

Constructing Eden: Eugenics in California from Soil to Science

The small town of Ukiah, California was once home to the Mendocino State Hospital for the Insane. The hospital itself sat among lush forests painted against a backdrop of picturesque mountains, but within its walled gardens, 113 men and 51 women were sterilized without consent up to the year 1939.¹ Though these figures are much lower in number than other institutions such as the Patton (1,693) and Stockton (1,455) State Hospitals, the Mendocino State Hospital is emblematic of the eugenic landscape of California between 1909 and 1979. Among forests and rolling hills you could be committed six times for fleeing home in a “nude condition” because your husband “drank and bought lottery tickets” with such frequency that you “would go without meat for days at a time.”² You might not officially be diagnosed for twenty years despite being subjected to repeated intelligence and venereal disease exams. Eventually, because you had been classified as “unfit,” “asocial,” or “promiscuous,” you might even be sterilized without consent.³

It is no coincidence that such abuses could occur in such a beautiful landscape in light of how interwoven the development of California’s agricultural empire and eugenic culture were. The landscape of the Mendocino State Hospital for the Insane thus raises the central questions of this essay: What is eugenic science and how did it develop in the United States and California? Are there differences in those developmental pathways in human, economic, and environmental terms? How were these ideologies put into practice on human bodies? This project traces the intellectual underpinnings of the eugenic landscape of California and connects them to the

¹ *Sterilizations Performed in California State Hospitals for Mentally Diseased and Defective Persons, Up to January 1, 1938* (Board of Charities, Corrections, and Insanity, 1938), Box 17 F. California-Institutions-Sterilization of Inmates, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

² *Summary of Case History: King, Mary* (Mendocino State Hospital, 1916), Box 17 F. California-Institutions-Sterilization of Inmates, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

³ *Ibid.*; *California State Hospitals For Insane Resident Populations* (Board of Charities, Corrections, and Insanity, September 30, 1936), Box 12 F. California-Institutions-Statistics, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA. It is likely that the patient above, Mary King, was eventually sterilized as she had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder which was the second most sterilized category in Californian institutions.

agricultural development of the state in order to better contextualize the advent of its sterilization programs. To a certain extent, it is also a cultural history of the manner in which Californian eugenicists came to view their state as the living embodiment of an Eden that was suitable only for a select few. It is a story of how topography fostered tension, how surgeons used scalpels, and how soil was thought to bring salubrity. Ultimately, though, this is a story about a few wealthy men who viewed California as their Eden and sought to create it through eugenic science, literature, and practice.

Historians studying the eugenics movements that swept the country throughout the twentieth century have created an expansive historiography that confronts many of the complexities found in the records.⁴ My project aims to add to this discourse by delving deeper into the history of eugenics in California. I argue that the origins of eugenic California lie in how its landscape was conceptualized by Euro-American pioneers to be a fertile garden, which in turn influenced how the state developed into an agricultural magnet that attracted affluent men familiar with notions of better breeding. Indeed, Alexandra Stern has argued that the diverse landscapes of California shaped eugenic thought as much as eugenicists sought to shape the

⁴ Phillip Reilly illustrates that from the beginning of the eugenics movement in America, proponents of involuntary sterilization were, “wedded to a faith that medical science had within its grasp a simple but humane procedure... that would benefit society.” See, Reilly, *The Surgical Solution*, x; Kline explicitly places gendered discourse at the forefront. Her work explains how the low birthrates of the white middle class were made to be the moral problems of women deemed unfit and moronic. Kline argues that the white middle-class did not seek to answer why they were having so few children, but instead, why other populations were having so many. See, Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 2005), 2; Alexandra Stern moves scholarship on the eugenics movement in America towards the American West as she traces the connections between affluent Californians and the eugenics movement at the turn of the twentieth century into the 1960s and 1970s. She argues that within the global history of eugenic practice, “[eugenic thought] ran exceptionally deep in the Golden State,” of California where at least 20,000 men and women were involuntarily sterilized as part of institutionalized efforts to prevent the destruction of the American gene pool. In doing so, she successfully connects medical and popular culture to eugenic ideology thereby creating the foundations for others to delve more deeply into the connections between the ideas of prominent Californian ideologues and their role in constructing who was deemed fit to be a Californian citizen. See, Stern, *Eugenic Nation Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 1–26.

populace of California.⁵ In this way, what makes California's eugenic legacy unique is the extent to which Californian flora, fauna, and topography reinforced the nascent ideologies of selective breeding at the turn of the twentieth century. It would be an influence that would have grave consequences for thousands of Californians in the twentieth century.

In order to illustrate the larger eugenic landscapes California was a part of I begin with an overview of how eugenic science developed in racial and gendered terms. I then hone in on the history of eugenic science in California. I analyze how California was conceptualized by mid-nineteenth century travel literature in order to connect this rhetoric to the state's economic and eugenic development. In doing so, I show that large-scale agriculture brought eugenically minded men and their eventual human subjects to the state. Then, I discuss some of these key eugenic figures, their motives, and their means for fostering eugenic programs in the state. Through a close reading of eugenic popular culture and news media, I illustrate the contours of the eugenic struggle as they painted it. Ultimately, in the final sections of the paper I analyze sterilization statistics and policy in order to reveal the human costs of eugenic practice, and I conclude with a brief reflection on the historiographical revisions which are still needed.

Constructing Eugenics

Statistician Sir Francis Galton developed what was to be the science of eugenic thought with three primary publications between 1869 and 1883.⁶ Eugenics was a term used in a fluid and changing manner at first, and it was not until 1909 that Galton defined eugenics concisely as "the science which deals with all influences that improve the inborn qualities of a race; also with those that develop them to the utmost advantage."⁷ The origins of eugenic science are found in

⁵ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 118.

