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The Role of Eugenics in the Restoration of The Nuclear Family Post-WWII

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Very few social movements have had as long and murky of a path in United States as the eugenics movement. The concept itself is by no means unusual in human history; some evidence suggests that eugenic thinking patterns emerged as early as the time of Plato (Frost, 2012). The beginning of eugenics' "modern movement", developed in 1865, received a new definition by Sir Francis Galton and promoted the progression of desirable traits throughout human heredity lines. Hand-in-hand with this explanation is the underlying assumption that undesirable traits are defined as "unfit" for the success of the human race, and that these traits should be limited. Initially, the movement provided incentive to encourage "negative eugenics" practices, which targeted the "unfit" members of society and restricted the group's ability to reproduce, in order to encourage only the perpetuation of the fittest traits. From forced sterilizations to restrictive immigration quotas to marriage restrictions, the negative eugenics movement prospered well into the 1930s. Throughout its early days, the movement gained significant support from prominent members of American society, including notable figures such as the Rockefellers and Winston Churchill. At the time, the individuals promoting the movement viewed it as progressive and heavily rooted in scientific evidence (Frost, 2012).

However, the eugenic image tarnished as the United States entered World War II. Nazi Germany's association with eugenic practices turned opinions of the movement from exemplifying an ideal American society to promoting oppression and even genocide. Many of the movement's previous associations with promoting racial hygiene and removal of the "unfit" fell away as public figures in the area renounced their association with the concepts. Yet, contrary to popular belief, the eugenics movement in the United States did not disappear along with Hitler's regime; rather, in some cases, these negative eugenics practices (such as compulsory sterilizations) continued quietly for decades post-war. However, the movement

overwhelmingly took on new titles and adopted an updated, more "positive" focus in the public eye. Many social groups with eugenic agendas continued promoting the ideals under the mask of population control and similar movements, all while stressing their rejection of negative eugenic thinking. This new eugenic focus entered into various realms of society in the post-war years, and the American family was no exception.

The Nuclear Family & WWII

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the nuclear family as "a family group that consists only of father, mother, and children" (Merriam-Webster). Socially, the traditional definition of the nuclear family involves a male-female couple producing children and raising those children to be productive members of society through nurturing and socialization (Saxton, 1995). Also embedded in the "traditional nuclear family" is the glorification of the patriarchal family structure, where the head of the household, and breadwinner, is the husband and father, while the mother focuses on domestic duties. The distinction of gender roles in the family laborer, caretaking, and household tasks formed in the era of the Industrial Revolution, and this format of the family perpetuated throughout the first half of the 20th century (Smith, 2011).

However, World War II significantly changed the layout of the American family in a variety of ways. Most prominent was the workforce shift; as men left for the war, women poured into the workforce to take their place in the booming labor market. Estimates vary slightly, but overall, the female labor force increased by around sixty percent during the war years (Coontz, 2005). If this increase in working women weren't unusual enough to the United States' traditional labor force, married working women comprised about seventy five percent of the surge (setting a new record for the highest proportion of married women workers). Previously,

mostly young and unmarried women entered the workforce, but the war's demand on production led to decreased discrimination regarding marriage status (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). Also significant were the types of jobs women were accepting during the war; rather than seamstress and secretarial positions, women were taking men's' spots in areas such as welding and mechanics (Saxton, 1995). The government supported women's' increasing involvement in the workforce during the war years, providing pay and supporting "Rosie the Riveter" (Coontz, 2005), a propaganda campaign to encourage women to begin working. Rosie epitomized the ideal woman worker; smart, patriotic, and pretty, she eagerly took a job in order to support the economy, the war, and the men of the United States (Sorensen, 2004). However, "[w]hile patriotism did influence women, ultimately it was the economic incentives that encouraged them to work" (Sorensen, 2004). Married women worked replace the income gaps their husbands left when they went to war, and those who were single enjoyed pay levels and positions they had previously been unable to obtain. During the war, the workforce experienced quite a gender shift.

The new workforce resulted, in some cases, in the dismantling of family life. Among the women who went to war were those who had children; in fact, the war saw a seventy-five percent increase in the number of working women who had children in the home (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). Because of this, the term "latchkey kid" developed to describe the children who were left alone during the day (Dictionary.com, 2012). This situation was by no means desirable in the eyes of the American people. Government officials, while on one hand encouraging women's involvement in the workforce, initially discouraged working mothers from entering; however, this encouragement was not overwhelmingly successful. The United States desperately needed laborers to contribute to the growing production, and eventually, employers could not pass up the possibility of utilizing working mothers. Additionally, while the government

provided stipends to “war widows” to assist with living costs, they were inadequate in their support of American families affected by the war; ultimately, mothers needed to work in order to acquire vital family income. Despite the inevitability of working mothers joining the labor force, social services were not equipped to provide help for working mothers in the workforce; the nation suffered from lack of effective child-care facilities in addition to inadequate housing, schools, and other developmental-related services for the family (Online Highways, LLC, 2012). The few childcare programs for working mothers that were developed often lacked in several areas; overcrowded and understaffed, they were hard to come by and often violated health standards. They were also considered temporary and were shut down as the war came to an end, under the expectation that working mothers would re-enter the home (Michel, 1987), so a low level of effort was dedicated toward ensuring their adequacy. These less-than-ideal conditions placed strain on the impacted families.

