Recommended Resources on the History of American Eugenics
by TAGC2020 panelists and participants

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I. Mailing Lists

The Personal Genetics Education Project (pgEd) invites you to join their mailing list to find out about their latest educational resources as well as future workshops.

II. Lesson Plans & Teacher Guides

1. pgEd Lesson on “Genetics, History, and the American Eugenics Movement”  
   http://pged.org/lesson-plans/#eugenics

2. pgEd Lesson on “Using Primary Sources to Examine the History of Eugenics”  
   http://pged.org/lesson-plans/#EugenicsDocumentAnalysis

3. “A R-based data-driven example to teach Hardy-Weinberg proportions that shows how a skin pigmentation locus is an outlier in terms of levels of differentiation”  
   https://github.com/StefanoAllesina/BSD-QBio3/tree/master/workshops/novembre

   This is written for high school teachers, but ideas applicable to any classroom  
   https://www.understandingrace.org/ForTeachers

   https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-race/

6. “The Illusion of Race” from the American Association for the Advancement of Science.  
   Lesson plans designed to help students learn that race “cannot be clearly defined, and is often used to elevate one group to the disadvantage of other groups.”  

III. Videos

1. “The Gene – an intimate history” by Ken Burns on PBS  
   Entire series (4 hours)  
   A short overview of Eugenics from the Gene by PBS Learning Media (10 min.)  
   https://tinyurl.com/y8dwjb94

2. “No Más Bebés” by Renee Tajima-Peña and Virginia Espino, on PBS.  
   This Emmy-nominated film documents the thousands of non-consensual sterilizations by California doctors on Mexican immigrants in the 1960’s and 1970’s.  
   Three minute trailer and entire movie  
   http://www.nomasbebesmovie.com/  
   Additional short clips on PBS  
   https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/no-mas-bebes/
3. “Fixed to Fail” explains the Buck v. Bell Supreme Court decision. Chilling. (4 minutes)

4. “Willis Lynch, For the Public Good” Interview with an older white man who was sterilized against his knowledge or consent as a teenager. (3 minutes)
   https://longreads.com/2014/11/19/for-the-public-good/

5. “Biology of Skin Color.” By HHMI (about 19 min.)  
   This is not about eugenics, but is included here because it can help teach students about the biology and selective forces acting on skin color, a trait that is literally skin-deep.
   https://www.biointeractive.org/classroom-resources/biology-skin-color

6. “Three Identical Strangers”  
   This is not about eugenics, but is included here because it exposes an abuse of scientific power to test the concept of “nature vs. nurture.” A set of triplets in an adoption center was intentionally separated and put in families of different socioeconomic groups to test “nature vs. nurture.”
   https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Identical_Strangers

IV. Podcasts

Radio Lab episode “G: unnatural selection”, specifically focuses on connections between eugenics and intelligence testing.
   https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab/articles/g-unnatural-selection

   Fresh Air interview with Adam Cohen, “The Supreme Court Ruling That Led To 70,000 Forced Sterilizations”
   https://www.npr.org/2017/03/24/521360544/the-supreme-court-ruling-that-led-to-70-000-forced-sterilizations

V. Websites

1. BSCS Science Learning promotes evidence-based learning approaches to science with a social-justice mission such as a “More Humane Genetics Education.”
   https://bscs.org/

2. Cold Spring Harbor Labs (CSHL) image archive on the American eugenics movement
   http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/

3. The Personal Genetics Education Project (pgEd, for short) is a team of scientists, social scientists, educators, and community organizers, with a mission to have inclusive conversations about genetics in every way that it is touching people’s lives.
   https://pged.org/

4. The Sterilization and Social Justice Lab is an interdisciplinary research team studying the history of sterilization in the United States. Additionally, they support efforts to provide reparations to surviving individuals who were involuntarily sterilized under U.S. eugenics laws.
   http://www.ssjlab.org/
5. **500 Women Scientists** “An initiative on reproductive justice, covering fertility control targeting women of color, including sterilizations.”

   https://500womenscientists.org/about-repro-justice

VI. Eugenics Legal Cases

1. 1927 Buck v Bell Supreme Court decision

   https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/274/200


   https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/01/magazine/when-doctors-took-family-planning-into-their-own-hands.html

3. 1974–2013 Fighting for reparations: Elaine Riddick Jesse and others forcibly sterilized by the state of North Carolina seek justice. They did not win in the courts, but found some justice from the state legislature.


   • “Elaine Riddick has been fighting for 40 years to get compensation from the state of North Carolina”, news clip, Associated Press. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I WanJoxW2s4


VII. Articles


   https://muse.jhu.edu/article/754878

3. “Interpreting polygenic scores, polygenic adaptation, and human phenotypic differences.”


   https://academic.oup.com/emph/article/2019/1/26/5262222


6. “Should ‘race’ be taught in high school biology.” Michael Schulson The subject of this article also pertains to college level biology and genetics courses https://undark.org/2018/09/12/biology-textbooks-race-high-school/


12. “Understanding our eugenic past to take steps towards scientific accountability.” Rori Rohlfs. A fascinating read about how students discovered Eugenics as a major at their own school http://genestogenomes.org/understanding-our-eugenic-past-to-take-steps-towards-scientific-accountability/

VIII. Books

1. Against Their Will: North Carolina’s Sterilization Program and the Campaign for Reparations by Kevein Paul Begos, Danielle Deaver, and John Railey https://books.google.com/books/about/Against_Their_Will.html?id=KbhfuQAACAAJ

2. Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-first Century by Dorothy Roberts https://thenewpress.com/books/fatal-invention


4. *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics and American Economics in the Progressive Era*  
   by Thomas Leonard  
   [https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691169590/illiberal-reformers](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691169590/illiberal-reformers)

5. *Imbeciles: The Supreme Court, American Eugenics, and the Sterilization of Carrie Buck*  
   by Adam Cohen  

6. *In the Name of Eugenics* by Daniel Kevles  

7. *She Has Her Mother’s Laugh: The Powers, Perversions, and Potential of Heredity*  
   by Carl Zimmer  
   [https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/536455/she-has-her-mothers-laugh-by-carl-zimmer/9781101984611](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/536455/she-has-her-mothers-laugh-by-carl-zimmer/9781101984611)

8. *Sex Itself: The Search for Male and Female in the Human Genome* by Sarah Richardson  

   [http://www.beacon.org/Superior-P1580.aspx](http://www.beacon.org/Superior-P1580.aspx)


11. *The Gene: An Intimate History* by Siddhartha Mukherjee  

12. *The Social Life of DNA: Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation after the Genome*  
    by Alondra Nelson  

13. *War Against the Weak: Eugenics and America’s Campaign to Create a Master Race*  
    by Edwin Black  
    [https://books.google.com/books/about/War_Against_the_Weak.html?id=3qBduQAACAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/War_Against_the_Weak.html?id=3qBduQAACAAJ)