The Roots of the I.Q. Debate
Eugenics and Social Control

I will argue that the eugenics movement of the early twentieth century was primarily a political movement concerned with the social control of groups thought to be inferior by an economic, social, and racial elite. I reject the contention that the movement was primarily scientific and apolitical. I have looked here primarily at the organized eugenics movement and its leading figures, rather than at the average rank and file follower within the movement.¹

My interest in the eugenics movement stems from my fear that the basic principles of the eugenics debate, even its most discredited aspects, are resurfacing in the 1990’s. To revisit the eugenics provide an antidote to contemporary manifestations of eugenicist arguments—the I.Q. Debate and the Right’s anti-immigrant campaign.

Any historical appraisal of the eugenics movement needs to step carefully to avoid imposing the values of the late twentieth century upon eugenists, especially concerning the question of motivation. The legitimate, scientific framework of the eugenics movement, a mainstream view at the beginning of the century, has been for the most part abandoned by scientists in the years since then. Similarly, to a great extent racist thinking, and in particular white supremacy, was neither questioned nor challenged among the white-dominated intelligentsia of the time. At the same time, the fact that white supremacist views were more acceptable in white society at the turn of the century still allows for gradations of focus and virulence; the question of the extent to which hereditarian arguments may have functioned as a pretext for a movement primarily concerned with the continuation of social and political dominance by upper-class, Protestant men of Anglo-Saxon background is unavoidable.

The roots of the eugenics movement have been traced variously to social Darwinism,² social purity, voluntary motherhood and the perfectionists,³ the naturalist tradition,⁴ Malthus and the neo-Malthusians,⁵ and the Progressive political and social movement.⁶

This paper emphasizes instead that the roots of the eugenics movement can be traced to the nineteenth century sci-
Scientific racism is a term capable of diverse definitions. For this discussion, I have adopted a slightly modified version of historian Barry Mehler’s definition,

“[Scientific racism is] the belief [often based on skin color, country of origin, or economic class] that the human species can be divided into superior and inferior genetic groups and that these groups can be satisfactorily identified so that social policies can be advanced to encourage the breeding of the superior groups and discourage the breeding of the inferior groups.”

It is possible to argue that notions of control by a racial and economic elite were key to the eugenics movement without embracing reductionist or conspiratorial theories that do damage to the diversity and scope of the movement.

It has been the diversity of the eugenics movement—the wide range of followers it was able to encompass—that has proved most difficult to explain. The eugenics movement was not monolithic: conservatives, progressives, and sex radicals were all allied within a fundamentally messianic movement of national salvation that was predicated upon scientific notions of innate and ineradicable inequalities between racial, cultural, and economic groups.

These scientific notions tended to maintain the status quo by obscuring the racial and class basis of poverty and advancement in the United States. The middle- and upper-class professionals of Anglo-Saxon descent who were leaders in the eugenics movement acted in and out of their own interests. Those interests led to the development of a political program in which an extreme economic conservatism was marked by a virulent anticommunism linked to an embrace of the untrammeled, unregulated capitalist state. Some eugenicist leaders rejected democracy in favor of the corporate state and in the 1920’s and 1930’s, several leaders of the eugenics movement were active in the promotion of German and Italian fascism.

The eugenics movement put forth a coherent, consistent social program in which eugenic sterilization, anti-immigrant advocacy, and anti-miscegenation activism all played crucial roles in the primary eugenicist goal of advancing social control by a small elite. Particularly now, when familiar eugenicist arguments echo within contemporary scientific and political circles, questions of motivation and intent are compelling.

BACKGROUND OF THE MOVEMENT

The American eugenics movement came into being primarily through the efforts of Charles Benedict Davenport, a biologist with a Ph.D. from Harvard University. While at Harvard as an instructor in the 1890’s, Davenport became familiar with the early eugenic writings of two Englishmen, the independently wealthy Francis Galton and his protege, Karl Pearson.

By 1869, Galton had published several articles and a book, Hereditary Genius, which argued that human traits, and particularly great ability, can be inherited from previous generations. It was not until 1883 that Galton coined the term “eugenics,” and it was 1904 before he formulated his classic definition of eugenics as “the study of agencies under social control that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations, either physically or mentally.”

Galton had been tremendously influenced by his cousin, Charles Darwin, whose study of human evolution, The Origin of Species, was published in 1859. The eugenics, led by Galton in England and Davenport in the U.S., were fascinated more by the idea of the inheritability of human traits than by Darwin’s focus on the evolution of species over time. Charles Darwin thought highly of his cousin’s book on the inheritance of genius; he wrote, “I do not think I ever in all my life read anything more interesting and original.”

Eugenicists originally believed in the inheritability of virtually all human traits. Charles Davenport’s work provided a typical list of hereditary traits: eye color, hair, skin, stature, weight, special ability in music, drawing, paint-

To Public Eye Readers

From 1987 until her death in 1992, Margaret Quigley was an analyst with Political Research Associates. The focus of her intellectual interest and activism was race and racism. While at PRA, she became particularly interested in how racism and nationalism interact and reinforce each other. Her research on this interaction focused on Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and the U.S.

In 1991 Margaret decided to return to Harvard Law School, where she had previously completed two years of the three year program. She continued at PRA while attending her final year; she often was able to write on the issues that interested her at PRA in fulfillment of her courses.

