carrie Buck was sterilized, did not create an institution such as the Eugenic Court in Nazi Germany. The decisions were made inside the institutions, which carried on sterilizations through their special boards. Therefore, it can be said that the German sterilization law was democratic.

In 1933, the German government passed a law which allowed castration of males, the destruction of the gonads, who were found to be "habitual delinquents." Castration of females was included in the sterilization law in 1936. The operation was done with X-rays and radium therapy. This method of sterilization was later used in labor and concentration camps for compulsory mass vasectomies.<sup>97</sup> The X-ray method was believed to be the safest modern sterilization at that time and, in 1936, the prestigious *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* recommended this method in an article by Ira Kaplan who was an American specialist in the method at Bellevue Hospital in

---

<sup>94</sup> Mehler, "History of the American Eugenics Society", 235-37.

<sup>95</sup> Daniel Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 116.

<sup>96</sup> Bock, "Racism and Sexism in Nazi Germany", 404.

New York.<sup>98</sup> X-ray sterilization was not as perfect as the eugenicists thought. Women often suffered cancer after the radium therapy.

Approximately 30 000 citizens of the United States were sterilized from 1907 to 1937.<sup>99</sup> It should be noted that the Nazis sterilized about 400 000 people under the sterilization law in the years 1934-1945, 0,5% of the population.<sup>100</sup> Compulsory sterilization laws in the USA were gradually abolished in all the states by the mid 1970s.<sup>101</sup>

Did the AES and Nazis reach their goals? Fortunately, they did not. The AES dreamed of millions of sterilized Americans.<sup>102</sup> The Nazis wished to sterilized 500 000 Germans as according to Wilhelm Frick (1877-1946), a Nazi Minister of Interior, planned in June 1933.<sup>103</sup> This suggests that the AES, primary American eugenicists, were more radical than Nazi sterilization policies. But the AES did not plan to kill American citizens as the Nazis actually did.

## **4. Chapter: Connection with the birth control movement**

### **4.1. The United States of America**

Supporters of the American eugenics movement were predominantly from the middle and upper-classes, were mostly Protestants, well-educated, and Anglo-Saxons.<sup>104</sup> This also characterizes the supporters of the birth control movement. Typical adherents came from the middle and upper-classes and were Protestants. Most of them were housewives married to well-educated men. The vast majority of their spouses also sympathized with the American birth control movement.<sup>105</sup> Members of eugenics

---

<sup>97</sup> Bock, "Racism and Sexism in Nazi Germany", 409.

<sup>98</sup> Ira Kaplan, "Sterilization by Irradiation," Paper read before the Section on Gynecology and Obstetrics, New York Academy of Medicine, 24th November 1936. It is reprinted in the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology 34 (September 1937), 507-12. In: Mehler, "History of the American Eugenics Society", 255.

<sup>99</sup> Frederick Osborn, "Circular Letter," 2/24/1937, Scrapbook, *AES Papers*. In: *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>100</sup> Bock. *Zwangsterilization im Nationalsozialismus: Studien zur Rassenpolitik und Frauenpolitik* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1986), 8. In: *Ibid.*, 267.

<sup>101</sup> Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America*, 9.

<sup>102</sup> Mehler, "History of the American Eugenics Society", 266.

<sup>103</sup> An Address by Wilhelm Frick, Reichminister for the Interior, before the First Meeting of the Expert Council for Population and Race-Politics held in Berlin, 28th June 1933. *Eugenical News* 19 No. 2 (March/April 1934), 34. In: *Ibid.*, 266-7.

<sup>104</sup> Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 63.

<sup>105</sup> Ellen Chesler, *Woman of Valor: Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 225-6.

organizations themselves were financially well-situated as many of them were doctors, social workers, clergy, writers and professors, especially of biology and the social sciences.<sup>106</sup>

The American eugenics movement promoted positive and negative eugenics. In view of the fact that its goal was higher birth rates of the fittest, the first followers of the movement had no sympathy with feminist ideas. Yet, there were women, who are today considered as women's rights campaigners, who joined the eugenics movement. The most famous female followers of the eugenic movement were Margaret Sanger (1879-1966), the main representative of the American birth control movement, and her British counterpart Marie Stopes (1880-1958).<sup>107</sup> The two women became friends during the First World War.

Margaret Sanger fought for legalization of contraception for women. Birth control was illegal in all states. It was even illegal to write about it, and, according to *the Comstock Act of 1873*, mail staff could open any envelope to make sure there was no information about contraception or birth control because the act prohibited circulation of "obscene" material.<sup>108</sup> However, there was one exemption on using contraception – to avoid disease. This was understood as an exemption for men to enjoy sexual intercourse out of wedlock, usually with prostitutes to avoid sexually transmitted diseases. Interpretation of this law changed after a decision of Judge Crane in 1917 after Sanger's conviction. Her first birth control clinic had been closed because it had violated *the Comstock Act*. The new interpretation of the exemption defined the word disease broadly. Therefore, Sanger could open birth control clinics in the state of New York, where the court decision was made, to allow consultation about contraception, but only physicians could do that and only women having a serious disease, for example, tuberculosis, could visit the clinics and use birth control because pregnancy might threaten their lives or even cause death. Sanger used this court decision in other American states to established birth control clinics elsewhere. However, the conditions to further test the legal system were hard. Moreover, Sanger needed doctors for the clinics. Thus, her *American Birth Control League* (ABCL) began cooperating with the eugenics movement for four reasons. First, eugenics was a popular science at that time.

---

<sup>106</sup> Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 64.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

<sup>108</sup> Heywood Broun and Margaret Leech, *Anthony Comstock: Roundsman of the Lord* (New York, 1927), 128-44. In James Reed, *From Private Vice to Public Virtue: The Birth Control Movement and American Society since 1830* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1978), 37.



Second, many physicians believed in eugenics and were leaders of the movement. Third, both of the movements shared Malthus's fear of an overcrowded world. The last reason was Sanger's belief in negative eugenics which is shown in her book *The Pivot of Civilization*.

Sanger wrote in her autobiography that eugenics included free love and pregnancy prevention. She supported this using the fact that the former leader of the American eugenics movement, Moses Harman, was in prison for violating the *Comstock Act*. This act forbade any mention of contraception and Harman wrote about it in his periodical *Lucifer the Light Bearer*.<sup>109</sup>

A friend of Margaret Sanger, sexologist Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), promoted eugenics and birth control for all women. Nevertheless, such supporters of eugenics were unique. Generally, the vast majority of followers of eugenics movement saw contraception as another instrument to lower fertility of the poor.

Sanger further explained why she disagreed with other followers of the eugenics movement on the issue of increasing birth rate of the rich. In this case, Sanger, inspired by Neo-Malthusianism, wanted to reduce fertility of all social classes, not just the poor. Additionally, she claimed that eugenics without birth control was like a house of sand. According to her, a better human race could be achieved only by limiting births of unfits.<sup>110</sup>

So, it is not surprising that there was a universal connection between the eugenics and birth control movements. These movements officially united their efforts at the *Fifth International Neo-Malthusian and Birth Control Conference* which was held in London in July 1922. The movements shared Malthus's worries about an overcrowded world and the only way to avoid this catastrophe was contraception.

