

MARIAN STEPHENSON OLDEN
AND THE STERILIZATION MOVEMENT
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NEW JERSEY¹

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ABSTRACT

In the cast of personages for the history of eugenics in New Jersey, Marian Stephenson Olden (a.k.a. Marion S. Norton, Marion S. Coleman-Norton, or Mariann S. Olden) is a notable figure. Born in Philadelphia in 1888, she lived in Princeton where she was a volunteer social worker and became an advocate of compulsory eugenic sterilization. It was in the Princeton League of Women Voters that she began to promote the legalization of compulsory sterilization of persons with traits considered to be “undesirable.” After leaving the LWV, Olden founded the Sterilization League of New Jersey (1937). This became the national organization, Birthright, Inc. (1943), the predecessor of what is currently Engenderhealth (2001). In 1938, Olden visited Germany where Nazi eugenicists already knew of her interest in sterilization and her anti-Catholicism related to it. She contributed to a Nazi propaganda film by writing English captions for it. Thus,

Olden had an impact on eugenics movements geographically greater than just New Jersey and the United States. While she agreed with the Nazi program of sterilization, she did not approve their anti-Semitic activities. The principle goal of Olden's organizations was the betterment of human beings initially through sterilization. In time, to her displeasure, less stringent measures. Neither she nor anyone else succeeded in obtaining approved legislation for compulsory sterilization in New Jersey. Nevertheless, Olden remained committed to that objective into her retirement years and died at the age of 93 in Gwynedd, Pennsylvania.

INTRODUCTION

Selective breeding is the process where animals and plants are purposely bred by humans to bring about particular traits in their offspring, these traits being beneficial to the breeders and, perhaps, to the species. It is generally held that this practice began in Asia with the dog as much as 32,000 years ago – where, is uncertain – and with sheep about 10,000 years ago.² In his *On the Origin of Species*, published on 24 November 1859, Charles Darwin (1809-1882) of England proposed the concept of *natural* selection where organisms undergo changes, that is evolve, in the course of time without human intervention. *Selective* breeding carried out by humans significantly shortens the time of evolution; Darwin called

this “*artificial* selection.”³ The knowledge gained from the breeding of animals found application in the promotion or prevention of reproduction by human beings.

In 1883 Sir Francis Galton of England, a half-cousin of Charles Darwin, created the word “eugenics” meaning “well-born” to encourage “healthy, capable people of above-average intelligence to bear more children, with the idea of building an “improved human race.” ”⁴ This would be “positive eugenics,” the selective breeding of humans. “Negative eugenics” is concerned with the prevention of the passage from one generation to the next of real or contrived undesirable characteristics with so-called “race” being a prominent factor.⁵

Negative eugenics began in the United States and the first legislation to deal with that concentrated on social features of individuals. This was the Page Act of 1875,

the first restrictive federal immigration law [that] prohibited the entry of immigrants considered "undesirable." The law classified as "undesirable" any individual from Asia who was coming to America to be a forced laborer, any Asian woman who would engage in prostitution, and all people considered to be convicts in their own country.⁶

This law came in a time in world history, the second half of the 19th century, when major advances were made in the biological sciences that would play important roles in the practice of eugenics. The field of bacteriology and the Germ Theory now became established through the work of a number of scientists in

different countries: Ferdinand Cohn (1828-1898) of Silesia, Robert Koch (1843-1910) of Germany, Joseph Lister (1827-1912) of England, and Louis Pasteur (1822-1895) of France to name but a few.⁷

Evolution and Genetics, two other major fields of biology used by eugenicists, also came into being in this time period. As noted above, Darwin's theory of Natural Selection appeared in 1859. Also in 1859, Gregor Mendel (1822-1884) of the Czech Republic and Austria discovered that characteristics of organisms, peas being the ones he worked with, are transmitted from one generation to another by units. Then, in 1879, Walther Flemming (1843-1905) of Germany described these units as chromosomes.⁸ With these new discoveries and fields, eugenicists now had information that would support their beliefs and programs.