⁶ Philip R. Reilly, "Involuntary Sterilization in the United States: A Surgical Solution," *The Quarterly Review of Biology* 62, no. 2 (June 1, 1987): 153, doi:10.2307/2829217.

⁷ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 11.

the work of two schools of science: naturalism and genetics. In the nineteenth century, French naturalist Jean Baptiste de Lamarck posited a theory of inheritance in which external factors in the environment could greatly influence inherited characteristics.⁸ Lamarck's work was foundational to the optimism that characterized eugenic reformists in France, Romania, Argentina, and Mexico, who thought that through comprehensive public health programs that addressed heredity, hygiene, and environmental factors racial decay could be reversed.⁹ This idea of racial decay, or race suicide as President Theodore Roosevelt dubbed it, was the *casus belli* of eugenicists and many Progressive-era reformers around the world.¹⁰ They would gravitate towards themes of degeneration consistently and exalt that not only was reversion to primitive states possible—it was already measurably underway in certain racial stocks.¹¹

However, Lamarck's work created concerns that the progress environmental programs garnered was only temporary, and that when budgets were curtailed during times of austerity, certain races would inevitably continue their regression as their environments once again degraded.¹² These fears were solidified with the work of German cytologist August Weismann, who built upon Gregor Mendel's hybridization experiments with plants and posited that hereditary material was transmitted from generation to generation with absolutely no change regardless of environment. Weismann's argument directly challenged the environmental reforms that Lamarck's work had fostered. Further, it infused eugenic thought with a fatalistic attitude that would foster the rise of negative eugenic programs that sought to better the human race via eugenic sterilization rather than public health because there could be no improvement of those

⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁹ Ibid., 14–15; Nancy Stepan, *The Hour of Eugenics: Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

¹⁰ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 11.

¹¹ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 13.

¹² Ibid., 15.

already alive, only those yet to be born.¹³ With such lofty goals and ambiguous means, questions and differing means of interpretation abounded from Galton's proposition that human betterment was attainable through science. What is improvement? Who benefits? What race? What is race? And most importantly: Who decides? It is how these questions were answered, and specifically by whom, that created the eugenic landscapes that permeated the globe in the twentieth century.

In general, these questions were answered by Progressive reformers around the world. Progressivism, like eugenics, was a multifaceted movement with global origins.¹⁴ The interconnected processes of industrialization, urbanization, and transcontinental immigration reshaped the landscapes of the planet in the latter half of the nineteenth century.¹⁵ From the creation of more effective tools of empire to the birth of new sciences, the period was full of innovation and idea exchange.¹⁶ But as Stern notes, "the underbelly of [this] Progress (with a capital P) was riddled with perceived social ills such as sprawling urban tenements, malnourished children, disease outbreaks, environmental degradation, class conflict, and racial strife."¹⁷ As assorted upper middle-class people in different countries took measurement of the world transitioning around them, and sought to make sense of it, they increasingly looked to the sciences which promised humans the power to perfect society.¹⁸ These Progressives constituted a diverse array of individuals whose pursuits varied based on regional contexts; however, what

¹³ Ibid.; Diane B Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity: 1865 to the Present* (Amherst, N.Y.: Humanity Books, 1995).

¹⁴ Faith Jaycox, *The Progressive Era*, Eyewitness History (New York: Facts On File, 2005), 190.

¹⁵ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 13.

¹⁶ Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 11–12.

¹⁷ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 13.

¹⁸ Joyce Oldham Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret C. Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: Norton, 1994), 15–90.

united them all was “their conviction that only... collective social action on behalf of ‘the people’” could improve the lot of humanity.¹⁹

The Progressive Era in America sprouted from the many developments that changed the socio-economic, cultural, and geographical landscapes of the nation from 1865 to 1920. From the end of the Civil War to 1890, Americans in essence “moved into town” as the country transitioned from a small agricultural nation to a larger more industrialized and urban one.²⁰ Cities ballooned as they were conceptualized as hotbeds of opportunity and haute-culture while the country experienced the largest influx of immigration it has ever seen between 1901 and 1910.²¹ So great were the numbers of immigrants entering the country that one newspaper, *The San Jose Mercury News*, saw it fitting to describe the massive amount of people as “America’s Great Horde of Imported Humanity.”²² While another magazine, *The World’s Work*, described the phenomenon as America’s “Immigration Peril.”²³ The massive influx of immigrants fostered a debate regarding nationality, unity, and collective identity. Some viewed the emerging nation as a melting pot where unity did not require a singular way of life while others pushed for “Americanization” efforts that would force immigrants to abandon their languages and customs in order to assimilate into the American whole.²⁴ Broadly, the eugenics movement in America emerged from this debate as fears that “mixing America’s northern European peoples with the new immigrants... would inevitably dilute American culture and spell ruin for its institutions.”²⁵

¹⁹ Jaycox, *The Progressive Era*, viii.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 5, 264.

²² “America’s Great Horde of Imported Humanity. Immigrants Reach New York at the Rate of Two,” *San Jose Mercury News*, November 5, 1905, 82 edition.

²³ Gino Speranza, “The Immigration Peril,” *The World’s Work*, May 1924.

²⁴ Jaycox, *The Progressive Era*, 412.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 412–413.

“The United States of Sterilization”

Between 1909 and 1960, 60,000 men and women were sterilized under the auspices of eugenic human betterment policies in “The United States of Sterilization.”²⁶ More specifically, California accounted for at least a third of that total with an estimated 20,000 or more procedures performed in that same period, implying that during America’s eugenic age, Californian policy and practice was at the vanguard.²⁷ It is important to note that all of these persons were sterilized without consent, as they were victims of state programs run by the Department of Institutions (later renamed the Department of Mental Hygiene) designed to stem the flow of “defective” genes into the American nation’s collective gene pool.²⁸

In the United States, eugenic science permeated society from politicians to the public precisely because it was easily assimilable into the larger ideology of the Progressive reform movement.²⁹ Indiana enacted the country’s first eugenic law in 1907, which authorized the “involuntary sterilization of persons” deemed unfit for life or procreation.³⁰ California became the second state in 1909 when it enacted the “Asexualization Act [which] authorized the involuntary asexualization of inmates of state hospitals and the California Home for the Care and Training of Feeble-Minded Children, as well as prisoners committed for life and ‘showing sexual or moral perversion’, or twice committed for sexual offenses or three times for other crimes.”³¹ Most importantly, the Californian law put the power of discretion in the hands of “the medical

²⁶ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 84; Reilly, *The Surgical Solution*, 2; Edwin Black, *War against the Weak: Eugenics and America’s Campaign to Create a Master Race* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2003), 87.

