The Preservation of the Great Race:
The Eugenics Movement of Early Twentieth Century America

BY ALISON C. GACHTER
Mansfield University
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Professor Karen Guenther
During the early twentieth century, scientific and social changes were occurring at a rapid pace throughout much of the world. As scientists were discovering how to make the internal combustion engine affordable for middle class families, millions of immigrants were pouring into the United States. Though new technologies led to vastly increased scientific knowledge, ancient prejudices continued to assert themselves—now, behind the guise of scientific fact. Amidst this period of European imperialism and American manifest destiny, the eugenics movement arose, targeting those seen as the inferior elements of the human race. In a scientific community infused with prejudices both old and new, this school of thought proclaimed the necessity of improving the human race in future generations. Even as the British founding father of the movement, Sir Francis Galton, pondered on ways to encourage the best elements of society to marry and reproduce only with each other, American scientists debated ways to keep the undesirables from mating.¹ The eugenics movement of the early twentieth century was a natural result of the racism, classism, and ethnocentrism that polluted early science in Western Europe and America. In the decades following the publication of Galton’s influential works, crimes against humanity occurred on a massive scale throughout the United States and in some parts of Europe. Rather than using guns and violence, however, the perpetrators committed their crimes behind the guise of surgical masks and scientific facts. For decades, countless thousands of people deemed ‘unfit’ were forcibly sterilized throughout the United States and parts of Europe.

By the early 1900s, Europeans and their descendents had dominated virtually the entire world for several centuries. While much of the earliest exploration and colonization took place during eras that placed little stock in scientific thought as modern thinkers consider it, beliefs

¹ Edwin Black, War Against the Weak: Eugenics and America’s Campaign to Create a Master Race (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2003), 19.
about the inherent superiority of Europeans abounded. However, coinciding with such exploration and settlement were plentiful advancements in science. By the nineteenth century, surgeries were occurring with anesthesia, steamships carried passengers across the oceans in days rather than weeks and microscopes existed that were powerful enough to see individual components of cells.\(^2\) Even as Enlightenment ideals of fraternity and equality fostered revolutions against the ancient nobilities of Europe, the ‘Scramble for Africa’ commenced with alarming rapidity. While the ancient social classes of Europe were slowly lessening in importance, racial differences continued to be emphasized. Though slavery was abolished in America, Jim Crow laws and domestic terrorism in the form of lynching ensured that freed Blacks and their descendents never forgot their place.\(^3\) During this period, many scientific men attempted to legitimize prejudice against other races through biological means. Flawed studies and inherent biases resulted in countless ‘scientific’ publications proclaiming exactly what every white person already ‘knew’—that Northern Europeans were biologically superior to everyone else. As Madison Grant, the chairman of the New York Zoological Society, wrote in his famous pseudoscientific work, *The Passing of the Great Race*, the Nordic race was the true “*Homo europoeus*, the white man par excellence.”\(^4\)

Author Allan Chase names the English political economist Thomas Malthus the original scientific racist.\(^5\) Coming of age during the birth of the industrial revolution in the late eighteenth century, Malthus saw the increasingly large impoverished population of England as evidence of the futility of charity. Rather than encouraging public sanitation and social welfare,

\(^2\) Ibid, 17.
Malthus advocated “build[ing] our villages near stagnant pools, and particularly encourag[ing] settlements in all marshy and unwholesome situations” in an effort to ease nature’s efforts to do away with the weakest members of humanity. He saw charitable efforts as an effort to undermine “the necessary stimulus to industry: poverty.”^6 Though Charles Darwin’s magnum opus *On the Origin of Species* focused exclusively on the natural world, many of its conclusions about evolution and natural selection were being applied to humanity within a few years of its publication. The English sociologist Herbert Spencer coined the phrase ‘survival of the fittest’ in his efforts to explain away the usefulness of such basic necessities as factory safety regulations and clean water systems. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Spencer counted American robber barons like John D. Rockefeller, Sr. and Andrew Carnegie among his staunch admirers.\(^7\) Rather than assigning moral responsibility to the greed that drove the expansion of big business, Spencer and his followers, using warped understandings of Darwin’s theories, assigned such motivations to laws of the natural world, which therefore made them the laws of God. Though he never used the term himself, Spencer’s writings embody the ideals of Social Darwinism.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, powerful microscopes were developed. Biologists were able to see, for the first time, the building blocks of heredity that had been acknowledged, if not understood, by humans for thousands of years. German cellular biologist August Weismann claimed to have discovered “the true vehicle of heredity”^8 by looking through a microscope. This nucleus, as he termed it, contained a “germ plasm,” which he theorized held “the physical causes of all apparently unimportant hereditary habits…of heredity talents, and