Margaret was concerned with the role of racism in the right’s discussions of immigration as early as 1991, well before the issue had reached broader consciousness. In the office we had many conversations with Margaret about her conviction that eugenics and scientific racism were the hidden intellectual agenda of the right’s anti-immigration campaign.

It is a great pleasure for PRA to publish an edited version of Margaret’s research paper on eugenics and scientific racism in The Public Eye. Since Margaret was PRA’s first Public Eye editor, it seem particularly appropriate that her prescient article be published here.

—Jean Hardisty & Chip Berlet

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ing, literary composition, calculating, or memorizing, weakness of the mucus membranes, nomadism, general bodily energy, strength, mental ability, epilepsy, shiftlessness, insanity, pauperism, criminality, various forms of nervous disease, defects of speech, sight, hearing, cancer, tuberculosis, pneumonia, skeletal deformities and other traits.\(^\text{11}\)

Davenport is reported to have hypothesized that thalassophilia, love of the sea, was a sex-linked recessive trait because he only encountered it in male naval officers.\(^\text{12}\)

For the most part, the eugenicists emphasized inheritance and trivialized the importance of environment. Stanford University president David Starr Jordan, an important American eugenicist, was typical in his dismissal of environmental arguments:

“No doubt poverty and crime are bad assets in one’s early environment. No doubt these elements cause the ruins of thousands who, by heredity, were good material of civilization. But again, poverty, dirt, and crime are the products of those, in general, who are not good material. It is not the strength of the strong, but the weakness of the weak which engenders exploitation and tyranny. The slums are at once symptom, effect, and cause of evil. Every vice stands in this same threefold relation.”\(^\text{13}\)

In the same vein, another eugenicist wrote:

“The...social classes, therefore, which you seek to abolish by law, are ordained by nature; that it is, in the large statistical run of things, not the slums which make slum people, but slum people who make the slums; that primarily it is not the church which makes people good, but good people who make the Church; that godly people are largely born and not made....”\(^\text{14}\)

The U.S. eugenics movement grew out of the American Breeders’ Association (later the American Genetics Association), which was founded in 1903 to apply the new principles of inheritance to the scientific breeding of horses and other livestock. In 1906, at Davenport’s urging, the ABA established a Eugenics Section (later the Committee on Eugenics). Stanford University president David Starr Jordan chaired the committee and Davenport was its secretary. These men and others active in the Committee on Eugenics (including the founders of the nativist Immigration Restriction League, Robert DeCourcy Ward and Prescott F. Hall; Henry H. Goddard and Walter E. Fernald, who both joined a subcommittee on feeblemindedness; Alexander Graham Bell; and Edward L. Thorndike) would form the core of the eugenics movement for the next twenty-five years.

The organized eugenics movement revolved around Davenport’s Station for Experimental Genetics, at Cold Spring Harbor on Long Island, New York, which itself came increasingly to focus on eugenic studies. In 1910, the Eugenics Record Office was established with Davenport as director and Henry H. Laughlin, key eugenicist and leader of the eugenic sterilization movement, as its superintendent. Two other important eugenics organizations were the Eugenics Research Association (with Davenport and Laughlin as its key members) and the American Eugenics Society (AES).\(^\text{15}\)

The Eugenics Research Association described itself as a scientific rather than political group and the AES, established in 1921, was visualized as the propaganda or popular education arm of the eugenics movement.

The eugenics movement advocated both positive and negative eugenics, which referred to attempts to increase reproduction by fit stocks and to decrease reproduction by those who were constitutionally unfit. Positive eugenics included eugenic education and tax preferences and other financial support for eugenically fit large families. Eugenical segregation and usually, sterilization (a few eugenicists opposed sterilization); restrictive marriage laws, including antimiscegenation statutes; and restrictive immigration laws formed the three parts of the negative eugenics agenda.

Virtually all eugenists supported compulsory sterilization for the unfit; some supported castration. By 1936, when expert medical panels in both England and the U.S. finally condemned compulsory eugenic sterilization, more than twenty thousand forced sterilizations had been performed, mostly on poor people (and disproportionately on Black people) confined to state-run mental hospitals and residential facilities for the mentally retarded. Almost five hundred men and women had died from the surgery. The American Eugenics Society had hoped, in time, to sterilize one-tenth of the U.S. population, or millions of Americans. Based on the American eugenic sterilization experience, Hitler’s sterilization program managed to sterilize 225,000 people in less than three years.

**EUGENICS’ RACIAL BIAS**

From the beginning, the eugenics movement was a racist (race-based) and elitist movement concerned with the control of classes seen to be socially inferior. In proposing the term eugenics, Galton had written, “We greatly want a brief word to express the science of improving the stock... to give the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had.”\(^\text{16}\)

Galton believed that Black people were entirely inferior to the white races and that Jews were capable only of “parasitism” upon the civilized nations.\(^\text{17}\)

Karl Pearson, Galton’s chief disciple, shared his racial and anti-Semitic beliefs. For example, in 1925, Pearson wrote “The Problem of Alien Immigration into Great Britain, Illustrated by an examination of Russian and Polish Jewish Children,” which argued against the admission of Jewish immigrants into England.\(^\text{18}\)

In the U.S., the eugenics movement started from a belief in the racial superiority of white Anglo-Saxons and a desire to prevent the immigration of less desirable racial stocks. In 1910, the Committee on Eugenics solicited new members with a letter that read, “The time is
ripe for a strong public movement to stem the tide of threatened racial degeneracy....America needs to protect herself against indiscriminate immigration, criminal degenerates, and...race suicide.” The letter also warned of the impending “complete destruction of the white race.”