This opens the question if the feminist movement was a part of the birth control movement. The answer is that the movement was divided over women's sexuality. Some feminists did not see their sexuality to be important, while others declared sexuality to be a part of women's emancipation. The heroine of the latter group of feminists was Margaret Sanger. This woman became the icon of the birth control movement and her *Planned Parenthood Federation of America* (PPFA) still exists today. The predecessor of the PPFA, the ABCL, cooperated with the American eugenics movement to such an extent that the ABCL almost merged with the AES in 1932. The

---

<sup>109</sup> Margaret Sanger, *An Autobiography*, 374.

<sup>110</sup> Sanger, *An Autobiography*, 374-5.

reason why the two organizations did not merge was disagreement about positive eugenics. As mentioned earlier, Sanger believed in negative eugenics, the primary goal of the eugenics movement in the 1920s, but in the 1930s, the eugenics movement favored positive eugenics against Malthus's theories to slow growing population.

The birth control movement opposed not just positive eugenics but also the New Deal.

Sanger and her colleagues from the ABCL thought that the New Deal agenda was wasting money. Their solution to help to victims of the Great Depression was birth control. They pointed out that the poor had always had large families and had to feed all their children. In other words, uncontrolled female fertility promoted poverty. The result of the variance on fertility of fit women ended connection between the eugenic and birth control movements globally. The ABCL changed its name to the *Birth Control Federation of America* (BCFA) in 1939 and in 1942, the BCFA changed its name to the *Planned Parenthood Federation of America* (PPFA) which still exists, plays a key role and challenges controversial issues in American society today.

#### 4.2. Nazi Germany

In Germany, the birth control movement appeared earlier than in the USA. Helene Stöcker (1869-1943) founded the *German League for Mother's Protection and Sex Reform* and established a counseling clinic in Dresden in 1905 where she also established the first marriage counseling in 1911.<sup>111</sup> Margaret Sanger founded the ABCL one year later and her first birth control clinic was established in 1916. Both women believed in eugenics, however, no strong connection existed between the German birth control and eugenics movements as was in the USA. On the contrary, the German birth control movement was suppressed and disbanded by the NASDAP in the 1930s because birth control, abortion, and women's emancipation did not support the idea of mother of the *volk* who bore at least three children, took care of her household and went to work only when the *führer* asked her to do so.

Birth control movement included not just female sexual emancipation but also sexual education. Thus, it is not surprising that gynecologists and sexologists backed or even participated in this movement. The *American Medical Association* (AMA)

---

<sup>111</sup> Henry David, Jochen Fleischhacker, Charlotte Hohn, "Abortion and Eugenics in Nazi Germany," *Population and Development Review* 14, No. 1 (Mar., 1988): 81-112, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012), 86.

recognized contraception to include medical treatment for woman's health and suggested inclusion of birth control methods in the syllabi of medical schools in 1937. The German Society for Sex Reform, established in 1913 by F.A. Theilhaber, supported improvement of contraception and legalization of abortion. In 1929, Hirschfeld founded the Institute for Sexology. These two institutions created a chain of birth control clinics, some of them were even mobile. So, knowledge about contraception methods was spread among the population. Also postgraduate courses on contraception were organized for physicians. The goal of Theilhaber and Hirshfeld was to make women use birth control to avoid abortion, also a goal of Sanger.<sup>112</sup>

The American eugenics movement was chiefly personified by the AES. During the Weimar Republic and then the Third Reich, eugenics was included in program of the NSDAP. During the 1920s, the NSDAP was a minor political party and had no influence on politics or even on lives of ordinary Germans. Thus, the German birth control movement could grow. When the Nazis came in power, the movement diminished because their goals opposed the Nazi policy of high female fertility.

The Weimar Republic modernized social life including sexual liberation and women's emancipation. The Constitution gave women suffrage, guaranteed equality with men. A high number of women sat in the *Reichstag*. The first election to the *Reichstag* had forty-one women of four hundred twenty-one delegates elected. This proportion of women in parliament was the highest in Europe and German women were seen as the most emancipated women in the world.<sup>113</sup> However, that was only an illusion. It appeared to be nice that equality between men and women was written in the Weimar constitution, but it did not exist in reality. The bad economic conditions of the Weimar Republic put brakes on these changes and developed a conservative society. Women were employed in inferior jobs and were paid less than their male counterparts in the same positions. Inflation made the situation worse. Unemployment was high and women were under pressure to leave their jobs for unemployed men. German women felt redundant in the society of the Weimar Republic. Therefore, the German feminist and birth control movement gave up. Even the largest feminist organization *Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine (BDF)*, *Union of the German feminist Organizations*,

---

<sup>112</sup> Abortion in Weimar Republic was legalized in 1927 and could be only performed if pregnancy had threatened the mother's health.

<sup>113</sup> Renate Pore, *A Conflict of Interest: Women in German Social Democracy, 1919-1933* (Westport, Conn.: 1981), 40. In: Günter Berghaus, "Girlkultur: Feminism, Americanism, and Popular Entertainment

followed the direction of society about women as mothers and housekeepers. Radical factions in the organization lost their voice before the Great War and since then, the conservative faction remains dominant. This faction cooperated with the Nazis regime to glorify motherhood. Among political parties the Social Democrats who had struggled for women suffrage and ironically, the party that received the smallest number of votes from women in the first election which allowed women to vote. It can be explained that women were influenced by social atmosphere and identified themselves as mothers not emancipated working women; so, they voted for conservative parties even that opposed their suffrage rights. The Social Democrats left the issue of women rights and the party's magazine for women taught women how to be perfect housewives. The radical feminist faction, including Clara Zetkin (1857-1933) and Rosa Luxembour (1871-1919) left the party and became communists. Even though these women were radical feminists, they did not agree with the birth control movement because Marxism opposed Malthusianism. According to Karl Marx, communists needed people for the reserve army of labor to overhaul the capitalistic regime and establish a proletarian order.<sup>114</sup> Communists needed women for breeding revolutionists and soldiers. So, German communists dropped the woman question. The reason was their need for votes from labor, especially male labor. The party could not sustain someone who was taking jobs from unemployed male workers who had a duty to feed their families.

The failure of the BDF, the SPD (the Social Democratic Party) and the KPD (the Communist Party) to resist opposition to women's emancipation is obvious. The SPD went so far that it supported a campaign against households with "double earners."<sup>115</sup> German women were confused. They had legal rights to the same opportunities as men, but liberal institutions were weak and could not guarantee their rights. Furthermore, the society was still conservative; therefore, a woman was respected as a mother and wife, not as a worker. When the German working women saw that they were not accepted and were added to inferior jobs and less paid than men in the same position, they decided to return to a household where they were valued. The NSDAP forced women to return to the household. The party's ideology adored motherhood and saw it as the females' pursuit of happiness. The National Socialists believed in the inferiority of women and

---

in Weimar Germany," *Journal of Designed History* 1, No. ¾ (1988): 193-219, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012), 197.