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^6 Ibid.
^7 Ibid, 8.
^8 Black, *War Against the Weak*, 19.
other mental peculiarities.” At this point in time, long before the twentieth century’s seemingly endless debates about ‘nature versus nurture,’ it seemed that scientists assumed that if some traits were passed down genetically, then all traits must be. While humans had of course long understood that physical attributes like hair color could be passed down from parent to child, the idea of things like physical ailments or personality being transmitted in a similar fashion was a new idea. However, it was one that was seized upon by countless scholars. Sir Francis Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin, based much of his decades of scholarship on this assumption. In his first and most famous book, *Hereditary Genius* (1869), he studied the prominent men of business, government, and the arts (many of them his classmates from Cambridge) and, using statistics and his own notions of human development (as he had left medical school upon receiving his inheritance), concluded that which has long been obvious to most. As Chase concisely states, Galton realized that “the children of bankers and generals…are statistically much more likely to find their way into the professions and the corridors of political and economic power than are the children of charwomen, peasants, and ditch diggers.” This fact, along with recent theories of molecular biology like Weismann’s, led Galton to surmise that there must be some inherent, concretely genetic reason for the tendency of certain families to appear over and over among the ranks of the rich and powerful.

To Galton’s horror, those genetically blessed families had, over the course of the decades of the industrial revolution, produced fewer and fewer children. On the contrary, as the birthrates of the upper classes declined, the offspring of those men and women who filled the nation’s poorhouses and worked its factories continued to multiply with abandon. Rather than

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attributing these statistics to the recent medical and sanitary improvements enjoyed by the British affluent classes, Galton theorized that moving from country to city “reduc[ed] the birth rates of people of superior blood” by causing sterility. By comparison, the lower classes had experienced a “lag in the decline of birth rates,”¹¹ which made Galton fear that the worthwhile kind of Englishman (perhaps unsurprisingly, the kind who closely resembled himself and his contemporaries) would soon find himself overrun by the genetically inferior offspring of the riff-raff. His solution was to encourage the ‘wellborn’ to breed as enthusiastically as possible. He called this idea ‘eugenics,’ which meant “pertaining to racial improvement by boosting the birth rate of the wellborn to the levels where they speedily prevailed over the less suitable strains or socially less wellborn classes.”¹² Under ideal circumstances, Galton imagined a world where marriages and families were planned—perhaps even governmentally regulated—according to his principles and equations. He was firm in his belief that two eugenically desirable mates could only produce more valuable offspring. However, he was equally sure that mixing one eugenically valuable individual with a defective one would not improve future generations. This, and the unfortunate act of two undesirables reproducing together, inevitably “promote[d] a downward biological spiral,” which, once entered, could not be escaped.¹³ Were persons of such undesirable biological character allowed to mate, Britain would plunge into desolation and poverty.

Though Galton acknowledged that good people sometimes emerged from bad families, and vice versa, for him, the germ-plasm was the factor that all others—such as environment—bowed to. He regretfully concluded that “[n]o amount of social progress or intervention could

¹² Ibid.
¹³ Black, War Against the Weak, 17.
help the unfit,” because their genes were inherently inferior. Those individuals or families who required charitable assistance (thereby proving their genetically-ordained inferiority) would be expected to essentially give up their right to reproduce in return. To put a stop “to the production of families of children likely to include degenerates,” he proposed isolation or segregation during fertile years. He hoped that society at large, once they understood the elements of his argument, would be willing participants of this system.

Galton never uncovered the elusive equations he believed governed human heredity. He sought evidence to support the theories he had already devised. Even after his death, his many followers were unable to pinpoint exactly where, how, and when eugenically desirable traits—like a moral character or an aptitude for mathematics—were passed on. Despite this lack of concrete evidence supporting his theories, these followers, particularly those across the Atlantic, were convinced that eugenics was the key to the fulfillment of the human race’s genetic destiny. Before this destiny could be fulfilled, however, all people who sullied it would have to be removed from the gene pool.