*Eugenical News*, which was published by the Eugenics Research Association and edited by Laughlin, welcomed racist and anti-immigrant articles. At the Second International Congress on Eugenics in 1921, one of the five classifications of exhibits was “The Factor of Race.”

Similarly, the American Eugenics Society’s “Ultimate Program,” adopted in 1923, placed “chief emphasis” on three goals: 1. A brief survey of the eugenics movement up to the present time. 2. Working out and enacting a selective immigration law. 3. Securing segregation of certain classes, such as the criminal defective. The Eugenics Research Association included among the major issues its members addressed “[im]migration, mate selection, race crossings, and...physical and mental measurement.”

When the World War I-era IQ testing of all soldiers indicated that almost half of all white recruits were morons according to the newly-developed Stanford Binet test, as were 89% of all Black recruits, the eugenics movement seemed more important and believable.

Although some commentators questioned the validity of the test, and noted that questions on such topics as the color of sapphires and the location of Cornell University might reflect qualities other than intelligence, the statistics, when released, created great anxiety and gave the eugenics movement a substantial boost.

**19TH CENTURY SCIENTIFIC RACISM**

The scientific racism movement of the mid-nineteenth century provided a number of important legacies to the eugenics movement. American scientific racism was primarily preoccupied with the attempt to establish that Blacks, Orientals, and other races were in fact entirely different species of “man,” which the scientific racists claimed should be seen as a genus, rather than a species. The theory that the integrity of the human species derived from the creation of one Adam and one Eve was called monogenism or specific unity; monogenists believed that the races arose as a result of the degeneration of human beings since creation. The separate races were essentially the same human material, but different races had degenerated to different extents. Polygenists, by contrast, believed that the races were created separately in a series of different creations. The separate races were entirely different animals. The mid-century theory of polygenism, or specific diversity, was one of the first scientific theories largely developed in the U.S. and was approvingly called “the American School of anthropology” by European scientists.

*Harvard Professor Louis Agassiz, a prominent natural historian of the nineteenth century, was the most important promoter of polygenism. Agassiz, an abolitionist, insisted that his adoption of polygenism was dictated by objective scientific investigation. Nevertheless, historian Stephen Jay Gould’s translation of Agassiz’s letter to his mother in 1846 shortly after his emigration to the U.S., reveals a profound, visceral aversion to Blacks.*

Not surprisingly, Agassiz was also passionately opposed to racial miscegenation. He believed that racial intermix would result in the creation of “effeminate” offspring unable to maintain American democratic traditions. Agassiz wrote, “The production of halfbreeds is as much a sin against nature, as incest in a civilized community is a sin against purity of character. No efforts should be spared to check that which is abhorrent to our better nature, and to the progress of a higher civilization and a purer morality.”

In part because the classic definition of a species revolved around the ability to mate and produce children with each other but not with others, and in part because of a drive toward racial hierarchy, the questions of hybridization and fecundity were of great import to the early American scientific racists. For the eugenicists, these questions were also tremendously important. Much of the early scientific racist rhetoric on hybrids later reappeared in eugenicist writings where it came to form the basis of eugenicist arguments against racial miscegenation. The early concern with fecundity fueled later eugenicist claims that differential racial fecundity was leading to white racial suicide.
The eugenicist recapitulation of earlier scientific racist arguments was not cursory, but deep and enduring. In one of many examples, a 1925 bibliography on eugenics published by the American Eugenics Society recommended the book, *Uncontrolled Breeding, Or Fecundity versus Civilization.*

At the First International Congress of Eugenics in 1912, author V. G. Ruggieri, despite his concern with race-mixing, put forth Mendel's monogamism to bolster his own argument in favor of monogamism; and Lucien March spoke on the "Fertility of Marriages According to Profession and Social Position." The opening of Raymond Pearl's lecture on "The Inheritance of Fecundity" made clear his position within this tradition. "The progressive decline of the birth rate in all, or nearly all, civilized countries is an obvious and impressive fact. Equally obvious and much more disturbing is the fact that this decline is differential. Generally it is true that those racial stocks which by common agreement are of high, if not the highest, value to the state or nation, are precisely the ones where the decline in reproduction rate has been most marked." FAMILY STUDIES, SOCIAL DARWINISM, AND RACE SUICIDE

Eugenic family studies were an important component in the movement's political development; family studies functioned as an objective, scientific basis for the twin myths of a feeble-minded menace and an impending white race suicide. The invention of feeble-mindedness, typically used as a term of art to cover broader issues related to social control, allowed the eugenacists to claim that social (and racial) classes were biological and hence, immutable.

