

Eugenic Image and Ideology: The Past Rewritten – A Future Imagined

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Based on the mid-20th century activities of three Western eugenicists, this paper will demonstrate that there was a concerted, and ultimately successful, transnational effort to keep the eugenics movement alive during its most socially unacceptable period. I will argue that this success rested on the ability of eugenicists to fuse the mid-century image and ideology of eugenics with respectable medical and public health agendas, and align this new adaptation of eugenics with the then increasingly fashionable social issues of democracy, environmentalism and family. Further to this, I will tentatively question the future bio-ethical implications of this historical reinterpretation.

What became of the eugenics movement? For the great majority of us, the comfortable answer is that the ideology died a death some time during the mid-20th century. Supporting evidence for this theory is not difficult to come by: during the middle decades of the century there certainly was a public backlash in Western societies against eugenics in response to its association with Nazism and paternalistic state control, as well as an ideological shift in society away from the movement's hereditarian basis in the face of the rising popularity of environmentalist theories (as in 'nurture over nature') to explain human characteristics.¹

This came in addition to the recognition from within the eugenics movement that the early 20th-century eugenicists' 'one gene, one trait' understanding of human genetics was over-simplistic and that most human traits were a result of the interaction of multiple genes and *could* indeed be altered by environmental factors.² All of these issues culminated in a serious threat to the credibility of the image and ideology of the movement. As a result of this, a number of tangible traces of eugenic influence began to be dropped, ignored by, or purposely erased from the public consciousness during the late middle decades of the 20th century.³ And despite a belated effort, beginning in Australia during the early 1980s and continuing throughout the 1990s, to publicly recognise omissions or rectify distortions of eugenics' history in Australia,⁴ the popular historical narrative has done little to dispel the soothing myth forged during the immediate post-war period that whatever Australia's eugenic past may have been, it all neatly came to an end sometime during the middle of the 20th century.

And how easy that would be. But, of course, for a paper written under the banner of 'The Past Rewritten – A Future Imagined', the history—and future—of eugenics is not that simple. Accordingly, this paper has multiple agendas. The primary, and relatively straightforward purpose, is indeed to 'rewrite history'. That is, to provide a purely historiographical reassessment of what did become of the eugenics movement at the time of its supposed death somewhere within the 1930s-1960s period. Based on the activities of three Western eugenicists⁵ during this era of apparent eugenic decline, I will challenge the dominant and popular 'disappearance' theory, and add evidence to the fledgling historiographical view being forged in America that the eugenics movement *did* survive the mid-century

backlash through the successful adaptation of its image and ideology to suit popular social philosophies and institutions of the period.⁶ I argue that this success rested on the ability of eugenicists to fuse the mid-century image and ideology of eugenics with respectable medical and public health agendas,⁷ and align this new adaptation of eugenics with the then increasingly fashionable social issues of democracy, environmentalism and family.

Considering the simultaneous efforts of eugenicists from three countries will strengthen my contention that the mid-century rebirth of the eugenic image and ideology was by no means a coincidence, and that the new direction of mid-century eugenics was in fact a result of an organised and calculated international public relations campaign. And while this trans-national study only adds support to the recent American literature, which has identified the unbroken historical line of descent running from the pre-war eugenics movement down into modern mainstream social activities, it offers a new vantage point from which to view the history of Australian eugenics. While Australian historians have tentatively acknowledged the mid-century and immediate post-war survival of the eugenics movement,⁸ and Australian bio-ethicists have identified aspects of eugenic ideology in contemporary social activities,⁹ no one has yet investigated the historical events linking Australia's pre-war eugenics movement to the country's post-war eugenic mentality.

Through studying this conscious revamping of eugenics—a movement and mentality essentially concerned with the genetic and social engineering of better breeding—a number of issues arise that provide a new perspective and chronology of the trans-national history of eugenics. American Paul Popenoe and his progressive organisation The American Institute of Family Relations will illustrate the savvy repositioning of eugenic responsibility from state enforcement to democratic choice, as well as the association of eugenic choice with a happy and healthy marriage and family.¹⁰ Briton Carlos Blacker's evolving eugenic philosophy and the consequent post-war activities of Britain's Eugenics Society will show the willingness of eugenicists and their organisations to not only realign the movement's image by working alongside primarily environmentalist organisations and social causes, but also to compromise their primarily hereditarian philosophy by acknowledging and adapting to the popular environmentalist theories of the period. And the evolving image and place within the

parent organisation of Australian Maurice Schalit's Pre-Marital Clinic will demonstrate the ultimate ability of the eugenic spirit to survive and fuse with new social services which were accepted and desired by members of the public. Together, these case studies reveal the mid-century reinvention of eugenics and, in so doing, challenge the accepted chronology and position of eugenics in Australia's history.