By 1900 nativists baldly claimed in scientific medicine a weapon that white Anglo-Saxon Protestant civilization could use to defend itself against the intrusion of those it regarded as of inferior breed. Nativists trumpeted data suggesting that certain diseases were more prevalent among the newcomers than among the native-born. ... [On the other hand] Assimilationists favored a continuation of immigration, though they differed over whether or not some restriction might be necessary. They contended that newcomers could receive care and education in health and hygiene that would transform life-styles.⁹

The first way eugenics was implemented in the United States was through immigration laws with restrictions enacted by Congress. Beginning with the Immigration Act of 1875, the Page Act (*loc. cit.*),⁴ there have been many restrictive immigration laws which could be utilized by eugenicists for their purposes.¹⁰ But what about persons already here and stopping the passage of their undesirable features to future generations? It may be unnecessary to state that the prevention of procreation would be a logical answer and that birth control by a variety of methods had been a common practice in the United States and the rest of the world for a very long time.¹¹ One of the methods, sterilization, has a long history as a very effective way to prevent pregnancy.¹² Samuel Lungren, a U.S. surgeon, performed “the first successful tubal sterilization” in 1880 and “The earliest American report of vasectomy ... was published in 1897 by A. J. Ochsner, a Chicago surgeon.”¹³ In fact, according to the medical historian Ian Dowbiggin, tubal sterilization became “the most popular form of contraception in various countries around the world, including the United States.”¹⁴ Moreover,

Nothing accelerated the acceptance of surgical sterilization more than the rise of eugenics. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, eugenics went from being an idea with limited backing in scientific and medical circles to a concept that tended to dominate debate over public health policy in country after country ... and no nation was more receptive to eugenics than the United States.¹⁵

Sterilization appears early in eugenics literature. In 1910, Charles Davenport (1866-1944), founder of the Eugenics Record Office (ERO), wrote:

When public spirit is aroused, its will must be crystallized in *appropriate legislation*. Since the weak and the criminal will not be guided in their matings by patriotism or family pride, more powerful influences or restraints must be exerted as the case requires. And as for the idiots, low imbeciles, incurable and dangerous criminals they may under appropriate restrictions be prevented from procreation B either by segregation during their reproductive period or even by *sterilization*. [Italics for emphasis by the author]¹⁶

In 1897, a compulsory sterilization bill was considered by the Michigan state legislature but was not approved. The state legislature of Pennsylvania passed such a bill in 1905 but Governor Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker (1843B1916) vetoed it.¹⁷ The first state to establish a law permitting sterilization based on eugenics was Indiana in 1907.¹⁸ However, it took until the late 1920s for this procedure to become widely accepted.¹⁹ According to Lutz Kaelber, a sociologist at the University of Vermont, in time, in the United States

compulsory sterilization laws [were] adopted by over 30 states that led to more than 60,000 sterilizations of disabled individuals. Many of these individuals were sterilized because of a disability: they were mentally disabled or ill, or belonged to socially disadvantaged groups living on the margins of society. American eugenic laws and

practices implemented in the first decades of the twentieth century influenced the much larger National Socialist compulsory sterilization program.²⁰

Dowbiggin has noted that “Until the 1930s, America vied with Germany for international leadership of the eugenics movement...”²¹ Germany, of course, became the “winner” in this atrocious competition. Just with respect to sterilization, Germany, between 1934 and 1945 carried out

approximately 350,000 compulsory sterilizations ... [which] was a stepping stone to the Holocaust. Even after the details of the Nazi sterilization program (as well as its role as a precursor to the "Euthanasia" murders) became more widely known after World War II (and which the New York Times had reported on extensively and in great detail even before its implementation in 1934), sterilizations in some American states did not stop. Some states continued to sterilize residents into the 1970s.²²

The State of New Jersey was one of the 17 of the United States that did not have legalized sterilization in operation (Table 1). The legislature did pass a bill for this in 1911 but in *Smith versus the Board of Examiners*, a suit brought before it, the New Jersey Supreme Court concluded the bill violated the fourteenth amendment.²³ That ruling did not stop the promotion of such legislation in New Jersey. Arguably, the most prominent person in that activity was Marian Stephenson Olden. She and compulsory sterilization are the central subjects of the discussion that follows.

