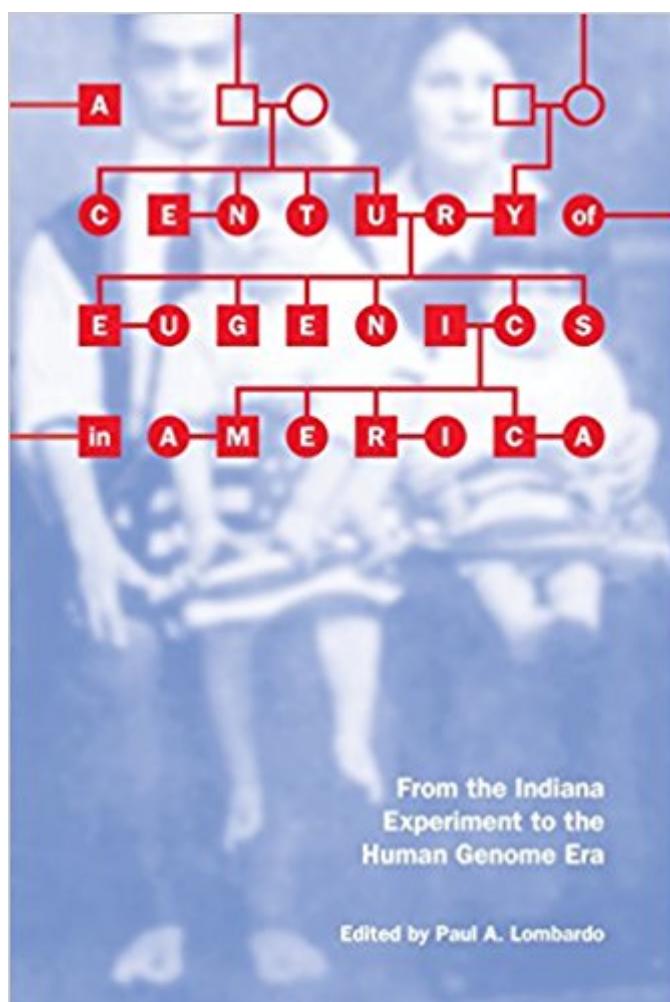


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# A Century Of Eugenics In America: From The Indiana Experiment To The Human Genome Era (Bioethics And The Humanities)



## Synopsis

In 1907, Indiana passed the world's first involuntary sterilization law based on the theory of eugenics. In time, more than 30 states and a dozen foreign countries followed suit. Although the Indiana statute was later declared unconstitutional, other laws restricting immigration and regulating marriage on "eugenic" grounds were still in effect in the U.S. as late as the 1970s. *A Century of Eugenics in America* assesses the history of eugenics in the United States and its status in the age of the Human Genome Project. The essays explore the early support of compulsory sterilization by doctors and legislators; the implementation of eugenic schemes in Indiana, Georgia, California, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Alabama; the legal and social challenges to sterilization; and the prospects for a eugenics movement basing its claims on modern genetic science.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Paul Lombardo has assembled a compelling argument for close monitoring of modern genetic policies in the Human Genome Era... It is essential reading." — The Internet Review of Books "A noted historian of the eugenics movement, editor Lombardo has divided this book into essays... The final two essays are perhaps the most important, as they look at the implications for contemporary medicine and law regarding the renewed interest in 'better breeding' as a result of the Human Genome Project.... Recommended." — Choice As a nation with lofty ambitions, the United States has had a mixed relationship with eugenics. The first country to prohibit procreation

by criminals and 'idiots' — in the state of Indiana in 1907 — today it embraces the Human Genome Project and the possibility of genetic enhancement. Law professor Paul Lombardo examines US legislation and attitudes to human selection in the past century, and the likelihood of such pressures arising again in modern genetics. *Nature*, Vol. 469, January 12 2011 "[T]here are indeed valuable lessons to be learnt from... this book; the editor was probably wise to confine its scope to the narrower brief of American compulsory sterilisation...." — Human Genetics "Valuable and welcome..." — BULLETIN HISTORY OF MEDICINE "A groundbreaking achievement in the historiography of American eugenics." — Joanne Woiak, University of Washington In 1907, Indiana became the first state to pass a sterilization law. The last sterilization of an Indiana resident took place in 1971. Thus, the state has the dubious honor of being the first and one of the last states to sterilize a US citizen forcibly in hopes of protecting the fit from the unfit. The subjects of this essay collection include the definitions of those two terms, the legality of the process, the culture that would rationalize such a procedure, and the uneasiness engendered in many persons by the neo-eugenic language used by supporters of the Human Genome Project. A noted historian of the eugenics movement, editor Lombardo (Georgia State Univ.) has divided this book into essays that focus upon the history of sterilization in Indiana; additional state studies, including California, which sterilized more persons than any other state; and two chapters that examine sterilization as portrayed in popular culture. The final two essays are perhaps the most important, as they look at the implications for contemporary medicine and law regarding the renewed interest in 'better breeding' as a result of the Human Genome Project. Summing Up: Recommended. All academic levels/libraries. --Choice D. O. Cullen, Collin College, October 2011 "A most important volume and a significant contribution to the field, [the book] will serve both experts and the general public in parsing the difficult issues raised by a transformed eugenics in the 21st century." — Steven Selden, University of Maryland

Paul A. Lombardo is Professor of Law at Georgia State University College of Law. He is author of *Three Generations, No Imbeciles: Eugenics, the Supreme Court, and *Buck v. Bell**.

A chilling and alarming reminder of the persistent quest to expand on a false premise of the inequality of humanity. Like the progenitors of racialism and a mostly materialistic outlook having its origins in Europe, Indiana and other states would take the notion of superiority to a level of legalized sterilization. The echoes of this madness and demonic view of members of the human family are felt today in our social and political discourses. Wayne Allyn Root and Trump are doing an excellent job

as spokesmen for this alarming and satanic view of what they think defines humanity. This book is a cautionary tale of what racialist thinking can do to legislators who haven't yet evolved to a level of maturity desperately needed in a world rocked by a chaos borne of the notions of superiority/inferiority.

I found the various articles very informative. It is unfortunate that so few people have any understanding of the implications as we move into the future.

A very interesting read. Thought provoking.

This is an excellent series of essays on eugenics in various states in the USA. Each essay, particularly the one by Paul Lombardo, is very readable but also scholarly. It does not offer an overview of eugenics in Europe or the USA (or its birth in Galton's work), but that is not its aim. Its aim is to provide a wealth of interesting and thought-provoking detail about how this cultural movement gained traction in the USA in the early 20th century, despite the geographical and cultural differences between the states, and it accomplishes this task very well.

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