The secondary, and more philosophical, purpose of this paper is to contemplate what implications this rewriting of history has for the future. The theoretical and social implications of this reinterpretation go beyond recognising that there has been an unbroken eugenic narrative from the 'old' paternalistic, brazenly discriminative early 20th-century eugenics through to the mid-century's socially aware, eugenically aligned advice for individuals seeking to form a successful family. This paper will, in fact, ponder the implications of the direct line of descent that runs all the way from the 'old' unpopular early 20th-century eugenics to the movement's sensitive mid-century period *and then through* to what bio-ethicists and facets of the scientific community are increasingly recognising as the 'new eugenics' of today's pre-natal testing and genetic counselling.¹¹ The merging of the 'old' eugenic interest in purely genetic information with the movement's socially sensitive mid-century image through these services deserves serious attention. The fact that malleable social attitudes have had a direct impact on the way in which eugenically aligned medical and public health services have been promoted to potential patients should be an issue of interest, and perhaps concern, to anyone engaged in the increasingly questionable issue of choice related to these supposedly objective health services.¹²

REWRITING THE PAST

Years before the eugenics movement was publicly demonised in Western society for its links with Nazism, socially in-tune eugenicists were already revamping the image of their cause due to a growing awareness that eugenics' traditionally paternalistic stance was not endearing the movement to the public.¹³ In America, the recasting of eugenics as a democratic choice for the individual can be found in the inter-war activities of The American Institute of Family Relations. The co-creator of this new enterprise, reputable medical professional Paul Popenoe, made no effort to hide his strong eugenic convictions,

as was evidenced by his ongoing involvement in another Californian eugenics organisation, The Human Betterment Foundation, which successfully promoted eugenic sterilisation in America¹⁴ and proudly influenced the eugenic sterilisation legislation of Nazi Germany.¹⁵ Crucially, though, Popenoe perceived the social need for an implicit, gentler approach to eugenics and accordingly, on the third of February 1930, The American Institute of Family Relations was opened in Los Angeles, California.

Wendy Kline has pointed out that during the middle decades of the 20th century there was a growing aspiration within, and pressure on, the Western middle-class to achieve the post-World War One image of the happy, healthy nuclear family.¹⁶ Accordingly, the Institute's fashionable public image of 'promoting successful marriage and parenthood'¹⁷ was used to obscure its underlying eugenic agenda. Popenoe's linking of eugenics with the creation of a happy, healthy family also demonstrated an astute understanding that in 20th-century Western society self-improvement and personal benefits were becoming increasingly more conducive to social action than coercive eugenic legislation or the supposedly noble eugenic incentive of contributing to the 'greater good'.¹⁸

In 1941, one of the Institution's pamphlets announced that 'the Institute is particularly proud of its Pre-marital Service, which is offered to those about to wed who want help in making their marriage a success.'¹⁹ The fact that the information gleaned from these 'thorough, but wholly voluntary'²⁰ battery of physical and mental tests held eugenic implications for the advice given to the couple by the Institute's 'pre-marital counsellor' was not explicitly identified in the Institution's promotional brochure. However, the eugenic implications of the tests are revealed through the acknowledgement that 'this examination also gives an opportunity to furnish the couple appropriate contraceptive information',²¹ and the proud claim that '[t]he Institute is said to be the only agency in the United States at the present time, which is prepared to receive personal problems of heredity and deal with them adequately.'²²

While Popenoe was pleased with the eugenic progress being made on a couple-to-couple basis through its 'pre-marital service' at its clinic in Los Angeles, he was also keen for the Institute to spread its new non-paternalistic, family-orientated approach to eugenics throughout all of America. To achieve this, he realised that less direct avenues of

communication would need to be employed, and aimed specifically at the movement's target audience. It had become a well-established fact among America's eugenicists of the 1930s that typically healthy and relatively intelligent school and university students were the favoured recipients of the eugenically advantageous promotion of the nuclear family.²³ And, in line with this understanding, the Institution of Family Relations' recruitment of professionals in educational facilities across America enabled the respectable mass exposure of the new evolved eugenics to the target audience. The Institute's 'Regional Consultants in Family Life Education' were recruited from the great majority of America's states. They all occupied jobs in universities, teaching colleges, or tertiary education based institutions, and their role was to facilitate the promotion of the Institute's wide range of scientific interests in improving family life.²⁴

That the implicit educational approach to eugenics proved successful for the Institution was evidenced by a pamphlet published in 1941, which proudly announced that:

Members of the Institute's staff have lectured in nearly 200 colleges and universities, as well as many high schools, and before many clubs and organizations of other types in almost every state of the union. Through these lectures and conferences they have reached more than a quarter of a million people directly, while an unknown but presumably larger number has been reached by radio broadcasts in many areas. A survey by an expert in publicity estimated that during the first 10 years of activity the Institute has also reached 20,000,000 people through newspaper and magazines publications.²⁵

Similarly, at the end of 1946, the Institute revealed a successful year of promotion through the fact that, among other things that year, it had:

Provided lecturers for high schools, colleges, and universities. ... Supplied speakers for radio programs. ... Sent out material requested by the clergy and religious educators. ... Aided other communities to organize counselling services. ... Published a monthly column in the California P.T.A. bulletin and helped teachers to plan courses on marriage in high schools.²⁶

