

EUGENICS

- Founder -----**Francis Galton** (cousin of Darwin)----history-----
- **Good breeding**
- Improve **racial** qualities
 - a)physically
 - b)mentally
- Division of eugenics --hereditary and environment(Francis believed in hereditary)

HISTORY

- The term ***eugenics***, derived from the Greek *eugenes*, was first coined by the English **mathematician and geographer Francis Galton** (1822–1911) in his *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development* (1883) to refer to one born "**good in stock, hereditarily endowed with noble qualities.**" As an intellectual and social movement in the early twentieth century, eugenics came to mean, in the words of one of its strongest American supporters, Charles B. Davenport (1866–1944), "the improvement of the human race by better breeding."

- Galton was born in 1822. His [parents](#) were people of means, and so he was enabled to receive a very liberal [education](#) and to devote his life to scientific research. He was [educated](#) at King Edward's School, [Birmingham](#), and Trinity College, Cambridge. He traveled in [Syria](#) and Central Africa. Charles Darwin was his cousin, both being grandsons of Dr. Erasmus Darwin.

Francis Galton

- As early as 1865 Galton began his work of measuring the human faculties and of tracing similarities and differences in definite families through several generations. He founded several anthropometric laboratories.

ANCESTRAL LAW

- His earlier studies led him to formulate what he called the ancestral law. According to this, the contribution to the making of any one individual is by each parent one quarter, by each grandparent, one sixteenth, and so on. In 1869 he published his "Hereditary Genius, and Inquiry into its Laws and Consequences". In this he essayed to show a law of distribution of ability in [families](#). In each group of ten illustrious men who have illustrious relations, there are three or four eminent fathers, four or five eminent brothers, and five or six eminent sons. Hence it is inferred that by mating eminent people with eminent people, we can produce eminent people.

mendelism

These threaten to modify Galton's law of regression towards mediocrity, and indeed to nullify his ancestral law. The permanence of dominant qualities and the disappearance of recessive qualities (see [MENDEL, MENDELISM](#)) show that experiments are of little value which have not been spread out over at least three generations. Mendelian experiments, however, on [human beings](#) have not yet been conspicuously successful. Owing to disturbing and amplifying factors only few normal characters, eye-colour for instance, have been demonstrated to follow Mendelian [laws](#).

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

- It **seemed ironic** to eugenicists that human beings paid such careful attention to the **pedigrees** of their farm and domestic stock while ignoring the pedigrees of their **children**

Racism

- The ideology of eugenics-----Strong belief in the power of heredity in determining physical, physiological, and mental traits; an *inherent ethnocentrism and racism* that included belief in the inferiority of some races and superiority of others (a view extended to ethnic groups and social classes as well); and a belief in the power of science, rationally employed, to solve social problems, including ones so seemingly intractable as pauperism, crime, violence, urban decay, prostitution, alcoholism, and various forms of mental disease, including manic depression and "feeblemindedness" (retardation).

Increased birth rates

- The core principles of eugenics as they came to be understood by the mid-1930s were summarized in a report, *Eugenical Sterilization: A Reorientation of the Problem*, published in 1936 by the Committee for the Investigation of Eugenical Sterilization of the American Neurological Association. The report articulates four major principles: **first**, that a number of social and behavioral problems, such as "insanity, feeble-mindedness, epilepsy, pauperism, alcoholism and certain forms of criminality are on the increase"; **second**, that people bearing these various defective traits "propagate at a greater rate than the normal population"; **third**, that such defects in mental function and behavior are "fundamentally and mainly hereditary"; **and fourth**, that the environment in which a person was raised was of much less importance than the germ plasm inherited from his or her parents as the cause of "adverse social status," criminality, or general "social maladjustment." Significantly improving the cognitive ability of the feebleminded or making the criminal into a model citizen was deemed virtually impossible. Biology was destiny

segregation

- The crux of the eugenic question is in the proposals for segregation and sterilization. Both may be either voluntary or compulsory. The aim is to prevent defectives from propagating their kind. Segregation means not only the separation of defectives from the rest of the community but also separation of the sexes from each other amongst the defectives themselves

STERILIZATION

From the start most eugenicists were anxious to play a role in the public arena. A good deal of eugenicists' efforts focused on lobbying for compulsory

sterilization laws for the "**genetically unfit**"

and, especially in the United States, for eugenically informed immigration restriction.

sterilization

- Sterilization is a surgical operation by which the subjects are made incapable of procreation. Formerly it consisted of castration in men, and excision of the ovaries in women. But recently two much simpler operations have been discovered, namely, vasectomy for men and ligature of the Fallopian tubes (Kehrer's method) for women

The United States pioneered in the passage of eugenical sterilization laws. The majority of such laws were passed by state legislatures during the interwar period. Eugenical **sterilization was aimed specifically at those individuals in mental or penal institutions who, from family pedigree analysis,** were considered likely to give birth to socially defective children. Eugenical sterilization reached astounding proportions worldwide in the first half of the century. In the United States over sixty thousand eugenical sterilizations were performed between 1907 and 1963. A similar number was estimated for Sweden, while the Germans ultimately sterilized over 400,000.