Finally, the very acts of marriage and divorce altered throughout the course of the war. The marriage level exhibited a significant upsurge during the early years of the war for a variety of reasons. For instance, scholars attest that the surge can, in part, be attributed to the loneliness sparked by the war and the sense of urgency the war provoked. Confronted with the reality of leaving for war, couples rushed to wed in order to grasp at any remaining sense of normalcy and “togetherness”. Marriage also increased due to the stipends provided for married individuals who headed off to war; in another vein, marriage was used as a shield from the draft, because married men were deferred from the war until 1942. Regardless of the reasons for matrimony, a great deal of the marriages formed during the war did not last long-term; post-war, the divorce rate increased drastically because the stresses of wartime resulted in an inability to cope with post-war marital problems and relations. As Mintz and Kellogg (1988) explain, “[c]ontributing

factors include the haste with which couples had wed, the strains of wartime separation, and the shock of strangeness and disillusionment on being reunited". Additionally, the war led to a significant increase in infidelity, as those women who were left by their significant other during the war found new men to replace the ones overseas, and vice versa (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). Indeed, the war left many individuals questioning the meaning of marriage itself.

Fear of Degeneration

Fear was no stranger to many Americans in regards to the state of the family in the years after WWII ended. Even as optimism about the United States soared, a good deal of concern regarding the family remained. First, the roles individuals were expected to play in their home lives had been completely uprooted by the war. For instance, the high tensions surrounding the state of the American workplace reflected the overarching worry about the state of the American family. The government, despite encouraging women workers to enter the force during the war, emphasized that women were working to support the men and the country while the men were gone; the influx of women into the workforce was not desired in and of itself. The federal government ensured that women were reminded of their temporary entrance and stressed that the primary duty of women was still the home and children (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). The government held somewhat firmly to the traditional concept of the cultural division of labor by sex, which encouraged separate spheres of dominance for men and women (with women running the "private sphere", the home, and men running the "public sphere", which included everything else) (Sorensen, 2004); using this social norm as a template, women who worked outside the home were considered to be overstepping their rightful boundaries, insulting men in the process, and also ruining the "sanctity of marriage" while feminizing the workplace (Davis, 2010). Additionally, many Americans still held work-related memories from the Great Depression,

when women were discouraged from working in order to provide the few available jobs to men (Sorensen, 2004). A social worker of the period summed up popular opinion with the following statement: “In our complicated society, with its traditional concept of employment as a masculine prerogative, a woman’s working may have symbolic meaning for her husband and may be a threat to him if he is not altogether secure in his masculinity” (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). While the war served as an exception to these cultural rules, its end also signified the end of those exceptions. Many companies resumed men-only hiring practices, and those that continued to hire women placed them in lower-paying, lower-level positions (Sorensen, 2004). Overwhelmingly, women saw their time working as temporary as well, and the few women who challenged the return of the traditional workforce had limited power.

Additionally, there was a great deal of anxiety regarding the breakdown of social values in both marital relations and child-rearing during the war years. For instance, rising divorce levels post-war concerned Americans and brought fear of family breakdown to light. Additionally, in the realm of parenting, while somewhat futile attempts were made to prevent mothers from subjecting their children to a life of parent absenteeism, many families found themselves in that exact position. The concept of working mothers and absent fathers evoked warnings from experts in social services, who feared the negative impact of uninvolvement on American children. As the “latchkey kid” became more commonplace, so did increased discussion regarding the slew of social and psychological difficulties these children could face (from behavior regressions, to social “ineptness”, to juvenile delinquency). The media weighed in on the topic as well; for example, public newspapers and magazines ran articles about the detrimental effects parental absence invoked on children, publishing horror stories describing everything from cases of extreme neglect to children’s dangerously violent outbursts (Mintz &

Kellogg, 1988). When considering the potential problems facing the both the marital couple and the youth of America, the future of the country looked very bleak indeed.