Educational pamphlets were also produced by the Institute, covering the broad scope of its interests in marriage and family, but crucially these included a portion of information related to eugenics, presented inconspicuously among the rest of the information and advice as a common-sense and modern approach to ensuring the happiness of family life. A variety of pamphlets (nearly all written by Popenoe), with an average price of ten cents, were advertised in the national media as being able to be posted out to individuals across America.²⁷ The many eugenically motivated publications created for 'teachers and students' included 'Eugenics and family relations', 'Eugenics and family life education', 'Mate selection', 'Childlessness: Voluntary or involuntary' and 'What science can do for matrimony' (by Dr E O Palmer). These appeared alongside the innocuous titles of 'Family ideals of service men' and 'A study of 738 elopements'.²⁸ Among the pamphlets providing advice 'for marriage', the overtly eugenic title 'Who should not marry?' (it suggested those with heritable health problems probably should not) is listed alongside the purely psychologically based 'How do you know it's Love?' and 'Will you keep growing after marriage?'²⁹ Within the 'Parenting' pamphlets the implicitly eugenic publication 'Should bachelors and fathers receive the same pay?' (which advocated higher pay for those male workers prepared to father healthy children) ran alongside 'They call them crushes' and 'When youth goes radical'.³⁰

Outside of America, progressive individuals involved in the eugenics movement observed the country's successful reorientation of the public image of eugenics from state benefit to family betterment with keen interest. Across the Atlantic, prominent member of the British Eugenics Society, Carlos Blacker, wrote of prominent American eugenicist Frederick Osborn's 1940 argument for 'Eugenic reorientation of various social policies' that:

There are now visible in operation in Western countries a number of social trends which have other than eugenic objectives. All of them aim at improving the human lot. There can be picked up and, without introducing any essential change in their character, can be applied to a eugenic ideal.³¹

However, unlike his American counterpart Popenoe, Blacker chose to approach the new style of eugenics by endeavouring to realign the

image and ideology of a well-established and explicitly eugenically orientated organisation, the Eugenics Society, with the growing number of family-orientated organisations being established during the middle decades of the 20th century. To this end, Blacker announced '[t]he eugenist should, therefore, at this early stage, make contact with leading personalities in these developing services.'³² Accordingly, by the end of the 1940s Blacker had begun representing the Eugenics Society at reputable, transnational family-focused organisations and was making attempts to reconcile, and even compromise, the ultimately hereditarian-based classical eugenic ideology with the increasingly popular environmentalist movements.

Beginning in 1948, Blacker represented the Eugenics Society at the International Union of Family Organizations (IUFO).³³ A decade later, at the 1958 World Congress on the Family (held in Paris by the IUFO), it was noted that '[d]uring the inter-war years the Eugenics Society had taken an interest in organizations concerned with family welfare, having recognized that, in a democracy, eugenic values were recognizable in terms of the performance-test of raising a healthy and happy family.'³⁴ And, despite needing to temper aspects of the eugenics ideology to work alongside Catholic organizations involved,³⁵ the Eugenics Society (through its delegate Blacker) contributed ideas about how best to support and create successful, healthy marriages and families alongside the four permanent commissions of the Union.³⁶ While Blacker acknowledged in this forum that among the qualities eugenists favoured in the next generation were the classical eugenic prizes of 'sound physical and mental health and good physique... free from genetic infirmities',³⁷ he also began to integrate more environmentalist-friendly traits into his definition of what was eugenically valuable. Also considered an invaluable eugenic quality by Blacker in his 1965 report to the IUFO was 'to be fond of children when in due course they have them and to be capable of founding united and well-adjusted families.'³⁸

The fact that Blacker was prepared to evolve the eugenics ideology to the point of compromising its traditional focus of bettering humanity through solely genetic means demonstrated the lengths to which the eugenics movement could evolve if required. Blacker's ideological adaptation of eugenics was conceived out of a conscious recognition that the movement had to adapt to suit the dominant social discourse in order to survive. This was established at the 1955 Fifth International

Conference on Planned Parenthood, held in Tokyo. Of the need for eugenics to fit into post-war Western society's democratic framework, Blacker announced:

The essential point I am here making is that the balance between the need for compulsions and the claims of freedom is one which every country and every generation must interpret in its own manner in the light both of the external conditions which prevail and of the character and habits of that generation.³⁹

Demonstrating his willingness to integrate the then popular environmentalist theory into his eugenics rhetoric, Blacker asserted at the 1965 conference of the Marriage Guidance Commission of the IUFO that:

For our purposes the simplest and most acceptable application of eugenics is to encourage the fertility of couples who provide a happy home for their children, who rear them sensibly and who set them a good example... as eugenists we think it matters which types of parents have most children, and that the eugenically favoured parents are those who have qualities enabling them to establish united, healthy and happy families.⁴⁰

In 1960, the outstanding success of Blacker's pioneering approach to eugenics had been officially recognised from within the Eugenics Society of London—a significant achievement considering the Society's classical roots and established traditions.⁴¹ In a memorandum presented at the Eugenics Society meeting on 18 January 1960, it had been proposed that:

[T]he Society's activities in Crypto-Eugenics [a term coined by Blacker in a 1957 memorandum to describe his incidental approach to promoting eugenics] should be pursued vigorously, and specifically that the Society should increase its *monetary* [word added in handwriting to document after printing] support of the F.P.A. [Family Planning Association] and the I.P.P.F. [International Planned Parenthood Federation] and

should make contact with the Society For The Study of Human Biology, which already has a strong and active membership, to find out if any relevant projects are contemplated with which the Eugenics Society Could Assist.⁴²

Five months after the Memorandum was presented, the minutes of the Society's meeting revealed that this motion was passed, with members agreeing that those individuals who had proposed the changes 'have done a service to the Society by raising a perhaps overdue discussion of general policy.'⁴³

The work and career of progressive and internationally connected doctor Maurice Schalit demonstrated that Australia's mid-century eugenicists were also interested in creating a socially acceptable and accessible form of eugenics for the public.⁴⁴ Just like his American and British counterparts, Schalit made no secret of his strong eugenic convictions, while demonstrating an understanding that to survive the eugenics movement would need to adapt to what was acceptable and being aspired to in contemporary society. In 1936, under the umbrella of New South Wales' Racial Hygiene Association (RHA), Schalit opened his new Marriage Advisory Centre at the Association's original headquarters at 14 Martin Place, Sydney.⁴⁵ Modelled on former President of the British Medical Association, Lord Horder's, overtly eugenic plans for pre-marital testing,⁴⁶ Schalit originally made no attempt to obscure his personal conviction that eugenically motivated social services should be implemented for the betterment of the race and state.⁴⁷ In addition, in the year leading up to the opening of the clinic, Schalit's campaign for a type of 'pre-marital check' was overtly promoted as 'another venture into eugenics'.⁴⁸ In her refreshingly frank account of her husband's eugenic motivation for establishing the RHA's Marriage Advisory Centre, prominent member Ruby Rich acknowledged:

We were working it out that they would get a certificate that both sides were perfectly healthy, as best they could be, and it would advise them to marry and have a family... and of course if there was reason to think that there was illness on both sides or bad history, mental history, or physical history, and it would take too long for them to wait well they were advised they could marry but not have any family at all.⁴⁹

However, the subsequent direction of the Centre's image demonstrated that, in line with the international trend, Schalit began to align his eugenic service with the fashionable ideas of the period. Only a year after the Marriage Advisory Centre opened, Schalit began to obscure the underlying eugenic agenda and alter the public justification for why couples should attend the clinic. In keeping with the approach of Popenoe's Institute of Family Relations, Schalit began to emphasise the familial and marital benefits of the pre-marital screening and counselling service, with a clear ideological shift being made from benefits for the state to the individual. Accordingly, in 1938 Schalit wrote that '[t]he Aim of the Bureau is not only to find out that the candidates are bodily fit to marry, but also whether the marriage will turn out a happy one.'⁵⁰

A new glossy image also began to appear, which associated the battery of mental and physical tests provided by the Service with the concept of young women and men aspiring to be responsible and informed spouses and parents.⁵¹ In a 1938 RHA pamphlet, a promotional photograph of Schalit with a young, smartly dressed and healthy young couple studying a book was published with an article under it titled 'Pre-Marital Clinic'.⁵² The article aligned eugenic choice with the popular 20th-century notion that, by being scientifically informed and responsible, individuals could secure health and happiness for themselves and their families:

Support the Racial Hygiene Association of N.S.W. in its crusade for happy marriages and healthy children, by means of the exchange of health certificates. Avail yourselves of this opportunity to gain knowledge of yourselves, mentally and physically.⁵³

By World War Two, Schalit's transition from associating pre-marital tests with state and race-based eugenic responsibility to the self-beneficial concept of building a happy, healthy family was complete. In a paper presented in 1943 to a Jewish organisation he was actively involved in,⁵⁴ Schalit appealed directly to an individual's right to health and happiness and sense of responsibility to their own family:

Intelligent and wise parents begin to wonder as to the fitness for marriage of the chosen partner whether his or her physical,

mental and moral standard of health forecasts a healthy posterity. In one word, whether the party to the marriage has those attributes that generally lead to a happy union... Real happiness is largely rooted in bodily and mental health. For instance, a wife has less chance of happiness with a tubercular husband however rich he be, or a husband with an epileptic wife however beautiful and accomplished.⁵⁵

Schalit's decision to obscure the Pre-Marital Clinic's underlying eugenic objectives proved beneficial for the success and longevity of the service, as was verified nearly two decades later in the RHA's 1960 annual report.⁵⁶ Of the services provided by the RHA in 1960, 'Preparation for Marriage' was described as 'A health examination and advice on the physical aspects of marriage, [and] is conducted by our Medical Officer'.⁵⁷ 'Pre-Marital Counselling' was described as a service 'available to young couples contemplating marriage' and 'Marriage Guidance' ostensibly provided the 'opportunity to discuss freely and confidently the many problems relevant to married life'—including medical ones.⁵⁸ While none of these services attributed their purpose directly to eugenics, the fact that the ideology was a driving, yet predominantly innocuous force in the operation of such activities was revealed in the report's section, 'Objects of the Association'.⁵⁹ In addition to the explicitly eugenic aim of 'Education on Sex Hygiene and furtherance of Eugenics', two other aims contain implicitly eugenic objectives, the first being:

To educate the people in Healthy Family Planning facilities for scientific contraception so that married people may space or limit their families and thus promote their happiness in married life and mitigate the evils of ill health.⁶⁰

The second being:

To encourage the production of healthy children who are an asset to the nation, provided that their parents have the health and means to give them a reasonable chance in life.⁶¹

The convoluted and ambiguous wording of these two eugenic aims suggests that members spent considerable time considering how the

image and objectives of the RHA should be presented to the public in 1960. Indeed, it was confirmed by the end of the year that members were keenly aware of public hesitation towards causes with tangible eugenic connotations, by which time the Racial Hygiene Association had been renamed the Family Planning Association. Yet, despite this sustained effort to obscure the continuing eugenic activities of the late mid-century RHA behind the increasingly emphasised environmentalist interests of the FPA, its continuation of eugenically aligned activities could not be completely disassociated from its past. As late as 1976, Rich characteristically bucked the increasing trend of disassociating the RHA's medical services from eugenics when, while proudly discussing Schalit's mid-century pre-marital tests, she announced that:

[W]e managed to get many young people [to] come in for these pre-maritals as they were called. And we still do this counselling, it is still done out in Chippindale in City Road, No.92. Got a pencil, good to get it down you know, 92 City Road, I have to get in my little plugging for them too. But I think they are wonderful, how they carry on all the time and anyway they still do the counselling and the couples come along and its very wise, no mistakes as far as one can help.⁶²

A FUTURE IMAGINED

That the eugenics movement *did* survive its mid-century backlash due to the ability of its progressive proponents to adapt the movement's image and ideology to the respectable and fashionable social agendas of the period is apparent from the evidence considered in this paper. But the implications of the ability of respected professionals like Popenoe, Blacker and Schalit to manipulate the social meaning and application of eugenics according to contemporary bio-ethical standards extends beyond the historical, and into the future. By acknowledging the tenacity of the eugenics movement, and the fact that it has, within the ever popular paradigm of medical science, survived by adapting to suit what is socially acceptable, those involved with the policy and administration of pre-natal testing and genetic counselling are provided with the opportunity to take pre-emptive steps against a eugenic

future imagined. I have demonstrated here that during the middle of the 20th century the image and ideology of eugenics had to be tempered to suit the then prevalent environmentalist theory of human traits and behaviour. In a future imagined, in which hereditarianism, state interference and notions of perfectionism could very possibly feature, it is hoped that the entire historical narrative of the eugenics movement and its achievements are remembered and considered by those involved with these services. ❖

ENDNOTES

- 1 It has been consistently recognised in the historiography of the transnational eugenics movement that these causes contributed to the mid-century social backlash against eugenics. See Daniel Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity*, Alfred Knopf, New York, 1985; Nancy Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1991; Stefan Kuhl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1994; Edward J Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science: Eugenics in the Deep South*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1995; Roy Lowe, *Schooling and Social Change, 1964-1990*, Routledge, London, 1997; Michael Rose, *Darwin's Spectre: Evolutionary Biology in the Modern World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1998; Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2001; Edwin Black, *War Against the Weak: Eugenics and America's Campaign to Create a Master Race*, Four Walls Eight Windows, New York, 2003; Diana Wyndham, *Eugenics in Australia: Striving for National Fitness*, Galton Institute, London, 2003; Alexandra Minna Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America (American Crossroads)*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2005; Masae Kato, *Women's Rights? Social Movements, Abortion, and Eugenics in Modern Japan*, Universiteit Leiden, 2005; Eric Ehrenreich, *The Nazi Ancestral Proof: Genealogy, Racial Science, and the Final Solution*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2007; Robert Friedel, *A Culture of Improvement: Technology and the Western Millennium*, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2007.
- 2 For example, see Carlos Blacker, *Eugenics: Galton and After*, Gerald Duckworth & Co, Ltd., London, 1952; Richard Lynn, *Eugenics: A Reassessment*, Praeger, Westport, Conn., 2001.
- 3 Of this phenomenon, during the 1960s-70s period, Rob Watts observed in his groundbreaking article 'Beyond nature and nurture: Eugenics in 20th century Australian history', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, vol. 40, no. 3, 1994, that: 'Standard histories simply ignored eugenics. Even the so-called "new revisionists" avoided eugenics. Occasionally amnesia gave way to suppression. Historians of key educationists like Tate, Browne, McRae