<sup>114</sup> Martha Gimenez, "The Population Issue: Marx vs. Malthus", official website of the University of Colorado, <http://www.colorado.edu/Sociology/gimenez/work/popissue.html> (accessed November 26, 2012).

did not allow them participate in social and political life. The policy of Nazi Germany was based on theory of separate spheres for the two sexes. The men built the state and protected it against enemies, the women raised good citizens; thus, everyone helped to create a strong state. Hitler explained this party's policy in his 1934 Party Day speech to the *Frauenschaft*, the Nazi women's organization: "Man's world was the state, woman's the home, and the two worlds complemented each other; women ought not attempt to penetrate the world of men."<sup>116</sup> However, this national policy changed when the *Wermacht* was loosing the war and the *Third Reich* sent old men and boys to the front. The women had to remove aprons and go to work in factories. That was the end of the policy which did not see equality between women and men.

Women in Nazi Germany were not just under pressure from the Nazis, but also from all groups. Most women accepted this role. The women followed the *führer* because it was better for them to feel valued at home and to be honored as a mother of the *volk* than to have a low-level job with a small wage. It is necessary to remember that the predecessor of the Weimar republic was a conservative monarchy which ended unwillingly and thoughts about women's emancipation did not have time to be absorbed by society. The situation of the Weimar republic was very difficult. The country had to solve bigger issues than the women's question. Therefore, it is obvious why a majority of women gave up resisting the Nazi regime and even vote for the NSDAP and sustained the Nazi regime.

## **5. Chapter: The Nazi Germany**

### **5.1. The German Eugenics Movement**

The first major international meeting of eugenicist took place in Dresden in 1911. *The International Hygiene Exhibition* was organized by the *International Society for Racial Hygiene*, established in 1907, where German eugenicists prevailed. Besides the Germans, eugenicists from Austria-Hungry, including Czechs, the Netherlands, Denmark, Great Britain, Sweden, and the USA participated at the conference. The

---

<sup>115</sup>Berghaus, "Girllkultur", 197.

<sup>116</sup> Adolf Hitler, "Die völkische Sendung der Frau," in N.S. Frauenbuch, ed. Ellen Semmelroth (Munich: J.F. Lehmann, 1934), 9-14. In: Rupp, "Mother of the *Volk*:", 363.

international tights of a new science were set up.<sup>117</sup> European and American eugenicists met again at *the International Congress of 1912* in London and discussed eugenics goals. Among the participants were famous figures such as Leonard Darwin (1850-1943), a British politician and economist, a son of Charles Darwin, Winston Churchill, Alfred Ploetz (1860-1940), a German physician and biologist, Alexander Bell (1847-1922), Charles Davenport, an American eugenicist, and David Starr Jordan. The international relations among eugenicists cooled during the First World War. *The Second International Congress of Eugenics* was held in New York in 1921 without German eugenicists due to the international situation. However, the German eugenics movement did not disappear. It was already in touch with the American movement. The *International Society for Racial Hygiene* changed name to the *German Society for Racial Hygiene* rejoined the international movement in 1925. The connections between the American and German movements got deeper. Eugenics research in the Weimar Republic was financed by American foundations, primary by the *Rockefeller Foundation*. The major German research institutes, the *Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Psychiatry* and the *Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Eugenics, and Human Heredity* (KWIA), were built for the *Rockefeller Foundation's* money.<sup>118</sup> The latter institution was opened in 1927 and Davenport gave a speech as the president of the *International Federation of Eugenics Organizations* (IFEO) at the opening ceremony.<sup>119</sup> The IFEO was founded in 1925. When Hitler was appointed a chancellor by President Hindenburg, the NSDAP later took power and the KWIA, still receiving money from the *Rockefeller Foundation*, served the regime.<sup>120</sup>

## 5.2. The leaders of the NSDAP

The biggest concentration of Nazi's supporters was in the north. This could be explained historically. Northern Germany used to be Prussia where the traditions of the Junkers who were socially and economically conservative. These roots affected thinking of intelligentsia there. Paradoxically, the main proponents of the NSDAP mostly

---

<sup>117</sup> *Fortpflanzung, Vetterbung, Rassenhygiene: Katalog der Gruppe Rassenhygiene der Internationalen Hygiene Ausstellung 1911 in Dresden*, eds. Max von Gruber and Ernst Rüdin (Munich: Lehmann, 1911). In: Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*, 13-4.

<sup>118</sup> Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*, 14,18-9, 20.

<sup>119</sup> Klaus-Dieter Thomann, "Otmar Freiherr von Verschuer-ein Hauptvertreter der faschistischen Rassenhygiene", *Medizin im Faschismus*, eds. Achim Thom and Horst Spaar (Berlin: VEB Verlag Volk und Gesundheit, 1985), 38-41; Paul Weindling, *Health, Race and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism, 1870-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 314, In: *Ibid.*, 21.

originated in the south, western, and central part of Germany, especially Bavaria. If some leaders of the NSDAP originated from old Prussia then they were more likely from the western part because the east was more conservative than the west. Socially, the NSDAP leaders mostly originated from middle-sized cities and the lower middle class. They were predominantly craftsmen, teachers, and members of the liberal professions, chiefly small farmers and artisans, civil servants and from other similar occupations. Among the leaders were a striking number of college students who did not graduate. Favorite fields of study were law and economics. Therefore, a typical NSDAP leader had a moderate education. The leaders were mostly young and veterans of the first war. They were in their twenties when the war began. Moreover, significant part of them, twenty-five per cent, was members of *Black Reichswehr* organizations, including the *Frei Corps*, after the war.<sup>121</sup>

### 5.3. Who voted for the NSDAP?

The support of the NSDAP came not just from different parts of the country but also from different social classes. The party got the biggest support in March 1933 when almost forty-four per cent of voters, 17 million, chose the party.<sup>122</sup> The party sympathizers represented all segments of the German society; however, two of them dominated - the upper middle class and urban bourgeoisie. Blue-collar workers composed a minority among voters of the Nazi party. More of those followers were Protestants who lived in rural villages and small towns.<sup>123</sup> In German federal election by July 1932, six and half million of women voted for the NSDAP. A higher percentage of the female to male electorate voted for Hitler in some Protestant areas.<sup>124</sup>

### 5.4. Who resisted the Nazi regime?

Two political parties, SPD and KPD, openly participated in resistance. All German parties were disbanded in 1933, but the Social Democrats and Communists continued

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>121</sup> Doblin and Pohly, "The Social Composition of the Leaders in Nazi Germany", 42-49; Herbert Andrews, "The Social Composition of the NSDAP: Problems and Possible Solutions", *German Studies Review* 9, No. 2 (1986): 293-318, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012).; Dick Geary, "Who Voted For the Nazi? (electoral history of the National Socialist German Workers Party)", [http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar6\\_Geary.htm](http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar6_Geary.htm) (accessed May 14, 2013).

