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A Culture of Control: Progressive Era Eugenics in South Carolina as a Continuation of Created White Supremacy

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A Culture of Control:
Progressive Era Eugenics in South Carolina as a Continuation of Created
White Supremacy

By

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ABSTRACT

This work examines the evolution of eugenic ideology in South Carolina during the Progressive Era by following relevant discussions published in *The State* newspaper. Between 1891 and 1939, *The State* newspaper provided a platform for discussions about eugenic ideology to be disseminated to the general public. Through eugenics the white portion of the South Carolina population saw a way to retain white supremacy and create better progeny. An examination of *The State* reveals a network of discussions that reached across South Carolina, the United States, as well as Western Europe. The existence of newspaper articles illustrates cultural integration in the form of organizational support and governmental interactions with eugenics. Into the 1930s, *The State* also reveals continued support for eugenic practices in the face of Nazi Germany eugenics.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

*“Justice Holmes of the United States Supreme Court said: ‘Three generations of imbeciles are enough.’ We have on record four generations of imbeciles in South Carolina and three generations of them are now at the State Training School [for the Feeble-minded].”*¹

In 1927, the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of forced sterilization in the infamous court case *Buck v. Bell*.² Four years later, in South Carolina, the superintendent for the State Training School for the Feeble-Minded spoke in front of the South Carolina Medical Association, creating a direct parallel between the case of *Buck v. Bell* (1927) and the call for forced sterilization in South Carolina. Forced sterilization was a product of the eugenics movement. Rising in popularity at the start of the Progressive Era, the eugenics movement found success in South Carolina as it

¹ Edward Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science: Eugenics in the Deep South* (Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 125. This quote was part of a speech delivered by B.O. Whitten, superintendent of the State Training School for the Feeble-minded incorporating Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.’s response to *Buck v. Bell* (1927). In 1935, South Carolina approved a forced sterilization bill as a result of such support. Larson’s work examines the existence of eugenic ideology in the deep South, specifically in South Carolina, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi. He defines the period of significance for eugenic involvement in the deep South, between 1900 and 1930s. He determined the main issues of southern eugenics were 1. “protecting and purifying the Caucasian race,” 2. that societies’ problems were caused by “the eugenically “unfit”-particularly the insane and feeble-minded, 3. “eugenic marriage restrictions, sexual segregation, and compulsory sterilization,” presented a viable solution to societies problems and, 4. professionals in the South “championed the cause of eugenics.”

² Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 28.

afforded the white portion of the population a sense of control otherwise lost to a rapidly changing world. The eugenics movement purported to offer a way for white South Carolinians to produce the best progeny and maintain white supremacy. That racism was an ingrained part of American culture and by extension the ideology of eugenics, during the Progressive Era, is not debatable, and largely “eugenics was not, at its core, a racist attempt to eliminate other races.”³ Between 1891 and 1939, South Carolina newspapers provided a platform for pro-eugenic discussions supporting the white population’s notions that the eugenics movement served as a means of societal control.

Although one might wonder how Progressive Era eugenics has any relationship to modern life, eugenic ideology is still very much alive and well. Just during the fall of 2020, reports of forced sterilizations of immigrants carried out under the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), have emerged.⁴ Allegedly hysterectomies were performed on women detained at an ICE detention center without their consent. Just as sterilizations during the Progressive Era can be seen as an effort to eliminate “undesirable” and “unfit” people from reproducing, so too can the modern actions of the United States be seen as a reflection of our longstanding xenophobic history towards immigrants and minorities. With regards to South Carolina, although the state’s sterilization law was originally passed in 1935 it remained on record until 1985.

³ Randall Hansen and Desmond King, *Sterilized by the State: Eugenics, Race, and the Population Scare in Twentieth-Century North America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 10.

⁴ “ICE, A Whistleblower and Forced Sterilization” National Public Radio, September 22, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/09/18/914465793/ice-a-whistleblower-and-forced-sterilization>.

Furthermore, it was not until 2003 that the governor of South Carolina offered an apology for the harm perpetrated by the state.⁵

Beyond South Carolina's interaction with eugenic ideology, this research also calls into question the generally accepted time frame of the Progressive Era. The South is unique for its slower acceptance of eugenic ideology when compared to other states and regions of the United States.⁶ With the later formation of women's groups in the South, the initial rejection of the nineteenth amendment, and passage of a South Carolina sterilization law in 1935, it is evident that defining tenets of the Progressive Era were comparatively slow to develop and extended beyond the 1920s.⁷ Throughout the writing process the need for further research on topics relating to eugenics in South Carolina arose. Although I have identified potential contributing factors for the delayed passage of a sterilization law, a greater understanding of the interplay between these forces requires further research.⁸ Additionally, as discussed in this paper, eugenics in early 1900s South Carolina focused on the purification of the white population, however, further research

⁵ Dave Reynolds, "South Carolina Governor Apologizes For State's Eugenics Past," Department of Administration Council on Developmental Disabilities, Inclusion Daily Express, January 8, 2003, <https://mn.gov/mnddc/news/inclusion-daily/2003/01/010803sceugenics.htm>.

⁶ Larson. *Sex, Race, and Science*, 40.

⁷ The works of *Sex, Race, and Science: Eugenics in the Deep South* and *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics 1830-1930* support the claim of a comparatively slow forming Progressive Era and extended discussion of eugenic ideology in the South.

⁸ Larson. *Sex, Race, and Science*, 124. Although there are a myriad of possible explanations for the delayed passage of a sterilization bill in South Carolina including religion and a rejection of progressive ideologies, one compelling argument is the South's distinct approach to family culture. Southerners demonstrated a general distrust of external entities including government institutions. In particular, this distrust extended to institutional interference in family matters such as eugenic sterilization or legislation that placed limitations on family matters.

could illuminate what precipitated the transition to a system of eugenics that focused on Black people.

History of Eugenics

The history of *eugenics* began with British statistician, Francis Galton (1822-1911), cousin of evolutionist Charles Darwin. First used in 1883, the term eugenics defined his “program of selective breeding.”⁹ Galton created the term from the Greek “eugenes” meaning “good in birth.”¹⁰ He defined “eugenics” as

"a brief word to express the science of improving stock, which is by no means confined to questions of judicious mating, but which...takes cognisance of all influences that tend in however remote degree to give the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had.”¹¹

The scientific support of eugenic ideology, based in plant propagation and stock breeding, was integral to the movement’s success and longevity. The South’s largely agrarian way of life paired well with Galton’s concept of stock breeding then applied to humans. Eugenics gained European notoriety during a time of scientific inquiry found in the Victorian Industrial Revolution.¹² Upper classes of British society could not explain

⁹ Diane B. Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity: 1865 to the Present* (New Jersey: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1995), 3.

