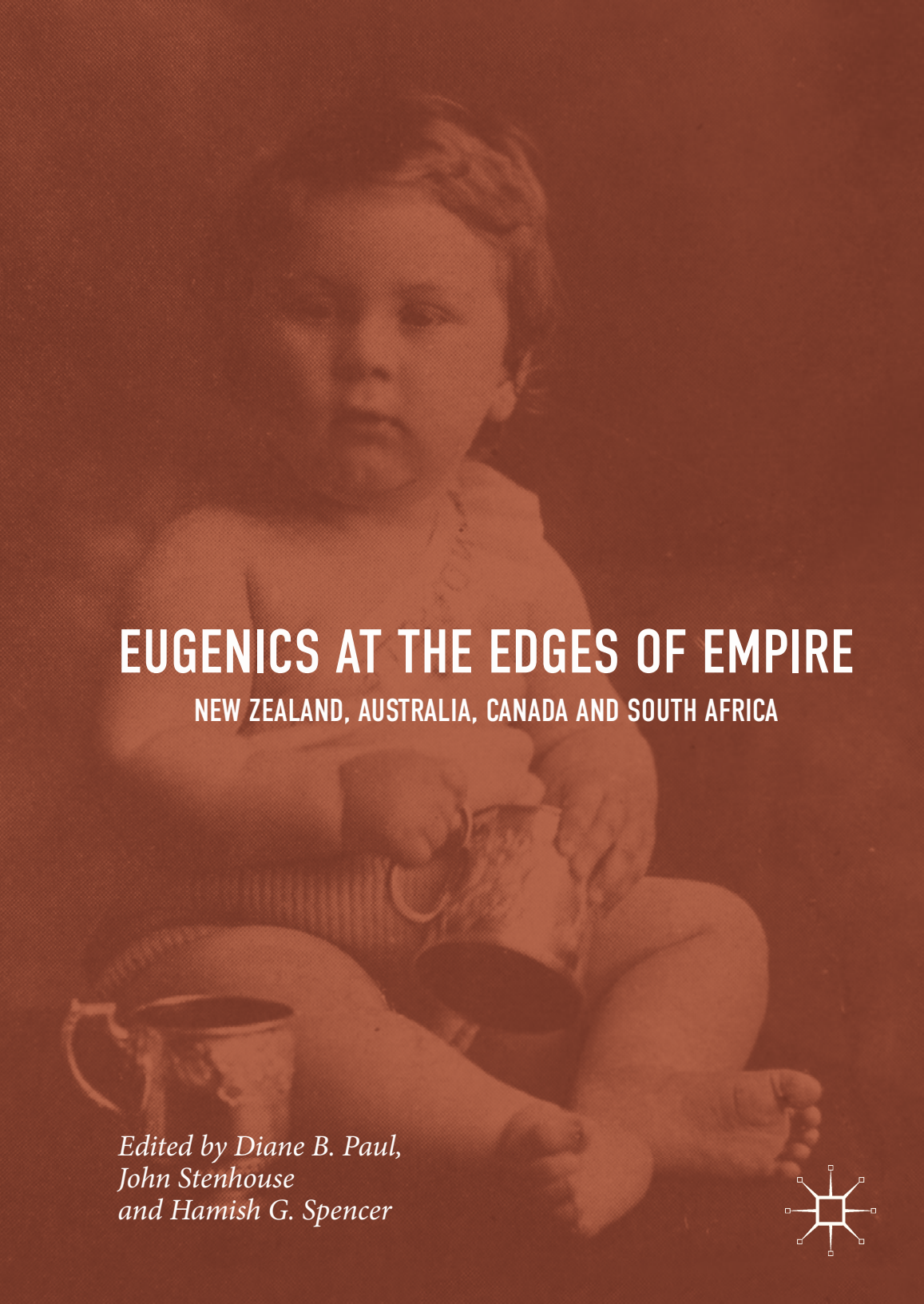

EUGENICS AT THE EDGES OF EMPIRE

NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Edited by Diane B. Paul,
John Stenhouse
and Hamish G. Spencer

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Editors

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palgrave
macmillan

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ISBN 978-3-319-64685-5 ISBN 978-3-319-64686-2 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64686-2

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017949458

Cover credit: Photo of Master Galland, baby contest winner, *Otago Witness*, 8 September 1909. Published courtesy of Allied Press Ltd.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Foreword

This is a history of eugenics written from New Zealand outwards. Its antipodean editorial and substantive location helps us to understand eugenics in fresh ways. Most importantly, it brings us close to scholarship on settler colonialism, and the sense in which population quantity and quality was core to that historical project. Vital nationalism in settler colonies was fundamentally driven by the future prospects for, and progressive achievement of, hygiene and population health through purposeful reproductive management. This was quite different from the degeneration anxieties that drove so much European eugenics. As these chapters show, health, race, sex and nation were conflated in settler colonial nations in the antipodes, North America and southern Africa. No wonder eugenics thrived. Lands of freethinkers, progressives, and social welfare experiments, these were new world political and cultural contexts in which managed reproduction and heredity became deeply civic matters.