Along with these concerns were worries about the safety of the country itself. While Americans carried a great deal of optimism and patriotism in light of the victory of WWII, some concerns perpetuated. Among the most prominent was the increasing level of Cold War fears; in a sense, many Americans found U.S. victory quite less-than-victorious, because it meant that the U.S. had "[defeated] one totalitarian monster by joining up with another", namely, the Soviet Union (Allitt, 2003). Americans already felt uncomfortable with familial structure changes; adding the possibility of a looming foreign enemy, possibly more dangerous than the enemies of World War II, added to the stress of the immediate post-war years.

Needless to say, the war put a strain on the family for a variety of reasons and explains the deep desire of a majority of Americans to attempt to find "normalcy" and what they believed to be a functional family structure. However, many families were unsure how to go about regaining this solidity within their personal lives when so much had changed during, and because of, the war years. For example, many women experienced significant discontent after the war, whether it be from experiencing a mere glimpse of the working world, yet being unable to join the workforce permanently, or from feelings of non-recognition for the difficulty of balancing responsibilities during the war, as well as post-war internal conflicts between homemaking and finding meaning outside the home. Wives after the war also felt significant pressure to live up to the traditional 'housewife' stereotype and many reported feelings of guilt for not devoting enough time to the home (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). For some, the weight of the possibility of divorce, paired with the state of their individual marriages, were disconcerting as well; "[p]ublic opinion polls [in the 1950s] indicated that approximately one-fifth of all couples considered

themselves unhappy in marriage" (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). With so much uncertainty in so many realms, the American public needed an answer that eased fear and seemed to change the problems facing the nation, and specifically the family, after the war.

Eugenic Thinking Post- WWII

By 1945, the eugenics movement was faced with the necessity of removing its notorious connection to the events of the Holocaust and similar brutalities employed by the Nazi regime. Eugenicists shifted away from concepts too overtly resembling the practices utilized by the United States' war enemies and even consciously removed their associations with the word "eugenics" itself. The American Eugenics Society, prominent before the war, assured the public that between the years of 1930 and 1940, the movement underwent a radical change of thought, away from the overarching themes of race and class (defining characteristics to separate subgroups in Nazi Germany) and into the more specific traits of the individual; Frederick Osborn, its president, explained that "the differences between individuals far outweighed 'any differences which might be discovered between the averages of the larger racial or social groups'" (Stern, 2005). This realignment occurred both to improve the eugenic image post-war, as well as due to the concession by many eugenicists that the "negative" movement had run its course and that more innovative and updated means of encouraging "fitter families" needed to be implemented. Therefore, rather than focus on overt elimination of subgroups, eugenic theory targeted population control, and specifically, encouragement of the fit to reproduce, during the post-war years. It is imperative to understand that, in the context of the topic, the "traditional American family" and eugenicists' target group refers to the "upper middle class suburbanites" (Olson, 1970). Therefore, it was by no means difficult for eugenicists to feel comfortable promoting reproduction among American families; their main target group was a eugenically

reliable class, which had boomed post-war and which now was producing more children than uneducated classes (Ladd Taylor, 2001). To be clear, population control in the form of birth control distribution and reproduction limitation was occurring in lower classes as well as overseas; additionally, such practices as sterilization and immigration control amongst lower socioeconomic classes, racial minorities, and other, less traditionally "well-off" populations, were not completely eradicated until, at times, into the 1980s (Stern, 2005). However, within the realm of the upper middle class, eugenicists felt comfortable enough to accept that reproduction and relationships centering on marriage and procreation were going to form. In these cases, they focused on improving the relationship of the couple and promoting the success of the family, the basis of the nation's "eugenic contribution"(Ladd Taylor, 2001).

Eugenicists on board with the theory surrounding population control believed it to be "a vehicle for modernization, the introduction of liberal democracy, and, if properly pursued, world peace" (Stern, 2005). Eager to develop a way to "scientifically" gauge factors that would influence population control efforts, complex classification systems such as biotypology were born. Biotypology measured composite traits of individuals, rather than overarching traits (such as race or class), in order to determine each individual's unique personality, as well as his or her psychological and physical traits. Interestingly, the use of these new "composite-gathering" tools, linked with the ideas of population control among the "average" American family, combined in such a way to begin defining the "normal" characteristics of each gender. As eugenicists began focusing on population control via the route of the American family, these definitions of what each individual should display influenced opinion on the proper interaction between the marital couple, and also encouraged a closer examination of sex and gender's impact on this relationship as well as its impact on American society as a whole. As Stern (2005)

highlights, essentially, "the racism of the 1920s was rearticulated into the sexism of the 1950s". As sex and gender roles were increasingly tied to biological composites, eugenicists developed increased focus on stabilizing gender roles and sex-appropriate traits and behaviors.