²⁷ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 84.

²⁸ Reilly, *The Surgical Solution*, 2; Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 86, 109, 113.

²⁹ *California’s Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979, July 16, 2003, Informational Hearing*. (California legislative report of the Senate Select Committee on Genetics, Genetic Technologies, and Public Policy, December 2003), v.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, vi.

superintendent... or resident physician of the state prison,” who could authorize asexualization whenever and wherever they deemed it to be “of benefit [to] the physical, mental, or moral condition of the inmate,” and society at large.³² Between 1905 and 1917, the legislatures of seventeen other states passed eugenic laws by wide margins of support. By 1932, the onus of the Great Depression had bolstered the national focus on “degenerating” and “costly” racial stocks thereby creating a landscape in which twenty-seven states enacted eugenic sterilization laws.³³

Eugenic law and practice fell into two categories that were explicitly racial and gendered: positive and negative. Wendy Kline notes that positive eugenics was the arm of eugenic science designed to instruct the white middle class on how “to promote the prolific procreation of white middle-class women—those who were considered to be the most mentally and physically sound and who would thus most effectively lead the advancement of civilization.”³⁴ Illustrative of this was a magazine article published in 1912 and entitled, “Women: Building a Better Race.” The article claimed that the “American woman is the leader of the awakened social conscience in a country-wide crusade that is cooperating to build a better race.”³⁵ Though the article’s author, Mabel Potter Daggett, was likely writing to eugenically inclined white middle-class families, it is not clear whether her usage of “American” had deeper racial connotations. However, her article nonetheless illustrates the importance of the female body to positive eugenic thought by placing it at the center of a “country-wide” crusade to build a better race. Further, it points to the construction of the progressive “New Woman” whose procreative abilities and sound morals could save the white American race.

³² Ibid.

³³ Reilly, “Involuntary Sterilization in the United States,” 158; Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 100.

³⁴ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 18–19.

³⁵ Mabel Potter Daggett, “Women: Building a Better Race,” *The World’s Work*, 1913 1912.

This archetypal “New Woman” was reified in extravagant spectacle at the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915 in San Francisco.³⁶ The exposition featured several towering statues depicting archetypal Western and virile stocks but at the center of these monolithic men stood a pioneer woman called the “Mother of Tomorrow” whose accompanying description urged her viewers to “take up the pioneer spirit” and concern themselves with future generations.³⁷ The statue of the “Mother of Tomorrow” tangibly put the female body at the center of the national struggle for progress and racial betterment.³⁸

Conversely, negative eugenics was targeted at those whose fertility was considered unrefined and nearly uncontrollable through conventional means: people of color and the working class.³⁹ These groups, characterized as “morons,” the “feble-minded,” the “unfit,” and chiefly, “moronic mothers” were thought to be “breeders.” Wendy Kline notes that, circa 1910, fears of the supposedly negative influences of these groups came to take on “mythic proportions” which in a substantive way fostered the spread of the eugenics movement.⁴⁰ Indeed, Mary Odem also notes that eugenicists linked the illicit sexuality of young, working-class women to racial decline and degeneration while simultaneously promoting the sexuality of white middle-class women.⁴¹ She notes that they looked to social and familial environments that urbanization had created to explain what they viewed to be the death of proper female morality.⁴²

³⁶ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 7.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 7–8; Burton Benedict and Robert H. Lowie Museum of Anthropology, *The Anthropology of World's Fairs: San Francisco's Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915* (Berkeley, Calif. : London ; Berkeley: Lowie Museum of Anthropology ; Scholar Press, 1983).

³⁹ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 19.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Mary E. Odem, *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Female Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920*, Gender & American Culture (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 96.

⁴² Ibid.

Progressive and eugenic reformers constructed the issue as one of space. The expanding geographies increasingly open to working-class women, and the associated opening of their sexual frontiers that became available to them as they were empowered through wages, work, and the ability to travel outside of the domestic sphere created fear of an ongoing moral degradation.⁴³ Indeed, social workers, psychiatrists, sociologists, educators, and progressive reformers all ascribed the “lax sexual etiquette” of the time to the female body, feminine sexuality, and degeneration stemming from their empowerment in society.⁴⁴ Origins of this degeneration were discussed *ad nauseam*, but the science of eugenics posited that these “moronic” women were not just sick or temporarily depraved, but rather, genetically flawed in irreversible ways.⁴⁵ Thus, the eugenic solution was most often a surgical solution.

By 1917, segregation of those deemed “unfit” was no longer feasible if the goal of eugenics, human betterment, was to be achieved. It is at this juncture that the hour of eugenics truly began in America. Between 1920 and 1940 negative eugenics became the dominant ideology of the field, and this is no more evident than in the state of California, where a select group of men would use eugenic science, law, and practice to construct a Californian Eden that had been conceptualized in the mid-nineteenth century.

Constructing California

The Euro-American pioneers that ventured to California in the nineteenth century could not ignore the vast and imposing aura of the landscapes they found themselves in. Their writings have reflected this, but most importantly, they created what Kevin Starr has dubbed “prophetic patterns” for how humans would place themselves in relation to the Californian environment and

⁴³ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 19–20.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 20; Elizabeth Lunbeck, “‘A New Generation of Women’: Progressive Psychiatrists and the Hypersexual Female,” *Feminist Studies* 13, no. 3 (October 1, 1987): 513–43, doi:10.2307/3177879.