This book deepens our understanding of just how and why eugenics was such a familiar idea in the early twentieth century. We learn how eugenics morphed into quotidian public health and mental health and welfare structures of the era, and into seemingly progressive education plans. Chapters also clarify the eugenic measures over which there was consistent concern and anxiety; in particular sterilization and legislation to regulate marriage. Sterilization is the historical and historiographical touchstone for scholars of eugenic policy and practice. Inventories of states which did or did not enact compulsory laws are standard in the scholarship. Yet here we learn much more about the spectrum

of arguments, how easily state legislatures in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada might have passed more pressing eugenic laws, but equally why they often did not. This is part of the history of liberalism in the British world: at the end of the day, the Canadian states which did pass and enact sterilization laws were the outliers. To understand eugenics fully, we do need to comprehend local as well as shared political and social debate about consent and coercion within a liberalism that was being tested in the early twentieth century. Especially—as I have argued elsewhere—the power of the idea of voluntariness for eugenists (and even, counterintuitively, 'freedom'), is critical to address.

New Zealand, Australian, Canadian and South African eugenics is often analysed by social and cultural historians of race, gender and nationalism, and this collection displays that particular historiographical strength. Yet Diane Paul, Hamish Spencer and John Stenhouse together approach the history of eugenics from a slightly different scholarly tradition: through the history of genetics. I fully agree with, and applaud their insight set out in the Introduction, that we need to rethink the idea that eugenists were bad scientists. That was a somewhat lazy analytical position that historians of eugenics held for many years: a convenient critique when the mathematics and genetics were hard, but hardly a supportable one. It is true that eugenics was easily and successfully popularized into better baby contests, maternal and infant welfare schemes, and widespread support for immigration restriction based on mental health, physical health and racial criteria. This is the terrain of the cultural, social and political historian. But so many of the twentieth-century's great population geneticists were drawn to the prospect of the social application of their theories. This was an era when being a biologist and being political—and often on the left—was a common enough proposition. The history of eugenics is impoverished when we underestimate the complexity of the genetics that underwrote and drove forward the social and legal application of eugenic measures. Historians of science and geneticists are required.

This new history of eugenics offers a range of historical actors, both unexpected and familiar. We learn about Māori—Āpirana Ngata and Peter Buck—who shaped biological anthropology, an expertise related to eugenics, but not necessarily coterminous. We learn about social reformer and politician William Pember Reeves, and about Truby King, the iconic New Zealand figure in that archetypal early twentieth-century

enterprise, 'mothercraft'. The sometimes facile finger-pointing to historical figures declared to be a 'eugenist'—the common tendency to perform a eugenic exposé—is here itself exposed. But nor is this an apology. Rather, we see the value of subtle argumentation from historians alert to the spectrum of changing and disputed ideas about heredity and environment.

The history of eugenics always requires, and invites, the careful study of race. The chapters herein show that crude arguments that 'eugenics' was coterminous with 'race science' are insufficient. Indeed, we learn that eugenists were perhaps least influential in the polity in which race science was most influential in policy terms: in segregated and apartheid South Africa. There, it is argued, pre-existing rationales for policies based on racial differences diminished eugenics' power, or at least made eugenics less necessary. At the same time, maintaining and improving the health and purity of a threatened white population was a declared imperative. For settler-colonies-turned-new-nations, the quality and quantity of 'whiteness' was paramount, as many chapters here detail.

Crucially, eugenics' heyday happened to coincide with the formation of new national polities—Australia in 1901 and South Africa in 1910—and dominion status for Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa in the aftermath of the Imperial Conference in London in 1907. Nation-building within a racially alert transnational context is the key context for understanding eugenics in the Dominions. There is thus a particular history of eugenics in this British world, at least as much about the early twentieth-century period as anything else. This is perhaps the most significant rationale for a collected history of eugenics in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Canada. It is long overdue, and I commend the editors and contributors for seizing the opportunity, the rich challenge and the intellectual reward of bringing these histories together.

Jesus College, Cambridge Alison Bashford

Acknowledgements

This book derives from a small conference, *Eugenics in the British Colonial Context*, held at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand in February 2015. We are grateful to the Otago Centre for Research on Colonial Culture and the Allan Wilson Centre for their generous support of that meeting.

The papers have all been substantially revised for the volume, with several new contributions solicited to fill geographic and topical gaps.

The editors are most grateful to Alison Bashford for writing the Foreword to the book. We would like to thank Molly Beck and Oliver Dyer at Palgrave Macmillan for their work in helping the project to a successful conclusion, and Erika Dyck for her insightful contributions to the Introduction.