<sup>122</sup> Lawrence Stokes, "Nazi leaders, Members, and Voters", 440.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 441.

their anti-Nazi activity. The first acquiesced with the dictatorship. The Social Democrats accepted the regime as the government, thus, their resistance ended. The latter leftwing party did not give up and bravely undermined the Nazi state.<sup>125</sup> A third strong opposition was apolitical; the industrial workers stood up against the Nazi oppression because most of the factory workers, who resisted the regime, were members of the KPD or at least sympathized with the party.<sup>126</sup> The official German labor movement excluded unskilled labors and members of minorities and sympathized with Hitler.<sup>127</sup> This correlates with the situation in the USA where the *America Federation of Labor* (AFL) supported the eugenic ideology as it is mentioned above.

The American Catholic church opposed eugenics and the American Protestant churches differed. The behavior of churches was more complicated in Nazi Germany. It is hard to judge if the Protestant churches were disunited in support of the Nazi regime. Some factions participated in resistance, while some factions agreed with the Nazi anti-Semitism because of the open anti-Semitism in all Europe. The Catholic Center Party was in the government in the Weimar republic and cooperated with the SPD and leftist German Democratic Party which means that the party was on another political pole from the NSDAP.<sup>128</sup> However, the Catholic Church did not oppose the regime.

It should be noted that some juveniles opposed the regime in Nazi Germany. They were rebels because they missed freedom and hated uniformity of the Hitler Youth but they did not care about ideology. These young people called themselves *The Edelweiss Pirates* and appeared in the working-class districts of some West German towns such as Cologne, Essen, Wuppertal, Dusseldorf and Duisburg in the late 1930s.<sup>129</sup> They hiked far away of towns, wore certain outfits, wrote anti-Nazi graffiti and fought with members of the Hitler Youth. Many of them joined in active opposition by the end of the war.

---

<sup>124</sup> Dick Geary, "Who Voted For the Nazi? (electoral history of the National Socialist German Workers Party)", [http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar6\\_Geary.htm](http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar6_Geary.htm) (accessed May 14, 2013).

<sup>125</sup> Frank McDonough, *Opposition and resistance in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge: the Cambridge University Press, 2001), 3-10.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>127</sup> Bock, "Sexism and Racism in Nazi Germany", 416.

<sup>128</sup> "Holocaust Encyclopedia: The German Churches and the Nazi State," official website of the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005206> (accessed December 1, 2012).

<sup>129</sup> McDonough, *Opposition and resistance in Nazi Germany*, 15.



Juveniles were often caught and indoctrinated by the Nazis. But in 1944, a group of the *Pirates* was publicly executed in Cologne because the regime considered their activities to be dangerous.<sup>130</sup>

Another youth group opposing the regime was composed by teenagers from the upper-middle class in big cities such as Berlin, Kiel, Frankfurt, Dresden, Hamburg and Stuttgart.<sup>131</sup> They were sick of cultural uniformity and secretly listened to swing and jazz. The Nazis banned public dances in 1940, so, these young people organized illegal parties. Additionally, Goebbels launched anti-American campaign in 1937 when the relations between the Nazi Germany and the USA were still officially friendly. And there were other paradoxes, for example, German soldiers listened to jazz.<sup>132</sup>

## **Chapter 6: Diversion within the American Eugenics Movement and End of the Connections with Nazi Germany**

### **6.1. Reform Eugenics**

By the 1930s, some reform eugenicists noticed the decline of natality of the upper class which was considered to be the class or better stock. There were two factions within the American eugenics movement. One, represented by Frederick Osborn (1889-1981), focused on biological and social diversity of the populace and suggested tax exemptions and higher salaries for certain employees such as ministers, teachers, professors, and so on, as means to raise the birth rate of the fittests. As Ellsworth Huntington (1876-1947), a demographer at Yale University, wrote in his pamphlet published by the AES "Tomorrow's Children": "It is hard to see how a perfect eugenic system can prevail until every intelligent married couple is able to have as many children as it wishes without lowering its economic status."<sup>133</sup> A good example of this was a project of the *Pioneer Fund* which contributed to pilots of the Army Air Corps. The pilots got cash grants to improve their financial situation.<sup>134</sup> So, the faction within the eugenic movement wanted to improve humans via social policy. The latter faction was headed

---

<sup>130</sup> McDonough, *Opposition and resistance in Nazi Germany*, 17.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 56.

<sup>133</sup> Ellsworth Huntington, *Tomorrow's Children* (Hoboken: John Wiley, 1935), 65, 72-3. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 184.

<sup>134</sup> Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*, 83.

by Hermann Muller (1890-1967), a geneticist supporting negative eugenics at the beginning of his career. He moved to Leningrad, today, Sankt Petersburg, in 1933 and worked there at the Institute of Genetics. However, he never became a Communist as he witnessed what happened to his colleagues such as Sergey Vavilov who opposed Stalin's protégé Trofim Lysenko in research. Muller's recipe of the human race betterment was "the conscious social direction of human biological evolution."<sup>135</sup> In other words, he was calling for human genetics. This faction of so-called social eugenicists will be discussed further below.

### 6.1.1. New Direction of the American Eugenics Association

The eugenics movement was supported by a variety of people, including Theodore Roosevelt and Margaret Sanger. However, it does not mean that all devotees were racist. All of them just shared one goal – improvement of the human race. But the firm support of the movement slowed down in the 1930s when the Nazis took power from the Weimar Republic and used theories of American stalwart eugenics like Laughlin and Davenport in practice and genetics theories of conventional eugenicists failed in new research. Moreover, Henry Osborn and Madison Grant, important representatives of the movement, died. So, scientific racism lost not just public support and devotees, but the research was also under criticism. Ironically, more and more states enacted sterilization laws and some of them kept them in the postwar period as described in the third chapter.

The strong influence of American mainline eugenicists was obvious in all spheres of life and eugenics organizations. In the 1930s, the stalwarts lost most of their key positions. They occupied only the *Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories*, the *Eugenics Research Association*, and the *Human Betterment Foundation* in California.<sup>136</sup> Although they lost power, they remained in the movement as was apparent in 1937 when Laughlin and Osborn were among the founders of the *Pioneer Fund*.

Opposition critics became stronger. The main critics of eugenics were liberal geneticist Leslie C. Dunn (1893-1974), and anthropologist Franz Boas (1858-1942).<sup>137</sup> Franz Boas supported another anthropologist, Earnest Hooton (1887-1954), against racism which showed dissolutions in the American eugenics movement. Hooton had

---

<sup>135</sup> Hermann Muller, *Out of the Night: A Biologist's View of the Future* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1935), 44; Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 176.

<sup>136</sup> Köhl, *The Nazi Connection*, 79.

participated in the movement and respected racist thoughts of his colleagues. Hooton also shared “basic sympathy” for Grant’s “opposition to the flooding of this country [United States] with alien scum.”<sup>138</sup> Although, Hooton was not free of the cultural prejudices, he disagreed with asserted supremacy of Anglo-Saxons. Hooton and Boas launched a new direction for the American eugenics movement when they established a committee to discredit class and race prejudices after the *International Population Congress* in Paris in 1937 where Nazi scientists confronted criticism. However, atrocities in Nazi Germany did not end eugenics ideology. The “science” was still attractive to some without racist and class undertones as geneticists, sociologists, psychologists, and anthropologists. Frederick Osborn, an icon of reform eugenicists, served on the Committee founded by Boas and Hooton. Boas came with a resolution “Proposal for Studies in the Determination of Population Qualities by Genetic and Environmental Factors”, in which he discussed the importance of heredity and its connection to race and class. The resolution concluded that heredity might be relevant for human development, but no research answered if heredity in different classes and races were responsible. In other words, the Committee declared that the fittest could be born in all classes and races which was actually the same thesis of socialist eugenicists and the American eugenics movement followed this thesis.