⁴⁵ Odem, *Delinquent Daughters*, 98.

other people.⁴⁶ As American presence shifted from a tentative period of contact between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to occupation, pioneers conceptualized the realm around them as a complex, and unforgiving amalgam of lush fertility and barren sterility.⁴⁷

Within the extant travel literature, multiple patterns are illustrated that were to have lasting legacies. Primarily, a recognition of the lush and Eden-like nature of the Californian landscape is put forward where the land is described as suitable for only the fittest racial stocks. Those who struggled in this Eden were characterized as unfit and degenerative to the population at large. Through travel literature these ideas permeated the Euro-American consciousness in such a way that those who migrated to California may have viewed their lives and landscape through these lenses.⁴⁸

When California became an American frontier in 1848 the region from north to south did not resemble what we know today.⁴⁹ It had been conceptualized as an Eden, but the eugenic California of the twentieth century was a highly industrialized space that had yet to be constructed. California developed via the international and continental forces of cattle and

⁴⁶ Kevin Starr, *Americans and the California Dream, 1850-1915*, Americans and the California Dream (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 3–48.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 13; John Bidwell, *A Journey to California, 1841: The First Emigrant Party to California by Wagon Train* (Berkeley, Ca: The Friends of the Bancroft Library, 1964), 13. In 1841, pioneer, soldier, and statesman, John Bidwell wrote of this environmental dichotomy saying that, “people generally look on [California] as the garden of the world, or the most desolate place of Creation.”

⁴⁸ Lansing W. Hastings, *The Emigrant's Guide To Oregon and California* (Princeton University Press, 1932), 94–95. In his book detailing his adventure west, lawyer turned pioneer, Lansing W. Hastings, wrote in painstaking detail of everything he encountered, his ruminations on those sightings, and his vision of what the future held for the far western frontier. Of the Californian landscape, Hastings wrote that there was not a region in the world, “so eminently calculated,” by nature, “to promote the unbounded happiness and prosperity, of civilized and enlightened man.” Of the Mexican people who occupied California at the time of his writings he wrote that, “the Mexicans differ, in every particular, from the foreigners; ignorance and its concomitant, superstition, together with suspicion and superciliousness, constitute the chief ingredients, of the Mexican character. More indomitable ignorance does not prevail... in truth, they are scarcely a visible grade, in the scale of intelligence.” In his paradigm, the Mexican inhabitant of California lived a life of squalor in direct tension with the overwhelming abundance of the landscape’s fecundity, precisely because California was for the fittest stocks.

⁴⁹ Douglas Cazaux Sackman, *Orange Empire: California and the Fruits of Eden* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 26.

citrus.⁵⁰ Douglas Sackman notes that these forces— especially railroad connections and the development of an agricultural empire— “were responsible for turning this part of America into a second Mediterranean, and more. Indeed, it would become a ‘second edition’ of Eden whose fruits could be shipped out and sold to the nation.”⁵¹

The creation of this second edition of Eden would come at a cost to those who built it. The citrus industry created and maintained a transmogrification of California’s agricultural working masses into, “racial others biologically suited to... manual labor, labor in the heat, [and] any labor white workers could not or would not stand for.”⁵² At first, the workers were predominantly Chinese and “fruit tramps” of eastern European descent. However, by the Mexican Revolution of 1910, which began to push Mexicans beleaguered by war north into the American Southwest en masse, a myriad of peoples had been working as part of the subaltern backbone of the “Orange Empire.”⁵³ Migrant Africans, Filipinos, Indians, Jamaicans, Japanese, and Mexicans were, “pulled to California’s promised land” of an agricultural Eden where there supposedly existed enough fertile soil for everyone to plow and make a living.⁵⁴ Indeed, an article from the *San Francisco Bulletin* published in 1889 harkened back to California’s prophetic patterns in perpetuating the myth:

There is still enough room for every skilled laborer, and for every honest one who wants nothing better than a chance to till the soil... there is still room for the strong-hearted... for such men... in pioneer days came to California and achieved success— because nothing in the way of work was too hard for them.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 20–52; Rachel St. John, *Line In the Sand a History of the Western U.S.-Mexico Border* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 63–89.

⁵¹ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 23, 34.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 9.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 9, 130.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 123–127.

⁵⁵ “Room for Skilled Artisans and Sturdy Laborers,” *San Francisco Bulletin*, April 16, 1889.

Three decades later, evidence that this conceptualization had truly permeated the Californian culture is shown in the words of Governor William Stephens, who in addressing the Los Angeles Farm Bureau, waxed poetic about the opportunities within the soil of “God’s favored land”:

We have a profound responsibility... we can lay the foundations for great and glorious cities, for wide highways that are arteries of trade, for the institutions of learning, if we labor intelligently and reverently with ... the soil.⁵⁶

These developments brought more than just industrialization and labor, they brought eugenic science to California via eugenically minded men who were drawn to the state due the prosperity its landscapes promised. In this way, the development of eugenic science in California was intrinsically interwoven with the agricultural development of California because it brought both the science and the human subject to the state.

California’s Cult of Human Service

The Californian case study of eugenics is unique in how a cadre of eugenic titans from the early 1910s into the 1950s was able to influence the racial, gendered, and sexual landscapes of California through their efforts to endorse, finance, and direct eugenic projects.⁵⁷ This cadre was primarily composed of prominent, white, Progressives who had migrated to California in search of soil and salubrity in similar patterns to the prophet pioneers who came before them. Further, as both George Mowry and John Higham have noted, these eugenic Progressives were likely to have been a group of less than one hundred, young to middle-aged men who probably traced their ancestry through “old American stock.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ F.W. Stephens, “Agriculture the Basis of All Prosperity,” July 30, 1921, Box 193 F. W.D. Stephens Governor, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

⁵⁷ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 100,113.