Contents

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List of Figures

Introduction: Eugenics as a Transnational Subject: The British Dominions

Diane B. Paul, John Stenhouse and Hamish G. Spencer

In recent years, scholarship on the history of eugenics has taken an increasingly comparative and international turn.[1] In part, this trend reflects the realization that the central ideas of eugenics surfaced 'more or less simultaneously across many parts of the world', with enthusiasts in various countries attending the same congresses, reading the same texts, exchanging ideas, and monitoring developments elsewhere.[2] It also reflects a recognition that long-standing generalizations about the nature and trajectory of eugenics have typically rested on only a handful of cases, notably those of the US, Britain and Germany. Insights derived from studies of the movement in other countries and regions (combined

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D.B. Paul et al. (eds.), *Eugenics at the Edges of Empire*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64686-2_1

with new scholarship on the classic cases), have challenged many conventional assumptions, in particular, that modern eugenics began with Sir Francis Galton in the latter half of the nineteenth century, began to lose scientific support in the 1920s, and came to an end with the defeat of Nazism. In contesting the standard periodization, scholars have noted that concerns with the transmission of hereditary defect and responsible reproduction were rife in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,[3] have underscored the ways in which the disintegration of old empires and creation of new nations and nationalisms acted as a stimulus to eugenics in the years around World War I,[4] and have challenged the common view that World War II was a watershed event, following which enthusiasm for eugenics evaporated.[5]

Recent scholarship has also disputed the view that eugenists were invariably racial essentialists and bad scientists. It has broadened attention from what had been a near-exclusive focus on state policy, on 'negative' measures such as segregation, sterilization and immigration restriction, and on the movement's enthusiasts and successes, to include arenas such as education, religion, the arts, and popular culture, pronatalist 'positive' practices such as baby contests and marriage counselling, and the movement's critics and policy failures. And it has been far more attentive than earlier scholarship to ways in which eugenics' meaning has varied over time and in space and to its co-optation for other purposes, such as women's use of sterilization to obtain access to otherwise-unobtainable birth control.[6]

In general, new research on eugenics internationally has reinforced the view, first importantly argued in Daniel Kevles's comparative study of Britain and the US, that the movement was remarkably diverse in respect to the practices advocated—ranging from free love (abolition of marriage) and access to birth control to what was euphemistically called 'euthanasia'—and also the politics of its proponents.[7] It is by now a commonplace that enthusiasts could be found across the ideological spectrum, with eugenic aims applauded not just by champions of the political and social status quo but (for example) by many Fabian socialists in Britain, social democrats in the Scandinavian countries, and agrarian reformers in the Canadian western provinces. In many countries, feminists were prominent supporters. Thus, scholars have increasingly stressed eugenics' wide appeal; what the historian Molly Ladd-Taylor has characterized as its 'ordinariness' and adaptability.[8]

Never monolithic anywhere, eugenics evolved quite differently in different contexts. In accord with recent research highlighting the importance of place in the history of science,[9] Stephen Garton notes in his essay for this volume that, although eugenics was a transnational movement, 'its success and impact in specific national and State contexts was shaped by local factors of class, race, religion, social structure and political and judicial institutions'. By exploring the trajectories of eugenics in the British white-settler colonies, we hope to contribute to the ongoing effort to broaden the geographical scope of the history of eugenics and, in so doing, deepen our understanding of eugenics' protean forms, purposes and meanings.

New Zealand in the Historiography of Eugenics

This book developed out of a project organized by geneticist Hamish Spencer and historians John Stenhouse and Diane Paul that initially focused on the history of eugenics in New Zealand. It is a common belief that New Zealand, which never enacted a sterilization law, was inhospitable terrain for eugenics. Given this assumption, the country has been given relatively short shrift by historians of eugenics, who rarely treat it as a subject in its own right. Although scholars interested in the histories of feminism, the family, birth control, disability and other topics have certainly discussed their eugenic dimensions, these discussions rarely involve research in primary sources; after all, the authors' chief aim is not to shed new light on eugenics but rather on other social movements, structures or practices.

The history of eugenics in New Zealand is sometimes also referenced in studies primarily focused on Australia. But despite these countries' (relative) geographical proximity, they differ in several relevant and significant respects. In particular, New Zealand had a smaller Catholic population than Australia and a quite different history of relations with its indigenous population. Indeed, New Zealand was a distinctive laboratory of racial science, where Māori actively shaped eugenic discourse and practice. In contrast with the situation in Australia, anxieties associated both with the 'convict stain' and of the impact of the tropics on white men were also absent. But of course, there were also shared concerns, especially around Asian immigration, and a common pride in the vigour of their citizens and belief that as young and enterprising colonies, they represented a vanguard that could show even Britain the way.

Many New Zealanders viewed their country as a 'Better Britain', possessed of a healthier and more invigorating climate and as free from slums and a pauper class. As was true elsewhere, enthusiasm for eugenics in New Zealand was expressed across the political spectrum. Nina Barrer, a political conservative, leading figure in the Women's Division of the National Farmers' Union, and author of the 1933 pamphlet *The Problem of Mental Deficiency in New Zealand,* was a zealous and influential advocate, as were a host of prominent political and social progressives, including the Fabian socialist William Pember Reeves (the subject of John Stenhouse's essay), whose successful advocacy of a series of labour and industrial laws importantly contributed to New Zealand's reputation as 'the social laboratory of the world', and the land-reformer and religious freethinker Sir Robert Stout (the subject of Emma Gattey's essay), who served both as Premier and Chief Justice of New Zealand. What these and other eugenic enthusiasts shared were assumptions about the superior quality of New Zealand's white settlers and the forces that threatened it; most notably that the settlers were especially fit, vigorous and resistant to degeneration, that the Empire was the entity that a fit body would serve, and that a young and malleable country needed protection from corrupting imports. These attitudes, widely endorsed by the political and professional elite, seem to link New Zealand more closely to other self-governing colonies of the British Empire, or Dominions as they were collectively known, than to the US, the countries of continental Europe, or even Britain.[10]

Eugenics in the Context of British Imperial History

New Zealand, Australia, Canada and South Africa were linked as colonies in a highly-interconnected British world. The history of eugenics in those white-settler countries thus intersects with the history of the British Empire. And as with the burgeoning scholarship on eugenics, the field of British imperial history is in ferment, with new research challenging longstanding assumptions.

