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**How and why to include
eugenics history in genetics classes**



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pgEd (past & present)

Scientists,
social scientists,
educators,
and community
organizers



Online Curricula

- Consumer genetics
- Personalized medicine
- How does ancestry testing work?
- Genetic discrimination & GINA
- DNA, crime, and law enforcement
- Reproductive genetic technologies
- Genetics, history, & the American eugenics movement
- Using primary sources to examine the history of eugenics
- Genome editing and CRISPR
- Birth of CRISPR-edited twins
- Genome editing and the environment

In Progress:

- Sex, athletics, and genetics
- Informed consent in the genomic age
- Ancestry, race, and DNA

Why is learning about the American eugenics movement useful when studying genetics?

Past

What was the US eugenics movement and who was impacted?

Present

What are the new medical advances and ethical issues in genetics?

Future

How do we access the benefits and reduce the harm in genetics?

American Eugenics Movement

What was the
American eugenics
movement and who
was impacted?

Eugenic ideology
Legal implementation



Play clip from *The Gene: An Intimate History*
(courtesy of WETA)

“Fitter Family”
contests:
1920s-1940s

Georgia State Fair
1924



American Philosophical Society. Noncommercial, educational use only.

Photo: 1924. Source: American Philosophical Society, ERO, MSC77,SerVI,Box 4, FF Studies, KS Free Fair

8-1 Supreme Court ruling: Buck v. Bell allows forced sterilization (1927)

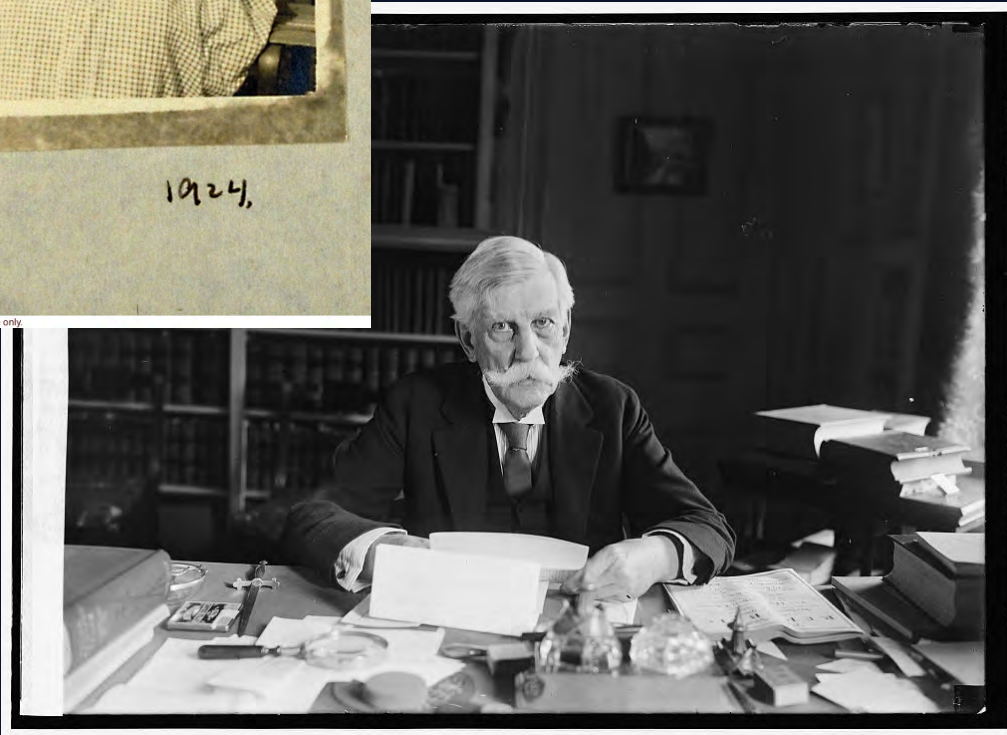


Carrie Buck
Emma Buck

1924,

University of Albany, State Univ. of NY. Noncommercial, educational use only.

Photo by A.H. Estabrook, 1924. Source: Arthur Estabrook Papers, Special Collections & Archives, University at Albany, SUNY.