⁵⁸ David Kennedy, ed., *Progressivism: The Critical Issues* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1971), 65–69; William Francis Deverell and Tom Sitton, eds., *California Progressivism Revisited* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 5; Jaycox, *The Progressive Era*, 30.

Men such as Luther Burbank, Ezra Gosney, and Lewis Terman all fit this description. They were to be what layman eugenicist Fred Hogue dubbed the “cult of human service” in California.⁵⁹ They would seek the “perfection and preservation of organized society” through eugenic human betterment.⁶⁰ Their works and writings would synergistically interact with fears of racial degeneration, female sexuality, and overpopulation that had been fostered by California’s rapid industrial and agricultural rise to power.⁶¹ All of these men were attracted to the conceptualization of Californian Eden, they all came to California in search of better health or agricultural splendor during the state’s rapid development, and all were key figures in California’s eugenic brotherhood.

For example, horticulturist Luther Burbank migrated to California in 1875 because he thought it was “the chosen spot of all this earth as far as nature is concerned.”⁶² Beginning in the 1900s, Burbank connected himself with prominent eugenicists in California such as David Starr Jordan and began promulgating his own eugenic ideas in pamphlets, papers, and speeches.⁶³ In his speech at the Second Congress for Race Betterment held at the Panama Pacific Exposition of

⁵⁹ Fred Hogue, “Social Eugenics,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 21, 1936.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 100; *California’s Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979: Background Paper* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office: Senate Select Committee on Genetics, Genetic Technologies, and Public Policy, July 16, 2003), iv.

⁶² Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 57; Luther Burbank and Wilbur Hall, *The Harvest of Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), 32.

⁶³ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 61; David Starr Jordan, *The Days of A Man: Being Memories of a Naturalist, Teacher and Minor Prophet of Democracy*, vol. 1 (New York, N.Y.: World Book Company, 1922), 434; Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 130–133. David Starr Jordan moved from western New York to Stanford California after having been offered a position as Stanford University’s first president. Eugenically, Jordan was of like mind with Burbank in that he viewed heredity as being of primary importance to California’s future. Jordan opined for the *Sunset* newspaper of San Francisco in 1908, “the essential source of Californianism lies in heredity.” Jordan’s vision was explicitly exclusionary. Indeed, in his work, *Footnotes to Evolution*, Jordan explicitly outlined what he viewed to be the problem with humanity: “Nature is too kind and too indiscriminating, [and] as a result we have pauper races.” To Jordan the environmental elements that fostered “strong races” were from the Northern Hemisphere, while weaker races hailed predominantly from the tropical Southern Hemisphere where the conditions created “parasites that enfeebled society.” It was through this lens that Jordan would bitterly lash out against what he considered to be global southerners from Mediterranean Europe, Asia, and especially Mexico during the 1920s.

1915, Burbank put forward a plan to achieve California's "imperial dominion" via eugenics. According to Sackman, the formula was simple— "place an enterprising people in a natural Eden, watch them make improvements, and then allow them to apply their ingenuity to human beings themselves. Both plants and people would be burbanked toward perfection."⁶⁴

Ezra S. Gosney and Lewis Terman both migrated to California in 1905 for work and the health benefits that the aridity promised their lungs. Gosney was a lawyer turned livestock magnate who had become sensitive to nascent doctrines of selective breeding during his ten years as president of the Arizona Wool Growers Association.⁶⁵ In California, Gosney made himself absolutely rich earning "forty times the average per capita income" on "more than three hundred acres of prime land where he planted more than twenty-four thousand lemon trees as well as oranges and juice grapes."⁶⁶ His funding would be of paramount importance to the eugenics movement in California. Indeed, Gosney created the Human Betterment Foundation (HBF) in 1929 after being encouraged by prominent eugenicists.⁶⁷ The creation of the foundation came two years after Gosney had assembled a team of the nation's most prominent eugenicists to conduct a comprehensive survey of California's sterilization practices from 1909 to 1927. The survey became a work of such significance that it validated the effectiveness of eugenic science on a national level. The team consisted of many, among them was Lewis Terman.⁶⁸

Terman migrated to California after having been offered a job as principal of San Bernardino High School. Several years later, after a move to Stanford University, Terman redeveloped the standard intelligence test in a way that would explicitly foster eugenics. He

⁶⁴ Sackman, *Orange Empire*, 63, 57; Peter Dreyer, *A Gardener Touched with Genius: The Life of Luther Burbank*, Rev. ed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 13.

⁶⁵ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 104.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ Reilly, *The Surgical Solution*, 79.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

became pivotal to the movement, as he “maintained an undying belief that inferior or superior intelligence was determined principally by genetics.”⁶⁹ His work on intelligence quotients made eugenic science a numerically substantiated field that gave “numerical classifications for feeble-mindedness, morosity, and idiocy.” Further, his work on expected average intelligence quotients of different racial groups dominated eugenic discourse for years to come and put the children of many nationalities—particularly Mexicans—on vocational and manual labor pathways.⁷⁰

Thus, these men and a select group of others were pivotal in their attempts to define a certain type of race, gender, and behavior that defined a Californian identity. However, there were many ways to define and control the populace. Indeed, anti-immigration laws, anti-miscegenation laws, deportation, scare tactics, and outright segregation from public life in state institutions were all methods that were employed in the early twentieth century.⁷¹ However, what made sterilization so utilitarian to eugenic boosters was the issue of blood. Ultimately, previous methods only segregated blood—they did not destroy it. Eugenicists in California constructed their endeavor to be a benevolent and necessary undertaking that would assuredly uplift society. With the aid of eugenic news, propaganda, and literature eugenicists in California moved towards the construction of a highly racial and gendered landscape.