Eugenicists' scientific focus served to place a tangible label on the problems of American society after the war, one that provided a fix. Eugenic theory filled the gap where there was recognition of problems, but lack of understanding of the reasoning behind these problems as well as inability to provide a solution. Eugenicists, who, like the American public, were shaken from the disintegration of the family and the nation during the war, desired family security and stability and feared the breakdown of society due to the war's upset. They used this anxiety to develop scientific reasoning (such as natural gender roles, mentioned above) that could then be used to provide answers where the public needed them most. The American public was just as willing to hear these solutions as eugenicists were to share them; therefore, eugenics found a significantly powerful avenue to promote its ideology and be welcomed with open arms by the middle class families of the United States. Utilizing a variety of venues, the eugenics movement and ideology found significant ways to encourage and promote the new version of the "fittest family".

Suburbia and the Consumer Culture

Interestingly, movement patterns of the post-war period facilitated the encouragement of traditional family roles. The birth of the suburbs, which coincided with the end of the war, radically altered previous living situations in the United States. Before the war, the upper middle class tended to reside in cities; however, along with the economy boom came the rapid growth of single-family homes outside of metropolises. The "suburban boom" accurately describes the

birth of the suburbs; between the end of the war and 1960, suburban home development accounted for 11 of the 13 million homes built (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). As the suburbs expanded, the families of middle class America rushed to fill the new living quarters; as Mintz and Kellogg (1988) explain, "the opportunity to have a family and buy a suburban house… filled a deep emotional need". This movement itself had implications for the meaning of the "family"; the realm of suburban life, away from family and the familiarity of the city, encouraged familial bonds and functioning to be as strong as possible to promote the sense of security and togetherness. This focus on "family togetherness" strongly reinforced the expectations of the well-rounded, desirable nuclear setup. The stereotypical suburban family involved a non-working wife who focused on housework and childcare, as well as a husband who emphasized the importance of his commuter job and embodied the role of breadwinner. Magazines and literature reinforced the aspects of the ideal suburban family (for instance, many stressed the importance of a woman's place in the home by depicting housewives as well-balanced and happy, while career women were touted as miserable and dissatisfied); also significant was the corresponding electronics boom of the era, featuring the newly accessible medium of television, a device that served as an additional venue to encourage the nuclear family ideology in a constant stream. The television cannot be overlooked in its influence on American culture of the fifties, including its impact on the expectations of suburban families; both television shows and the commercials between their segments provided their viewers with highly influential depictions of the structure of family relationships (and environments) that would prove most successful in achieving the post-war American ideal. Promoting ideals of masculinity and femininity, stressing the do's and don'ts of parenthood, and presenting the interplay of husband-wife relations, television shows captured the attention of the suburbanites tuning in and

encouraged the replication of on-screen dynamics in their own lives (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). The mass movement to the suburbs itself, as well as the increased consumption of consumer goods, especially those with influential advertising capabilities, allowed for eugenics ideology to obtain a subtle, but secure, realm of influence in the everyday life of suburban America.

Marriage Counseling: A Eugenic Endeavor

With post-war anxiety, as well as a change in living situations and increased pressure to live up to the family ideal, the American family was more willing than ever to enlist the help of "professionals" in obtaining familial perfection. Seizing this opportunity, eugenicists joined the ranks of social services and actively offered eugenically-driven advice. Marriage counseling was perhaps the most overt avenue though which eugenicists promoted their ideals throughout the post-war years. Scholars analyzing the relationship agree that there is "striking correlation between the eugenicist and marriage-counselling agendas" (Ladd Taylor, 2001), and for good reason; an ideal way to combat family degeneration was to directly target the spousal unit, the core of the nuclear family. Additionally, eugenicists realized the likelihood that the American public would likely desire these services after the war; as one eugenics counselor explained, "[a]s stresses and strains of war again create added disturbance to marriage and family life, it is predicted that there will be increased demand for more marriage counseling" (Mudd, 1951). The first marriage counseling centers opened in the early 1930s (two of these primary clinics will be further discussed), and 1942 witnessed the development of the American Association of Marriage Counselors, a group that encouraged further expansion of the marital counseling field (Olson, 1970). By the early 1950s, it can be safely said that the marriage counseling boom had arrived, allowing eugenic ideas to thrive and permeate into the life of the family itself.