OLDEN'S PERSONAL HISTORY

Biographical information about Marian Olden is limited.²⁴ Information about her mother or any siblings has not been found. However, her father, Arthur Herbert Stephenson, a Philadelphia businessman, was well-known for his activism in a tax reform movement and, thus, warranted an informative obituary when he died in 1902.²⁵ So fervent was he about the single tax, that he established and wrote for a paper called "Justice" to promote the single tax and his obituary includes the statement "the single tax was his religion."²⁶ It is probable that Arthur Stephenson had a role in the development of his daughter's writing skills, as evidenced in her publications, and in her unwavering devotion to one particular social movement, eugenics.²⁷

Marian Stephenson was born in Philadelphia on 29 March 1888. She had an education through finishing school, graduating in 1905. Two years later, she married her first of four husbands, James Henry, Jr. That marriage produced in 1909 her only child, Dorothy, and ended shortly after that, presumably by divorce.²⁸

Her second marriage was to Billy deVictor in 1914. That marriage ended when deVictor died in about 1927.²⁹

In 1928, Olden married a Princeton professor, Paul R. Coleman-Norton. He

was about 10 years her junior. Coleman-Norton was a classicist and published books on Roman law, economics, society and relationships with Christianity.³⁰ The 1930 United States Census includes an entry for a Dorothy Henry, a 20 year old female living with her stepfather, Professor Norton.^{31,32}

In 1938, Olden and Coleman-Norton toured Europe where she had the opportunity to learn about sterilization laws in operation there, knowledge that she may have applied to her own campaigns for sterilization in the U.S.³³ It would be interesting to know if the amount of attention she gave to eugenics played a role in the dissolution of her marriage to Coleman-Norton; in 1939, they separated and were divorced in 1940. Marian did not remain long unmarried for in 1941 she married Roger Olden, an engineer.³⁴ It should be noted here that her activities in eugenics and the promotion of sterilization began when she was married to Professor Coleman-Norton and, as a result of that, her last name appears in the literature as Norton or Coleman-Norton as well as Olden.³⁵

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women Voters was founded in 1919 “as an auxiliary to the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA).”³⁶ The following year, the New Jersey State chapter, The League of Women Voters of New Jersey, was established in Newark.³⁷ On the 18th of August of that year, 1920, the 19th

Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote, was ratified and the activities of the League of Women Voters in political and legislative matters could then be expanded and strengthened. Like all LWV branches, the Princeton chapter, founded in 1932, has been from its beginning “a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government.”³⁸

In 1932, Olden was invited to the home of Mabel Eldridge, a former public school principal, to participate in the founding of the Princeton chapter of the LWV.³⁹ However, she did not join at that time because her request for social hygiene to be part of the group’s agenda was not accepted.⁴⁰ By this time Olden would have welcomed an opportunity to promote birth control but that had to wait until the following year when Eldridge asked her to become a member of the LWV and create the Social Hygiene department she wanted.⁴¹ Olden accepted and began the duties associated with that office in January of 1934.⁴²

“Never having studied biology,” Olden began self-education in fields she would be dealing with by reading *Heredity and Environment* (Princeton University Press, 1916) a book by the famous and then-retired Princeton embryologist, Edwin G. Conklin (1863-1952).⁴³ She was fortunate in being able to personally seek Conklin’s aid for clarification of what she did not understand in his book.⁴⁴ Some

statements in the book smack of eugenics so one may wonder if Olden's campaign in eugenics was affected by what Conklin said in the book and in discussions with her.⁴⁵ It should be noted, however, that he was considered to be a *moderate* eugenicist in that:

Although he was sympathetic to eugenic goals and participated in eugenic organizations throughout his life, Conklin realized that eugenic ideas rarely could meet strict scientific standards of proof ... [and he] attempted to balance more extreme eugenic claims B that emphasized the absolute limits posed by heredity – with his own view of Athe possibilities of development.”⁴⁶

Olden read more than the Conklin book and from a number of publications and field trips, she and her committee members prepared themselves for their goals.⁴⁷ The first major contribution by the Social Hygiene Department to the LWV was a course given in 1934 by Olden which was open to all league members. The subject was “basic principles of social hygiene” and the classes were held on the Princeton University campus.⁴⁸ This course was to familiarize all league members with genetics and other subjects including the legality of sterilization. The field trips were also educational and available to all interested LWV members. Among the trips were a morning at the State Village for Epileptics at Skillman and an all day visit to the State Hospital for the Insane at Greystone Park in Morris Plains.⁴⁹ From these on-site visits, Olden reported that “those in charge of the institutions

were unanimous in their desire to have a law to permit sterilization before parole or discharge ... administrative officials as well would welcome a program of sterilization in New Jersey such as twenty-eight other states had adopted.”⁵⁰