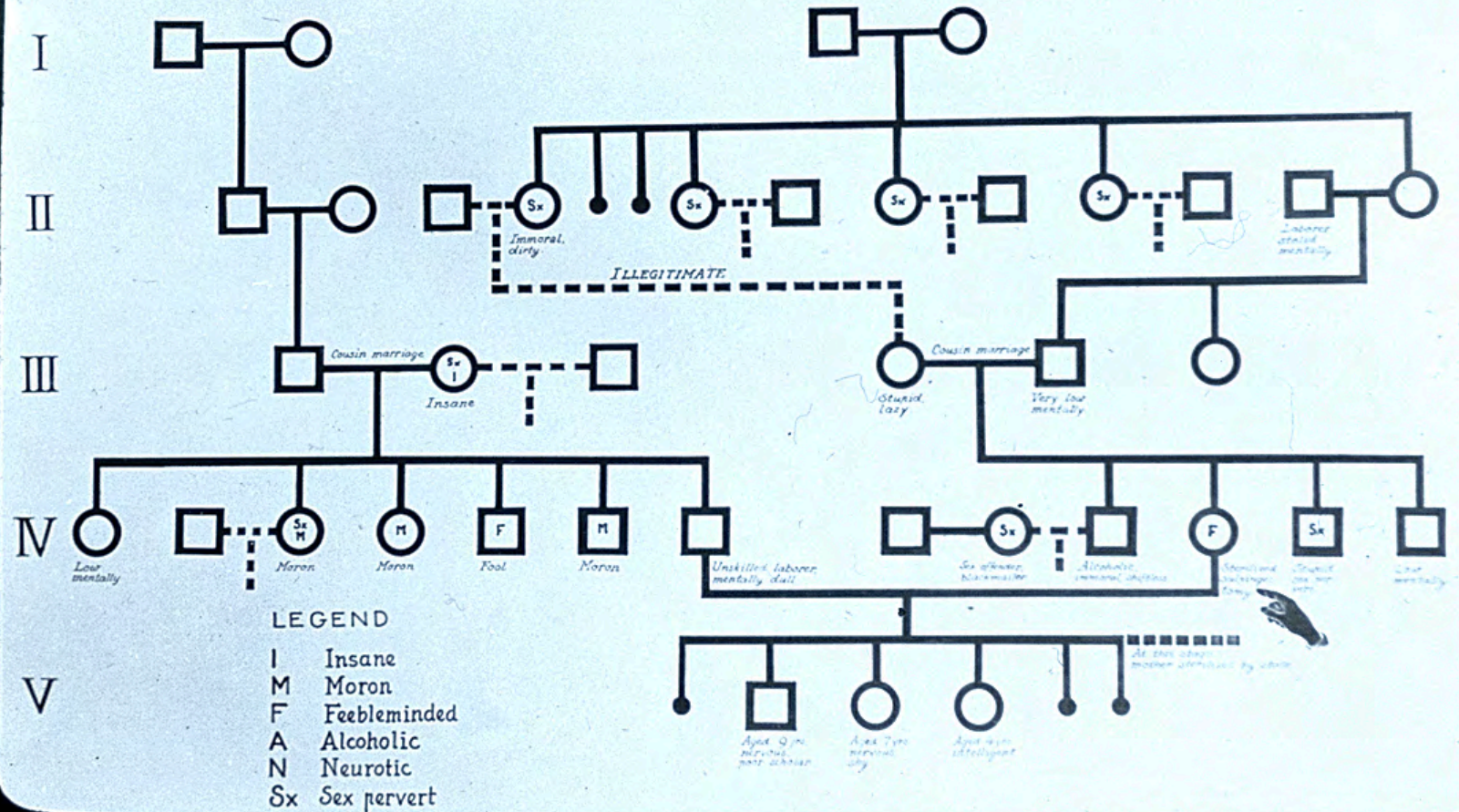
US Library of Congress

"...society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind... Three generations of imbeciles are enough."
-Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