- and Cunningham, or of bodies like the Australian Council of Education Research (ACER), have refused to identify their eugenic provenance' (319).
- 4 See, for example, Carol Bacchi, 'The nature-nurture debate in Australia, 1900-1914', *Historical Studies*, vol. 75, April, 1980, 199-212; Michael Roe, *Nine Australian Progressives*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1984, 7-19; Stephen Garton, *Medicine and Madness: A Social History of Insanity in New South Wales 1880-1940*, New South Wales University Press, Kensington, 1988; David McCallum, *The Social Production of Merit: Education, Psychology and Politics in Australia 1900-1950*, Farmer Press, Basingstoke, 1990; Watts; Stephen Garton, 'Sound minds and healthy bodies: Re-considering eugenics in Australia, 1914-1940', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 26, no. 103, 1994, 94. In the United States, the acknowledgement of the ambiguous role the eugenics movement played in that particular country's social and philosophical history occurred much earlier, beginning with Donald K Pickens, *Eugenics and the Progressives*, Vanderbilt University Press, Nashville, 1968.
- 5 I chose to use the term 'eugenist' over 'eugenicist' because this was the title preferred by the proponents of the organised eugenics movement. I think recognition and historical respect of this pre-World War Two profession will contribute to a more objective and thus broader acknowledgement of the movement's influence in 20th and 21st century society.
- 6 See, for example, Kevles; Kline; Stern; Friedel; Matthew Connelly, *Fatal Misconception: The Struggle to Control World Population*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2008.
- 7 These agendas fell within the jurisdiction of the 20th century's 'expert', and thus guaranteed their perceived legitimacy in Western society. Of the rationale behind the construction of the notion of the 'expert' and the respectability of (usually) his progressive reliance on science to justify his social cause, Barbara Ehrenreich and Dredre English have summarised (in their publication *For Her Own Good: Two Centuries of the Experts' Advice to Women*, 2nd ed., Anchor Books, New York, 2005, 78) that: "Experts" could solve society's problems because they were, as scientific men, by definition totally objective and above special interests of any kind. In the process, the problems of the new middle class itself could be solved too. Specialized "expert" occupations, accessible only after lengthy training, would provide them a secure occupational niche and a share of power far out of proportion to their numbers. Far-seeing spokesmen of their class even prophesied a future society in which— not the "half-taught plutocracy", not the "ignorant proletariat"—but the experts themselves would rule. This, it was felt, would be the utopian summit of human civilization, since the experts would of course manage things scientifically.'
- 8 See, for example, Judith Bessant, 'Described, measured and labelled: Eugenics, youth policy and moral panic in Victoria in the 1950s', in B Wilson, B and R White (eds), *For Their Own Good: Young People and State Intervention in Australia*, LaTrobe University Press, Melbourne, 1991, 8-28; Grant Rodwell, 'Domestic science, race motherhood and eugenics in Australian state schools, 1900-1960', *History of Education Review*, vol. 29, no. 2, 2000, 67-83; Grant Rodwell, "'Shoes well cleaned and heels repaired": scientific management, eugenics and teacher selection and preparation in Australia, 1910-1970', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural*

- Policies of Education*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2003, 67–86.
- 9 See, for example, Michela Betta (ed.), *The Moral, Social, and Commercial Imperatives of Genetic Testing and Screening: The Australian Case*, Springer, Dordrecht, 2006; Melinda Reist Tankard, *Defiant Birth: Women who Resist Medical Eugenics*, Spinifex Press, North Melbourne, 2006.
 - 10 American historian Wendy Kline first recognised Popenoe's successful repositioning of eugenics in *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom*, when she observed that 'the "passion for parenthood" that is most commonly linked to Cold War culture had its roots in the positive-eugenics campaign that began in the 1930s and grew in influence during the 1940s and 1950s. While post-war abundance supplied the means for achieving suburban bliss in the 1950s, the impetus behind the move to suburbia and the new emphasis on baby-boom family culture stemmed in part from the influential promotion of procreation by eugenicists' (156).
 - 11 See, for example, Kevles; Deborah Lynn Steinberg, *Bodies in Glass: Genetics, Eugenics, Embryo Ethics*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1997; Warren Thomas Reich (ed.), *The Ethics of Sex and Genetics*, Macmillan Reference USA, New York, 1998; Diane Paul, *The Politics of Heredity: Essays on Eugenics, Biomedicine, and the Nature-Nurture Debate*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1998; Frank Dikotter, *Imperfect Conceptions: Medical Knowledge, Birth Defects and Eugenics in China*, Hurst & Co, London, 1998; Rayna Rapp, *Testing Women, Testing the Fetus: The Social Impact of Amniocentesis in America*, Routledge, New York, 1999; Anne Kerr and Tom Shakespeare, *Gene Politics: From Eugenics to Genome*, New Clarion Press, Cheltenham, 2002; Troy Duster, *Backdoor to Eugenics*, Routledge, New York, 2003; Nicholas Agar, *Liberal Eugenics: In Defence of Human Enhancement*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, 2004; Betta; John Glad, *Future Human Evolution: Eugenics in the Twenty-First Century*, Hermitage Publications, Schuylkill Haven, 2006; Rosamund Scott, *Choosing between Possible Lives: Law and Ethics of Prenatal and Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis*, Hart, Oxford, 2007; Friedel; Connelly.
 - 12 Publications which question whether recipients of genetic counselling are offered a genuine choice as to the outcome of pre-natal testing results include John Harris and Soren Holm (eds), *Future of Human Reproduction: Ethics, Choice and Regulation*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1998; Ruth Chadwick (ed.), *The Ethics of Genetic Screening*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 1999; Justine Burley (ed.), *The Genetic Revolution and Human Rights*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999; Audrey Cole, *Genetic Discrimination: Looking Back to the Future?*, Roeher Institute, North York, 2001; Reist Tankard.
 - 13 An example of inter-war eugenicists' recognition that their movement's classical paternalistic stance (and original faulty interpretation of genetics) was preventing the social acceptance and thus application of eugenics in Australia can be found in the colourful debate concerning the (eventually blocked) 1929 Mental Deficiency Bill in *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, 18 September 1929, 1680–1694, and *Victorian Parliamentary Debates*, 8 October 1929, 2104–2107. The background and fate of this Bill is analysed in Ross Jones, *The Master Potter and the Rejected Pots: Eugenic Legislation in Victoria, 1918–1939*, *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 30, no. 113, 1999, 319–342.