For much of the twentieth century, historians saw the empire from the perspective of London or, less often, Oxbridge or northern industrial cities. Ideas, influence, money, people and power flowed from the imperial centre to the colonial peripheries. Economic historians Peter Cain and Tony Hopkins reinforced this view during the 1980s, arguing that 'gentlemanly capitalists' in southeast England drove both formal colonization

and informal penetration of places such as China and Argentina.[11] Late in the decade, feminist historians such as Catherine Hall, Antoinette Burton and Mrinalini Srinha began drawing Britain and the colonies into a single analytic framework to show how colonialism depended on and reshaped gender ideologies at home and abroad.[12] Although such scholars recognized that influence and agency flowed from colony to metropole as well as vice versa, they still tended to prioritize 'vertical' links between metropolis and colonies. The metaphor of the wheel, whose hub lay in Britain with spokes radiating out into the colonies, continued to shape, often unconsciously, much of the new imperial history.

In a series of essays now collected in *Webs of Empire: Locating New Zealand's Colonial Past* (2012), Tony Ballantyne reimagined the empire as more like a spider's web than a wheel. By highlighting the ways ideas, information, money, people and power flowed between colonies, the web metaphor highlighted such 'horizontal' connections—without denying the importance of 'vertical' links to the metropole. The web model also implied that colonial cities such as Wellington, Sydney and Cape Town might be peripheral in relation to London, but central in their own regions and localities; ideas, information, people and power flowed within as well as between colonies.[13]

A second approach to empire developed partly independently of this new network theory. During the 1960s and 70s, as decolonization advanced in Africa, Asia and Oceania, the white settler colonies of Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand fell out of scholarly favour as fields of empire. During the 1980s and 90s, however, historians such as James Belich, Marilyn Lake, Henry Reynolds and Saul Dubow published new histories of these places that highlighted their imperial dimensions.[14] Beginning in the 1990s, a series of international conferences and a successful new journal, *Britain and the World*, established an approach to imperial history that focused on the reciprocal connections that drew settlers together into a larger, transnational 'British World'. As the essays that follow demonstrate, this approach has much to offer historians of eugenics in British colonies.

We believe that this volume makes a distinct contribution by looking at the margins of empire. Several of the essays show how the 'metropole' idea existed in some ways *within* the colonies. While the British Empire was part of what framed eugenic thinking in Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, the colonies also adapted the models to suit their own governing ideas about citizenship, which broke

down along racial and ethnic (and gender) lines as well. British eugenists focused on class, an approach that did not translate well to these colonial populations. In the colonies, ideas from the metropole were adapted to suit regional circumstances, such as the need to deal with indigenous populations.

Local attitudes towards fitness also seep into the discourse. If the British engaged in a kind of urban eugenics exercise, these colonial examples suggest that there was also a strong agrarian response that borrowed some of the principles, but appealed to local communities using a different logic—whether that of animal husbandry or agrarian feminism. Importantly, these were generally not urban elites or Fabians, but rather colonials who adapted the intellectual strains of eugenics into a practical—even populist—movement. Teasing these elements apart adds nuance to the literature. These were not merely copy-cat societies, but rather places that incorporated elite elements of eugenics ideology into an agrarian logic.

The 'What' and 'Where' of Eugenics

In exploring distinctive features of the British white-settler colonies, the authors aim to contribute to ongoing historiographic discussions over what Philippa Levine and Alison Bashford have called the what, when, and where of eugenics.[15] The essays in this volume, focused on countries at the edges of the British Empire, obviously bear on the issue of where, several that take their stories into the postwar world also bear on the issue of when, and because these colonies generally lacked sterilization laws, they speak to the issue of 'what'.

The 'what' question is at the core of Charlotte Macdonald's essay, which traces chronological shifts in the ideas and practices characterized as eugenic as they played out in New Zealand. She notes that 'national fitness' would become a byword for racial purity, associated with the worst kind of eugenics as practiced by the Nazi regime. But in the 1930s, the resonances of the phrase were very different in New Zealand and other Dominions. Premised on the assumption of the improvability and malleability of the adult human body, national fitness campaigns seemed the antithesis of eugenics. A state of unfitness was taken to be characteristic of most adults, who could profit from more exercise, rather than the pathological state of a minority. Fitness campaigns were not linked to breeding or to assumptions that some lives were worthier than

others. In a similar vein, Caroline Daley argues that baby contests both pre-dated and post-dated the existence of any organized eugenic movement; in her view, those who automatically equate such contests with eugenics miss most of the story. And Diane Paul traces shifting interpretations of Frederic Truby King and his infant and maternal-welfare agenda, showing how a 'eugenist' label that would have been considered preposterous to King's contemporaries came by the 1980s to seem obviously appropriate to many.