“Social Eugenics”: Eugenic Science in Popular Culture

Sterilization practices as pervasive as those found in California’s history could not have existed in a vacuum. Progressive era fears that the eugenic news, propaganda, and literature

⁶⁹ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 18–19.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁷¹ *California’s Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979, July 16, 2003, Informational Hearing.*, 3; Alexandra Stern, “Buildings, Boundaries, and Blood: Medicalization and Nation-Building on the U.S.-Mexico Border, 1910-1930,” *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 79, no. 1 (February 1, 1999): 41–81.

outlets exacerbated often catalyzed the spread of eugenic culture. Indeed, these mediums often analyzed the national and international contours of the eugenic struggle against racial decay by invoking environmental and racial prescriptions.

Globally, an article published in the British tabloid, *The Evening Express*, described how an international congress of “sexual reform” had been organized and was planning on addressing the nations of the world regarding the need to address the inheritability of criminality.⁷² Another article described how eugenic thought was affecting the succession of the Spanish crown in Madrid.⁷³ Nationally, other articles discussed marriage bans in South Dakota and marriage “black lists” in Iowa.⁷⁴ Ultimately, in California, *The Los Angeles Times*, was the primary vehicle of eugenic culture, thought, and propaganda.

Indeed, in 1924, an article conflated eugenic propaganda efforts with the prophet Jeremiah whose role was to warn the masses of the impending apocalypse.⁷⁵ Moreover, an article published in October of 1933 argued that racial destruction was inevitable. Titled, “A Moronic World is Only 100 Years Away!,” Ransome Sutton claimed that one-fourth of the population, a group he labeled the tenement district, would be grandparents to every single American in one hundred years because they had “plenty of leisure” to propagate their kind. Further, the article was accompanied by a cartoon depicting the dichotomous construction of “racial stock” that had become central to eugenic discourse in America: the western European “Old stock” American and the homogenized immigrant. The cartoon could not be misinterpreted. Taking an entire page,

⁷² “To Aid All Nations for Social Reforms,” *The Evening Express*, 1921, Box 65 F. 22, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

⁷³ “Spain to Bar Sons of King,” n.d., Box 65 F. 21, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

⁷⁴ “Marriage of Unfit Is Banned in South Dakota,” 1939, Box 65 F. 21, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA; “Iowa Compiles Black List of Unfit to Marry,” 1926, Box 13 F. Sterilization J.R.H, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

⁷⁵ “No Title,” *Los Angeles Times*, 1924, Box 65 F. 21, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

it depicted the space privé to the “Ancestors of A Fading Race” and the “Forefathers of the Next America.” The ancestors were pictured to be the type of people who frequented Capitol Hill, city halls, universities, and banks. While, the forefathers, were pictured as being frequenters of asylums, poor farms, prisons, and reform schools.⁷⁶

Such articles were not uncommon for the time. From 1935 to 1941, readers of *The Los Angeles Times* could consistently read the latest news from the eugenics movement at a global level in a column entitled *Social Eugenics*. Authored by prominent layman eugenicist, Fred Hogue, his work was “sensationalistic, folksy, and doctrinaire” in discussing topics of paramount importance to the eugenic consciousness.⁷⁷ From “population, birth control, venereal disease, marital exams, [to], above all, sterilization,” Hogue reflected the viewpoint of an influential cadre of elite Californians who viewed eugenic science as the panacea to California’s grave socioeconomic problems.⁷⁸ So grave were the issues in question, that Hogue saw fit to title the pilot article from April of 1935, unabashedly and in large bold text, “Shall We Halt Race Suicide?”⁷⁹

Other *Social Eugenics* articles written by Hogue in that six-year period harken to the rhetoric California’s earliest settlers had created. One in particular, speaks to the Eden complex present in the Californian consciousness illustrating not only that those patterns had staying power, but that eugenic science in California was tied to perceptions of the Californian landscape. In a column from June 1941, Hogue uses Japan as his muse in putting forward an argument for eugenic science. Hogue placed both the Japanese and American nations on a level

⁷⁶ Ransome Sutton, “A Moronic World Is Only 100 Years Away!,” *Los Angeles Times*, October 8, 1933, Sunday edition, Box 65 F. 21, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

⁷⁷ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 82.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 82–83.

⁷⁹ Fred Hogue, “Shall We Halt Race Suicide?,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 1935, sec. Social Eugenics.

field not only in their splendor, but in their dire situation of overpopulation and degrading morals.⁸⁰ Indeed, to Hogue, Japanese aggression in the East Asian sphere was an issue regarding overpopulation of the unfit, not imperial desires. If it were not for the fact that the Japanese had “bred so prolifically,” there “would be no Japanese aggression, for the Japanese prefer their own Eden.”⁸¹ The Japanese example Hogue put forward was meant to be a fearful lesson for the “flower garden that is the coastal plain of... California.”⁸²

At the twenty-fifth annual meeting of the Eugenics Research Association in 1937, the presidential address given by prominent eugenicist and lifelong Californian, Charles M. Goethe, was the pinnacle of eugenic propaganda.⁸³ In his speech entitled, “Extinction of the Inca Highcastes,” Goethe placed both the Incan civilization and American civilization along the same course in tandem on a timeline towards a nearly inevitable destruction. Appropriating colonial history in the Americas for his purposes, Goethe claimed that it was not so much the “guns, germs, and steel” that allowed the Spanish Conquistadors to conquer the Inca as much as it was their ability to decimate the Inca high-castes— which he claimed were “eugenically speaking, of high intellectual worth” and of limited number.⁸⁴ In his view, the Inca were so technologically advanced because they were a eugenic culture that “was organized like a beehive” where everyone from the low caste worker, to high-caste noble was eugenically appropriate for their role in society.⁸⁵ Especially in regards to their gender roles which Goethe viewed as exceptional because the harem of the Inca ruler ensured that the “fairest maidens... conquered provinces”

⁸⁰ Fred Hogue, “Social Eugenics,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 1, 1941.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ This is likely due to the fact that sterilization practices in California were near their peak in 1937.