The Careers of Paul Popenoe and Emily Mudd

Several public figures set the stage for the wave of marital advice to hit the American public in the immediate years post-war. Among the social leaders at the forefront of the marriage counseling boom was a man by the name of Paul Popenoe. An avid eugenicist, Popenoe advocated for compulsory sterilizations and other "mainstream" eugenic ideals before the war. In his 1918 book *Applied Eugenics,* Popenoe stated that "[a] eugenically superior or desirable person has, to a greater degree than the average, the germinal basis for the following characteristics: to live past maturity, to reproduce adequately, to live happily and to make contributions to the productivity, happiness, and progress of society". Always interested in the interplay of marriage, fitness, and society, Popenoe's focus shifted to marriage counseling as the United States swung away from negative eugenics. Popenoe used his core beliefs ("steadfast moralism and ringing endorsement of family values") to develop his own marriage clinic, an endeavor he believed had yet been fully utilized in promoting eugenic ideology (Stern, 2005). In 1930, the American Institute of Family Relations opened its doors; modeled after German marriage counseling centers focused on the all-around fitness of individuals in creating a spousal unit, the AIFR stressed its scientific basis for encouraging the best possible mate for each American individual (Stern, 2005). Popenoe remained steadfast in his agreement that the grossly unfit should be dealt with under the lens of negative eugenic practices, but recognized that the majority of American families were not in this position. Consequently, the AIFR assisted, with an overarching hereditary focus, marital couples with information regarding "suitability of marriage and procreation" (Stern, 2005). Self-proclaimed a "doctor" despite a lack of formal medical or doctoral training, Popenoe convinced the public of his understanding of the field, his reputable scientific and moral background, and his legitimacy to offer advice, attesting that he,

along with fellow marriage counselors, held "particularly favorable position[s] to give advice that will have eugenic value" (Stern, 2005). He often boasted about the success of his own marriage and its roots in conservative values, and assured the public that they, too, could experience similar success by employing the means the AIFR offered. The clinic was most instrumental and reached its peak in providing information for eugenic-based marital advice throughout the 1940s and 1950s.

Similarly, Emily Hartshorne Mudd had a significant impact on the realm of marriage counseling. Initially intrigued by the newly developing field of birth control (a fundamentally eugenic undertaking, although it didn't become a mainstream discussion point until the 1960s), Mudd was inspired to delve into the marriage counseling arena after observing the impacts of limited birth control availability and information on the lives of women living in her Philadelphia community. Mudd not only desired to change the comprehension and availability of birth control in her community, she also concluded that marriage problems could stem from contraception issues and that, in general, it was imperative to focus on marriage and attempt to relieve relational distress among couples. Her interest led to her position as director at the Marriage Council of Philadelphia, a marriage counseling agency that developed around the time of Popenoe's clinic. Like the AIFR, the MCP provided marriage counseling to couples desiring the therapy; additionally, the MCP conducted familial research and became a significant training center for aspiring marriage counselors. Mudd managed these aspects of the MCP, and contributed directly to the consultation of clients as well as the training of counselors (whether they be traditional marriage counselors, pastors, or even medical students) using the same outlines and focus as Popenoe and other eugenic counselors of the age. Additionally, Mudd published numerous articles, edited books on marriage counseling, and traveled across the globe

delivering lectures pertaining to the importance of family planning and marriage counseling services (Brookes, 1993). Mudd, like Popenoe, joined the leaders of the marriage counseling boom in order to promote ideals she found to be, in the eugenic sense, prosperous to the American public and helpful for the individual family.

Counseling Ideals

Marriage counselors developed ideals of what the American family should embody in order to achieve most successful status by eugenic means as defined post-wear, with a focus on the marital relationship. Marriage itself was touted as the most natural state for adults; nothing was thought to be more socially or instinctively normal than matrimony. In fact, leaders of the time period stressed the misfortunes to befall families living in a state of unhappy marital relations or similarly dysfunctional states (Frank, 1948). To state that other forms of adulthood living were "looked down upon" constitutes a severe understatement; bachelors were labeled as "narcissistic, deviant, infantile, or pathological" (Coontz, 2005), and the social ramifications for single women were even worse. However, simply getting married did not appease eugenic experts; several guidelines were composed in regards to the state of marriage itself. Eugenicists steadfastly believed the spousal relationship should be "sexually satisfying, emotionally fulfilling, and reproductively responsible" (Davis, 2010), and marriage counselors provided a number of provisions in order to fulfill this goal. First, it was expected that a patriarchal family structure be achieved as a "traditional and permanent form of marriage", consisting of a male breadwinner and a domestic female (Coontz, 2005). This arrangement was considered to be crucial for success of the family as well as the overarching success of the country and even western civilization as a whole (Stern, 2005). Male dominance and female submissiveness was not only viewed to be biologically natural but also the most successful way to run a household.