On the issue of 'where', Stephen Garton notes that, except for two Canadian provinces, the British Dominions—like Britain—never enacted sterilization laws despite the ardent support for such initiatives expressed by numerous scientists, doctors, politicians and other influential figures. Since these laws have traditionally served as a measure of the strength of eugenic sentiment, it is often assumed that eugenic enthusiasm in Australia and New Zealand must have been muted. However, as Garton has elsewhere argued, eugenists in these countries had 'significant and lasting effect' in several domains,[16] a point supported by Ross Jones's essay showing that post-primary education in Victoria was strongly shaped by eugenic beliefs.

More generally, historians have become increasingly sceptical of generalizations based on the passage of sterilization statutes. One reason for scepticism is recognition that a few votes or even a single official's decision to veto a proposed bill could determine whether a bill would become law. Several essays in this volume indicate just how easily the cards could have fallen the other way. Thus, Hamish Spencer shows that New Zealand in fact came very close to enacting a sterilization provision, while Alex Deighton argues that the level of support for eugenics in Saskatchewan was comparable to that of Alberta and British Columbia, the two Canadian provinces that enacted sterilization laws. Indeed, in 1930, a motion to the Saskatchewan legislature in support of sterilization of mental defectives passed with only a single dissenting vote. Its ultimate defeat was largely attributable to opposition by a particularly powerful Catholic figure. Garton also notes that Western Australia, where a sterilization bill made it to the third reading in 1929, could easily have passed such a law and Erika Dyck that only a lack of consensus over the exact design and implementation of a sterilization law prevented its enactment by the Canadian province of Ontario. Thus, in many places, legislative outcomes could well have been different, in which case

scholars would aim to explain why support for eugenics was so strong rather than why it was weak!

Deighton's recognition of the key role played by a powerful Catholic opponent in the narrow defeat of eugenic sterilization in Saskatchewan highlights a thread running through several other essays. In relatively small-scale colonial societies, committed individuals and minorities could make a difference to the success or failure of particular eugenic proposals. Several of our contributors show that able individuals could significantly shape the course and consequences of eugenic debates, especially in state bureaucracies, legislatures and medical and welfare institutions. If not for the determined opposition of J.M. Uhrich, a devout Catholic and experienced politician, Saskatchewan would probably have joined Alberta and British Columbia in legally sterilizing people considered mentally defective after 1930. The equally well-informed and passionate opposition of Labour politician Peter Fraser, several of whose siblings had spent time in Scottish mental institutions, was probably equally important in the narrow defeat of eugenic sterilization in New Zealand in 1928. Similarly, committed individuals played important roles in galvanizing public support for eugenics. Politically active Protestant women such as Irene Parlby and Nina Barrer kept eugenic enthusiasm alive, especially among rural women, in Canada and New Zealand respectively during the 1920s and 30s. Whether they supported or opposed eugenics, powerful individuals might be seen as important nodes in global eugenic webs, importing into their own context ideas and practices from other places, reconfiguring these for local purposes, and spinning new connections—webs within webs—across local, regional and national boundaries.

There are other concerns about the tendency to draw broad generalizations from the fact that a jurisdiction legalized or declined to legalize sterilization. One consideration is that the relation of law to actual practice in this domain was far from straightforward. Thus sterilization procedures appear to have been common in institutions in some jurisdictions that had no enabling laws, and in others, such laws apparently limited what had been customary practice, and indeed, were sometimes opposed by physicians for this reason.[17] Referencing Michel Foucault's concept of 'tacitly tolerated illegalities', Garton notes that in institutions in both Australia and New Zealand, sterilizations took place outside the law, and that some doctors felt that legislation was unnecessary and potentially complicating.[18] Erika Dyck similarly notes that despite the lack of authorizing legislation, Ontario schools for feeble-minded

children engaged in sexual sterilizations. Another caveat is that motivations for sterilization, both among doctors and patients, could be mixed. In particular, patients, sometimes in collusion with doctors, could turn the laws to their own ends, using them to gain access to a safe form of birth control.[19] Dyck comments that women who effectively subverted the eugenics laws are included in the numbers of people sterilized through eugenics programmes, a situation that 'reminds us that we cannot simply rely on the numbers or the policies alone to help us understand the motivations behind sterilization operations, or to categorize them as eugenic or not'.

We note that the cases that dominate this collection are not the typical examples of jurisdictions that enacted sterilization laws or developed explicit eugenic programmes, although in some cases legislation was debated and nearly enacted. They instead illustrate features that distinguish eugenics in these white-settler nations from eugenics in the US and Europe, where as Alison Bashford notes in her Foreword, fear of degeneration drove the movement and accounts for its wide popular support. These new, agrarian nations were optimistic, marked by confidence in the future and the belief that they were especially healthy, open, experimental, vigorous and socially progressive. Management of reproduction was seen as crucial in maintaining these qualities and hence the societies' associated vanguard status. But concerns about population quality were expressed more in the shaping of health, welfare and educational policy and in religious and popular culture than in state measures to prevent 'degenerates' from breeding. They were also expressed in policies to ensure the racial purity of settler populations (which in New Zealand incorporated Māori) through measures to protect against contamination by outsiders—a point that brings us to the vexed topic of eugenics and race.