The Princeton LWV’s Social Hygiene Department now undertook the task of educating the public about sterilization with the goal of legislation for that in New Jersey.⁵¹ Olden’s apparently self-appointed assignment for this was to write promotional materials, something to which she devoted herself passionately.

Olden’s first publication, written for professionals and lay persons, was initially a 10 pages typed then duplicated product, dated January 1935, and titled “New Jersey: Its Population Problem.”⁵² Olden tied the population problem to immigration and believed that “normalcy” should be a requirement for entrance into the United States.⁵³ She provided statistics and examples to support her opinions about the need for compulsory sterilization. Olden noted the work of Elizabeth S. Kite, a “psychological researcher for the Vineland Training School for Feeble Minded Boys and Girls (now called the Vineland Developmental Center),” who found “whole districts ... to be peopled with families of degenerates.”⁵⁴ Acting upon what Kite reported, E.A. Doll sounded an alarm concerning the “scattering [of] the members of these degenerate families from their former centers to all communities of the state.”⁵⁵

Prior to 1935, there had been nine attempts to have sterilization legalized in New Jersey by its legislators.⁵⁶ The tenth attempt was in 1935, introduced by Senator S. Rusling Leap and supported by the LWV. Olden circulated a petition in favor of this bill and by doing that, learned about the role of Catholic legislators in bringing about the defeat of such bills.⁵⁷

In May, 1935, Olden produced a booklet of 48 pages called *Heredity and Ten Social Problems*.⁵⁸ As in her first publication, Olden emphasized population control but, with regard to inheritance, observed that planned parenthood “is not used by, nor applied to the classes most in need of it.”⁵⁹ She called “the eighteenth century philosophers’ idea that all men are created equal” a false belief that thwarted efforts “to improve society.”⁶⁰

The phrase concerning the equality of people is, of course, from a unique governmental document and Olden adopted it – should it be said distorted it? – to promote a particular social movement.⁶¹ She emphasized with italics that “*Mental deficiency has become so prevalent that it constitutes the chief obstacle to social betterment.*”⁶² For her and certain health professionals, sterilization was the answer to what she called “the most important of the ten social problems.”⁶³

Olden’s next publication came out in 1936 and was titled *Sterilization and the Organized Opposition*.⁶⁴ The first half of the booklet concerned sterilization,

including its legality, while the second dealt with Olden's archenemy, the Roman Catholic Church, with, understandably, its opposition to sterilization. Olden, it should be noted, was not anti-religious. At the age of 30, she found and quite willingly accepted New Thought, a spiritual movement that recognizes and worships God.⁶⁵ As expected, she would also approve and, perhaps, appropriate what a clergyperson said about matters related to eugenics if those statements were in line with her own thinking such as "Either rational selection must take the place of natural selection, which the modern state will not allow to act, or we must go on deteriorating"⁶⁶ Olden notes that "Prior to 1931 there were Catholic scholars who openly advocated eugenic sterilization" but this ceased during the tenure of Pope Pius XI.⁶⁷ She states "Outworn thought binding the modern state to medieval conceptions is a menace to the evolution of society"⁶⁸ and, having in mind the difficulties in having sterilization laws enacted, "the unalterable ambition of the Church of Rome to dominate in temporal affairs is vigorously at work in America today."⁶⁹

In 1935, Olden began to concentrate on the role of heredity in criminality and in the following year published her fourth booklet, "Crime in its Biological Aspect."⁷⁰ She observed that "Great effort is being made to inform thoughtless Americans on the nature of crime, but little effort is being made to enlighten