Experts of the time period stressed that couples displaying this balance would be more content (and more successful in the realm of child-rearing) if they understood gender differences, and warned of the problems that could arise in marriage if this balance was disrupted. Many reminded the public of the dissatisfaction the marriage (and especially the male partner) would experience the woman was to dominate; more intensely, some experts played on fears the American public faced post-war. For example, psychoanalysts Nathan Ackerman and Marie Jahoda insisted that anti-Semitism, a main theme underlying the eugenic practices utilized in the Holocaust, was caused by "a violent, argumentative, cold, and unsympathetic relationship between the [partners]…one [partner] was dominant and overaggressive, the other submissive… [m]ore often than not, it was the [wife] who represented aggressive dominance" (Ackerman & Jahoda, 1950; cited in Weinstein, 2004). However, while the trait was deemed negative, even dangerous, when found in women, dominance in men was considered a natural state, embedded in centuries of evolutionary history; therefore, "dominant" actions by the husband, even those bordering on (or classifying as) abuse, were dismissed as natural under the state of the marital couple. Men were also expected to be, among other traditionally "masculine" traits, more active, aggressive, rational, and courageous than women; alternatively, women were expected to display higher levels of submissive, timid, modest, and vindictive behaviors. Additionally, men were expected to display extroverted traits, while women should more often show introverted tendencies. Unfortunately, introverted behaviors were also more indicative of neuroses, mania, and other problematic behaviors (Stern, 2005). These general "guidelines", formed by eugenic ideals, about how each respective gender should behave, as well as the ideal elemental makeup of the spousal couple, mirrored those suggested by public media and served as the basis for marriage counseling through a eugenic lens.

An extension of the expectations of marriage involved the expectations of parenthood, often with extended focus on the mother's role in her children's upbringing. A 1948 article, titled "What Families Do For The Nation", illustrates the numerous reasons specific child-raising practices are imperative for the future success of the child and, consequently, the future success of the nation as a whole (Frank, 1948). The family is defined as a crucial component in both the socialization and installation of cultural values of the child; the importance of the intact parental pair, and especially the mother, is also strongly stressed. In fact, it was considered strange for a woman to not desire motherhood; in some cases, women endured shock treatments and other medical procedures as a result of attempting abortion or otherwise not living up to motherly expectations. Yet, there was conflicting encouragement regarding the relative roles a woman should play as "wife" and "mother". Specifically, the woman should be invested in her children, but not more invested in her children than in her husband. As prominent marriage counselor Paul Popenoe (whose contributions to providing advice for the family will later be discussed in detail) stressed, "[women] should be less solicitous of their children… and pay more attention to their husbands" (Ladd Taylor, 2001). There was a similarly fine line surrounding child-rearing techniques; women were expected to be "loving and attentive without being overbearing or domineering" (Celello, 2009), and consequently risking the chance of such "ills" as homosexuality, especially in their sons. Mothers who failed to show a reasonable intermediate of tenderness toward their children suffered the same sense of being ostracized as women who did not want to be mothers; as scholar Stephanie Coontz (1992) explains, "[w]omen who could not walk the fine line between nurturing motherhood and castrating 'momism'… were labeled neurotic, perverted, or schizophrenic". While the rules of proper motherhood composed the majority of parenting focus, fathers were also given suggestions on the best ways to interact with

their children, especially in order to encourage the child's gender identity (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). These rules of proper parenthood and proper marital relations, essentially created by eugenic influence through those who dubbed themselves "experts", influenced the ideologies of counseling centers, from the statements of their leaders to their methods of therapy.

Counseling in Action: Strategies and Avenues

Marriage counselors provided their clients with opinions, advice, and strategies that fell in line with their core beliefs of what the marital couple (and family) should encompass. Often, martial counseling involved a biotypology-based individual analysis to acquire a person's traits and incorporate this information into an understanding of the couple's functioning. Counselors reasoned that marriage problems could be solved by first determining the base personalities of each half of a couple and consequently providing solutions to merge these "genetically-based" personalities most advantageously. For instance, one such test, the Johnson Temperament Analysis Test (JTA), was designed with temperament in mind; the form contained nearly 200 questions and assessed the dimensions of an individual's personality, from nervousness levels to activeness to aggressiveness. From this information, decisions could be made regarding the best way to proceed toward a solution. Essentially, "the JTA illuminates the operating principles and biases of the family-centric eugenics of the postwar period" by encouraging gender conformity and the adoption of strict gender roles (Stern, 2005). The suggested "solutions" often targeted the wife and encouraged patriarchal family values. Eugenicists of the time took the stance that "it was much easier to change women than men", that instances of women refusing to conform were more common than male deviation, and that the wife should, as Popenoe phrases it, "make more of the larger adjustments" (Stern, 2005). Generally, these adjustments involved one-on-one therapy, physical exercises, and other self-improvement techniques. Known as one of the AIFR's