¹⁰ Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity*, 3.

¹¹ Francis Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development* (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1883), 24-25. <http://galton.org/books/human-faculty/>. In this quote, Galton explains his definition of eugenics and how the practice accounts for any and all aspects that influence the promotion of desirable traits within the white race.

¹² Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 3.

the supposed devolution of city dwellers into poor violent criminals.¹³ Similar fears of societal deterioration plagued upper white classes in the United States. The scientific communities of both Britain and the United States eventually adopted and evolved the ideology of eugenics to solve societal deterioration. The acceptance of eugenic ideology by European and American professionals and the upper classes lent the movement legitimacy.

During the 1910s and 1920s in the United States, eugenics was interpreted as “applied human genetics.”¹⁴ Eugenic ideology of the Progressive Era promoted the idea “that society ought to foster the breeding of those who possessed favorable traits...and discourage or prevent the breeding of those who did not” and that “human mental, temperamental, and moral traits were determined by heredity.”¹⁵ Two concepts existed regarding the implementation of eugenics, called positive and negative eugenics. Positive eugenics promoted procreation between people of good heredity through the government and other organizations. Negative eugenics proposed the enactment of restrictions, such as segregation of “degenerates” from society or sterilization laws, of those deemed “unfit” to procreate.¹⁶ South Carolina and numerous other states used sterilization as a form of eugenic control. In the 1920s several events, including “advances in surgical

¹³ Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity*, 22.

¹⁴ Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity*, 4.

¹⁵ Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity*, 1.

¹⁶ As this paper is primary source driven, it uses terminology authentic to the time period and eugenic ideology. Overtime these terms have become unacceptable to describe human beings or mental health, however, because these terms are historically accurate and held a shared meaning for those involved in the eugenic movement, they are used in this paper.

techniques” and a “vigorous pro-sterilization campaign,” culminated in the rise of sterilization as a viable form of eugenics.¹⁷

Galton determined that an increased birth rate amongst “degenerate” people and a decreased one among the “fit” were the cause of societal deterioration.¹⁸ The term “degenerative” encompassed a diverse subset of the population and ultimately “eugenics was animated by race, class, and sexual anxieties about social and economic change” and in the United States by “victimized urban immigrants, poor white “trash,” blacks, Mexicans, Jews, criminals, alcoholics, the mentally ill.”¹⁹ Essentially anyone outside the cultural norm was a potential target of the eugenics movement. Those who supported eugenics and were a part of the cultural norm tended to be “white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, and middle class.”²⁰

South Carolina Newspapers

The State newspaper of Columbia, South Carolina, established in 1891, provides a rich source of materials on the interactions between South Carolina and eugenics. Likewise, *The State* offers a compelling understanding of the network at the state, national, and international level of eugenic ideology during the Progressive Era.²¹ By

¹⁷ Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Fixing the Poor: Eugenic Sterilization and Child Welfare in the Twentieth Century* (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 6.

¹⁸ Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity*, 5. The concept of eugenic “fitness” in relation to humans, can broadly be defined as people who possess desirable genetic traits such as intelligence and are free from illnesses both physical and mental.

¹⁹ Ladd-Taylor, *Fixing the Poor*, 4.

²⁰ Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity*, 2.

²¹ Patricia McNeely. *The Palmetto Press: A History of South Carolina’s Newspapers and the Press Association* (South Carolina: South Carolina Press Association, 1998), 129.

1910, *The State* had become the largest circulating newspaper in South Carolina providing justification for the use of this source base for a study of South Carolina's interaction with eugenics.²² This research utilized a keyword search for "eugenics" between 1891-1939.²³ Searches showed approximately 284 results for "eugenics," 1,136 results for "heredity," 407 results for "sterilization," and 373 results for "feeble-minded" during this same time period.²⁴ Results for "eugenics" really only start appearing from the 1910s onward, which could be explained by the use of different terminology such as "heredity" to discuss similar concepts. Of the 284 articles from 1891-1939, 115 are from 1900 through 1914 and 91 are from 1914-1919. A cursory examination of *The State* newspaper articles on eugenics reveals several common themes, including eugenic marriages, eugenic laws, government involvement, and cultural integration of eugenic ideology. Another important theme is the legitimization of eugenic ideology by medical professionals, organizations, and men's and women's organizations. Both eugenic laws and support by prominent members of the white community validated eugenics as a form of societal control.

²² McNeely, *The Palmetto Press*, 132.

²³ The Richland County Library in Columbia, South Carolina provides a digitally accessible version of the newspaper from 1891 to the present that is also keyword searchable.

²⁴ There are fewer than 284 results as there were occasional occurrences of words like "eagerness" returned as a result for "eugenics."

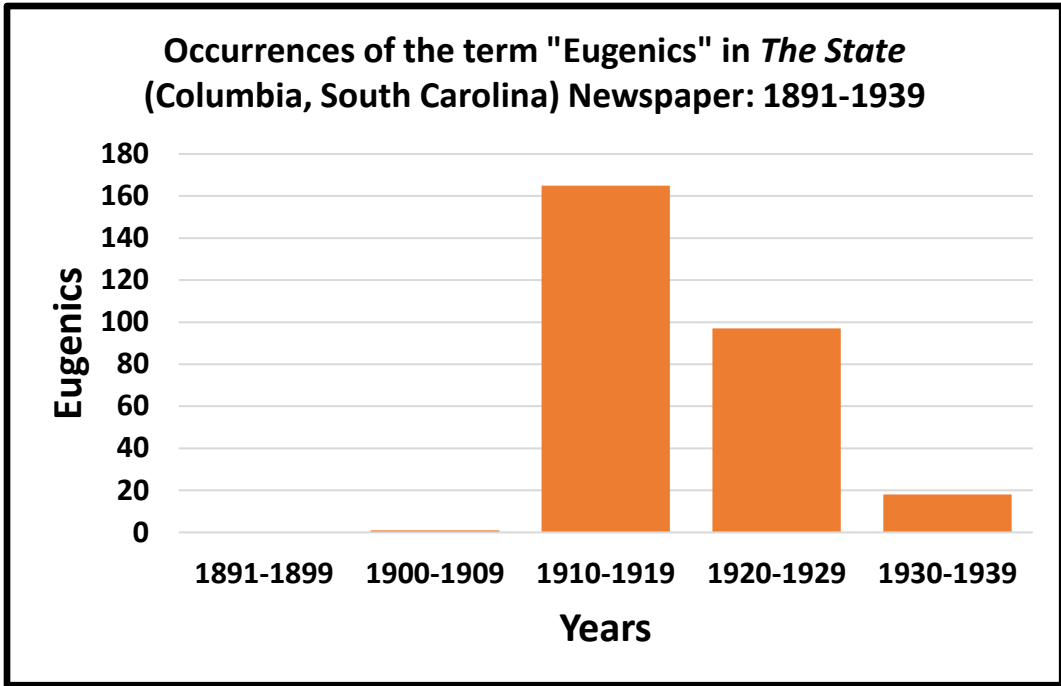


Figure 1.1 Occurrences of the term “Eugenics” in *The State* (Columbia, South Carolina) Newspaper: 1891-1939.