Furthermore, Osborn supposed that a democratic welfare state was a better choice for improvement of gifted individuals, which was another inspiration of socialist eugenicists, and encouraged them to have large families,<sup>139</sup> For example, Herbert S. Jennings (1868-1947), an American anti-hereditarian socialist eugenicist, believed in a welfare state as a good way to improve the human race.<sup>140</sup>

A new shift within the movement was directed toward immigrants who were no longer seen as a menace. Osborn considered variety of ethnicities and their mingling as an advantage for the country because of the new eugenics theory that people of good stocks could be found in every group.<sup>141</sup>

The American eugenicists saw Sweden, Italy and Nazi Germany with their positive eugenics that included generous social policy for families as examples of positive

---

<sup>137</sup> Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*, 77.

<sup>138</sup> Hooton in a letter to Grant on March 11, 1933, quoted according to Elazar Barkan, “Mobilizing Scientists Against Nazi Racism, 1933-1939”, in *Bones, Bodies, Behavior*, ed. Georgie Stocking, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 186. Ibid., 80.

<sup>139</sup> Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*, 83-84.

<sup>140</sup> Diane Paul, “Eugenics and the Left”, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45, No. 4 (October-December, 1984): 567-590, 581-2.

eugenics. AES decided to follow Swedish policy because it was an example of eugenics working in a democratic country.<sup>142</sup> German eugenics measures lost attractiveness for the majority of American eugenics when the Nazis established a totalitarian government.<sup>143</sup> It should be remembered that democracy was *raison d'être* of existence of the USA, therefore, the American eugenicists could not succeed if inspired by an anti-democratic political system.

The Swedish government subsidized housing, public education, meals at public schools, and extensive day nurseries.<sup>144</sup> Swedish data showed that this social policy helped to enlarge the fit population among fits as Osborn pointed out: "...upper professional and executive groups are having more children than those in the lower economic groups, the skilled labor more children than the unskilled."<sup>145</sup> This is the reason why the AES mostly supported the New Deal's social welfare legislation. In the years 1937 to 1939, the society organized or participated in circa twenty-two conferences on issues such as housing, recreation, medicine, health care, education, and so on.<sup>146</sup>

In the years, the President of the AES was Ellsworth Huntington, the AES President 1934-1938, and the AES Secretary, Frederick Osborn, promoted positive eugenics. Huntington envisioned a eugenics insurance company be called the *Family Insurance Corporation*. It would cover only screened eugenic families and it would pay for maternity leave and provide other social benefits. Another goal of Huntington's positive eugenic program was to be the *Maternal Cooperation* to provide child care. The last point of Huntington's plan was housing for select couples to be covered by eugenics insurance. The idea was to create communities with facilities which would make maternity easier and would therefore encourage young families to have more than two children. In other words, Huntington's dream about housing was similar to what the *Public Works Administration (PWA) Housing Division (HD)* tried to build. He also shared this goal with housing planners who wanted to build communities which would improve inhabitants' lives.

---

<sup>141</sup> Kühl, *The Connection*, 81.

<sup>142</sup> Sterilization was practiced in Sweden and in other European countries as well. In Sweden, it was launched by the Sterilization Act of 1934. It was distinguished from the American sterilization laws that only voluntary mental patients were sterilized.

<sup>143</sup> Mehler, "A History of the American Eugenics Society...", 289.

<sup>144</sup> Mehler, 293.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

President Huntington succeeded in securing the appointment of a member of the AES in the President's Housing Commission.<sup>147</sup> He wanted to get New Deal funds for his pro-children housing policy. However, it cannot be demonstrated that the AES really influenced federal housing policy.

The highlight of Huntington's effort was a conference on "Eugenics Aspects of Housing" in 1938 to create housing conditions that would lead eugenics results. Speeches at the conference were given by housing planners among them Edith Wood, a member of the *Regional Planning Association of America*. Wood was not a follower of eugenics but she shared a common vision of communities in suburbs as a good place for raising future good citizens as she wrote: "houses are also like factories. Their output is children – the citizens of tomorrow."<sup>148</sup>

The movement totally abandoned Malthusianism, fear of overpopulation, as members wanted to increase progeny of the fittest. This opposed thoughts of some socialist eugenicist such as Muller and the birth control movement. The American renewal eugenics movement represented by Osborn wanted to use contraception for the inferior part of the population to avoid their increase.

To conclude, eugenics had a goal to better the humans through selection. The first selection method was based on class and racial and ethnic bias, it was represented by racist eugenicists such as Laughlin, the second method was based on individual abilities regardless of class and ethnicity as reform eugenicist Osborn stated the shift of the AES in 1937: "It would be unwise for eugenicists to impute superiorities or inferiorities of a biological nature to social classes, to regional groups, or to races as a whole."<sup>149</sup>

This faction of reform eugenicists had thoughts similar to devotees of euthenics. The eugenics movement actually took a step back in the 1920s when the American eugenics movement strongly promoted sterilization and anti-immigration policy instead of welfare policy. Eugenicists had already cooperated with euthenicists in housing in the early of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as mentioned in the second chapter.

---

<sup>147</sup> Laura Lovett, "'Fitter Families for Future Firesides': Popular Eugenics and the Construction of Rural Family Ideal in the United States" (Draft Chapter from a Book Manuscript, University of Massachusetts), 32, 36. <http://www.yale.edu/agrarianstudies/colloqpapers/PopularEugenics.pdf> (accessed November 23, 2011).

<sup>148</sup> Edith Wood, "That 'One Third of a Nation'", *Survey Graphic* 29 (1940), 83. Available on the Official Site of the New Deal Network, created by the Roosevelt Institute, <http://newdeal.feri.org/survey/40a04.htm> (accessed December 1, 2011).

<sup>149</sup> Frederick Osborn, "Implications of the New Studies in Population and Psychology for the Development of Eugenic Philosophy", *Eugenic News*, 22 (1937), 106. In: Kühn, *The Connection*, 84.

### 6.1.2. Social Eugenicists

Eugenicists did not find common aims only with eugenics and the birth control movement. Some of them were Marxists and Fabians such as British prominent figures Havellock Ellis, Joseph Needham (1900-1995), Julian Huxley (1887-1975), Karl Pearson (1857-1936) or American scientist Hermann Muller who represented “Bolshevik Eugenics” in the United States and the United Kingdom.<sup>150</sup> These scientists were not against eugenics as an ideology. They disagreed with the eugenics of this time. These socialist eugenicists were active from the 1920s through the 1940s.