The first important eugenacist works in the U.S. were a series of studies of American families supposedly plagued by hereditary feeblemindedness, beginning with Richard Dugdale's exposition of the Jukes family, published in 1877. All of the family studies claimed to prove that a single feeble-minded ancestor could (and did) result in generations of poverty-stricken and degenerate offspring. The families in the studies were rural families, of Anglo-Saxon, Protestant descent, and for the most part, their lineage dated to the colonial settlers. The families were remarkably similar to the eugenicists activists in these traits; the main difference between the two was the poverty of the rural families. The equation by the eugenacists of poverty with degeneracy was quite explicit. Eugenacists believed that poverty was no more than a manifestation of inner degeneracy. Charity was therefore unlikely to lead the pauper out of poverty and in fact misguided charity might prove very costly to society. In the heightened tone that is common to writers in the family studies, one eugenacist wrote, "It is impossible to calculate what even one feeble-minded woman may cost the public, when her vast possibilities for evil as a producer of paupers and criminals, through an endless line of descendants is considered."

Another writer said, for example, "A habit of irregular work is a species of mental or moral weakness, or both. A man or woman who will not stick to a job is morally certain to be a pauper or a criminal." In the same vein, a third wrote, "Pauperism and habitual criminality are respectively passive and active states of the same disease."

Feeble-mindedness for the eugenacists was a designation that created a difference between the eugenacists and the families they studied. One group of social reformers described in detail the nature of the feeble-mindedness which they had found characterized prostitutes: "The general moral insensibility, the boldness, egotism and vanity, the love of notoriety, the lack of shame or remorse...the desire for immediate pleasure without regard for consequences, the lack of forethought or anxiety about the future—all cardinal symptoms of feeble-mindedness—were strikingly evident."

Thus the prostitute's failure to adhere to social conventions of behavior for women is here called feeble-mindedness. The deliberate and even fraudulent misrepresentations of the people in the family studies have been established. Stephen Jay Gould, for example, has shown that H. H. Goddard, author of *The Kallikak Family*, retouched photographs to make the Kallikaks appear mentally retarded.

Family studies were used to support the myth of the "feeble-minded menace," which claimed the U.S. was in imminent danger of being swamped by the degenerate and dangerous masses of the feeble-minded. When the feeble-minded menace was linked at the end of the nineteenth century to the idea that the better stocks were failing to produce enough children, the idea of race suicide emerged. Race suicide captured the U.S. imagination and lent support to the entire eugenics agenda.

The "race suicide" theory which developed during the first decade of the new century claimed that the greatly lowered birthrate of the better classes coupled with the burgeoning birthrates of immigrants and the native-born poor endangered the survival of "the race."

"The race" was clearly a term that referred to the white, Anglo-Saxon race and a deep racism permeated the racial suicide period from its beginning in 1900 to 1910. One classic racial suicide work is Robert Reid Rentoul's *Race Culture; or, Race Suicide? A Plea for the Unborn*, published in New York and London in 1906. Rentoul speaks of the "terrible monstrosities" created by the racial intermarriage and points out that the Americans are "poor patriots" for repealing their racial miscegenation statutes.

The concept of the feeble-minded menace provided a way to make the rural families, who were neither institutionalized, foreign, nor "colored," into people who were "different" from the eugenacists. Underlying the family studies and the myth of the feeble-minded menace was the theory of Social Darwinism, which assumed the existence of a struggle between the individual and society, and of an adversarial relationship between the fit and unfit classes. Eugenical family studies and social Darwinism both involved a transmutation of nature into biology and the eugenics...
movement frequently acknowledged its debt to Social Darwinism.

The deeply conservative implications of such philosophies included the rejection of government welfare programs or protective legislation on the grounds that such reforms as poorhouses, orphanages, bread lines, and eight hour days enabled the unfit to survive and weakened society as a whole. From the beginning, the eugenics movement accepted the regressive implications of Social Darwinism. Karl Pearson believed that "such measures as the minimum wage, the eight-hour day, free medical advice, and reductions in infant mortality encouraged an increase in unemployables, degenerates, and physical and mental weaklings." 38

Pearson's friend, Havelock Ellis, known as a sex radical and free thinker, shared Pearson's elitist views, writing in his 1911 eugenics book, The Problem of Race Regeneration, "These classes, with their tendency to weak-mindedness, their inborn laziness, lack of vitality, and unfitness for organized activity, contain the people who complain they are starving for want of work, though they will never perform any work that is given them." 39 Ellis suggested in the same book that all public relief be denied to second generation paupers unless they "voluntarily consented" to be surgically sterilized.40

One American eugenist said harshly, "The so-called charitable people who give to begging children and women with baskets have a vast sin to answer for. It is from them that this pauper element gets its consent to exist....So-called charity joins public re-

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Eugenics Today

This is an excerpt from In Genes We Trust: When Science Bows to Racism, by Barry Mehlis published in the Winter, 1994 issue of Reform Judaism reprinted here by permission of the author.

The revival of eugenics in North America has more to do with ideology and money than with science. A New York-based foundation called the Pioneer Fund, established in 1937 by textile heir Wickiff Draper, has provided millions of dollars (more than $10 million from 1971-1992 alone) to behavioral scientists whose findings lend credence to racist ideas and eugenic solutions, as well as to anti-immigrant groups. Draper believed that genetics could be used to prove the inferiority of blacks and the superiority of the white Anglo-Saxon stock that first colonized the Eastern seaboard.