CHAPTER 2

EUGENIC NETWORKING AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION

The State often included eugenic themed articles from other states and countries. In doing so, the newspaper created a network for the dissemination of eugenic ideology.²⁵ “EVERYDAY QUESTIONS” is just one re-occurring article that demonstrated the scope of this network.²⁶ The title in conjunction with the discussion about eugenics implies the normalization of this topic in society. The article’s author, a reverend and radio minister of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, answered “inquiries that appear to be representative of the trend of thought in the many letters which he receives.”²⁷ The article’s inclusion of his status as a reverend and one at the national level lent legitimacy to his responses. The first question is from London, England and asked: “Is it true that the stamina of the race is declining in civilized countries? If this is the case would not more attention to breeding and legal measures to direct it arrest the decline?”²⁸ The author proposed several solutions to the declining fitness of the populations while also noting the potential problems with those solutions. Emigration of “incompetents” would provide

²⁵ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 3.

²⁶ Dr. S. Parkes Cadman, “EVERYDAY QUESTIONS,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), Jan. 13, 1930, 4, *NewsBank*.

²⁷ Cadman, “EVERYDAY QUESTIONS,” 4.

²⁸ Cadman, “EVERYDAY QUESTIONS,” 4.

a temporary solution, although natural reproduction would soon refill the void.²⁹ Educating adults about eugenics and requiring certificates of health were listed as two other potential solutions. He stated that “sterilization is too drastic a step for popular indorsement.”³⁰ The existence of certain laws prohibiting the marriage of related persons within a certain degree of each other acted as a eugenic measure. Lastly, the author suggested that a reduction in war expenditures and an increase in the funding of slum demolition, enforcement of less drink, and greater maternal care would impact the further production of “incompetents.”³¹

Other international articles discussed race, specifically foreign perceptions on race and immigration in relation to eugenics. “Racial Mixtures” for example, commented on the reactions of Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, and Sweden to immigration and the perceived negative result of interracial procreation.³² Australia had banned Asian immigrants and New Zealand banned all immigrants except those of “Anglo-Saxon origin.”³³ Sweden articulated its anti-interracial and anti-immigration sentiment by stating “race mixtures cause a mixed race of inferior quality” and “inferior individuals belonging to foreign races must not be allowed to enter and settle in Sweden without hindrance.”³⁴ A different article from 1927 analyzed the immigration policy of Canada and criticized the liberalization of said policy, noting that “a like policy now

²⁹ Cadman, “EVERYDAY QUESTIONS,” 4.

³⁰ Cadman, “EVERYDAY QUESTIONS,” 4.

³¹ Cadman, “EVERYDAY QUESTIONS,” 4.

³² Dr. W. A. Evans, “Racial Mixture,” *The State* (Nov. 16, 1922), 4. *NewsBank*.

³³ Evans, “Racial Mixture,” 4.

³⁴ Evans, “Racial Mixture,” 4.

applied in Sananda[sic] may fill up the country and may even increase their labor supply. But it makes a heterogenous population, and in most cases that is eugenically bad.”³⁵ An article on the relatively low birth rate of Germans around the time of World War I discussed the Weimar Republic’s 1919 constitution, which accounted for increased propagation of the race. The author stated that “the world finds fault with the policy of those who conceived it to be the duty of the German government to retain their population in Germany and to otherwise build up a surpassing war machine for the purpose of imposing by force and right of conquest their superior civilization on others.”³⁶

The State also created a network by reporting on eugenic events occurring across the nation. Midwestern coverage included states such as Illinois, Wisconsin, and Nebraska. Northern coverage included Pennsylvania, New York, and Vermont. Both sets of regional articles demonstrated a strong trend towards the discussion of eugenic marriage laws. A 1914 article on Wisconsin reported that its eugenics law, “which provides for the issuance of marriage licenses only upon a certificate of a clean bill of health,” was declared unconstitutional by the state’s circuit court and would go to the Supreme Court for a final decision.³⁷ An article from Vermont, similarly discussed the passage of a eugenics marriage law that restricted the wedding “of those pronounced

³⁵ Dr. W. A. Evans, “Canada’s Immigration Policy: Is it Good?,” *The State* (Nov. 11, 1927), 4. *NewsBank*.

³⁶ Dr. W. A. Evans, “Germans and the Future,” *The State* (Sept. 22, 1921), 4. *NewsBank*.

³⁷ “Eugenics Law Held Invalid,” *The State* (Jan. 21, 1914), 3. *NewsBank*.

physically or mentally “unfit.””³⁸ Numerous other *State* newspaper articles reported on the themes of eugenic marriage laws, eugenic marriages, and marriages between cousins.

Support from medical professionals, academic professors, religious organizations, institutions of higher learning, women’s and men’s organizations, and government legislation legitimized the eugenic movement. Lectures, books, and theatre performances perpetuated ideas of eugenics in South Carolina. *The State* reported on public health conferences, like the one held in 1922 by The South Carolina State Board of Health in Columbia, South Carolina, at the town theatre in collaboration with the U.S. Public Health Service.³⁹ The names of prominent South Carolina government and medical professionals stand out. Attendance at this conference included State Governor Robert Cooper, who gave the welcome address, the president of the Columbia Medical Society, who spoke at the opening ceremony, and the president of the South Carolina League of Women Voters, who conducted the session on detention and care of delinquent girls as well as heredity and eugenics.⁴⁰ The session description stated that it would be “especially devoted to matters of interest to the women of South Carolina and will be conducted under the auspices of the Women’s Organizations of the State.”⁴¹ This statement, more than anything, indicates the reach and interest of eugenic ideology amongst women’s organizations. Women’s work within the eugenics movement was mostly supported because women were thought to possess the right qualities to deal with

³⁸ “For Negative Eugenics,” *The State* (Columbia, SC), March 23, 1915, 1. *NewsBank*.

³⁹ “Program of South Carolina Public Health Institute,” *The State* (Dec. 25, 1921), 18. *NewsBank*.

⁴⁰ “Program of South Carolina Public Health Institute,” 18.