Complexities of Race

An important thread in the essays is reflection on eugenists' attitudes toward racial purity and racial mixing. In general, the contributors to this volume support Levine and Bashford's claim that:

> Eugenics and racism have become almost interchangeable terms, but the association is perhaps too simplistic. Historical work on eugenics shows that much, if not most eugenic intervention was directed at 'degenerates'

> who already 'belonged', racially or ethnically: 'internal threats' or 'the enemy within', whose continued presence diluted the race. … To be sure, these were projects of racial nationalism and indeed racial purity – eugenics was never *not* about race – but the objects of intervention, the subjects understood to be 'polluting', were often not racial outsiders, but marginalized insiders …[20]

Support for this claim is provided by Susanne M. Klausen, who shows that in South Africa, eugenic concerns and intervention focused largely on poor whites, whose racial weaknesses were seen to render the system vulnerable to swamping by the immensely larger black population. Klausen notes that because poor whites were a much smaller group than Africans, they were also far easier to target for eugenic intervention, and they were indeed the targets of a campaign to establish birth-control clinics, the only instance of a successful campaign initiated and led by eugenists. In the Antipodes, attitudes towards racial purity and racial mixing were also complex and perhaps surprising. Garton notes that, in Australia, the major threats to the nation were seen as external rather than internal. Australian aboriginals were considered a 'doomed race', and hence of little eugenic concern. Asians were another story. The new nation was founded on a 'White Australia' policy, which required fending off the Asian hordes and, as Ross Jones notes, preventing the immigration of inferior whites. As a result, pro-natalism was a strong strand in Australian eugenics, with quantity trumping the quality of births.

In New Zealand as well, eugenists did not target the indigenous population. Here we want to emphasize New Zealand's distinctiveness and its significance for the 'where' of eugenics. Existing studies of British colonial eugenics rarely pay much attention to the ways in which the colonized shaped eugenic thinking and practice, partly because primary sources are often lacking. Chloe Campbell's study of colonial Kenya, for example, focused largely on the eugenic attitudes and practices of British settlers.[21] The essays by Stenhouse, Wanhalla, Brookes and Spencer show that educated Māori leaders actively participated in debates about population, health reform, racial science and eugenics, shaping the kinds of biopolitical discourses and practices that proved acceptable in New Zealand.

The 'webs of empire' model illuminates better than does a 'British world' approach why this was the case. Before explaining why, we note that one of the strengths of the former lies in recognizing the continuing

salience of religious institutions and movements in modern imperial webs. Historians such as Ballantyne, Chris Bayly, Sujit Sivasundaram, David Hempton, Rowan Strong, Hilary Carey and Colin Barr have contributed in diverse ways to a growing body of scholarship acknowledging that religious as well as secular people, institutions, networks and processes helped make the modern world.[22] Much 'British world' scholarship, by contrast, pays at best passing attention to religion. Neither James Belich's *Replenishing the Earth* nor Gary Magee and Andrew Thomson's massive *Empire and Globalisation*, for example, contain entries for churches or religious organizations.[23]

With religion also returning to the agenda of historians of eugenics recently, we suggest that it may be timely to integrate religion, eugenics and race with the new network-oriented imperial history. New Zealand illustrates the uses colonized people made of British religious networks. Anglican missionaries founded Te Aute College for Māori boys (as well as Hukarere College for girls) in 1854 to train future Māori leaders. The schools' founders did not want Māori either to die out or to become nothing more than 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for white settlers—a subjugated and potentially dangerous underclass. A group of able young Māori men—Māui Pōmare, Āpirana Ngata, Te Rangi Hīroa (Peter Buck), and Rēweti Kōhere—used their Te Aute education to go on to post-secondary education and leadership in church, state and society, where they worked to revitalize Māori society.

Yet these Māori leaders did not confine their search for intellectual and social resources to British religious networks. They also forged links with America. While studying at Te Aute, for example, Māui Pōmare met American Seventh-day Adventist missionaries who urged him to become a medical missionary. Training under Adventist health reformer John Harvey Kellogg, a eugenist, at Battle Creek, Michigan and then at the Adventists' Medical Missionary College at Chicago, Pōmare obtained a medical degree in 1899 before returning to New Zealand in 1900 and working as a Māori health officer to improve health and sanitation among Māori communities. After serving as minister of the Cook Islands from 1916 to 1928, Pōmare became New Zealand Minister of Health between 1923 and 1926, where his efforts, along with Truby King's, substantially enhanced maternal welfare and infant mortality among both Māori and Pākehā (New Zealanders of European origin). In 1924, Pōmare established the Committee of Inquiry into Mental Defectives and Sexual Offenders. Buck, who worked with Pōmare as a Māori health

officer, also exploited American connections to become professor of anthropology (1932–1934) at Yale University and director of the Bishop Museum in Hawaii from 1936. As the essays by Stenhouse, Wanhalla and Spencer make clear, thanks to the efforts of Te Aute-trained Māori leaders such as Pōmare, Ngata and Buck, no New Zealand eugenist in the 1920s, when enthusiasm peaked, ever advocated sterilization, segregation or marriage restriction for Māori or mixed-race New Zealanders. These men would have given such proposals short shrift.