Social progressives were often staunch eugenicists. Victoria Woodhull, a feminist author at the turn of the century, wrote a pamphlet in 1891 entitled *The Rapid Multiplication of the Unfit*. In it, she stated, “The best minds of today have accepted the fact that if superior people are desired, they must be bred; and if imbeciles, criminals, paupers, and [the] otherwise unfit are undesirable citizens they must not be bred.” What had been, for born-and-bred Englishmen like Malthus, Spencer, and Galton, largely an issue of social class was translated into racial terms across the Atlantic. Race, once an issue of white and black, was rapidly becoming more

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14 Ibid, 18.
15 Ibid.
complex in the wake of the enormous immigration waves of the early twentieth century. In previous decades, the formula had appeared thus: whites, largely of northern European extraction, enslaved Africans and their descendants. They then settled on the land of American Indians. By 1880, Europeans were again pouring into the United States—but these were largely from southern and eastern European nations. They were also overwhelmingly poor and uneducated. In large part, they were coming to provide cheap labor for the growing factory economy. However, these immigrants also undoubtedly made up a disproportionate quantity of paupers, criminals, and others Woodhull (and many others like her) deemed ‘unfit.’ Francis Walker, the Director of the 1880 Census Bureau, wrote an article for *Atlantic Monthly* in 1896 entitled “Restriction of Immigration.” In it, he “lamented the statistical imbalance between America’s traditional Anglo-Saxon settlers and the new waves flowing in from southern Europe.”

He and others feared the ‘suicide’ of the truly white race if immigration was not slowed or even halted completely. That the term ‘race suicide’ tended to be the preferred during discussions of the issues clearly demonstrates how clearly eugenicists believed they were halting the unknowing destruction of their race. Rather than ‘blaming’ the unfit for polluting their race, they refer to killing it themselves.

British eugenicists, from Galton himself to his disciples, were open about the fact that the evidence they presented in support of their theories was slim. According to author Edwin Black in his book *War Against the Weak*, “most Galtonian eugenicists admitted that their ideas were still too scantily clad to be called science, too steeped in simple statistics rather than astute medical knowledge, too preliminary to even venture into the far-reaching enterprise of organized

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17 Ibid, 23.
human breeding.” However, their American counterparts, for the most part, possessed no such scruples. The ultimate reason for this nationality-based disparity can only be guessed at. Perhaps racial and ethnic differences were more deeply ingrained in American scientists, leading them to believe that actual concrete evidence was unnecessary. Black states: “racial activists had already convinced themselves that those of different races and ethnic backgrounds considered inferior were no more than a hereditary blight in need of eugenic cleansing.” Among the most preeminent eugenic crusaders of the early twentieth century was the aforementioned Madison Grant, whose racism extended far beyond the ‘obvious’ borders of black and white and led him to differentiate between those Europeans of Nordic, Alpine, and Mediterranean stock. His *The Passing of the Great Race* was a bestseller among the general public. Grant’s ‘Nordic Theory’ was clear: While the Anglo-Saxons, members of the superior Nordic Race, had settled across much of Great Britain, he was careful to point out, those of Irish, Scottish, and Welsh ancestry could be clearly identified as ethnically Briton, which actually meant that their long-ago ancestors had been of Mediterranean heritage. Obviously, these people were inherently inferior to those Brits of Anglo-Saxon descent. Though Grant frequently despaired over the hordes of Italians flooding into Ellis Island, he was careful to note that those Italians whose contributions could not be doubted (Dante, Raphael, da Vinci) were actually of Nordic blood, a conclusion he based on ‘careful’ analysis of busts and portraits from the era. Far from neglecting the accomplishments of the Romans of antiquity, he claimed that a combination of deadly wars and the end of the Republic served to exterminate those of true Roman stock. The inhabitants of Italy—and those Italians emigrating to the United States—during his own era were actually the

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18 Ibid, 27.
19 Ibid, 29.
20 Ibid, 30.
descendents of Roman slaves. An ardent supporter of anti-miscegenation laws, he believed that even one drop of non-Nordic blood would lead to offspring inferior in every way. It was in this way, he and his supporters claimed, that Nordics were committing race suicide.