⁸⁴ Charles M. Goethe, “Extinction of the Inca Highcastes,” *Eugenical News*, 1937, 22 edition, 55, Box 65 F.25, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA; Jared M. Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York: Norton, 1999).

⁸⁵ Goethe, “Extinction of the Inca Highcastes,” 54–55.

through their abilities to produce hundreds of high-caste children.⁸⁶ To Goethe, “Old stock” Americans could have learned much from “America’s Tibet.”⁸⁷

Ultimately, Goethe’s purpose in retelling his version of Inca history was to cite an example of racial destruction. He warned his audience to heed the lessons other societies had given America, for the “eugenic effect of the wholesale killing of practically all of Incan highcastes... [was] felt to this day.” Goethe claimed that the death of Incan high-castes constituted nothing less than the destruction of their “priceless seed stock” thereby crippling them from ever lifting themselves “out of misery.”⁸⁸ A possibility which he claimed was all too possible for the “colonial” stock of the United States who were at danger from overpopulation of the “hyphenates.”⁸⁹ Thus, in stark terms, Goethe illustrated the gravity of the eugenic struggle. Accordingly, the human costs of “improving” the Californian populace were just as high.

“It seems to me that [this] is a crime”: The Costs of Constructing a Eugenic Eden

The chief architect of the first sterilization law passed in California was eugenicist Frederick Winslow Hatch Jr., who aided in drafting the law that was enacted in 1909, and was then promoted to head the California State Hospital system.⁹⁰ From there, eugenic culture in California was larger than one single man, but his voice still contributed to the expansion of the eugenic net. In 1912 he is quoted as having claimed that “the legal operations of the law” should be extended because it was a “settled conviction” that such extensions would be of benefit to society.⁹¹ Hatch’s advice was heard and in 1913 and 1917, the law was expanded to protect

⁸⁶ Charles M. Goethe, *Seeking to Serve* (Sacramento, Ca: The Keystone Press, 1949), 180–181.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Goethe, “Extinction of the Inca Highcastes,” 56.

⁸⁹ Ibid. “Hyphenates” here is used in an extremely derogatory fashion likely intending to equate an inferiority inherent to people of mixed heritage.

⁹⁰ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 51.

⁹¹ *California’s Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979: Background Paper*, vi.

physicians from legal retaliation for their work; make sterilization a condition of being released from state care; and expand the net of who could be considered for sterilization by including “idiot” minors, those with a “disease of a syphilitic nature,” and those considered perverted.⁹² These legal adjustments accelerated the pace of sterilization in California, and by 1921, 80 percent of all sterilization cases nationwide had been performed in the state.⁹³

While the scope of these legislations do show the extent to which fears about the costs and dangers of degenerate peoples permeated Californian government and culture, they are only partially revealing. By 1921, California was just barely entering the height of its eugenic hour.⁹⁴ Indeed, despite the fact that California accounted for 80 percent of all sterilizations nationwide by 1921, this constituted fewer than 1,000 sterilizations.⁹⁵ However, by 1929, 6,250 operations had been performed, and by 1942, that number was 15,000.⁹⁶ California’s eugenic hour—loosely defined as the period from 1920-1940— was a pivotal junction in the state’s history. It was at this moment where the constructions of the “West” and California as a lush Eden were truly manifested by California’s cult of human service. In doing so, they moved towards the creation of a Californian identity structured by human evolution, race, gender, and sexuality in the name of a therapeutic human betterment that would result in the sterilizations of 20,000 people.

It is important to know that these figures are imprecise and likely to be much higher, but despite the opacity of the records available, a pattern is still present that is unlikely to be reversed as new sources become available: The construction of eugenic California was explicitly racial

⁹² Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 99–101; *California’s Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979: Background Paper*, vii.

⁹³ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 100.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 100,104.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 104,108; *California’s Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979: Background Paper*, viii.

and gendered.⁹⁷ Racially, both the initial report that Ezra Gosney's Human Betterment Foundation published in the late 1920s and the follow up published in 1938, show that foreign-born peoples living in California were adversely affected constituting "39% of the men and 31% of the women" in the study when foreign-born peoples only constituted 21% of the Californian populace at the time.⁹⁸ These figures are not surprising when analyzed in light of the rationale for the figures put forward in the next paragraph of the HBF report stating that "one would expect to find an excess of foreign-born here because figures from all parts of the United States show an excess of insanity among the foreign-born."⁹⁹

Further, these totals also illustrate that "African Americans and Mexicans were operated on at rates that exceeded their proportion of the population."¹⁰⁰ The HBF report outlined bluntly that "Negroes exceed their quota... [as they] made up 1.5% [of the population] in 1930, but 4% in this study."¹⁰¹ Again the justifications given for the statistical inconsistency fault the genetic make-up of the victims claiming that "studies show that the rate of mental disease among

⁹⁷ This is so for four reasons: First, the archival evidence is incomplete. Second, operations performed in state penitentiaries are not tabulated in state reports clearly. Third, women who were sent to institutions purely for sterilization and dismissal, or others who were labeled as "volunteers" were not tabulated in official statistics. Fourth, eugenic culture permeated the Californian consciousness so thoroughly that there were likely to have been hundreds to thousands of sterilizations performed in private practices or at county facilities. While analysis of the limited records available at these institutions points to a consistent system of consent and approval before operation, Alexandra Stern notes that with all cases of sterilization—state sanctioned or private—there exists a "blurred spectrum between choice and coercion" that will be difficult, if not impossible, to discern from the documentation available. See, Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 109–110; Alexandra Minna Stern, *California's Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979, July 16, 2003: The Darker Side of the Golden State: Reckoning with the History of Eugenic Sterilization in California* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office: Senate Select Committee on Genetics, Genetic Technologies, and Public Policy, July 16, 2003), 7.