⁴¹ “Program of South Carolina Public Health Institute,” 18.

the subject matter.⁴² Other conference topics included communicable diseases, tuberculosis, child hygiene, non-communicable diseases, sanitary engineering, administrative problems of public health, and the delinquent. The women of South Carolina, also under the direction of the president of the South Carolina League of Women Voters, led the session on child hygiene. Medical professionals from around the state including, Columbia, Spartanburg, Charleston, Seneca, and Greenville attended. This conference also represents the larger shared network of eugenic ideology as there were medical professionals from Georgia, North Carolina, New York, Washington D.C., and Maryland present.⁴³

The South Carolina State Hospital for the Insane provides another example of outside interactions, specifically national organizations, with in-state medical organizations. The national organizations of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene (NCMH) and the Committee on Provisions for the Feeble-Minded (CPFM) came to the state to promote eugenics.⁴⁴ Notably, after the resignation of the hospital's superintendent, the South Carolina State Hospital, invited the NCMH to "examine conditions at the facility in 1915."⁴⁵ Around the same time, "the head South Carolina State Board of Charities and Corrections met with the eugenicist Alexander Johnson," field secretary for CPFM.⁴⁶ Subsequent interactions with CPFM, apparently influenced

⁴² Paul, *Controlling Human Heredity*, 54.

⁴³ "Program of South Carolina Public Health Institute," *The State* (Dec. 25, 1921), 18.

⁴⁴ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 57.

⁴⁵ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 57.

⁴⁶ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 57.

the head of the Board of Charities and Corrections to the extent that he was “convinced of the need for eugenic segregation in his state.”⁴⁷

Women’s organizations in the South were some of the biggest proponents of eugenics. This is unsurprising because of the generally held mission of women’s organizations for societal betterment. Upper middle-class white women largely populated these organizations in an effort to maintain superior class and racial positions. Another reason for female involvement in the eugenics movement resulted from a belief that eugenics was inherently women’s work.⁴⁸ Various organizations from South Carolina, such as the Dixie Club, South Carolina Federation of Women’s Clubs, and League of Women Voters of South Carolina, directly engaged in the eugenics movement.⁴⁹ For their monthly meeting in October of 1916, the Dixie Club prepared papers on the topic of eugenics to read aloud.⁵⁰ The Thursday Study Club also planned on compiling a list of papers including topics such as child welfare, the trained nurse’s work, and eugenics.⁵¹ Another South Carolina woman who was the Edgefield, South Carolina chairman of child welfare encouraged children’s rights and a eugenics law, demonstrating the connection

⁴⁷ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 57.

⁴⁸ Larson, Edward J. "“In The Finest, Most Womanly Way:” Women in The Southern Eugenics Movement." *The American Journal of Legal History* 39: 2 (1995), 121. Larson cites Linda Gordon’s *Woman’s Body, Woman’s Right: Birth Control in America* (Renamed *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America*) in support of this argument.

⁴⁹ “Events of the Week in South Carolina Society,” *The State* (Oct. 8, 1916), 19. *NewsBank*.

. “Club Women’s Interests and Activities,” *The State* (June 9, 1918), 24. *NewsBank*.

⁵⁰ “Events of the Week in South Carolina Society,” *The State* (Oct. 8, 1916), 19.

⁵¹ “With the Club Women,” *The State* (Oct 3, 1915), 25. *NewsBank*.

between activities generally associated with women's organizations and eugenics.⁵² The South Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs hosted a course at Winthrop College, located in Rock Hill, South Carolina, for club members scheduled from July 8-20, 1918.⁵³ Classes offered included agriculture, art, bird study, biology, chemistry, education, heredity, eugenics, feeble-mindedness and delinquency, as well as many others.⁵⁴ The subject matter covered during this course reveals that the inclusion of eugenic-related materials normalized it, placing it on the same socially accepted level as gardening lessons.

Other organizations such as the American Breeders Association and the National Corn Exposition demonstrated the connection between plant propagation, animal breeding, and human breeding. The concept of eugenics linked to theories surrounding plant propagation, where Galton was undoubtedly influenced by the work of his cousin, Charles Darwin. The American Breeders Association, in cooperation with the National Corn Exposition, held an exposition in Columbia, South Carolina starting January 27, 1913.⁵⁵ At the exposition, the American Breeders Association's assigned booth presented literature on the topics of "plant breeding, animal breeding, and eugenics."⁵⁶ The University of South Carolina campus held general sessions for the American Breeders

⁵² "Clubwomen Give Ear To Numerous Calls," *The State* (October 2, 1924), 3. *NewsBank*.

⁵³ "Club Women's Interests and Activities," *The State* (June 9, 1918), 24. Present day Winthrop University was founded in 1886 as the "Winthrop Training School" specifically for white women teachers.

⁵⁴ "Club Women's Interests and Activities," 24.

⁵⁵ "Breeders Plan Annual Meeting," *The State* (Jan. 22, 1913), 8. *NewsBank*.

⁵⁶ "American Breeders Plan Meeting Here," *The State* (July 22, 1912), 10. *NewsBank*.

Association and the South Carolina State Hospital for the Insane hosted the eugenics session.⁵⁷ During the general session, notable Eugenicist Dr. Davenport recognized Dr. Babcock, director of the South Carolina State Hospital for the Insane, in connection with his paper “A Biologist’s View of the Southern Negro Problem.” This recognition reiterated the connection and network amongst eugenicists.⁵⁸

The Young Men’s Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) of Columbia, South Carolina, hosted lectures on the topic of eugenics in 1915 and 1917. Dr. Riddell, a physician and lecturer, from Chicago was scheduled to appear before the men of the Y.M.C.A from November 1-15 and deliver a series of lectures on topics such as “ethical hygiene and practical eugenics.”⁵⁹ The city’s ministerial union endorsed the lecture series. This article demonstrates the theme of legitimization of eugenics by medical professionals and in this case two religious organizations. Just two years later, in 1917, T. W. Shannon, author, editor, and lecturer, addressed the Y.M.C.A on “Vital Facts for Men.”⁶⁰ Not only had Professor Shannon been heard before in Columbia, South Carolina, but had gone on lecture tour at universities and colleges around the country “under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A., churches and young people’s organizations.”⁶¹ He was “commended by college presidents, clergymen, and others” as a specialist on “individual and race betterment.”⁶²

⁵⁷ “Breeders Plan Annual Meeting,” *The State* (Jan. 22, 1913), 8.

⁵⁸ “Breeders Hear Able Addresses,” *The State* (Jan. 26, 1913), 1. *NewsBank*.

⁵⁹ “Chicago Lecturer Coming This Fall,” *The State* (June 8, 1915), 3. *NewsBank*.

⁶⁰ “Eugenist Speaks at Mass Meeting,” *The State* (Feb. 18, 1917), 23. *NewsBank*.

⁶¹ “Eugenist Speaks at Mass Meeting,” 23.

⁶² “Eugenist Speaks at Mass Meeting,” 23.