Madison Grant was a chairman at the American Museum of Natural History. While today his writings are taken seriously only among white supremacy groups, during his time, his beliefs—racist, classist, and neglectful of history as they were—were par for the course among the day’s leading intelligentsia. Not only that, the years immediately preceding World War I saw science and technology as general ideas enjoying the best public relations of their existence. Author Harry Brunius discusses Charlottesville, Virginia, on July 3, 1906. Even as townsfolk prepared for Fourth of July celebrations, Confederate veterans and widows still among them, editorials appeared in the local newspaper decrying the efforts of Northern ‘negrophilists’ who were “up to their old tricks, trying to…make whites go to school with blacks.” Amidst this ancient bigotry, however, roads were being paved, not with bricks, but with the new more efficient crushed gravel. Brunius quotes from the packaging of boxes of crackers shipped to Charlottesville from Milwaukee, “What the National Biscuit Company stands for: the scientific, reconstructed baking industry, whereby the goodness and nutrition of biscuit and crackers have been marvelously enhanced.”

Even as old gentlemen and Southern belles prepared to celebrate the Fourth still dressed—and more importantly, still thinking—like their ancestors, “it was becoming an axiom in this fast changing world: the methods of science are not only reliable and trustworthy, they’re bringing progress, protection from impurities, and, of course, marvelous

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22 Ibid, 216.
enhancement.”

This unwavering faith, among both the general public and those in scientific fields, in the vague ideas of ‘science’ and ‘progress’ would be an essential factor leading to the adoption of eugenic policies across the nation.

Thus, the United States of the early twentieth century was scientifically and socially prepared for eugenics. To lead this movement, Charles Benedict Davenport rose to prominence. The son of an old New England family, he was a Harvard educated zoologist who taught both there and at the University of Chicago. However, it was as director of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences biology laboratory, located at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, that his interest in Galton’s works became a passion. His own upbringing had been “choked with genealogies and ancestral comparisons” to his Puritan forefathers, leaving an enduring fascination with family history, but he also was “obsess[ed] with race mixture. Davenport saw ethnic groups as biologically different beings—not just physically, but in terms of their character, nature, and quality.”

Both he and his outspoken ally Lothrop Stoddard believed that the idea of an American ‘melting pot’ was absurd. Stoddard stated, “As a matter of fact, the melting pot may mix but does not melt. Each race-type, formed ages ago, and ‘set’ by millennia of isolation and inbreeding, is a stubbornly persistent entity. Each type possesses a special set of characters: not merely the physical characters visible to the naked eye, but moral, intellectual, and spiritual characters as well. All these characters are transmitted substantially unchanged from generation to generation.” Thus, if “Italians were predisposed to personal violence,” as Davenport claimed, then naturally those “thrifty, intelligent, and honest” Germans would be doing themselves—and future generations—a grave disservice by reproducing with

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25 Black, War Against the Weak, 33.
26 Ibid, 35.
them. From the point of view of Davenport and his allies, they were doing humanity—or at least, the normalized Anglo-Saxon version of humanity—a great service. Overwhelmingly, they reasoned, it was the British and their descendents who had colonized much of the world and who had invented the technologies needed to do so. If this race of human was ‘out bred’ by members of races who cleaned and cooked for this dominant group, there was surely no hope for humanity.

But how was this service to be performed? Obviously, Davenport needed funds. To provide these, he enlisted the aid of the newly formed Carnegie Institution, writing about a desire to establish a “Biological Experiment Station” at Cold Spring Harbor in Long Island. Though he was clear that his initial experiments would be on plants and animals, he was equally clear that the purpose of these experiments was to learn about race change. In his correspondence to the Carnegie trustees, Davenport addresses

> “the grave problem of the negro, a race whose mental development is, on the average, far below the average of the Caucasian. Is there a prospect that we may through the education of the individual produce an improved race so that we may hope at last that the negro mind shall be as teachable, as elastic, as original, and as fruitful as the Caucasian’s? Or must future generations, indefinitely, start from the same low plane and yield the same meager results? We do not know, we have no data. Prevailing ‘opinion’ says we must face the latter alternative. If this were so, it would be best to export the black race at once.”

Where he proposed exporting the millions of African Americans to was not a mentioned part of this contingency plan. While he was open to the option that improving the environment could benefit an individual, he was skeptical about how this could impact future offspring. Just as a modern person who has rhinoplasty will pass on the genes for their original nose, a feebleminded

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28 Black, War Against the Weak, 35.
29 Ibid, 36.
30 Letter, Charles Davenport to John S. Billings, 3 May 1903: APS B-D27 Cold Spring Harbor Beginnings Correspondence #1, quoted in Black, War Against the Weak, 38.
degenerate—even one who managed to elevate his personal status—would pass on those feebleminded genes, creating risky individuals forever.