favorite tools, the JTA was often cited as "the center of the AIFR's marriage counseling"; around seventy thousand individuals were given the measure throughout the span of the AIFR's operation. Popenoe himself explains an instance of the JTA's success in marital counseling services (Stern, 2005); he records a certain "Mrs. C" who, upon taking the JTA and finding high levels of nervousness and coldness/impulsiveness, was determined to suffer from "masculine protest". The counselor working with the C family suggested numerous strategies for dealing with Mrs. C's tendencies toward this undesirable set of traits, and later received report of a happier, more satisfying marriage from Mrs. C and her husband. Mrs. C's case is just one of virtually unlimited case studies and public examples in which the wife's behaviors were touted as the source of marital distress, while the husband's contribution to the pair's problems was merely skimmed, if even explored at all.

In general, the focus on the wife's improvement areas was a significant goal of many marriage counselors. However, although marriage counseling during the time period overwhelmingly stressed the responsibility of the wife to improve marital relations and the family structure, usually by relinquishing personal opinions and input, counselors also claimed that the "ideal" family displayed a give-and-take, both in the realm of the family and in the bedroom. This 'fifty-fifty' mentality was highly recommended and touted by Paul Popenoe himself as a significant reason for his own marriage's success. However, the term 'fifty-fifty' was not encouraged in the literal sense; for instance, in the realm of childcare, as a "parenting advice expert", Dr. Benjamin Spock, explained, " Of course I don't mean that the father has to give just as many bottles, or change just as many bottles as the mother… [b]ut it's fine for him to do these things occasionally… on Sunday" (Cootnz, 2005). When considering the husband-wife relationship, similar rules applied; Popenoe explained that a wife should be "sympathetic with

her husband's work and a good listener" but refrain from criticizing him, because, of course, she was not the expert (Coontz, 2005). If there is one area within the family structure that reaches what, by today's standards, would constitute true "equality", it may rest within the encouraged composition of the sexual relationship between the husband and wife. It is true that the discovery of sexual dissatisfaction in marriages often came along with the discovery of the wife's "masculine protest" and, even more severe in this situation, "frigidity" (which resulted in lack of sex drive); the wife was encouraged to reduce these symptoms in order to reassert sexual desire and satisfaction between the couple. However, in this realm, husbands also were given a variety of suggestions to help improve the sexual relationship, from advice on arousing their wives and retaining from experiencing their own sexual pleasure if the result would be more sexually pleasing to the wife (Stern, 2005). In the context of the marriage counseling realm of the time period, this area of advising may seem counterintuitive to the beliefs held by experts and encouraged within the general public. However, upon closer examination, the encouragement of equality, and perhaps even a greater focus on the wife's needs (rather than the husband's) in the realm of intimacy is highly beneficial for the perpetuation of the eugenics movement. To allow the sexual relationship to fizzle would be to "destabilize the male-female relationship and jeopardize the perpetuation of the middle-class family" (Stern, 2005). Therefore, from the sexual relationship to the everyday interactions between a couple, marriage counseling provided steadfast, firmly planted belief systems and techniques based on the themes and ideals of post-war eugenics theory.

Marriage counselors influenced the American public in areas outside of their direct services to couples in therapy settings. Many ran marriage education workshops for a variety of social organizations involved in American life, all with the goal of making American society

itself more in-tune to family life. For instance, a description of the Marriage Counsel of Philadelphia's discussion group and workshops illustrate the true scope marriage counselors achieved when directing their messages to social leaders throughout various aspects of American life: "Seminar discussion groups on marriage and related topics have been held yearly for physicians, ministers, and more recently for teachers in high schools and colleges… professional[s]… with many different interests and affiliations write from all parts of the country or come to the office…" (Mudd & Rose, 1940). In addition, several workshops were geared toward the "average" family and focused on marriage counseling techniques. For example, one popular workshop, Popenoe's "Marriage Readiness Service" (announced in *Ladies' Home Journal*) provided single women nearing the age of thirty with advice to increase the chances of marriage based on the JTA and other self-reported information. Within six months of the announcement, around sixty women had written in and paid the appropriate fees to receive personal reports, nearly all received diagnoses of significant character flaws stemming from displaying inappropriate gender roles, and were well on their way to re-assuming their rightful, and most eugenically beneficial, positions in society (Stern, 2005). Many other workshops diverted slightly from direct marital advice and instead covered various "home maintenance" topics, such as budgeting. Marriage counselors also used the media, in its various forms, to promote counseling and its premises. Housewives were encouraged to run the perfect home and obtain the perfect marital relationship by marriage advice columns in popular magazines such as *Ladies Home Journal* (Coontz, 2005); extremely successful was Popenoe's advice column "Can This Marriage Be Saved?", which launched in 1953 and provided "practical" advice to get marriages back on track, often with the focus, as expected, on fixing the wife's behavior and attitudes (Stern, 2005). Also popular was Popenoe's newspaper column "Modern Marriage",