Another indicator of the extent to which eugenic ideology affected South Carolina was through cultural integration evidenced by literature requests, theatre promotions, and medical advertisements. People requested literature recommendations on the topic of eugenics. Common recommendations included the works of eugenicist Davenport's *Eugenics in Relation to Heredity* and *Studies from the Eugenics Laboratory*. Other recommendations included *Heredity and Eugenics*, *Race Regeneration*, *Heredity*, "Eugenics Review," *The Super Race*, and *The Task of Social Hygiene*.⁶³ *The Super Race*, discusses the author's belief in societies' ability to create a super race through eugenics.⁶⁴ The works of authors Davenport, Walters, Reed, and Redfield were also recommended.⁶⁵ Specifically, the *Dynamic Evolution* by Redfield.⁶⁶ In a different article, the person writing-in and requesting publication information already knew about the existence of *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics* as well as Davenport's *Twelve University Lectures*, proving that literature on the topic was widely discussed.⁶⁷

Theatre and film presented another outlet to disseminate eugenic ideology. The use of film to discuss controversial topics was not all that uncommon during the Progressive Era. *The Laws of Population* and *Where Are My Children*, among others, examined "the needs of the poorer classes and on the eugenic value of preventing the

⁶³ Dr. W. A. Evans, "Eugenics Literature," *The State* (Jan. 20, 1913), 2. *NewsBank*.

⁶⁴ "With Writers and Books," *The State* (June 16, 1912), 27. *NewsBank*.

⁶⁵ "Eugenic Marriages," *The State* (Oct. 29, 1915), 4. *NewsBank*.

⁶⁶ "Eugenic Marriages," *The State* (Oct. 29, 1915), 4.

⁶⁷ Dr. W. A. Evans, "Books on Eugenics," *The State* (Aug. 13, 1914), 2. *NewsBank*.

“unfit” from having children.”⁶⁸ Between the years 1891 and 1939, *The State* newspaper ran several advertisements promoting shows with eugenic themes. In 1912, the eugenic themed play “Tomorrow” ran.⁶⁹ In 1914 and 1915, the Columbia Theatre showed “Damaged Goods,” previously shown in Washington D. C. and touring other “principal cities of the country.”⁷⁰ The director of the play, Richard Bennett, encouraged the author Eugene Brieux to give a lecture series on the topic of eugenics at universities around the country.⁷¹ Bennett is further quoted stating “it strikes me that the civilized world is beginning to realize its “uncivilization” and that “it appears that in at least half the unfortunate marriages the cause is eugenic “unfitness.””⁷² In 1917, the work “The Garden of Knowledge” showed for two days, “a powerful problem play discussing the science of eugenics.”⁷³ In 1918, the Main Street Rialto Theater showed the work “Temptation,” depicting “the combat that has been waged since the dawn of history illustrated in this spectacular picturization on the delicate subject of eugenics.”⁷⁴ Also of note in the advertisement were the statements “hundreds turned away yesterday” and “engagement extended today,” implying the heightened interest in the subject matter.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ Parry, *Broadcasting Birth Control*, 19.

⁶⁹ “Bookshop Gossip,” *The State* (May 12, 1912), 22. *NewsBank*.

⁷⁰ “At the Columbia Theater,” *The State* (Sep. 25, 1915), 6. *NewsBank*. Parry, *Broadcasting Birth Control*, 13. A social hygiene movement launched in 1905 by New York Prince Morrow led the incorporation of the term syphilis into the play *Damaged Goods*.

⁷¹ “At the Columbia Theater,” 6.

⁷² “At the Columbia Theater,” 6.

⁷³ “The Garden of Knowledge,” *The State* (Aug. 16, 1917), 10. *NewsBank*.

⁷⁴ “TEMPTATION,” *The State* (March 28, 1918), 8. *NewsBank*.

⁷⁵ “TEMPTATION,” 8.

Eugenic advertisements demonstrated both a level of acceptance and the ability for entrepreneurially minded people to profit from the movement. There were very few advertisements that directly mentioned eugenics. The advertisement “Rational Eugenics,” published in 1915 and 1916, argued that man has for a long time given great consideration to better breeding practices of stock and plants, but very little to their own offspring.⁷⁶ By framing the discussion in this way, Dr. W.R. Register promoted his services as a solution to securing better lives for men’s children. Dr. Register also noted that “Many states have suggested making laws to require men to be examined before giving a marriage license.”⁷⁷ This further created a sense of need and urgency for men to engage in eugenic practices and also offered a solution to poor heredity, which is contrary to the underlying theme of eugenics as good or bad heredity as a result of genetics. The only notable difference between the 1915 and 1916 article was the addition of another doctor, perhaps demonstrating a level of success in their business practice or the belief that this could be a successful business venture.⁷⁸

Despite newspaper articles’ discussions of a network of eugenics, nationally and internationally, and discussions of the cultural integration of eugenics in South Carolina, there is a noticeable and intentional lack of discussion about eugenics and African Americans. African American people did, however, take a stance against eugenic sterilization, specifically in the 1930s.⁷⁹ Those against sterilization, encouraged rejection

⁷⁶ “RATIONAL EUGENICS,” *The State* (May 23, 1915), 2. NewsBank.

⁷⁷ “RATIONAL EUGENICS,” 2.

⁷⁸ “RATIONAL EUGENICS,” *The State* (Oct. 22, 1916), 10. NewsBank.

⁷⁹ M. Rodrique, “The Black Community And The Birth Control Movement,” in *We Specialize in the Wholly Impossible: A Reader in Black Women’s History*. Darlene Clark Hine, Wilma King, and Linda King (Brooklyn, NY: 1995), 511.

of the practice by others “because they were being waged against the weak, the oppressed, and the disfranchised” and as a result “the burden of such programs would “fall upon colored people.””⁸⁰ Based on the article topics discussing eugenics in *The State* newspaper and those involved in the movement, the Caucasian race was far more concerned with maintaining white supremacy through the propagation of the “fittest” white people than any threat from interracial procreation with African Americans. This same prioritization of the white race is evident in other southern states.⁸¹ Segregation of the races was well ingrained into South Carolina culture by the Progressive Era. Anti-miscegenation sentiment in the United States and South Carolina was so all encompassing that it seemed natural.⁸² In 1895, South Carolina became one of five states to write the ban on interracial marriage into their state constitution. This occurred after the state’s ban was removed during Reconstruction.⁸³ Eugenics was therefore portrayed as a segregated issue that impacted and needed to be corrected within the Caucasian race.

⁸⁰ Rodrique, *The Black Community And The Birth Control Movement*, 511.

⁸¹ Hansen and King, *Sterilized by the State*, 10.

⁸² Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (London: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1. The term miscegenation was invented in the 1860s and symbolized the interaction between a belief in scientifically backed white supremacy and the disapproval of interracial marriages.