Along with money, Davenport also needed a means to get his ideas accepted amongst the scientific community. As Black says, “the great men of medicine were, for the most part, devoted to improving individual health, not stunting it, few of them wanted to be affiliated with the nascent movement.”31 This did not overly daunt Davenport, however. He met with the newly formed American Breeders Association, which had, as a result of Mendelian genetics, formed to discuss issues of breeding animals and plants. At a conference in 1903, Davenport encouraged the group to add a third section: the Eugenics Committee.32 Perhaps because his audience was already firmly convinced about the possibility of scientifically breeding to ‘improve’ racehorses and corn plants, they were receptive to this idea. Of course, while one might breed a racehorse to excel in speed, and corn to excel at yielding crops, there is no such trait that is universally desired amongst humans. Therefore, Davenport and his allies focused on traits that were universally undesirable.

In 1910, Davenport wrote a letter to a Mrs. E. H. Harriman, a railroad tycoon’s widow, asking for funds to set up a Eugenics Record Office.33 Her recently deceased husband had been, like many of his fantastically rich contemporaries, most appreciative of the ideas of Social Darwinism and eugenics. It was with the title of Director of the Eugenics Record Office that Davenport was able to begin to have direct influence on United States policy. The major goals of the organization included immigration restriction and the compulsory sterilization of inferior

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31 Black War Against the Weak, 38.
32 Ibid, 39.
33 Chase, Legacy of Malthus, 118.
However, before any bills could be read or laws passed, Davenport knew he needed evidence to back up his theories. Following in Galton’s lead, Davenport and the ERO relied heavily on questionnaires. These, which asked questions about individual families’ genealogies and physical traits, were sent to thousands of bankers, professors, corporate presidents, and other people Davenport thought of as superior society members. However, the questionnaires were not sent alone, “[a]long with the questionnaires went letters explaining that these data were needed in order to make the maximum use of the Science of Eugenics in helping America breed more leaders like the recipients of the questionnaires.”35 For those less eminent individuals, who Davenport was equally interested in studying, identical questionnaires were distributed. However, rather than being received as a piece of mail with a explanatory note, these less lauded families had ERO field workers descending upon their homes up and down Atlantic seaboard, collecting both the questionnaires and their own notes and observations. For the most part, these families and individuals had no real understanding of what the data being collected was being used for. According to a New Jersey State instructive report, quoted by Edwin Black, “The investigator visits the patients in their cottages [at the New Jersey State Village for Epileptics at Skillman]. She does this in the way of a friendly visit and leads the patient to tell all he can about his friends and relatives, especially as to addresses…Then comes the visit to the [family’s] home. It is the visitor’s recent and personal knowledge of the patient that often assures her of a cordial welcome.”36 In an era where disabled relatives of any sort were frequently hidden away

34 Ibid, 119.
36 Eugenics Records Office, “Methods for Studying the Hereditary History of Patients as used at the New Jersey State Village for Epileptics, New Jersey State Villages for Epileptics Schedules and Forms,” circa 1911, p. 6: APS ERO Series 1, quoted in Black, War Against the Weak, 55.
and not discussed, it seems unsurprising if family members were willing to discuss a patient with someone who did not appear judgmental or disapproving.

The field workers of the Eugenics Record Office were overwhelmingly young and female. Mostly comprised of “young ladies of good families, some but by no means all of them college graduates,” these women had spent several weeks attending lectures by eugenicists and also a brief period observing and talking to known degenerates, such as those patients at the Vineland, New Jersey Training School for Feeble-minded Girls and Boys. According to leading eugenicist Henry H. Goddard, “As a result of the weeks of residence at the training school, they become acquainted with the condition of the feeble-minded.” This quote demonstrates that Goddard truly believed that these women had sufficient knowledge and expertise to diagnose mental conditions after mere weeks of training. These eugenics field workers were to be entrusted with the task of knowing, virtually on the spot, any number of various hereditary mental conditions amongst the general populace. Even those who seemed ‘normal’ individuals risked reevaluation if, for instance, a woman the next county over recalled an aunt or other relative exhibiting any kind of eugenically despised behaviors decades prior. These field workers also combed through the records of hospitals, prisons, and churches, searching for details to add to their notes on various families and individuals.