America on the nature of criminals.”⁷¹ While not dismissing the role of environment, Olden claimed “that the largest part of crime in this country is due to the repeated offenses of defective individuals who cannot be reformed by the application of any social remedy.”⁷² Furthermore, “the most thorough and exhaustive studies have been made in this country and abroad, all unanimous in support of a selective sterilization program” to deal with these problems in society.⁷³ She backs this view with case after case and data including that of William Hickson, the Director of the Psychopathic Laboratory of the Municipal Court of Chicago. He studied 40,000 individuals and concluded in 1925 “*Environmentalists are to criminology what anti-evolutionists are to science.*” [Italics by Olden]⁷⁴ And if the information and instructions Olden provides in her publications and lectures on “defectives” are not good enough to result in action, she directs people to the Bible, John 13:17, and the quote therein: “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”⁷⁵

According to Spurlock, “by the late 1930s ...The League of Women Voters was becoming less hospitable to Olden’s crusade and she had begun to antagonize some of her co-workers.”⁷⁶ She, then, “With gratitude, but not regret ... left the League to undertake the formation of a state organization that, with the participation of men, would be dedicated solely to obtaining a sound sterilization law for New

Jersey.”⁷⁷

THE STERILIZATION LEAGUE OF NEW JERSEY

In December 1935, Olden attended a convention of social workers and was impressed with what Eduard C. Lindeman, the president of the New York School of Social Work, said in a talk he gave.⁷⁸ That he lived in the Hunterdon County Borough of High Bridge, New Jersey was another reason why Olden met with him and a result of that meeting was that he became the chairman of the committee that would form the Sterilization League of New Jersey (SLNJ).⁷⁹ Putting together the governing body of notable persons for that organization and producing the documents for what would become the SLNJ was not an easy task for Olden who assumed the major work to accomplish those things.⁸⁰ But finally she did achieve success with the formal establishment of the League on 20 March 1937.⁸¹ Shortly after that, the League produced its first proposed sterilization law. It was presented to the New Jersey Legislature by the physician and Assemblyman from Burlington County, S. Emlen Stokes but died in committee.⁸²

Taking advantage of a period of convalescence following a hysterectomy, Olden wrote and published in 1937 *Selective Sterilization in Primer Form*.⁸³ With this, her fifth booklet, Olden’s readership and reputation in the field grew; she gave more talks in different venues and more people were attracted to her and the SLNJ’s

goals.

In 1935, President Franklin Roosevelt had signed the Social Security Act. This made it possible for the League to include in its Platform in 1937 these statements:

If Social Security is to be made an obligation of government, met by granting huge sums in subsidies, it is essential that society control the quality of the life which is to be made secure ... Where sterilization is indicated but is objected to by any recognized body which conscientiously is opposed to the principle of sterilization, the person may be paroled to such body which shall provide such means in supervised institutions as will effectively prevent parenthood, and at no cost to any municipal, county or state organization.⁸⁴

OLDEN'S TRAVELS IN EUROPE

As noted above, Olden went with her husband, Professor Paul R. Coleman-Norton, who was on a sabbatical leave, to Europe in 1938. Her description of their voyage to and stay in Italy and Sicily in February, the foul weather they experienced at sea and on land as well as the beautiful sites and vistas they visited and saw is quite a digression from her discussion of eugenics and sterilization.⁸⁵ However, her desire for sterilization programs was always with her and she discussed it whenever she had the opportunity with fellow travelers and government officials such as the vice-director of the Swiss National Public Health Service.⁸⁶

From Switzerland, Olden and her husband went to Germany where, by this time, 1938, the Nazi programs of sterilization and euthanasia were well underway and so she was now in a location where the government, at least, was in agreement with her social passion.⁸⁷ A German woman Olden met in Heidelberg told her “Race health was taught us long before Hitler’s day.”⁸⁸ Olden may have cited such information and examples of what was practiced to make the Nazi sterilization program less objectionable. However, further travels in Germany and seeing anti-Semitism in action, particularly in Nuremberg, led her to say “By this time shocked incredulity had changed to furious resentment and a fighting determination to do something to help the Jews.”⁸⁹

After what she saw and heard in Germany, she “was in no mood for sightseeing in that cruel nation.”⁹⁰ However, her main interest was to get on-the-spot, up-to-the minute information of what they were doing with their sterilization. At home, ... [she] had read everything available on the subject and had a well founded conviction that it was administered scientifically and rationally, not emotionally or racially.⁹¹