⁸³ Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally*, 48 and 63. South Carolina’s was the last of two states, Alabama being the other, to remove the anti-miscegenation law from their state constitution in 1998.

CHAPTER 3

SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNMENT AND EUGENICS

The South Carolina government played an important role in the promotion of eugenic ideology through introduction of various legislation. Even though “nationally recognized leaders of the eugenics movement had long dismissed eugenic controls on marriage as ineffective,” factors such as inadequate state facilities to prevent the “unfit” from reproducing promoted eugenic marriages as a viable option.⁸⁴ South Carolina followed in the footsteps of many other states when introducing bills to regulate marriages on the basis of eugenics. The Patterson Bill required any male applying for a marriage license to have medical proof of good health.⁸⁵ The bill was voted down in the senate by a vote of 22 to 17.⁸⁶ The Bill was “indefinitely postponed” because “it was too much ahead of the times.” Wisconsin’s similar legislation had resulted in numerous complications for the state. Senator Patterson noted the great support for the legislation from the “State medical organization, the physicians of the State individually and the women.”⁸⁷ Again in 1923, South Carolina’s State Board of Public Welfare promoted

⁸⁴ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 97.

⁸⁵ “Senate Rejects Eugenics Measure,” *The State* (Jan. 15, 1914), 9. *NewsBank*. A. Billy. Patterson was a physician from Barnwell County who served as a South Carolina state senator as well as a physician or physician’s assistant at the State Hospital for the Insane. The marriage certificate was meant to prove good health in so far as the couple was free of disease.

⁸⁶ “Senate Rejects Eugenics Measure,” 9.

⁸⁷ “Senate Rejects Eugenics Measure,” 9.

legislature stating “persons that are of known feeble-mindedness should not be allowed to contract matrimony with one another, nor should a feeble-minded person be allowed to marry a normal one.”⁸⁸ Ultimately eugenic marriage legislation in South Carolina proved unsuccessful with only “preexisting restrictions in...South Carolina invalidating marriage contracts entered into by “an idiot or lunatic” because they “lacked the legal capacity to enter into a contract.”⁸⁹

Outside the legislative branch of South Carolina, numerous articles in *The State* dealt with the topic of eugenic marriages. Simply put, a eugenic marriage was a marriage in which the “fitness” of two people was taken into consideration, especially with regards to procreation. One inquirer wrote to the author of a re-occurring health article series entitled “How To Keep Well” asking “1. What is meant by eugenics; also a eugenic marriage? 2. Suggest some good books on this subject. 3. Is a child influenced physically or mentally when its father is from 10 to 35 years older than the mother? 4. What is the effect when the father is from 5 to 15 years younger than the mother?”⁹⁰ The author replied that “Eugenics means the science of being born well. It has to do with measures favoring race improvement (positive eugenics) and also with those to prevent race degeneration (negative eugenics).”⁹¹ The author responded that “The term eugenic marriage is generally used as meaning the marriage of two people known to be free from

⁸⁸ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 97.

⁸⁹ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 98.

⁹⁰ Dr. W. A. Evans, “Eugenic Marriages,” *The State* (Oct. 29, 1915), 4. The “How to Keep Well” series was written by Dr. Evans, originally for the Chicago Tribune, further demonstrating the vast network of eugenic ideology.

⁹¹ Evans, “Eugenic Marriages,” 4.

venereal disease.⁹² In the same weekly installment, another person asked about marriages between first cousins and why this was not advised. The inquirer also asked if the “children from such a union” were “likely to be defective?,” demonstrating an awareness on some level of eugenic ideology even if the exact term was not used.⁹³

Another article, on the marriage of cousins, noted that sixteen states at the time outlawed the marriage of first cousins including Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.⁹⁴ Unsurprisingly, this list illustrates a concentration of laws in midwestern states where eugenic ideology first evolved. The author agreed with the scientist he mentioned, who promoted the notion that both parents had to be intelligent to produce intelligent children.⁹⁵ This logic did not exclude the marrying of relatives so long as both partners were of good stock. The author supported the scientist’s argument by stating that great men such as Bach married good stock and as a result the family continued to be successful.⁹⁶ To further support his claim, the author pointed to the breeding of livestock and the selection and inbreeding of good stock to create more good stock. He concluded that, “A good marriage law would be one founded on the experiences of successful breeders of stock and growing of seed, corn, cotton, and wheat.”⁹⁷ Following a similar theme of using livestock breeding to inform human

⁹² Evans, “Eugenic Marriages,” 4

⁹³ Dr. W. A. Evans, “Marriages of Cousins,” *The State* (Oct. 29, 1915), 4.

⁹⁴ Dr. W. A. Evans, “Marriage of Cousins,” *The State* (July 14, 1926), 4.
NewsBank.

⁹⁵ Evans, “Marriage of Cousins,” 4.

⁹⁶ Evans, “Marriage of Cousins,” 4.

⁹⁷ Evans, “Marriage of Cousins,” 4.

breeding, the article, “Marriage of First Cousins,” suggested that marriage laws dealing with first cousins should be replaced with ones that accounted for the breeding practices of short horn cattle as developed by Robert Bakewell, promoting the inbreeding of good stock up to a certain point.⁹⁸

The State newspaper also reported on the one-year anniversary of Minnesota’s eugenic marriage law in 1915. Specifically, the article reported on the problems facing Wisconsin since the legislation had been passed. Despite noting the 4,000 fewer marriages, the author critically stated that it in no way signified 8,000 “unfit” people were prevented from marrying.⁹⁹ Rather, the article proposed that people could have simply travelled to other states or that perfectly fit people could be represented in that number and simply have decided not to marry in the face of the new laws. The article concluded that until the eugenic utility of such a law was proven, “most of the other states will rest content while Minnesota plays the pioneer.”¹⁰⁰

In 1927, the Supreme Court legalized forced sterilization, with the court case *Buck v. Bell* legitimizing the creation or revision of state laws.¹⁰¹ South Carolina was clearly aware of eugenic sterilization activities in other states and countries, incorporating these practices into their own legislation. South Carolina was the second to last state to pass a eugenic sterilization bill.¹⁰² Despite eugenic sterilization discussions starting as

⁹⁸ Dr. W. A. Evans, “Marriage of First Cousins,” *The State* (April 21, 1928), 4. *NewsBank*.

⁹⁹ “A Year of “Eugenics,”” *The State* (Feb. 16, 1915), 4. *NewsBank*.

¹⁰⁰ “A Year of “Eugenics,”” 4.

¹⁰¹ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 119.