The Pioneer Fund's original charter outlines a commitment to work for "racial betterment" through studies in heredity and eugenics and to "improve the character of the American people" by encouraging the procreation of descendants of the original white colonial stock.

To help establish the Pioneer Fund, Draper asked Frederick Osborn, secretary of the American Eugenics Society, and Harry Laughlin, a supporter of Hitler's race ideology, to organize research projects and distribute pro-eugenic propaganda. Osborn believed the Nazi sterilization program was "perhaps the most important social experiment which has ever been tried" (Summary of the Proceedings of the Conference on Eugenics in Relation to Nursing, Feb. 24, 1937).

Harry Laughlin, director of the Carnegie Institute's Eugenics Record Office, had been honored in 1936 by the Third Reich for his contributions to Nazi eugenics. Laughlin accepted the award "as evidence of a common understanding" between American and Nazi scientists on the importance of preserving "the racial health" of future generations.

As one of the Pioneer Fund's first "accomplishments," it imported two copies of a Nazi propaganda film, "Applied Eugenics in Present-Day Germany," adding English subtitles for American consumption. The film portrayed severely impaired people as freaks living in the splendor of a palatial sanitarium, while genetically sound Aryan children lived in squalor.

The message was clear: too much money is wasted on "life unworthy of living." The Nazis produced more sophisticated versions as a means of preparing medical workers to commit mass murder in state-sanctioned euthanasia programs. During the Third Reich an estimated 200,000 mentally and physically disabled persons were murdered by lethal injection, deliberate starvation, and gas.

The Pioneer Fund has changed little since its inception. A December 11, 1977 New York Times article characterized it as having "supported highly controversial research by a dozen scientists who believe that blacks are genetically less intelligent than whites." In the 1960s Nobel Laureate William Shockley (1910-1989), a physicist at Stanford University who advocated programs of voluntary sterilization of people with lower than the average American IQ score of 100, received an estimated $180,000 from the Pioneer Fund.

Dr. Arthur Jensen, an educational psychologist who was recruited by Shockley to the racist cause in 1966, garnered more than a million dollars in Pioneer Fund grants over the past three decades. The investment yielded early dividends. Three years later, in an article published by the prestigious Harvard Educational Review, Jensen attacked Head Start programs, claiming the problem with black children is that they have an average IQ of only 85 and that no amount of social engineering would improve their performance. Jensen urged "eugenic foresight" as the only solution.

Fascist ideologist Roger Pearson, a Pioneer Fund beneficiary ($56,800 from 1981-1991) and author of Eugenics and Race, published by Willis Carro's notoriously anti-Semitic Nootic Press, argues that the white race is endangered by inferior genetic stock, but with proper use of modern biologi-
The economic conservatism of the movement was very clear. Paced with a social problem, the eugenist leapt to the conclusion that it was the individual who must change to accommodate society (which is one reason why conservative commentators frequently argued that eugenics was a liberal movement committed to the supremacy of the community over the individual). The prevalence of the appeal to economics in eugenics writings led G. K. Chesterton to claim that the eugenist was, at heart, the employer. Chesterton wrote:

"[N]o one seems able to imagine capitalist industrialism being sacrificed to any other object...[the eugenist] tacitly takes it for granted that the small wages and the income, desperately shared, are the fixed points, like day and night, the conditions of human life. Compared with them, marriage and maternity are luxuries, things to be modified to suit the wage-market."

The eugenists' family studies were one aspect of the movement's domestic program of scientific racism. The eugenics movement concentrated on differences: its roots in scientific racism looked to the differences between the white and other races, while the family studies created a distinction between fit and unfit white folks. At the same time, eugenists and other scientific racists were discovering many different "races"
among the foreign immigrants, all previously conceived to be members of a single, "white" race.

THE EUGENICIST ROLE IN ANTI-IMMIGRANT ORGANIZING

The involvement of the organized American eugenics movement with the advocacy of immigration restriction was deep and long-standing. Although the organized anti-immigrant movement predated eugenic organizations by a few years, immigration restriction was from the beginning a key component of the eugenics program. For example, the American Eugenics Society published a wide variety of materials on immigration restriction and the 1923 "Original Ultimate Program to be Developed by the American Eugenics Society" listed immigration restriction as one of the top three goals of the society.43

The first organized anti-immigrant group, the Immigration Restriction League, was founded in 1894 in Boston by a small group of Harvard-educated lawyers and academics; Prescott Hall and Robert DeCourcy Ward were the driving forces behind the League. The Immigration Restriction League was based on a belief in the superiority of the white races. Ward summed up the group's philosophy when he wrote "the question [of immigration] is a race question, pure and simple...It is fundamentally a question as to what kind of babies shall be born; it is a question as to what races shall dominate in this country."44

Most eugenicists agreed and Yale Professor and prominent eugenicist Irving Fisher's comment, "The core of the problem of immigration is...one of race and eugenics," was typical of the eugenicist position.45

In the first decade of the century, the men of the Immigration Restriction League became active members of the Eugenics Section of the American Breeders' Association and other eugenics organizations, focusing their attention primarily on immigration issues. The connection was so compatible that the Immigration Restriction League almost changed its name to the Eugenic Immigration League. Hall and Ward even had sample stationery drawn up with the new name, but found the Board of Directors was unwilling to adopt the name of a movement younger than its own.