⁹⁸ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 111; Paul Popenoe and Ezra Gosney, *Twenty-Eight Years of Sterilization in California* (Pasadena, CA: Human Betterment Foundation, 1938), 9.

⁹⁹ Popenoe and Gosney, *Twenty-Eight Years of Sterilization in California*, 9.

¹⁰⁰ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 110; Stern, *California's Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979, July 16, 2003: The Darker Side of the Golden State: Reckoning with the History of Eugenic Sterilization in California*, 7.

¹⁰¹ Popenoe and Gosney, *Twenty-Eight Years of Sterilization in California*, 10.

Negroes is high.”¹⁰² Mexican men and women constituted “7 and 8 percent of those sterilized,” and it is likely that if it were not for deportation practices so prevalent during the 1920s and 1930s that these figures would have been much higher. Stern notes, from 1925 to 1929 alone, deportations of Mexican men and women increased from 1,751 to 15,000 per year, and that these figures do not include the 8,000 to 10,000 people that chose to leave voluntarily each year after 1927 under the onus of widespread racism.¹⁰³ Even with this exodus, at the Norwalk State Hospital in Southern California, where sterilization of Mexican men and women outpaced their rate of admission most significantly, bed space was limited.¹⁰⁴

Patterns regarding the eugenic focus on the female body are also discernable. As Kline notes, eugenics was intimately connected to the politics of reproduction, and to a large extent the eugenic struggle was one against the growing schism between sexuality and motherhood.¹⁰⁵ Sterilization figures illustrate this focus on the female body—especially in California—where more women were sterilized than men in total; more women were sterilized for ambiguous reasons; and half of the institutions routinely sterilized more women in a given year between 1909 and 1950.¹⁰⁶ In this way, the “moronic mother” was more than a racialized and gendered caricature— she was reified explicitly through eugenic sterilization.¹⁰⁷

Indeed, the HBF report, *Twenty-eight Years of Sterilization in California*, labeled manic-depression “a problem of married women” who had inherited a certain “constitution” and that 37

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 75.

¹⁰⁴ For sterilization statistics at Norwalk see, Stern, *Eugenic Nation Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*; For lack of bed space at Norwalk and Patton hospitals see, Thomas Leonard, “T.H.L to J.R.H.,” March 31, 1930, Box 17 F. California-Institutions-Sterilization of Inmates, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

¹⁰⁵ Kline, *Building a Better Race*, 61.

¹⁰⁶ Lisa Matocq, *California’s Compulsory Sterilization Policies, 1909-1979, July 16, 2003: Cumulative Sterilization Data, 1909-1950* (Sacramento: California State Printing Office: Senate Select Committee on Genetics, Genetic Technologies, and Public Policy, 2003).

¹⁰⁷ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 112.

percent of women who had been sterilized in California were sterilized for this reason. The report concluded that “no other argument than these figures is needed, to show the value of sterilization in such families.”¹⁰⁸ In absence of justification from the Human Betterment Foundation, the words of prominent physician and eugenic booster, John Randolph Haynes, speak volumes about the intersection between eugenic sterilization and gender. In a letter to a school commissioner in New Jersey, Haynes castigated the laxity of their standards in paroling “morons” and “feeble-minded” girls without sterilization as a standard. Haynes wrote, “I notice that you apparently do not require sterilization of these feeble-minded and moron girls... it seems to me that [this] is a crime.”¹⁰⁹

Historical Revisions

For the Euro-Americans who moved west throughout the nineteenth century, “to colonize California was to lay stake to its landscapes, through manipulation of the soil.”¹¹⁰ This remained true well into the mid-twentieth century where the quest to create a eugenic Eden was not only substantiated through prophetic conceptualizations, gendered structures of power, and scientific racisms, but through the wealth created by a robust agricultural machine that propped up California’s economy. Goethe, a titan among California’s cult of human service, claimed that he had spent nearly a million of the dollars his citrus and cattle empire had earned him on proliferating eugenic pamphlets.¹¹¹ Thus, Goethe’s efforts to protect the “white pioneer stock... [that] demanded defense” were undergirded by California’s agricultural splendor.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Popenoe and Gosney, *Twenty-Eight Years of Sterilization in California*, 13.

¹⁰⁹ John Randolph Haynes, “John Randolph Haynes to William J. Ellis,” December 22, 1933, Box 13 F. Sterilization J.R.H, Papers of John Randolph Haynes, Special Collections, UCLA.

¹¹⁰ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 148.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 136–142.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 135; Charles M. Goethe, *Seeking to Serve* (Sacramento, Ca: Keystone Press, 1949), 28, 184, 96.

It would not be until the 1940s— a period that marked an end to the massive economic depression that ravaged the world, and America’s formal entry into WWII— that California would be overtaken in terms of annual sterilizations performed by states like Delaware, North Carolina, and Virginia.¹¹³ At this transition— when California still accounted for 60 percent of the operations performed nationwide and other states were just entering their own eugenic hours— the Californian eugenics movement would progressively shift its rhetorical focus back to the power of the white “mother of tomorrow” in their attempts to construct families according to hegemonic American norms.¹¹⁴ Eugenic sterilization laws in California would not be expunged until 1979, but even then, their legacy would remain clear in tangible ways.¹¹⁵ Monuments and places like the Luther Burbank Grove, the C.M. Goethe Arboretum, and the David Starr Jordan High School remind us of California’s cult of human service. From environmental conservancy to cictriculture, we laud them as great men who helped us progress as a people and we have commemorated their lives accordingly— this much is clear. Yet, the darker legacies of these men, their ideas, and the voices of those sterilized are not.

¹¹³ Stern, *Eugenic Nation: Faults and Frontiers of Better Breeding in Modern America*, 108.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 109.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

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