As Barbara Brookes shows, from the beginning of European settlement, Māori had aimed to incorporate the newcomers into their own society, with intermarriage a means to this end. But by the 1920s, even men who were themselves offspring of Māori–Pākehā unions had become alarmed by the prospect of liaisons between Chinese market-gardeners and their female Māori employees. According to Brookes, Ngata, Buck and others devised hierarchical racial sciences and eugenic policies, the latter targeting Chinese. Erika Dyck's essay similarly highlights indigenous agency in Canada, where some First Nations and Inuit women with large families used eugenic laws to opt for sterilization. The colonized sometimes used the eugenic ideas and practices of the colonizers to enhance their own welfare and that of their families, local communities, tribes/bands and nations. Thus, the history of attitudes toward racial purity and mixing in New Zealand and toward eugenic sterilization in Canada illustrate Bashford and Levine's point that the links between eugenics and racism are anything but simple.

Māori leaders were not the only colonial eugenists who looked beyond the British world. Thus in 1927, Theodore Gray, Director-General of New Zealand's Mental Hospitals Department, went on a thirteen-country tour of mental institutions and special schools specifically to enquire into which eugenic measures might be suitable for his country. As well as Britain and Canada, Gray visited Belgium, Germany and the United States. William Pember Reeves was one of several Australasian labour politicians to argue that Britain's involvement in India and East Asia made her immigration policy too Asian-friendly. He argued that the more exclusionary and anti-Asian immigration laws of American states such as California offered a better model for progressive colonies Down Under. Later New Zealand eugenists often had contact with their peers in the US and followed the American literature and American developments. Thus Charles B. Davenport, director of the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor, New York, lectured in

New Zealand in 1914, and the works of Lothrop Stoddard, especially his *The Rising Tide of Color against White World-Supremacy*, were frequently cited by New Zealand eugenists obsessed with the threat of swamping by Asians. Opponents of eugenics also kept up with American literature and developments. Many in the Dominions read and cited Franz Boas, the German-American anthropologist. Peter Fraser, the main New Zealand Labour Party critic of eugenics, attacked California's enthusiasm for eugenic sterilization as scientifically dubious and morally repulsive.

Racial anxieties instead focused on Asians, especially Indians and the Chinese, the latter characterized by William Pember Reeves (whose racial views are analysed by Stenhouse) as the 'scum of the earth'. Unlike Māori–Pākehā intermarriage, unions involving Asians were assumed to produce degeneration. Racial purity would be ensured through immigration restriction and a host of other discriminatory policies such as the denial of pensions to the Chinese whether they were naturalized or born in New Zealand. Immigration regulations would preserve settler quality not only by keeping the Asian hordes at bay but by preventing the entry of inferior whites. That perspective is encapsulated in the closing passage of Theodore Gray's 1927 report on his overseas tour, which quotes from J.H. Curle's *Today and Tomorrow: The Testing Period of the White Race*: 'Australians and New Zealanders still have it in their power, by excluding colour, limiting entry to the best whites, and preventing the unfit from breeding, to become, and remain, about the finest white strains in the world.'

Here we note another theme appearing in several essays. Traditional imperial history tended to be Eurocentric and value-laden, as the language of British or European metropolitan 'centres' and colonial 'peripheries' suggests. But where did the centre of modern civilization really lie? Could the colonies teach the Old World a thing or two? Were they becoming vanguard nations, showing the way to the future? As Gray's enthusiasm for Curle suggests, Gray believed that Australia and New Zealand were ideally placed to lead the Old World into a better future, providing citizens took their eugenic responsibilities seriously. Similarly, William Pember Reeves believed that the enlightened state experiments undertaken in Australia and New Zealand, less encumbered than the UK by social hierarchies, religious divisions and history, were blazing a trail for the world to follow. Building exemplary democracies in the Antipodes, of course, required keeping out aliens and undesirables of all kinds. Similarly, as Ross Jones notes, anatomy professor R.J. Berry

promoted eugenic educational reforms in Victoria because he believed that Australia's more open and egalitarian society had weakened the English class system enough to build an equal opportunity meritocracy. Modernizing nation-builders such as Gray, Reeves and Berry saw the dynamic young democracies of the south as leading the world into a better future.

As one of the chief architects of the colony's anti-Asian immigration laws, Reeves pioneered a 'white New Zealand' policy that, extended during the early twentieth century, resembled 'White Australia' more nearly than many New Zealanders, including some historians, have acknowledged. As this example suggests, the burgeoning field of whiteness studies galvanized by the pioneering research of American labour historian, David Roediger, has much to offer the student of eugenics.[24] Its central premise is that the category of whiteness, politically potent in the many parts of the modern world, is a contingent historical formation requiring careful critical analysis in time and place. An important collection by Boucher, Carey and Ellinghaus (2009), *Re-Orienting Whiteness*, has sought to move the field away from its American origins and focus by systematically reconnecting whiteness as a racial category to the history of settler colonialism.[25] By showing that eugenists in South Africa, reflecting long-standing tensions between white settlers of British and Dutch descent, mainly targeted poor white Boers, Susanne M. Klausen's essay in this volume illustrates how fruitfully histories of whiteness and of eugenics may interact.[26] As Barbara Brookes shows, even after a distinguished career as a physician-turned-anthropologist, during which he favoured Māori–Pākehā marriage and reproduction and constructed Polynesian racial hierarchies topped by Māori, Buck was classified as an Oriental (a category into which all Polynesian peoples were lumped) and denied citizenship by American authorities. Yet whiteness has limits as well as uses for the student of eugenics. According to Diane Paul, although Truby King's maternal and infant welfare work won admiration throughout the British world, his innovative approach was inspired partly by a visit to Japan, where mothers routinely breastfed their infants for much longer than in the West. Japanese mothers, from whom Truby and Bella King were not too proud to learn, were important nodes in the Plunket knowledge webs that spanned the world.