In 1918, Davenport and his fellow eugenicist and virulent racist and anti-immigration activist Madison Grant (author of The Passing of the Great Race and The Alien in Our Midst) set up the Galton Society. The Society was established for "the promotion of study of racial anthropology" and from the beginning, immigration restriction was "a subject of much interest."46

As John Higham has noted, one strand of nativism in the U.S. derived from a conviction that the immigrant was a political and social radical, importing communistic or anarchistic ideas into the United States.47 Grant and Davenport both shared this conviction and established the Galton Society in part to bar such foreign radicals. The independently wealthy Grant wrote to the other organizers, "My proposal is the organization of an anthropological society...confined to native Americans, who are anthropologically, socially, and politically sound, no Bolshevik need apply.”48

Other prestigious members of the Galton Society included Henry Fairfield Osborn (who wrote the introduction to Grant's book) and Grant's friend and protege, Lothrop Stoddard. Like his friend Grant, Stoddard was a strong anti-Communist. His book, The Rising Tide of Color, argued that bolshevism was a dangerous theory because it advocated universal equality rather than white supremacy.49

H. H. Laughlin, of the Eugenics Research Association and Eugenics Record Office, was also very involved in anti-immigrant work. He produced many pamphlets on immigration, including "Biological Aspects of Immigration," "Analysis of America's Melting Pot," "Europe as an Emigrant-Exporting Continent," "The Eugenics Aspects of Deportation," and "American History in Terms of Human Migration." Because Laughlin had been appointed the Expert Eugenics Agent for the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization by the Committee's Chair, Congressman Albert Johnson, many of these nativist pamphlets were published by the Government Printing Office in Washington, D.C.50

In 1923, Johnson, a confirmed eugenicist, was appointed to the presidency of the Eugenics Research Association, a post held before him by Grant. The immigration restrictionists were motivated by a desire to maintain both the white and the Christian dominance of the United States. A year after the eugenicists' victory in securing passage of the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act, which established entry quotas that slashed the "new immigration" of Jews, Slavs, and southern Europeans, Davenport wrote to Grant, "Our ancestors drove Baptists from Massachusetts Bay into Rhode Island but we have no place to drive the Jews to. Also they burned the witches but it seems to be against the mores to burn any considerable part of our population. Meanwhile we have somewhat diminished the immigration of these people."51

Similarly, the racial nature of the anti-immigration position was not veiled. In 1927, for instance, three years after the restrictive Act of 1924 was passed, Grant, Robert DeCourcy Ward, and other eugenicists were still anxious to cut non-white immigration further. They signed a "Memorial on Immigration Quotas," urging the President and Congress to extend "the quota system to all countries of North and South America...in which the population is not predominantly of the white race."52

The early twentieth century eugenics movement, often dismissed as a fad, provided a coherent and consistent political program to enforce the racial, class, and sexual dominance which was perceived to be under attack in American society. Its program has, in large part, reasserted itself in the late twentieth century, at a time when racial and economic elite dominance of U.S. society is again under attack. The continuing vigor of scientific racism in the United States is in part a testament to its strong, deep roots.

Write or call for footnotes for this excerpt, or for the complete paper.
BOOKS RECEIVED
A Selected, Annotated List

Tucker, William H.
The Science and Politics of Racial Research

This excellent and timely book predates the publication of The Bell Curve, by Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray but serves as a definitive refutation of its arguments. Tucker reviews the scientific research that “proves” racial superiority, beginning with its use to justify slavery in the nineteenth century and covering the contemporary movement to establish social policy based on genetic determinism. His chapters on the eugenics movement, the “scientific” opposition to integration in the 1950’s, and the work of Arthur Jensen are particularly helpful in documenting the direct link between the scientific research and the social goals of hereditarianism. Tucker concludes that there is a consistent pattern; these scientists begin by claiming to be impartial investigators seeking only the truth, then collaborate with racists, xenophobes and Nazis in their shared social goals.

Patna, Daphne and Noreetta Koertge
Professing Feminist: Cautionary Tales from the Strange World of Women’s Studies

There is no more noble role than that of the insider critic. Patna and Koertge, themselves associated with Women’s Studies, have written, with the passion of a lover scorned, of the betrayals and shortcomings of contemporary Women’s Studies programs. Their plea for a return to liberal values and an end to anti-intellectualism within these programs deserves better treatment than it gets here. With an unfortunate snideness and bestseller packaging, they have collected anecdotal dirty linen. Had the authors been more detached, they might have been able to incorporate at least a passing appreciation of the nearly impossible task assigned to Women’s Studies as a crossroads of scholarship and reformist activism.

Sowell, Thomas
Race and Culture

Sowell, one of the leading Black conservatives, argues that black and Hispanic cultures are incompatible with success in (capitalist) society. However, a litany of racial stereotypes with footnotes added does not a serious work make. Nor does “proving” that racism doesn’t influence the black situation by using data that assumes racism doesn’t exist add any integrity to the work. Although their prescriptions are unpalatable, many better conservative works can challenge a progressive with their pinpointing of social issues. However, that is not the case in this work in which the methodology is often just embarrassing.