- 14 Members of the Foundation (including Blacker) were actively involved in drafting a number of the eugenically inspired sterilisation laws which came into operation in thirty-three of America's states during the 20th century. For the detailed involvement of the Foundation's members in drafting eugenic legislation, see The Human Betterment Foundation Annual Report 1933, *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*, 1931–1946 [the collection includes Human Betterment Foundation publications], manuscript collection no. 152, History and Special Collections Division, Louise M Darling Biomedical Library, UCLA, Los Angeles, had eugenically-inspired sterilisation laws in operation. For a more general history of America's eugenic sterilisation programmes, see Stern; Kline; Black; Harry Bruinius, *Better for All the World: The Secret History of Forced Sterilization and America's Quest for Racial Purity*, Knopf, New York, 2006; Ian Dowbiggin, *The Sterilization Movement and Global Fertility in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008; Mark Largent, *Breeding Contempt: The History of Coerced Sterilization in the United States*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, 2008.
- 15 That this organisation had a direct impact on the content of the Nazis' 1933 sterilisation law is illustrated in fascinating correspondence between George Dock (vice-president) and E S Gosney (president) in which they discuss the, then new, German law. Of the law Dock wrote to Gosney 'It seems to me the German law is an excellent one. Probably some of the details would not fit into our legal modes, but the medical work is good, and the patient seems to be protected in every respect. I think the reference [in the drafting of the German sterilisation law] to the California work, and the work of the Foundation is a very significant thing. The matter has given me a better opinion of Mr. Hitler than I had before. He may be too impulsive in some matters, but he is sound on the theory and practice of eugenic sterilization.' After a prolonged visit to pre-WWII Germany, another prominent member of the Foundation, C M Goethe, wrote in an historically grotesque letter to Gosney that 'You will be interested to know that your work has played a powerful part in shaping the opinions of the group of intellectuals who are behind Hitler in this epoch-making program. Everywhere I sensed that their opinions have been tremendously stimulated by American thought, and particularly by the work of the Human Betterment Foundation. I want you, my dear friend, to carry this thought with you for the rest of your life, that you have really jolted into action a great government of 60,000,000 people.' All of these publications can be accessed in *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
- 16 Kline, 154–156.
- 17 Front page of pamphlet published in 1941 outlining the achievements and activities of The American Institute of Family Relations, *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
- 18 Historiography has continued to exaggerate the idea that the 'for the greater good' mentality was the primary agenda, and thus unanimously agreed upon, component of early eugenicists' rationale for socially implementing eugenics. This can clearly be seen in (both the content and title!) of the only attempt to trace the Australian eugenics movement, Diana Wyndham's 2003 publication, *Eugenics in Australia: Striving for National Fitness*. That eugenicists also consistently linked personal gains to the use of eugenics throughout the 20th century is a fact which I believe

- has been obscured. For example, Sir Francis Galton himself championed the personal gains eugenics could provide at the turn of the 20th century. Mary Stopes based the eugenic rationale for her inter-war birth control campaign predominantly on alleviating the personal suffering of women, as did Australian eugenicist Victor Wallace during the 1940s.
- 19 'Personal service' section of pamphlet published in 1941, outlining the achievements and activities of The American Institute of Family Relations, *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
 - 20 Promotional pamphlet for The American Institute of Family Relations, circa 1935, *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
 - 21 'Personal service'.
 - 22 'Personal service'.
 - 23 This view is clearly articulated by a number of American eugenists in the 'Summary of the discussion at the conference on education and eugenics, Hotel Delmonico, March 20th, 1937', *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
 - 24 'The staff of The American Institute of Family Relations—Regional Consultants in Family Life Education' section (back page) of pamphlet published in 1941 outlining the achievements and activities of The American Institute of Family Relations, *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
 - 25 'Public education' section of pamphlet published in 1941 outlining the achievements and activities of The American Institute of Family Relations, *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
 - 26 Brochure published in 1946 promoting 'The achievements of the Institute in its 17th year', *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
 - 27 Catalogue of publications for sale by The American Institute of Family Relations (date unknown), *The American Institute of Family Relations Collection*.
 - 28 Catalogue of publications.
 - 29 Catalogue of publications.
 - 30 Catalogue of publications.
 - 31 Carlos Blacker's review of Frederick Osborn's 'Preface to eugenics' (1940 edition), 22, item number PP/CPB/H.2 no. 7, *Eugenics Society Collection*.
 - 32 Carlos Blacker's review, 28.
 - 33 C P Blacker, World Congress on The Family, 15 June to 23 June 1958, Paris, *The Eugenics Review*, October 1958, vol. 50, no. 3, 179, item number PP/CPB/J.3 no 63(b), *Eugenics Society Collection*.
 - 34 C P Blacker, World Congress, 179.
 - 35 C P Blacker, World Congress, 179–180.
 - 36 These four commissions were the Commission for Family Housing; Commission for the Standard of Living of the Family; Commission on Parent-Teacher Relations; and Marriage Guidance Commission.
 - 37 C P Blacker, 'Who are eugenists today?' Prepared for conference of Marriage Guidance Commission of I.U.F.O., Lausanne, June 1965, 18 June 1965, 2, item number PP/CPB/H.1 no 52, *Eugenics Society Collection*.
 - 38 C P Blacker, 'Who are eugenists today?', 2.
 - 39 C P Blacker, Family Planning and Eugenic Movements, Report of the Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Planned Parenthood, Tokyo, Japan, 24–29 October, 1955, 132, PP/CPB/J.3 no 54(a), *Eugenics Society Collection*.