IMMIGRATION RULES

- In the United States eugenicists were instrumental in the passage of the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act. Immigration from Europe, especially from eastern and southern Europe, had increased significantly since the 1880s, replacing the traditional immigrant groups from northern Europe and the British Isles. IQ test scores and data on institutionalization of various immigrant groups for feeble-mindedness, insanity, criminality, blindness, and so on were used to support the claim that recent immigrants were less genetically fit than the older, northern European stock. Eugenics provided an air of scientific objectivity for what various nativist groups wanted to accomplish for reasons of economics or prejudice

GERMANY AND NAZIS(TWINS)

- Because racial policy and eugenics formed one of the cornerstones of National Socialism, eugenics research and policy found considerable support in Germany after 1933. When Fischer retired as director of the KWIA in 1942, he was succeeded by his protégé Otmar von Verschuer, one of the pioneers in the use of identical twins in genetic and eugenic research. Verschuer eventually took the institute's research into extermination and slave-labor camps, where his assistant and former doctoral student, Josef Mengele, made pairs of twins available, especially for research on pathological conditions. For example, twins (with non-twins as controls) were infected with disease agents to study the effects of the same and different hereditary constitutions on the course of disease. After they died or were killed, twins' body organs were sent back to the KWIA for analysis. Such procedures, when brought to light at the Nuremberg trials, not only shocked the world but indicated the extent to which eugenic work could so easily transgress the bounds of acceptable scientific practice.

Church standing

- The Argument
- Little has been written about religion vis à vis eugenics and, even less on Roman Catholicism and eugenics. A 1930 papal encyclical, *Casti connubii*, is usually held by historians to have been the official condemnatory view of the Catholic Church on eugenics, and the document is further supposed to have induced the only organized opposition to eugenic legislative efforts in several countries (especially France). In fact, the encyclical was not directly about eugenics but a general statement of the Catholic doctrine on marriage.
- This article attempts to clarify the issue of a Catholic position on eugenics by re-examining the encyclical itself as well as its contemporaneous reception in Germany and France, where there was a strong Catholic presence. *Casti connubii* introduced a change in the prescribed hierarchy of the aims of marriage when, for the first time, relations between spouses took precedence over procreation. While condemning the means (abortion, sterilization, etc.), the encyclical did not condemn positive eugenics. In the broader context of the history of eugenics, the reception of the encyclical emphasizes the family as the third entity between the individual and society. Eugenics, as a “religious Utopia” of modernity, developed a hegemonic discourse over the family realm. As such it entered into competition with more traditional religious institutions such as the Roman Catholic Church.

- The root difference between Catholic teaching and that of modern eugenics is that the one places the final end of man in eternal life, whilst the other places it in civic worth. The effectual difference is that the Church makes bodily and mental culture subservient to morality, whilst modern eugenics makes morality subservient to bodily and mental culture.

Dr Robert Edward

“I wanted to find out exactly who was in charge, whether it was God Himself or whether it was scientists in the laboratory - it was us! The Pope looked totally stupid. You can never ban anything. You can say, ‘hang on a minute’. But never say ‘never’, and never say that this is the worst decision for humankind, otherwise you can look a fool. Now there as many Roman Catholics coming for treatment as Protestants.”

IVF

Edwards seems to argue thus: If God were in charge, He would have stopped us succeeding at IVF. He did not, so either He does not exist, or He is powerless to stop us. Either way, we are in charge.

If scientists like Edwards are in charge, though, then the only restraint on their actions will be the limitations of today's technology. Logically, tomorrow's technology will bring them more power to do whatever they want.

IVF

- So if, as Professor Edwards himself admits, IVF is not primarily about “making couples happy”, what is its ultimate goal?
- “It was a fantastic achievement”, he concedes modestly, “but it was about more than infertility. It was also about issues like stem cells and the ethics of human conception.” In other words, it was the next step to be taken, the next obstacle to be overcome on the road ahead to the Brave New World which technology will bring us. Now, as the aging scientist looks to the future, he is all in favour of cloning. With regard to pre-natal sex selection (whereby parents would be allowed to abort babies of unwanted gender) he says, “go ahead and use it. Those parents have to raise those children. Why should a politician tell me what I can and can’t do?” And Dr Peter Brinsden, Edwards’ successor at the Cambridgeshire clinic he founded, predicts that “in 50 years assisted conception will have almost become the norm. This is because screening techniques will have improved to such an extent that parents can make their children free of even minor defects.”
- That is the destination of the voyage; IVF was merely a port of call on the way. And the understandable frustration of childless parents is merely a means to an end, something to be instrumentalised in order to bring about a eugenic agenda where even normally fertile parents will feel pressurised to have recourse to ‘assisted conception’ in order to eliminate any unwanted results in their offspring.