Hubbard, Ruth
Profitable Promises: Essays on Women, Science, and Health

This selection of Ruth Hubbard’s public talks and short articles is a sampling of her important and iconoclastic voice within the scientific community. An unrecognizable humanist, Hubbard debunks the myth of scientific objectivity—here beautifully in the classic essay “Sexism and Sociobiology.” Her critique of genetic manipulation rests on an appreciation of the possibility (indeed, likelihood) of its abuse, a political commitment to appropriate health care for all people, and an acute awareness of the profit motive that so often drives medical research. This is a rich collection that sparks with the insights of a skeptic comfortable with her role as scientific gadfly. Profitable Promises is another book that anticipates The Bell Curve and exposes the political prejudice that underlies such pseudo-science.

Pfaff, William
The Wrath of Nations: Civilization and The Furies of Nationalism

This odd book delivers both more and less than it promises. A long thought piece by a knowable conservative who sees nationalism as the central issue for the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the book weaves together historical motivation and psychological factors, such as group anxiety, the need to belong, and attachment to place, to explain the forces of nationalism. Pfaff is unfettered by idealism and apparently disinclined to give much weight to the power of economic systems to create or suppress nationalism (there is no entry in the book’s index for capitalism or for markets). Nevertheless, the book is a tour de force as it marches through European history with a dazzling and breezy mastery. Worth reading.
RECOMMEND RIGHT WOOS JEWS
An affinity between liberalism and Jews seems intellectually rational. After all, liberalism's openness and tolerance for diverse constituencies, its emphasis on issues of equality and justice, and its attachment to free speech and freedom of religion resonates with much that is of concern to Jews.

Now, however, there appears a new organization, Toward Tradition, that recruits Jews to the right's attack on liberalism. Headed by Rabbi Daniel Lapin and based in Washington state, it promotes its mission: to restore the Judeo-Christian ethical tradition as the foundation of our culture, our economy, and our political life. Simultaneously, it promotes capitalism through, among other venues, its course titled "Ethical Capitalism for Corporate Prosperity." Toward Tradition draws Jews into an alliance with the Right under the umbrella of "religious conservatism." The goal, to create an inroad for the Christian Right into the Jewish community through a Rabbi with right-wing leanings, is a clever strategy for expanding the constituency for the Right's agenda.

SALVI, CLINIC SHOOTINGS, & CONSPIRACISM
A handwritten statement released by anti-abortion activist John C. Salvi, III, accused in the December clinic murders in Brookline, MA, contains references to a Freemason conspiracy against Catholics. His statement reflects long-standing right-wing theories that see the world as controlled by various secret elites — in Salvi's case the Freemasons. Reuters and CBS News have reported that while in Florida, Salvi discussed his interest in the armed militia movement, a movement where discussion of the theory of a Freemason conspiracy is widespread.

The allegation that Freemasons control the economy through the manipulation of paper money first surfaced in the late 1700's and flourished in the 1800's. Those who embrace this theory often point to Masonic symbols on the dollar bill as evidence of the conspiracy.

Variations on the Freemason conspiracy include overtly bigoted theories concerning Jews, theories of a secular humanist conspiracy on the part of liberals to take God out of society, theories that secret elites are drawing the US into a One World Global Government, and many others. Abortion, homosexuality, the feminist movement, sex education, Outcomes Based Education, and the environmental movement, among others, are identified as evidence of the conspiracy.

Salvi is reported to have quoted the Biblical book of Revelations; he met with a Catholic priest and demanded to distribute lurid photographs of aborted fetuses, charging that the Catholic Church is not doing enough to stop abortions; he confronted his parish on Christmas Eve for failing to live up to his interpretation of the Catholic faith and its obligations. Each of his actions and statements can be traced to specific theological and political arguments promoted by organizations in the Boston area and nationwide.

The photographs of fetuses distributed by Salvi come from Human Life International, a national right-wing Catholic anti-abortion group with a chapter in Massachusetts. HLI promotes a highly orthodox vision of Catholicism that is critical of liberal Catholics on abortion, sex education, homosexuality, and feminism. HLI distributes books with titles such as Sex Education: The Final Plague, The Feminist Takeover, Ungodly Rage: The Hidden Face of Catholic Feminism, and New World Order: The Ancient Plan of Secret Societies. The last book attacks the Freemasons as part of a conspiracy to control the country through the manipulation of the economy and paper money. The book is also sold by other right-wing groups that circulate conspiracy theories, including some that promote the armed militia movement.

These theories have a broader audience than many believe. They are spread, for instance, by Rev. Pat Robertson in his books and on his TV program, The 700 Club. They are also spread by the John Birch Society, the Liberty Lobby, and on the computer Internet, on radio and TV talk shows, on short-wave radio, and in hundreds of small books, pamphlets, and flyers available through the mail.

HUMAN LIFE INTERNATIONAL
Human Life International will hold its fourteenth world conference titled "Love, Life and the Family" from April 19-23, 1995 in Montreal, Canada. Featured speakers include:

- **Paul Cameron**. Author, The Gay Nineties; Chairman, Family Research Council. A leading homophobe, Cameron's unethical manipulation of research has been condemned by the American Psychological Association and the American Sociological Association.

- **William Marshner**. Early theorist for The Free Congress Foundation; Editor HLI Reports; Associate Professor of Theology, Christendom College.

- **Fr. Paul Marx**, Ph.D. Founder and Chairman, Human Life International.