The British left-wing eugenicists claimed that more gifted individuals came from the upper-income groups in society. On the other side, their American colleagues did not see any genetic diversion among social classes but if a genetic diversion existed, then a greater number of the fittest would come from the masses. Both views sought to better the fittest which could be only practiced in a socialist society such as the Soviet Union because capitalism did not allow equal opportunities to all; so, the gifted members of lower-income classes often could not improve. It is not astonishing that Marxists and Fabians welcomed an increased role for the state.

The disparity between classical socialist eugenicists was the role of the environment in human development. The former group saw heredity as the crucial element in such development. The latter considered the importance of heredity as well and, at the same time, the environment. There were additional distinctions between these groups.

A primary representative of American social eugenicist was Hermann Muller, a geneticist, who was a strong exponent of the environment in human development and an ardent feminist demanding mothers to be active outside home, have fewer children, use effective birth control, and abortion.<sup>151</sup> Muller wrote in his book, *Out of the Night*, that good or bad genes were not obvious among classes and ethnic groups which means that Muller emphasized environment. Although not all of his colleagues did, i.e. John Haldane (1892-1964), a British geneticist. Muller even believed in socialism after his experience in the Soviet Union. He was confident that environments are not equal in capitalist societies.<sup>152</sup> Muller supposed that “only the eugenics of the new society, freed of traditions of caste, of slavery, and of colonialism, can be a thoroughgoing and a true eugenics.” He believed that provided eugenics in the capitalist USA was a cul-de-sac in

---

<sup>150</sup> Paul, “Eugenics and the Left,” 568-9, 573.

<sup>151</sup> Paul, “Eugenics and the Left”, 576.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

the human race improvement. It would result in a populace composed of “a maximum number of Billy Sundays, Valentinos, Jack Dempseys, Babe Ruths, even Al Capones.”<sup>153</sup>

The socialist eugenicists in the United States evolved into a strong opposition movement opposing conventional racist eugenics. They mainly criticized the regime in Nazi Germany. In 1936, American scientists prepared for the Seventh International Congress for Genetics in Moscow a year later. Thirty American geneticists sent a resolution to a Russian geneticist Solomon G. Levit, the general secretary of the Congress. The geneticists asked for a section in which all geneticists would discuss conventional eugenics. The disagreement with Nazi policy was already obvious among some eugenicists such as Clarence C. Little (1888-1971), president of the AES from 1928 to 1929, and Robert C. Cook, editor of the *Journal of Heredity*, who signed the resolution.<sup>154</sup>

The German government decided to boycott the Congress, which did not take place because of the Soviet Union’s anti-genetic policy; and thus, the Congress was cancelled. However, a Congress was held in Edinburgh in 1939.

Even though, some socialist eugenicists had cultural prejudices, they were capable of working with geneticists; and, therefore, they denied ethnic racism in Nazi Germany, leading to the so-called *Genetico Manifesto*.<sup>155</sup> The Manifesto was primarily written by Muller and twenty two other scientists, mostly Americans, who were also the primary supporters of the manifesto. These scientists called for economic and political change, birth control, and the emancipation of women and openly opposed racism. The *Manifesto* was basically a summary of Muller’s book *Out of the Night*.<sup>156</sup> One issue was primary for Muller and the other scientists. Some socialist eugenicists, especially the British ones, believed in class differences. The compromise in the *Manifesto* was a statement that good or bad genes are in of members of all classes.<sup>157</sup>

The *Manifesto* was a symbolic act against Nazi policy by diverse scientists. The moderate attitude of socialist eugenicists failed during the 1940s because the scientists did not find followers even though, Muller and Haldane stood behind their thesis until the 1960s when they died.

---

<sup>153</sup> Muller, *Out of the Night*, 113-4. In: Kevles, 187-8.

<sup>154</sup> Letter from Jennings to Levit, April 2, 1936, Jennings Papers: Levit. In: Kühl, *The Connection*, 78.

<sup>155</sup> Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*, 78.

<sup>156</sup> Muller sent a copy of the book to Stalin to show him an idea of socioeconomic advance. The Stalin’s answer was expulsion of Muller from the USSR (Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 190).

Muller and his colleagues supported something more in the *Manifesto* – a sexual revolution. They dreamed about reproduction without lovemaking. At that time, only artificial insemination was feasible. Although, the social eugenicists hoped that unfolding genetics could play a key role in human betterment, therefore, physiology prevailed in the goals of socialist eugenicists. For example, Muller, an ardent feminist, promoted artificial insemination in the “Out of the Night” where he described women as tools for the sperm of the fittest males. That was Muller’s way to create a genius in the world. He did not include successful women, contradicting his pro-feminist belief. But he was not alone with these ideas. His American colleague Herbert Brewer (1865-1928) once said that “the whole nature of women is dominated by her reproductive function...”<sup>158</sup> Brewer also wished that resulting children would be adopted by gifted couples. Haldane dreamed that only men of talent, in other words, only a few men, would fertilize women. He called this theory euteleogenesis. Anyway, social eugenicists were not first who gave mating and nurturing rights only to the superiors. Plato is the father of the idea.

## 6.2. The ERO

All of the social eugenicists could only avidly discuss about it because little was known about human heredity. Human genetics needed to be studied, a challenge task for the ERO but the British geneticists led in this field without any doubt. In 1940, Osborn complained that the USA was behind in the research. The American geneticists were trained in plant and animal genetics and only a few of them turned to human genetics as human genetics was linked to eugenics in Nazi Germany and therefore, the science was not popular and had no significant financial support. The problem of retardation was a lack of quality research in ERO because the office confirmed social and racial biases and its personnel were not trained enough to carry out studies in genetics. The director of the office was Harry Laughlin, a former teacher of agricultural sciences in Kirksville, Missouri. Even though, he had no education in human biology, his research on human heredity was taken seriously and many American states followed his proposal to create ideal sterilization laws.

---

<sup>157</sup> Paul, “Eugenics and the Left”, 583.

<sup>158</sup> Brewer to Blacker, Feb. 8, 1938, Eugenics Society Records, file C.43. In: Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, 191.



Their methods were far from doing objective research. The ERO trained field workers to receive information mainly from records of institutions such as hospitals, prisons, asylums, and so on. The field workers also questioned neighbors or family members. In 1937, the *American Neurological Society* studied the research of the ERO and found that the majority of the research was just a pile of papers because most of the staff did not obtain a doctorate's degree and had no medical schools.

In the 1930s, Laughlin's influential position became untenable. Moreover, he accepted an honorary degree from the University of Heidelberg in 1936. That was not appropriate in the mid-1930s. So, Vannevar Bush (1890-1974), the new president of the Carnegie Institution, an administrator of the ERO, forced Laughlin to resign in 1939. ERO was closed in 1944. Research on animal and plant genetics, under Charles Davenport, carried out a valuable research and earned an international prestige. The personnel of this division of ERO had adequate education for the research.

### 6.3. The KWIA

The ERO could not be compared to its German counterpart, the KWIA in Berlin. Its first director Eugen Fisher (1884-1967) was a racial anthropologist and eugenicist trained in medicine. He showed his racist attitudes when the regime changed in the 1930s. The Nazis and the *Rockefeller Foundation* generously funded the institute to use its services for Nazi propaganda.<sup>159</sup> The research was made by well-trained personnel in medicine and other sciences such as anthropology. In the mid-1930s, the institute was internationally respected and its scientists attended national and international conferences to advocate for Nazi ideology. The research was still valuable after the war, although, innate racial characteristics became questionable.<sup>160</sup> The KWIA was renamed Max Planck Institutes in 1945. The successor of the KWIA did not employ scientists from the former institute because some scientists connected to the KWIA, such as Josef Mengele, were involved in German abomination.