We hope to have shown that, in fact, nothing about the history of eugenics is simple, and that the more we learn about little-studied countries and regions, the greater is our appreciation of the complexities.

Those whose scholarly or political agendas are promoted by a simple narrative about this history will not necessarily welcome the caveats that result from this new knowledge. As the story becomes more complex, its lessons for current policy inevitably become less obvious. The compensation for the loss of immediate policy-relevance is a far more surprising and interesting story than one of bad people using bad science to promote bad practices, a narrative that makes eugenics' wide appeal—in the British Dominions as elsewhere—literally incomprehensible.

Structure of the Volume

The volume is divided into three parts, moving from the narrowest and least contested to the broadest and most unsettled conceptions of eugenics. The opening chapters by Stephen Garton, Erika Dyck, Alex Deighton and Hamish Spencer, have as their primary focus debates over compulsory sterilization. All discuss not only the sources of support for legislation but also the existence of countervailing forces, contestation and resistance.

The next set of chapters by John Stenhouse, Ross Jones, Caroline Daley, Angela Wanhalla, and Emma Gattey shift to other eugenic or eugenics-inflected policies, practices and attitudes. These include laws to restrict immigration and to regulate marriage and also practices and views in such non-legislative arenas as education, religion and the general culture.

The final chapters by Diane Paul, Susanne Klausen, Charlotte Macdonald, and Barbara Brookes concern the 'borderlands' of eugenics. In some form, they all emphasize conundrums of boundary-drawing, the difficulties of demarcating what counts as eugenics from what does not. They are thus not only about contested policies but contested meanings, making explicit the always disputed but also historical and changing character of the concept itself.

The distinctions among these categories are not necessarily clear-cut, and several essays could plausibly fit in more than one. For example, Caroline Daley's chapter on baby contests relates to eugenics in the general culture, but at the same time questions how much of the appeal is attributable to eugenic preoccupations. Also, we have not included a specific section on issues of racial mixing and purity because these are interrogated in nearly all the essays either in respect to anti-Asian sentiment and policy or relationships with indigenous populations or both.

Indeed, because these were settler populations, issues related to the latter are inescapable. We believe that its attention both to eugenists' attitudes toward indigenous peoples and the latter's (diverse) attitudes toward eugenics is one of the distinctive contributions of this volume.

Notes and References

1. A. Bashford and P. Levine, eds. (2010) *Oxford Handbook of the History of Eugenics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press).
2. The phrase is from P. Levine and A. Bashford (2010) 'Introduction: Eugenics and the Modern World' in Bashford and Levine (eds.) *Oxford Handbook*, p. 15. See also A. Bashford, 'Internationalism, Cosmopolitanism, and Eugenics' in Bashford and Levine, *Oxford Handbook*, pp. 154–172 and Stephen Garton's Chap. 2 in this volume.
3. J.C. Waller (2001) 'Ideas of Heredity, Reproduction and Eugenics in Britain, 1800–1875', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 32, 457–489; J.C. Waller (2003) 'Parents and Children: Ideas of Heredity in the 19th Century', *Endeavour* 27, 51–56; D.B. Paul and B. Day (2008) 'John Stuart Mill, Innate Differences, and the Regulation of Reproduction', *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 39, 222–2231; D.B. Paul and H.G. Spencer (2016) 'Eugenics without Eugenists? Anglo-American Critiques of Cousin Marriage in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', in S. Mueller-Wille and C. Brandt (eds.) *Heredity Explored: Between Public Domain and Experimental Science, 1850–1930* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), pp. 49–79; M. Lorenz (2008) 'Proto-Eugenic Thought and Breeding Utopias in the United States before 1870', *GHI Bulletin* 43, 67–90; M. Lorenz (2014) 'For the Betterment of Mankind: Ideas about Selective Breeding in French and German Enlightenment Thinking', History of Science Society Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, 19–22 November.
4. Levine and Bashford, 'Introduction', p. 12.
5. Notable examples from the vast literature bearing on this issue include: G. Broberg and N. Roll-Hansen, eds. (1996) *Eugenics and the Welfare State: Sterilization Policy in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press); W. Kline (2001) *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkeley: University of California Press); D.B. Paul (2002) 'From Reproductive Responsibility to Reproductive Autonomy' in L.S. Parker and R.A. Ankeny (eds.) *Mutating Concepts, Evolving Disciplines: Genetics, Medicine, and Society* (Dordrecht: Kluwer), pp.