- **Stanley Monteith, MD.** Author, AIDS, The Unnecessary Epidemic. Another homophobe, he promotes conspiracy theories about AIDS, and is featured on the video "The Gay Agenda."

- **Judith Reisman**. Critic of the Kinsey studies; author Soft Porn Plays Hardball, and Kinsey, Sex and Fraud; President, Institute for Media Education.

- **James Sedlak**. Author, Parent
Power, Founder & National Director, STOPP (Stop Planned Parenthood).

Donna Stelchen, Journalist; author, Ungodly Rage—The Hidden Face of Catholic Feminism.


Pro-choice and gay rights activists in both Canada and the U.S. are organizing protests.

MILITIAS EMERGE FROM PATRIOT MOVEMENT

A number of conspiracy theories historically promoted by the right are common in the emerging Patriot movement. The Patriot movement's core principles of unity are right-wing or libertarian anti-government themes: rabid opposition to taxation, regulation, and gun control. The Patriot movement is bracketed on the moderate side by the John Birch Society and the conspiracy-minded segment of Pat Robertson's audience, and on the more militant side by the Liberty Lobby and groups promoting white supremacy and anti-Jewish bigotry. There are perhaps five million persons who consider themselves part of the Patriot movement.

An offshoot of the Patriot movement is a looser movement of armed citizen's militias, made up of between ten and twenty thousand persons in over forty states. The armed militia movement has been growing rapidly, relying on a network of fast electronic media such as computer networks, fax networks, and radio broadcasting. It is arguably the first U.S. social movement to be organized primarily through non-traditional electronic media such as the Internet.

There is an undercurrent of resentment across the Patriot movement against what are seen as the unfair advantages the government gives to people of color and women through programs such as affirmative action. While the underlying white supremacistism of the traditional far right runs through the Patriot movement, the movement has captured a broader sector than the traditional far right. In fact, there are four distinct but overlapping and reinforcing sectors of the right, each with extremist factions, that are organizing with an eye to violent confrontation:

- the armed militias that grow out of the broader Patriot movement and opponents of gun control.
- militant right-wing libertarians, tax protesters, so-called constitutionalists, and persons promoting pseudo-legal theories regarding so-called "sovereign" citizenship.
- the confrontational wing of the anti-abortion movement.
- apocalyptic millenialists including zealous Christians who believe we are in the period of the "End Times."

Militia organizers are manipulating people's fears and grievances by directing their anger at a number of scapegoats: federal officials and law enforcement officers, Jews and Jewish institutions, abortion providers and pro-choice supporters, gay and lesbian rights organizers, environmental activists, and people of color, immigrants, and welfare recipients.

Many of the militia movement's themes are rooted in state's rights arguments (traditionally white supremacist) and anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. It is important to remember that one of the most famous militia movements in US history is the Ku Klux Klan, that arose as a militia during the turmoil of Reconstruction.

THE PATRIOT MOVEMENT & COALITION BUILDING

Under the umbrella of the "Patriot" movement, groups who oppose the New World Order conspiracy held a meeting in November, 1994 at a Burlington, MA High School a few miles from Boston and Brookline. Speakers included John Birch Society stalwart Samuel L. Blumenfeld, Sandra Martinez of Concerned Women for America, and leading anti-abortion organizer Dr. Mildred Jefferson, who tied groups such as NOW and Planned Parenthood to a conspiracy of secular humanism tracing back to the 1800's. Both the Birch Society and CWA are active in the anti-abortion movement. Jefferson describes herself as a founder and former officer of the National Right-to-Life Committee and a Board member of Massachusetts Citizens for Life. Accused of murder, John Salvi attended at least one meeting of Massachusetts Citizens for Life and met with several of its leaders.

One speaker, Ed Brown, runs the Constitutional Defense Militia of New Hampshire. Brown passed out brochures offering "Firearms Training, Combat Leadership, Close Combat, and Intelligence Measures." Several months ago Planned Parenthood held a press conference in New York where it released information on another Patriots meeting, this one in Wisconsin, where anti-abortion activists and armed militia proponents shared the podium.

A key figure in training armed civilian militias, Robert K. Spear, was the featured afternoon speaker at the Burlington meeting. Spear is the author of Living Under the New World Order and Surviving Global Slavery. According to Spear, we are living in the "End Times" predicted in the book of Revelations.

No minorities should have any power whatsoever. That is the essence of full democracy.
—Richard Bussert, Nationalism Movement Quoted in The Clarion Ledger, 10/8/1994

LIMERICK

Do you think that The Bell Curve is science?
On I Ching you can place more reliance!
With bloodlines to fix, statistics or sticks.
Eugenicists play with their bias.

GENERALLY CRITICAL REVIEWS


"The Revival of Genetic Determinism," by Salim Muwakkil. Progressive Media Project, Madison, WI.


GENERALLY FAVORABLE REVIEWS


Thanks to The DataCenter for help with this list.

The Poverty and Race Research Action Council has put together a terrific packet of critical reviews, columns on ed’s etc. that can be yours by sending a 9X12” self-addressed envelope with $15 to cover photocopying and postage to PRRAC, 1711 Connecticut Ave., NW, #207, Washington, DC 20009.

RECOMMENDED READING