¹⁰² Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 124.

early as 1920, legislation would not be enacted for roughly a decade. This delay was due in part to influential people such as South Carolina Hospital for the Insane's Superintendent, C. F. Williams, who opposed sterilization on the grounds of "insufficient scientific jurisdiction and constitutional authority."¹⁰³ Despite the opposition of at least one prominent medical professional, support from the superintendent of the State Training School for the Feeble-minded, B.O. Whitten, and other eugenicists, promoted the passage of legislation during the 1930s.¹⁰⁴ In fact, Whitten created a direct link between his promotion of sterilization to *Buck v. Bell* by expanding on the infamous quote "three generations of imbeciles are enough." "We have on record," he maintained, "four generations of imbeciles in South Carolina and three generations of them are now at the State Training School" [for the Feeble-minded].¹⁰⁵ Whitten's bill allowed for the sterilization of "any inmate of such institution who is afflicted with any heredity form of insanity that is recurrent, idiocy, imbecility, feeble-minded[ness] or epilepsy."¹⁰⁶ Although the bill was prepared by 1931, it would not pass the General Assembly until 1935, when it gained the support of the South Carolina Medical Association, South Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs, and officials from the State Training School."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 125.

¹⁰⁴ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 124-125.

¹⁰⁵ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 125.

¹⁰⁶ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 126.

¹⁰⁷ Larson, *Sex, Race, and Science*, 128. Although there is no discussion of the impact of Harry H Laughlin, Superintendent of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, or his "Model Eugenical Sterilization Law," on the sterilization bill in South Carolina newspapers, there are general discussions about Laughlin and his involvement in matters relating to eugenics. It is reasonable to assume that those creating the sterilization bill were aware of Laughlin's work concerning sterilization laws.

Another discussion about sterilization took a more European approach as it compared British notions of sterilization with those in the United States.¹⁰⁸ One article argued that “In the matter of court decisions the gain is very strongly toward the position that sterilization is not a cruel, inhumane punishment; that it is not even a punishment in the strictly legal sense...and that it is a proper exercise of the right of society to protect itself.”¹⁰⁹ In support of this notion that eugenics and sterilization fit into the Progressive Era, the writer stated that “the tendency of the states to adopt sterilization laws is progressive.”¹¹⁰ The article’s section on the sterilization of criminals provides further evidence of the spread of eugenic ideology across a vast network and specifically through the written word as is evident in *The State* newspaper.

¹⁰⁸ Dr. W. A. Evans, “Sterilization of Criminals,” *The State* (Dec. 10, 1926), 4. *NewsBank*.

¹⁰⁹ Evans, “Sterilization of Criminals,” 4.

¹¹⁰ Evans, “Sterilization of Criminals,” 4.

CHAPTER 4

SOUTH CAROLINA EUGENICS IN THE 1930S

The eugenics movement remained a steady component of public conversation throughout the Progressive Era and into the 1930s. Even as eugenic practices began to solidify in Germany under Hitler's regime, support for eugenics in America remained strong. In fact, several articles promote the activities in Germany including sterilization and eugenic courts. The eugenics movement in South Carolina follows the initial rise and fall of the movement during the Progressive Era, but the erasure of eugenic thought did not occur as historians have previously argued.¹¹¹ As previously stated, the term "eugenics" occurred roughly 562 times between 1891 and 1939 in the *State* newspaper. By comparison, "eugenics" occurred about 131 times between 1930 and 1939. Well before the start of World War II, newspaper articles published in South Carolina discussed the eugenic practices adopted in Germany and some even reflected positively on these events. It is the presence and continuation of discussions regarding eugenics that

¹¹¹ Historian Diane B. Paul's *Controlling Human Heredity: 1865 to the Present* implies that the actions of Nazi Germany caused a hiatus in the eugenics movement also citing *Guaranteeing the Good Life: Medicine and the Return of Eugenics* by Richard J. Neuhaus. Additionally, MacKellar and Bechtel's *The Ethics of the New Eugenics* as well as Judith Daar's *The New Eugenics* argue that it was an eventual awareness of Nazi Germany eugenic practices that resulted in the downfall of eugenics. However, South Carolina newspapers prove that there was an awareness early on and in fact widespread support for the eugenic practices of Germany.

speak to the continued acceptability of the movement's ideologies within South Carolina society.

On January 1st, 1934 *The State* published an article entitled "Germany Puts into Practice New Sterilization Statute."¹¹² The article reports that with the start of the new year, roughly "400,000 mental and physical hereditary defectives in German asylums and prisons" will qualify for sterilization under the new sterilization statute.¹¹³ Additionally, the article discusses the introduction of some 1,700 eugenic courts established in Germany to decide on matters of government sanctioned sterilization. In a different article, and in direct contradiction to various historian's claims about the decline of the eugenics movement in response to the rise of Nazi Germany, "Breeding Superior People" claims that "the old furor about eugenics seems to have been revived since Hitler has started his campaign to breed the super-superior race."¹¹⁴ The article then provides an overview of eugenics including its origins with Sir Francis Galton as well as the methods that eugenics supporters intend to use to implement these changes in society. Also interesting to note is this article's emphasis on the eugenics movement's belief in hereditary differences between the races and the superiority of white people. The "Breeding Superior People" article's statement that there are many prominent doctors who oppose eugenic theory reveals that while the former is true, those doctors recognize that the general public still believes in the movement as though it were true science.

¹¹² "Germany Puts Into Practice New Sterilization Statute," *The State* (Jan. 1, 1934), 6. *NewsBank*.

¹¹³ "Germany Puts Into Practice New Sterilization Statute," *The State*, (Jan. 1, 1934), 6.

¹¹⁴ "Breeding Superior People," *The State*, (Feb. 6, 1934), 4. *NewsBank*.

Far from opposing or rejecting eugenics because of similar German practices, the *Columbia Record* on March 13, 1934, notes that “there has been far more sterilization of the unfit in American than in Germany or any other country, for eugenic reasons.”¹¹⁵ Sterilization provided an acceptable outlet for the evolution of eugenic ideology as it is the topic of a number of newspaper articles between 1930 and 1939. On April 25, 1934 the *Columbia Record* reported that the State Board of Affairs in Oklahoma approved the sterilization of eleven women.¹¹⁶ The author of the article clearly supports sterilization. This is evident through claims in the article that, the sterilization process is not painful and that the Great Depression revealed how “mental defectives” were a financial burden on the rest of society. Again, rather than the sterilization practices of Germany creating opposition to eugenics, this article demonstrates how those very actions were used as support for the sterilization of people in the United States. The article states that Germany’s order to sterilize some four hundred thousand people would save the country hundreds of millions of people in the end and that with an ever-increasing United States population, controlling the population was increasingly necessary. Despite public knowledge regarding the practices of eugenics in Germany and specifically their intense sterilization plans, the eugenics movement in South Carolina continued to evolve under the support of the general public.