Quote source: Buck v. Bell, 274 US 200 – Supreme Court 1927

FAMILY-STOCK OF A WOMAN STERILIZED BY THE STATE OF MAINE
 REASONS OF THE STATE: HEREDITARY FEEBLEMINDEDNESS

Pedigrees
 used to justify
 sterilization



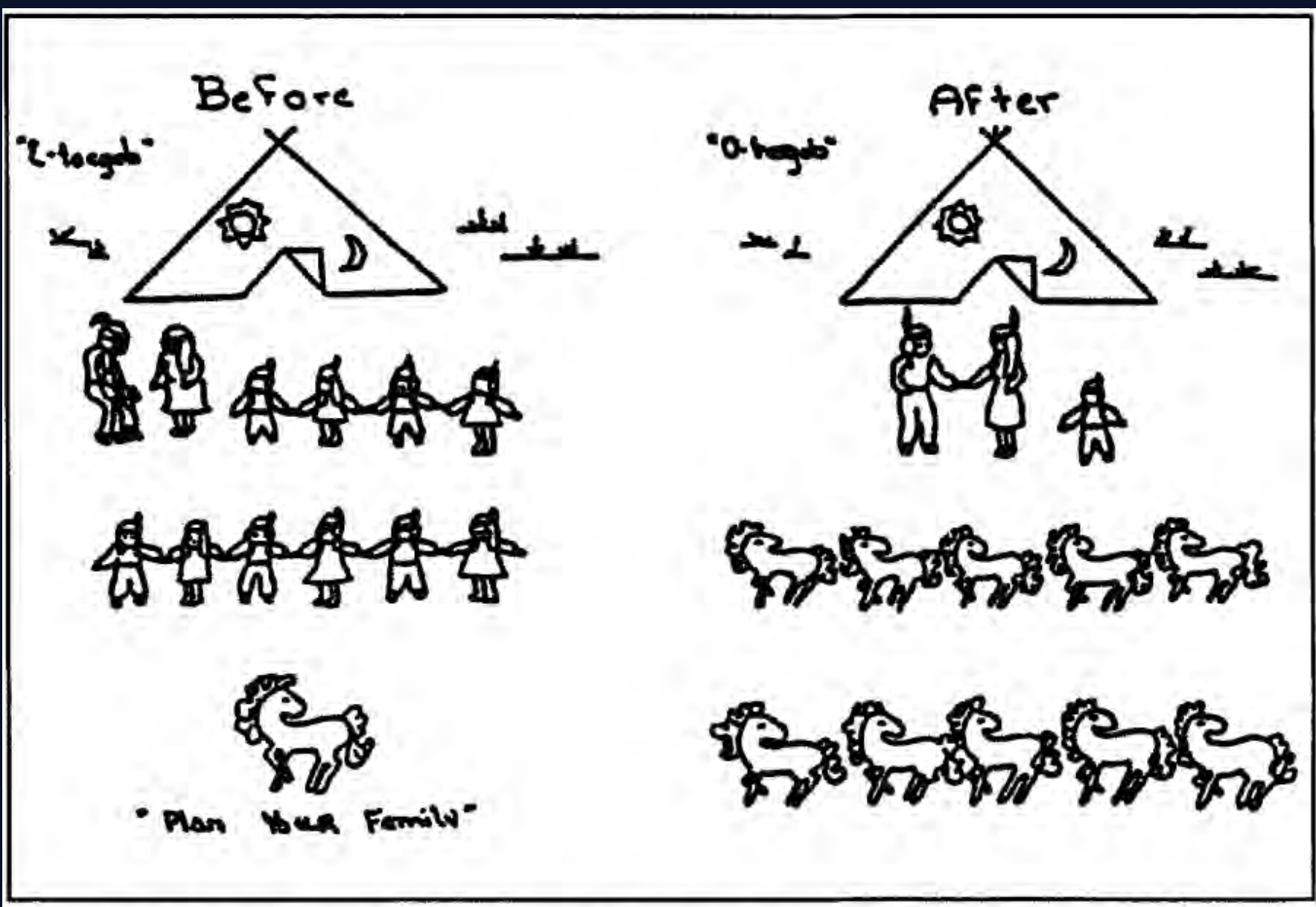
Truman State University. Noncommercial, educational use only.

Photo: circa 1935. Source: The Harry H. Laughlin Papers, Truman State University, Lantern Slides, IBM Box, Box 10

American eugenics and German Nazism



Nazi Propaganda
“We do not stand
alone”



Indigenous people in the US were targeted for forced sterilization

Madrigal v. Quilligan advances the cause of informed consent



Dolores Madrigal (left) and attorney Antonia Hernández (right) at a press conference announcing the 1975 lawsuit *Madrigal v. Quilligan*. NBC Universal Archives

- Latinx women in California were sterilized without consent or under coercive circumstances, such as being in active labor.
- They sued the doctors and hospital where they were sterilized. They did not win the 1978 case, but it was a catalyst for social and legal change.
- New practices implemented at the hospital:
 - No longer threatening to take away welfare benefits if woman refused sterilization.
 - Consent forms translated into several languages.
 - Waiting periods for women to weigh their options.

Secretly sterilized at age 14, Elaine Riddick successfully fought for recognition and compensation in North Carolina



Watch an Associated Press 3-minute long video about Elaine Riddick:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWanJoxW2s4&t=10s>

Photo permission via Adam David Kissick, <https://www.adamkissick.com>

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Engaging our communities

There is almost no scientific discovery of any import that I can think of that hasn't had the capacity for both good and ill. And it's going to take wise societies to direct those discoveries down the right path and away from the wrong path.

- Shirley Tilghman, from *The Gene*



KEN BURNS PRESENTS
THE GENE
AN INTIMATE HISTORY



Thank you!