While racism—often against those groups with only the most minute of physical differences—certainly influenced the actions and beliefs of eugenicists, there were examples of dysgenic individuals who were, nonetheless, of good Anglo-Saxon stock. Perhaps the most famous example was Goddard’s 1912 book, The Kallikak Family: A Study in the Heredity of

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37 Chase, Legacy of Malthus, 120.
Feeble-Mindedness. These Kallikaks (a pseudonym from the Greek words for ‘beauty’ and ‘bad’) had lived in the United States since colonial times, were Protestant, and were of Anglo-Saxon, German, and Dutch extraction. The factor that made them unfit to reproduce? They were, to put it bluntly, ‘poor white trash,’ and the reason for this was strictly hereditary: they possessed the ‘unit character,’ passed on from generation to generation, of ‘pauperism.’ The term unit character was that upon which all of Davenport’s assumptions lay. In this one term, Davenport could describe every single “physical, mental, and moral trait of mankind,” and also claim that each was distinctly inheritable. In short, Davenport believed that “one gene=one trait.”

The Kallikaks had been, despite all the benefits of origin that their ancestors had bestowed on them, poverty stricken for several generations. The troubles of the family had begun, according to Goddard when the colonial-era patriarch, Martin Kallikak, had reproduced both with his wife, who came from a good family and was ‘normal,’ but also had a dalliance with a feebleminded barmaid. From this one dalliance, generations of incompetents were produced. The family member that the field workers had actually met, called Deborah Kallikak in the book, was a result of the degenerate line. She was twenty-two years old in 1911. By Goddard’s own admission, Deborah was more than capable of doing simple math problems, playing instruments, and reading and writing English. There are photographs of dresses she had made, chests she had built, and handkerchiefs she had embroidered. However, according to the intelligence test she was given—the Goddard-Binet IQ tests—she had a mental age of a nine-year-old. She was,

undoubtedly, feeble-minded. A member of the Vineland School since age eight, she had been carefully guided for most of her life. According to Goddard, if she were to leave and exist on her own, she would come to lead a life “vicious, immoral, or criminal, though because of her mentality she would not herself be responsible.”

The term ‘feeble-minded’ was no more specific a century ago than it is now, though it was used to legitimize crimes against humanity committed against thousands of people. Goddard classified Deborah Kallikak as a “high grade, or moron, type of feeble mind, [and this] was the one society had to fear the most.” Unlike those feebleminded individuals of the ‘imbecile’ or ‘idiot’ level, morons were capable of functioning, to an extent, within the confines of greater society. The deeper meaning of this is clear: “Under our compulsory school system and our present courses of study, we compel these children to go to school…until they are fourteen years old and then leave school, not having learned anything of value.” That is eight years of compulsory education for people who apparently lack the mental capacity to gain from it. Goddard’s message was clear: educating these morons was a waste of both teacher time and millions of hardworking, taxpaying citizens’ dollars.

Ultimately, the exact number of people sterilized during the early decades of the twentieth century will never be known. Though Davenport’s belief in the infallibility of ‘unit characters’ like pauperism, feeblemindedness, and immoral character remained unshaken throughout his life, many scientific minds of his era were aware of the pure wrongness of such scholarship. In 1911, in fact, Davenport’s friend, professor of biology at Columbia University Thomas Hunt Morgan “[was] on the eve of demolishing [this] simplistic…hypothesis of heredity

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43 Ibid, 12.
44 Chase, *Legacy of Malthus*, 149.
so completely that Morgan was to become the first geneticist to win the Nobel prize.”

However, Davenport’s most famous book, *Heredity in Relation to the Study of Eugenics*, which based its entire thesis on the unit character assumption, was to be used as a textbook in college classrooms—and enter the minds of professors, lawmakers, and laymen—for decades. One by one, throughout the 1920s, states across the nation would pass legislation legalizing compulsory sterilization of certain individuals. It would not be until the Nuremburg trials after World War II, when many Germans being tried for war crimes against humanity cited the United States as a major inspiration for their own eugenic policies, that Francis Galton’s theories would fall out of favor.

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46 Chase, *Legacy of Malthus*, 149.
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