which ran for the first time in print in 1947 and sought to "cover the general field of the relations between the sexes both before and after marriage, bringing in relevant material from the fields of biology, sociology, and psychology" (cited in Stern, 2005). In a break from the loose façade surrounding marriage counseling (in reference to its avoidance of using the word "eugenics"), marriage advice columns even developed within the American Eugenics Society's *Eugenics Quarterly,* and its counselors were welcomed into the AES Board of Directors with open arms (Ladd Taylor, 2001). Numerous other pamphlets, regarding everything from recommendations of a wife's appropriate reactions to a husband's sentiments to navigating a variety of childcare troubles, permeated through the public sphere as well (Mintz & Kellogg, 1988). Unwilling to neglect electronic media, Popenoe, as well as other marriage counselor leaders of the time, also appeared in television advice shows and talk radio channels, utilizing the electronics purchase that often accompanied a family's move to suburbia. Simply put, marriage and family counseling was everywhere, flooding a slew of cultural and professional mediums.

Eugenic Theory Within the Church

Church life during the post-war years also influenced the American family, serving as a comforting figure in the lives of many Americans. The church intensely encouraged family participation in services and Sunday school classes, with increasing membership as one of its main goals (Harris, 2012). By 1950, over 86 million Americans were church-goers, and the numbers only continued to rise, along with the construction of record numbers of new churches to fill the growing suburbs, creations of religious organizations, and bible sales (Zeller, 2011). Luckily for eugenicists, the rise of church-going families did not distract from eugenic goals; rather, the church endorsed the same values eugenicists touted. In tune with the scientific underpinnings for eugenic theory, churches of the period supported the viewpoint that men and

women were very different in nature and embraced the theory of separate spheres, also encouraging traditional family structures and supporting familism (Edgell & Docka, 2007).

Not only did the churches of the period develop their own "pro-family" programs through the routes of Sunday school and weekly family services, they also expanded on the counseling boom sweeping the United States in the post-war years. Within the activities of the church itself was the development of pastoral-based counseling services, which held many similar values and utilized similar strategies as more "general" marriage counseling. Just as marital counseling formed its strategies through the use of eugenic beliefs about gender and relationships, pastoral counseling utilized the "psychology" of eugenics to create its specific field. The 1930s witnessed, in a manner similar to the birth of marriage counseling clinics, the formation of the American Foundation of Religion and Psychology, created from the merging of ministry and psychology to create a biological basis of religious therapy (American Association of Pastoral Counselors, 2012). While its exact path to its position in society today is not easily traced, records do indicate that during its emergence, pastoral counseling took note of general marriage counseling's strategies and even received influential instruction from the latter. For instance, Emily Hawthorne Mudd dedicated a section of a 1951 marriage counseling guidebook to the appropriate actions of the clergyman providing counseling services; among her encouragements was to keep the focus on marriage's position as product of the love of God, as well as urgings to undertake the strategies of non-religiously affiliated counselors and apply them within the realm of the church. Pastoral counselors were also encouraged to delve into premarital counseling; although Mudd acknowledged that premarital counseling had been naturally occurring within the marital process, she stressed that this "counseling" was limited to "incidental advice" during the time period with which the clergy assisted in wedding preparations (1951). Therefore, Mudd

stressed the importance of pastors and other clergy members to consciously strive to provide structured counseling services and consider it as one piece of the counseling puzzle necessary for couples to find success in their marriages and family lives (Mudd, 1951). Through this therapeutic avenue, as well as due to the mere growth of congregations and interest in the church during the time period, religion proved to be a central player in the eugenic fight for the family.

Eugenics and World War II have a compelling relationship. The war brought with in a variety of changes, many of which impacted the family structure and what was considered to be the "traditional" way of doing things. This alteration left the American public in a state of uncertainty and fear, unsure of how to proceed to restore what had been lost during the war. The eugenics movement, which had shifted during the time period in order to focus on "positive" aspects such as promotion of the fit, found this public need to be the ideal platform to promote its ideology. From marriage counseling to church services, to acknowledging the impact of the suburbs and the media boom, eugenicists discovered a variety of viable ways to impact the formation of the American family post-war. It is vital to note that the interaction between such aspects as suburbanization, counseling, public media, and religion was an interplay of eugenics ideals and public sentiment, rather than a linear progression; they all influenced each other, in at times a circular manner. Regardless of the ways in which they operated, all venues helped, during the post-war years, to achieve the final outlook eugenicists promoted and the American public desired: the reformation of the nuclear family.

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