¹¹⁵ Arthur Brisbane, “Nudists and Others, Unfit. The Milwaukee Crime Party. Will Sterilization Help? Puerto Rico’s Gamecocks,” *Columbia Record*, (March 13, 1934), 4. *NewsBank*.

¹¹⁶ Irby Koon, “News on the Rebound,” *Columbia Record*, (April 25, 1934), 6. *NewsBank*.

Another aspect of the eugenics movement that carried through the Progressive Era into the 1930s was eugenic marriage laws. As late as 1938, the eugenic practice of marriage laws was still receiving attention and support. The article “Uniformity Sought in Eugenic Laws,” describes “a growing movement for eugenic marriage laws and a need for uniformity of such regulations.”¹¹⁷ According to the article, states across the nation implemented legislation requiring premarital physical examinations, health certificates for prospective couples, and an imposed waiting period after applying for a marriage license. The movement for standard eugenic laws continued to gain traction as additional states chose to adopt “the eugenic standard” for marriage.¹¹⁸ Another article about marriage laws, published on November 21, 1938, notes that South Carolina is unique in its marriage laws.¹¹⁹ At the time this article was written, divorce was not allowed and a marriage license was not required for a legally binding marriage.

While there were certainly other terms used to perpetuate pro-eugenic ideology such as: mental hygiene, heredity, and sterilization, social hygiene in particular demonstrates the adoption of new terminology as a form of evolution within the eugenic movement. A search of the NewsBank database for the term “social hygiene” between the years 1891 and 1939 yields 458 results. Between 1930 and 1939 “social hygiene” yields 122 newspaper article results. Various organizations in South Carolina continued to hold meetings that included discussions about social hygiene. The South Carolina League of Women Voters is one of the organizations mentioned in previous newspaper

¹¹⁷ “Uniformity Sought in Eugenics Laws,” *The State*, (May 15, 1938), 18. *NewsBank*.

¹¹⁸ “Eugenic Laws Are Passed,” *Columbia Record*, (July 1, 1938), 2. *NewsBank*.

¹¹⁹ “Marriage Law,” *Columbia Record*, (Nov. 21, 1938), 4. *NewsBank*.

articles in connection with social hygiene and eugenic ideologies. An article regarding the 1930 annual convention of the organization included a list of all the current chairwomen including a committee for social hygiene.¹²⁰ In 1932, the South Carolina League of Women Voters held a meeting on May 30th at which eugenic practices were being carried out under social hygiene programming. At this meeting, child welfare was said to contain three groups of children including “the dependent, delinquent, and defective.”¹²¹ “Defective” children were to be housed trained at Cedar Spring and the Clinton Training School for the Feebleminded. Additional discussions related to social hygiene called for “the sterilization of the unfit.”¹²²

Other women’s organizations including the Young Women’s Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) taught health courses, open to all women, regarding personal and social hygiene.¹²³ Lecturers such as Dr. Valeria Parker from the American Social Hygiene Association, from outside of South Carolina also provided lectures to the Richland County Social Workers’ club, Y.W.C.A, Columbia College, and sociology classes at the University of South Carolina.¹²⁴ At this same lecture series, a Social Hygiene Association was established by the president of the Richland County Social

¹²⁰ “Annual Meeting of Women Today,” *The State*, (March 7, 1930), 2. *NewsBank*.

¹²¹ “Chairmen Give Talks at League of Women Voters Meeting with Mrs. Reamer,” *Columbia Record*, (June 1, 1932), 5. *NewsBank*.

¹²² “Chairmen Give Talks” *Columbia Record*, (June 1, 1932), 5.

¹²³ “Y.W.C.A. News,” *The State*, (Feb. 1, 1931), 18. *NewsBank*. The Y.W.C.A. held the social hygiene class again in April perhaps signaling continual interest in the topic. See “Y.W.C.A. Sponsors Tennis Class,” *Columbia Record*, April 19, 1931 and “Y.W.C.A. Committees to Meet,” *Columbia Record*, May 10, 1931.

¹²⁴ “Social Workers’ Club Host to Doctor Parker,” *The State*, (April 15, 1932), 11. *NewsBank*.

Workers Club.¹²⁵ The creation and activities of the organization were reported on numerous times indicating a significant public interest in this topic. The Social Hygiene Association was supported by county clubs from both Columbia and Richland as well as a state health officer who “said that it was a blot on the name of the state because health certificates were not required of marrying couples.”¹²⁶ The evolution of eugenic marriage laws followed through to the social hygiene movement. In 1938, nine states required health certificates from both marriage applicants, six states required a health certificate only from the male, and all states discouraged marriages between couples where one or both persons had a venereal disease.¹²⁷ Other speakers, such as Dr. Croft Williams, Sociology teacher at the University of South Carolina, made eugenic statements “that the world’s problems come from the average people.”¹²⁸ It is important to note that the ideas discussed and cultivated during this meeting were called upon by those same people to be disseminated back to the respective clubs they were representing. This truly speaks to the widespread acceptance and participation in eugenic practices through public organizations.

¹²⁵ “Permanent Association of Hygiene is Planned,” *Columbia Record*, (April 16, 1932), 2. NewsBank. The sociology lectures, given by Dr. Parker, at the University of South Carolina were taught by Dr. G. Croft Williams and Miss Lelia Johnson.

¹²⁶ “Will Promote Social Hygiene,” *The State*, (May 4, 1932), 10. NewsBank.

¹²⁷ Frederic J. Haskin, “Answers to Questions,” *The State*, (June 26, 1938), 6. NewsBank.

¹²⁸ “Will Promote Social Hygiene,” *The State*, (May 4, 1932), 10. NewsBank.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

White South Carolinians created a culture of control to support the ideologies of white supremacy. Disseminated throughout the state, newspaper articles provided the platform by which the eugenics movement was perpetuated and given further legitimization. It was part of a network of shared eugenic ideology throughout South Carolina, the United States, and Western Europe. Evidence of South Carolina's interaction with eugenics, as reported by newspaper articles, came in the form of cultural integration and corresponding government interaction. White men's and women's organizations acted as supporters and promoters of eugenics. This appeared to be especially true on the part of women's organizations as eugenic ideology and notions of social betterment often coincided. Various women's organizations supported governmental control through legislation promoting forced sterilization while others attended public health conferences that discussed eugenic ideology. Other organizations such as the American Breeders Association and the National Committee for Mental Hygiene operated on a national platform; however, they did interact with and influence South Carolina eugenics. Other forms of cultural integration included theatre productions and literature. Both highlight eugenic influence from outside sources. The South Carolina state government responded to the growth of eugenic ideology and white supremacy by proposing legislation on eugenic marriages and forced sterilization. While the eugenic marriage law was not approved, the law on forced sterilization was in 1935 and remained

on record until 1985. Eugenic ideations still plague society today as people seek control through propagation of the fittest.

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