It is shocking that Harry Laughlin, a person without any adequate education, presented himself as an expert on human genetics and became a very influential figure in American legislature and society. Even the KWIA under Nazi influence produced useful research on human genetics which cannot be said about the ERO.

---

<sup>159</sup> Adams, Allen and Weiss, "Human Heredity and Politics, 244.

#### 6.4. Shame on Eugenics

The American eugenics movement was surprised while Nazi Germany attacked ethnically similar nations and the relation between American eugenicist and the Nazis froze when Germany declared war on the USA. At this moment, the American movement suspended its activities and distanced itself from Nazi ideology after the war. The word eugenics was changed to human genetics or social biology.

Although, the truth about the “research” of the ERO, uncovered atrocities in Nazi Germany, and a major change in the American eugenics movement did not discredit mainline eugenics totally in the USA. The racial biases remained and some states kept their sterilization laws. By the 1960s, more than 60, 000 sterilizations were performed in the country.<sup>161</sup> Anti-immigrant policy based on racial prejudices was still present in American legislation as well. The *McCarran-Walter Act of 1952* was based on racial and ethnic prejudices. Just a few immigrants from the “Asian-Pacific Triangle” could immigrate to the United States and the act put limitations on immigration from countries of nonwhite nations. Additionally, resident aliens could be deported for a political activity and special boards, not courts, ruled on their deportation. One sponsor of the law, Francis Walter, was a member of the Pioneer Fund’s leadership board in the 1950s.<sup>162</sup> All this shows how much mainline eugenicists were influential in society even after the war. Furthermore, the *Pioneer Fund* still supports racism in public policy.

### Conclusion

There is no doubt that the American eugenics movement and the Nazis broadly cooperated. They shared the same visions of how to make a society “better.” Both of them were supported by middle and upper classes and labor unions. The difference between them was the occupations and origins of the leaders and their relation to the birth control movement. The Nazi leaders came from lower middle class and were usually educated in the social sciences. The American prominent eugenicists, on the other side, were from middle and upper class and were most likely educated in the sciences. The American eugenics movement initially collaborated with the birth control movement. The Nazi regime was strongly against contraception and abortion, of fit

---

<sup>160</sup> Adams, Allen and Weiss, “Human Heredity and Politics, 246-7.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 238.

<sup>162</sup> Ordover, *American Eugenics*, 46.

women, of course, and books by Margaret Sanger were burnt.<sup>163</sup> Other different issue is a quality of research in eugenics. The ERO did not carry out a real objective scientific research. Therefore, it is hard to believe how compulsory sterilization laws and immigration restrictions could be based on the so-called research. The KWIA was a serious scientific organization but serving to a wrong regime. Both of the institutions had the same sponsor – the *Rockefeller Foundation*.

The opposition in the USA was around the Catholic Church. However, it was not strong enough to stop hysteria over increasing immigration of non-Anglo-Saxon ethnics and allegedly defective American citizens. The opposition in Nazi Germany faced the possibility of death as one hundred fifty thousand Communist were in concentration camps and more than thirty thousand were executed.<sup>164</sup> The opposition almost disappeared. However, the Communist Party and other groups remained and undermined the regime.

How was it possible that such movement was successful in the USA, a democratic country? Firstly, racism was generally accepted at that time. Secondly, the African-American minority was still disfranchised and the Ku-Klux-Klan did not have the bad reputation of today. Thirdly, eugenics was generally accepted and practiced by other democratic countries. What is more shocking is the fact that some American states continued in compulsory sterilization and immigrant restrictions based on ethnicity were passed by Congress after World War II. This is a huge skeleton in the closet of American history and Germany should not be blame for eugenics policies as only one country.

## **Summary**

This study researches the connection between the American eugenics and Nazi Germany. The American eugenics movement arose in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and various pseudo theories about the superiority of Anglo-Saxons were formulated. The theories were focused on the intelligence of non Anglo-Saxon nations and the thesis gives examples of some popular eugenics studies such as a study by Robert Yerkes of 1917, who carried out intelligence tests among soldiers, and a book *Study of American*

---

<sup>163</sup> “The Sanger – Hitler Equation“, *Margaret Sanger Papers Project*, official website of the New York University, [http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/secure/newsletter/articles/sanger-hitler\\_equation.html](http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/secure/newsletter/articles/sanger-hitler_equation.html) (accessed November 23, 2012)

<sup>164</sup> McDonough, *Opposition and Resistance in Nazi Germany*, 4.

*Intelligence* (1923) by Carl Brigham. Both of these “scientists” concluded that Anglo-Saxons were the smartest people. Other eugenics works influenced not only American legislation, but also ordinary Americans and Nazi Germany. The study underlines the successes of the movement in prejudice formation against non-Anglo-Saxon ethnic groups. The so-called scientific activity of the movement was praised by Nazi leaders, including Hitler.

The American eugenics movement created the fear of “inferior” newcomers and lobbied for anti-immigration and sterilization policies. The study also emphasizes how much irrational were arguments for these policies. Immigration restrictions and compulsory sterilization laws were enacted to protect “good” Anglo-Saxon stocks in the USA and became an example for Nazi Germany which enacted similar sterilization laws.

The American formed many organizations that organized and promoted research and raised money from various foundations, such as the *Carnegie Institute* and the *Rockefeller Foundation*, the *Pioneer Fund* which was even influential after World War II. American and German eugenicists cooperated together at the international level and their primary laboratories had the same sponsor – the Rockefeller Foundation.

In the 1930s, new shift, free of social and ethnic biases, prevailed within the American eugenics movement, and therefore, the relations with Nazi Germany freeze. Although, immigrant restrictions and sterilization laws in some American states remained.

To sum up, this historical period is a dark side of American history and this study describes this era with details.

## Literature

### Primary Sources

Andrew Carnegie, "Americanism versus Imperialism", *North American Review* 0168, .No 506 (Jan. 1899): 1-14, <http://digital.library.cornell.edu/n/nora/> (accessed October 2, 2012).

Albert Beveridge, "In Support of an American Empire", record, 56. Congress, 1. session, 704-12, official website of Vincent Ferrara, professor of International Politics, Mount Holyoke College, USA, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/feros-pg.htm> (accessed October 2, 2012).

Francis Galton. "Eugenics: Its Definition, Scope, and Aims", *The American Journal of Sociology* 10, No. 1 (Jul. 1904): 1-25, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed May 7, 2013).

Francis Galton. *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry Into Its Law and Consequences* (New York: Macmillan, 1892). 390.

"Justia.com", *US Supreme Court Center*, <http://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/274/200/case.html#207> (accessed May 1, 2013).

Thomas Malthus. *Essay on the Principle of Population* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008). 208.