- Is the Church insensible to the joy of the parents of the more than a million babies who have been born through IVF since 1978, the joy on which men like Edwards trade for their credibility?
- In the meantime those who discover the laws of nature only to deny the existence of their Author are doubly inexcusable: “For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made. [...] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”; and so, according to their “hardness and impenitent heart”, they treasure up to themselves “wrath, against the day of wrath and revelation of the just judgment of God [...] Who will render to every man according to his works” [Romans I, 20-22; II, 6].

- IVF is intrinsically and extrinsically wrong. For our contemporaries (and even our co-religionists), for whom might makes right, and who love not truth for its own sake but for the power that knowledge can bring, there is little chance of their coming to understand that a child “has the right to be the fruit of the specific act of the conjugal love of his parents” [*Donum Vitae*, 1987]. If they cannot understand that IVF, as the same Vatican document says, “is in itself illicit and in opposition to the dignity of procreation and of the conjugal union, even when everything is done to avoid the death of the human embryo”, nevertheless they may be brought to their senses when they see its inevitably evil consequences: millions have perished since 1969, when the first short-lived attempt at human fertilisation *in vitro* was achieved.

CHURCH

- And so, amidst all the positive publicity surrounding IVF, the Church remembers the **millions who have perished and prays for the conversion of those parents who have been misled by public opinion into thinking that what they have done is lawful, reminding them that “marriage does not confer upon the spouses the right to have a child, but only the right to perform those natural acts which are per se ordered to procreation.”**
- “The child” continues *Donum Vitae*, “is not an object to which one has a right, nor can he be considered as an object of ownership: rather, a child is a gift, ‘the supreme gift’ and the most gratuitous gift of marriage, and is a living testimony of the mutual giving of his parents”..

Eugenics in the Twenty-First Century

- The history of the eugenics movement raises many issues relevant to the expanding work in *genomics* at the beginning of the twenty-first century, especially the Human Genome Project (HGP). Test-tube babies, sequencing the human genome, cloning new organisms from adult cells, stem cell research, genetic testing, and the prospects of gene therapy, the term *eugenics* has once again come into popular culture. **Since it is possible, through in utero testing, to determine if a fetus is male or female or has Down syndrome or a mutation for Huntington's disease, cystic fibrosis, thalassemia, or Tay-Sachs disease, should these tests be required for all pregnant women?** And if so, who should have access to the results? Can **medical insurance companies refuse to cover families or their children if the mother does not undergo genetic testing of the fetus?** Some medical ethicists argue that the outcome—controlling births in order to reduce the number of "defective" people in society—is identical to that issuing from the old eugenics movement. According to this view, it makes little difference whether state legislation or social and economic pressures force people to make reproductive decisions they might not otherwise make. Other ethicists, however, argue that state coercion, as in the old eugenics movement, is qualitatively different from various forms of social pressure, since the latter still gives the individual some range of choice. In addition it can be argued that modern genetic decisions are made on a case-by-case basis and do not involve application of policies to whole groups defined racially, ethnically, or nationally.

INSURANCE

- Clearly it is in the interests of insurance companies to reduce as much as possible the medical costs incurred by their clients. And some would argue that it is also in the interest of individual families to avoid bringing a seriously disabled child into the world. But ethicists raise the question of what is "disabled" and who should be the judge. These issues have become more pressing the more costly medical care has become and the more ancillary social services are cut back. Ironically, as a result of sequencing the human genome, a project that carried with it funds for ethical considerations, geneticists now know that there is no one-to-one correspondence between genotype and phenotype and that the reading out of the genetic code is far more plastic than previously believed. Individuals with the same mutation in the cystic fibrosis gene, for example, can have quite different phenotypes (some are seriously affected and others are not or the effects manifest themselves in different organs and at different stages in development). Thus in utero genetic testing may reveal a mutant gene but will provide little information on how the child will turn out phenotypically

MUST READ

- ***CASTI CONNUBII* *30 DEC1930***
ENCYCLICAL OF POPE PIUS XI
ON CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE
TO THE VENERABLE BRETHREN, PATRIARCHS,
PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS, AND
OTHER LOCAL ORDINARIES
ENJOYING PEACE AND COMMUNION WITH
THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

medicine

- While these various ethical issues are problematical, with well-defined clinical conditions, they are infinitely more so when mental, behavioral, and personality traits are the center of discussion. From the last quarter of the twentieth century many claims have been made for identifying genes that affect human behavior or personality (alcoholism, manic depression, criminality, homosexuality, shyness, aggression). **No gene or group of genes has ever been isolated or shown clearly to affect any of these conditions, yet the belief that the conditions are to a significant degree genetically determined has become widespread throughout the media and in the public.** Reproductive decisions based on circumstantial or nonexistent data add another level of ethical considerations in the growing debate about reproductive technologies. Recognizing the consequences of policies put forward under the guise of the old eugenics movement can help avoid some of the more obvious errors of the past.