

**Eugenics and Sterilization Laws in the US:
Violating the Right to Procreate**

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Group Website
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Process Paper

Our topic is over the series of eugenics laws in the early 1900s that allowed for selective breeding and the sterilization of unfit US citizens, such as the mentally disabled, prostitutes, criminals, and others. The impacts of these laws included over 10,000 American men and women left victimized and in essence, took away many American minorities' right to procreate. It was hard facts like these and the descriptive accounts and emotional testimonies of present-day victims that impelled our group to choose this topic and focus on the logistics of sterilization in the United States and what propelled this social upheaval of ethical violations.

Our group conducted part of our research by collecting information from books in the Minnesota State University library. We took advantage of an organized research night by compiling lists of titles containing basic background information on our topic and either checking those books out, or scanning important portions. One highlight of our research was visiting the Minnesota Historical Society and reading the Dight Papers, written by Charles F. Dight, a physician that introduced eugenics in our home state, Minnesota. His writings revealed many of the motives for eugenics in America. For other primary sources, we used internet archives specifically on eugenics, finding many images, newspaper clippings, and graphs to incorporate into our web pages as visual representations. For multimedia purposes, we incorporated a clip of bioethical issues expert Paul Lombardo, whose insight on the movement was very valuable to our project, especially his expertise on the case *Buck v. Bell*. However, our favorite source was an interview we conducted with Dr. Ryan C. MacPherson, Associate Professor from the history department at Bethany Lutheran College whose interests include bioethics. Dr. MacPherson's knowledge on the scientific origins of eugenics was particularly helpful to setting a background in our "Movement" page, and he provided us with a new perspective on eugenics with the "positive" and "negative" variations that were supported in the 20th century.

To accommodate our group members' different schedules, we chose the website category. The website provided us a way to collaborate without disturbing each others'

schedules. In addition, the use of technology and multimedia features was a very efficient and interactive way to display our information seamlessly. Using the NHD Weebly template took time to master, but we were pleased with the versatility of creating pages and uploading images. In addition to this we used Windows Movie Maker to edit video clips and Google Drive to type our research project, bibliography, and research description.

In a pursuit to create an ideal nation, many minorities had their rights taken away. Those individuals were discriminated based on their race and disability. They were deemed unfit and were sterilized, often times forcefully. Their right to pursue happiness, in the form of having a child, was taken away. In a country that was created for the people, the law did not uphold its responsibility, and in return hundreds of thousand lost their right as a human-being to procreate.