- 40 C P Blacker, 'Who are eugenists today?', 3–4.
- 41 It has been well established by historians of the British eugenics movement that Blacker's progressive, socially adaptable approach to eugenics was at odds with the established, classically inclined faction of the Eugenics Society, led by the president (and then former president) Leonard Darwin (second youngest of Charles Darwin's eight children). For example, see Pauline Mazumdar, *Eugenics, Human Genetics, and Human Failings: The Eugenics Society, its Sources and its Critics in Britain*, Routledge, London, 1992; and Richard Soloway, *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birth-rate in Twentieth-Century Britain*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1995.
- 42 Memorandum by certain members of the Council of the Society [A S Parkes, A C Stevenson, J M Tanner, C H Waddington], 18 January, 1960, item number PP/CPB/B.21 no. 3, *Eugenics Society Collection*.
- 43 Minutes of the Eugenics Society Meeting held on Wednesday, 25 May, 1960 (circulated at meeting and signed at the Council Meeting on Wednesday, 8 June, 1960), PP/CPB/B.21 no. 2, *Eugenics Society Collection*.
- 44 For biographical details on Schalit, see 'A brief summary of the Life of Dr Moise Aaron Schalit', Doctor Schalit's papers, Box 3 (folders 17–25), *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 45 Transcript of recording of Ruby Rich, 13361.
- 46 Transcript of recording of Ruby Rich, 13363.
- 47 For example, in his paper titled 'Pre-marital certificate' (circa 1936), which was read publicly by his high-profile wife Ruby Rich, Schalit wrote: 'it is disturbing, even repulsive, yet men and women mate and reproduce, and the state, which is beginning to regard the child as a liability, will sooner or later be forced to show a very lively interest in the number and quality of the children that are born to be fed, housed, educated and employed.' See Doctor Schalit's papers, Box 3, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 48 Pamphlet promoting the aims and activities of the RHA, published 1937, Doctor Schalit's papers, Box 3, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 49 Transcript of recording of Ruby Rich, 13363.
- 50 Schalit presentation paper for RHA, Racial hygiene papers, box 68, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 51 According to the paperwork, these 'tests' included a thorough investigation of an individual's 'family history', including the cause of death of deceased relatives, known still-births and miscarriages in the family and whether any family member had suffered from a range of supposedly hereditary 'mental disturbances' including nervousness, mental backwardness or defect, insanity, fainting spells, convulsions or fits, suicide, heavy drinking or drug addiction. The tests also covered personal 'nervous troubles' (such as morbid fears of traffic or heights and fits of crying), and physical abnormalities (such as blood spitting, backache and defect of hearing or vision). See 'Schedule to be filled in by applicant', Racial hygiene papers, box 68, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 52 During 1938 the Pre-marital Bureau seemingly changed its name to 'Pre-Marital Clinic'.
- 53 RHA pamphlet promoting the 'Pre-Marital Clinic', published 1938, Racial hygiene papers, box 68, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 54 The B'nai Brith.
- 55 Presentation paper titled 'The need for a pre-marital advisory bureau,

under the aegis of the B'nai Brith, by Brother Schalit', Doctor Schalit's papers, Box 3, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.

- 56 By this time the NSW RHA had become a national organisation titled 'The Racial Hygiene Association of Australia'.
- 57 'Preparation for marriage' section in 'The Racial Hygiene Association of Australia (a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and affiliated with The American Social Hygiene Association) thirty-fourth annual report, 1st June – 30th July 1960', Racial hygiene papers, box 68, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 58 'Pre-marital counselling' section in 'The Racial Hygiene Association of Australia (a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and affiliated with The American Social Hygiene Association) thirty-fourth annual report, 1st June – 30th July 1960', Racial hygiene papers, box 68, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 59 'Objects of the Association' section in 'The Racial Hygiene Association of Australia (a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and affiliated with The American Social Hygiene Association) thirty-fourth annual report, 1st June – 30th July 1960', Racial hygiene papers, box 68, *Papers of Ruby Rich*.
- 60 'Objects of the Association'.
- 61 'Objects of the Association'.
- 62 Transcript of recording of Ruby Rich, 13364.