Margaret Sanger, *An Autobiography of Margaret Sanger* ( New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1971). 504.

*My Fight for Birth Control* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1931). 360.

*The Pivot of Civilization* (Middlesex: The Echo Library, 2006). 99.

*Woman and the New Race* (Middlesex: The Echo Library, 2006). 88.

*Margaret Sanger Papers Project*, official website of the New York University, [http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/secure/newsletter/articles/sanger-hitler\\_equation.html](http://www.nyu.edu/projects/sanger/secure/newsletter/articles/sanger-hitler_equation.html) (accessed November 23, 2012)

William Shirer, *Berlin Diary: The Journal of a Foreign Correspondent, 1934-1941* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1941), 605.

## Secondary Sources

Mark Adams, Garland Allen and Sheila Weiss, "Human Heredity and Politics: A Comparative Institutional Study of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor (United States), the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity, and Eugenics (Germany), and the Maxim Gorky Medical Genetics Institute (USSR)", *Osiris*, 2nd Series, No. 20, *Politics and Science in Wartime: Comparative International Perspectives on the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute* (2005): 232-62, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed May 10, 2012).

Samuel Armstrong, *The Southern Workman, Volume 43*. (Hampton: Nabu Press, 2010). 766.

Herbert Andrews, "The Social Composition of the NSDAP: Problems and Possible Solutions", *German Studies Review* 9, No. 2 (1986): 293-318, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012).

Petr Bakalář, *Tabu v sociálních vědách* (Prague: Votobia, 2003). 343.

John Bauman, Roger Biles and Kristin Szylvian, eds. *From Better Dwellings to Better Neighborhoods* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007). 288.

Gisela Bock, "Sexism and Racism in Nazi Germany: Motherhood, Compulsory Sterilization, and the State", *Signs* 8, No. 3, *Women and Violence* (1983): 400-21, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 2, 2012).

Günter Berghaus, "Girlkultur: Feminism, Americanism, and Popular Entertainment in Weimar Germany," *Journal of Designed History* 1, No. ¾ (1988): 193-219, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012)

Ellen Chesler, *Woman of Valor: Margaret Sanger and the Birth Control Movement in America* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992). 639.

Henry David, Jochen Fleischhacker and Charlotte Hohn, "Abortion and Eugenics in Nazi Germany", *Population and Development Review* 14, No. 1 (1988): 81-112, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 2, 2012).

Ernest Doblin and Claire Pohly, "The Social Composition of the Nazi Leadership", *American Journal of Sociology* 51, No. 1 (1945): 42-9, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 2, 2012).

Jessica Gienow-Hecht, *Transmission Impossible: American Journalism as Cultural Diplomacy in Postwar Germany, 1945-1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999). 296.

Charu Gupta, "Women in Nazi Germany", *Economic and Political Weekly* 26, No. 17 (1991): WS40-8, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012).

Daniel Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). 426.

Stefan Kühl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, And German National Socialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). 166.

Laura Lovett, “'Fitter Families for Future Firesides': Popular Eugenics and the Construction of Rural Family Ideal in the United States” (Draft Chapter from a Book Manuscript, University of Massachusetts), 32, 36. Available on: Official Site of Yale University.

Frank McDonough, *Opposition and Resistance in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). 76.

Barry Mehler, “A History of the American Eugenics Society, 1921-1941” (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois, 1988). 481.

Allen Merriam, “Racism in the Expansionist Controversy of 1898-1900“, *Phylon* 39, No. 4 (1978): 369-80, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed October 28, 2012).

Nancy Ordovery, *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 2003). 297.

Leila Rupp, “Mother of the ‘Volk’: The Image of Women in Nazi Ideology“, *Signs* 3, No. 2 (1977): 362-79, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012).

Lawrence Stokes, Review of *Who Voted For Hitler?*, by Richard Hamilton; *The Nazi Party: A Social Profile of Members and Leaders 1919-1945*, by Michael Kater, *The International History Review* 6, No. 3 (1984): 440-53, <http://www.jstor.org> (accessed February 12, 2012).

Diane Paul, “Eugenics and the Left“, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45, No. 4 (October-December, 1984): 567-590, 568-9, 573.

Julius Paul, “'Three Generations of Imbeciles Are Enough': State Eugenic Sterilization Laws in American Thought and Practice“ (study, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Washington, D.C., 1965). 824.

James Reed, *From Private Vice to Public Virtue: The Birth Control Movement and American Society since 1830* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1978). 456.

Ellen Richards, *Euthenics: The Science of Controllable Environments: A Plea for Better Conditions As a First Step Toward Higher Human Efficiency (Public health in America)* (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1910).

Sheila Weiss. *Race Hygiene and National Efficiency: The Eugenics of Wilhelm Schallmayer* (University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1987). 245.

Anne Winfield, *Eugenics and Education in America: Institutionalized Racism and the Implications of History, Ideology, and Memory* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc. 2007). 195.

Edith Wood, "That "One Third of a Nation";" *Survey Graphic* 29 (1940), 83. Available on the Official Site of the New Deal Network, created by the Roosevelt Institute, <http://newdeal.feri.org/survey/40a04.htm> (accessed December 1, 2011).

### Internet

"Against Their Will: North Carolina's Sterilization Program," [http://extras.journalnow.com/againsttheirwill/graphics/partone\\_astateapart.html](http://extras.journalnow.com/againsttheirwill/graphics/partone_astateapart.html) (accessed on November 1, 2012).

"Holocaust Encyclopedia: The German Churches and the Nazi State," official website of the *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005206> (accessed December 1, 2012).

Martha Gimenez, "The Population Issue: Marx vs. Malthus", official website of the University of Colorado, <http://www.colorado.edu/Sociology/gimenez/work/popissue.html> (accessed November 26, 2012).

David Micklos, "*Eugenics Research Methods*," Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement, *official website of Dolan DNA Learning Center, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, USA* <http://www.eugenicsarchive.org> (accessed October 21, 2012).

Dick Geary, "Who Voted For the Nazi? (electoral history of the National Socialist German Workers Party)", [http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar6\\_Geary.htm](http://www.johndclare.net/Weimar6_Geary.htm) (accessed May 14).

Lutz Kaelber, "Eugenics: Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States", *official website of the University of Vermont, USA*, <http://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/> (accessed November 1, 2012)

Official website of Clarkson University, USA, <http://people.clarkson.edu/~sheilafw/classes/hp201/grayscience/images/States%20with%20eugenics%20laws.jpg> (accessed November 1, 2012).

"Harry H. Laughlin," *official website of the library of Truman State University, USA*, <http://library.truman.edu/manuscripts/laughlinbio.asp> (accessed October 31, 2012).

"The American Eugenics Society Inc.," *Eugenics Watch, website on eugenics*, <http://www.eugenics-watch.com/roots/chap12.html> (accessed October 31, 2012)



## **Appendix**

**Figure no. 1:** Number of compulsory sterilization in the state of Connecticut (graph)

**Figure no. 2:** Number of compulsory sterilization in the states of California, Virginia and North Carolina (graph)

**Figure no. 3:** Map of USA with shaded states, those that adopted compulsory sterilization laws (map)