And so Olden stayed in Germany and, in fact, contributed to Nazi propaganda. Her publications on sterilization were known to the Nazis and when she met Falk Ruttke, the Director of Public Health Services, she was asked to write

English captions for the film, “The Fatal Chain of Hereditary Disease.” She did this “work for them gladly.”⁹² Nevertheless, she was disturbed by the “atmosphere created by the two vainglorious dictators” and “It was with great relief that” she left Germany and went to Copenhagen, Denmark.⁹³

At that time, Denmark had two sterilization laws and Olden added copies of them to the information on sterilization in Europe she was collecting.⁹⁴ To the collection were also added the laws on “eugenic and social” sterilization in Sweden, Finland and Norway when she visited those countries.⁹⁵ Then, in England, Olden had discussions with major figures in the British eugenics and sterilization movements and obtained films and literature on these subjects.⁹⁶ Her trip to Europe ended on a high note with her speaking to a group in Hyde Park but, by this time, she was anxious to return home and resume her mission. It was “with a glad heart and a large amount of valuable material to be used in furthering the cause of human betterment” that she arrived in New York in September.⁹⁷

IN NEW JERSEY AFTER EUROPE

While the Sterilization League of New Jersey continued to hold membership meetings as Olden traveled in Europe, no action had been taken to carry out its purposes. Moreover, she found it necessary, beginning in 1939, for the SLNJ to have a new president, one whose ideas on sterilization were in agreement with hers,

while she continued as the Executive Director.⁹⁸ Olden also now had support for sterilization from the Medical Society of New Jersey and the famous Baltimore journalist and critic Henry L. Mencken which would help her programs to move forward.⁹⁹

The booklets she wrote and other literature available from the SLNJ that Olden would use to promote sterilization were now supplemented by the printed materials and films that she had obtained in Europe and her efforts for that cause and venues for expounding on it increased.¹⁰⁰ She made, for example, presentations at meetings of the Medical Society of New Jersey and the New Jersey Hospital Association in Atlantic City and the Health and Sanitary Association in Asbury Park.¹⁰¹ She overcame personal problems and friction within the organization and her message was now being heard and accepted by new groups.¹⁰²

In light of her growing reputation, the Medical Director of the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, J. W. Bell, strongly encouraged her to enter the national scene.¹⁰³ And, indeed, she did that in 1940 with talks and sales and distribution of literature in a number of western states.¹⁰⁴ Those experiences provided Olden with a “foundation for a national organization.”¹⁰⁵

Back in New Jersey, armed with the information she acquired in the West, Olden and members of the SLNJ worked diligently on a “Model Bill” to be

submitted to the New Jersey State Legislature and visual aids for both Olden's talks and exhibits by the SLNJ to educate the public on sterilization procedures.¹⁰⁶ The bill, Assembly No. 170, was submitted by Fred E. Shepard, a Republican member of the Assembly from Union County, on 9 March 1942, but, as Olden wrote, "of course it was smothered in committee without ever having had a hearing."¹⁰⁷

With the growth of the SLNJ and Olden's feelings towards it and its cause – this "child" of hers as she called it – friction and problems developed between her and members within the League, especially with an SLNJ attorney, Raymond H. Berry.¹⁰⁸ In making the SLNJ into a national organization, for the sake of the organization's funds and expenses Berry developed and worded the Certificate of Incorporation to the satisfaction of a benefactor, a Mr. Driver, but to Olden's displeasure.¹⁰⁹ Olden understood that Berry was taking away from her the control of her organization and that she must now resign from the SLNJ. She wrote that she would not "compromise with the man who through my salary felt sure of making me an accomplice in turning the national organization to his own purpose."¹¹⁰

THE BIRTHRIGHT MOVEMENT

After mailing her letter of resignation to the 225 members of the SLNJ, Olden met in her home with two confidants in the organization and they developed a plan that would keep Olden active in a national organization. That organization

was formed and, in 1943, it came to be known as “Birthright, Inc” rather than Olden’s preference for “Sterilization League of America”

because it clearly voiced our commitment to protect the right of the helpless child as being of greater importance than the right to parenthood by an unqualified person. To further emphasize this we adopted as our motto the Child’s Bill of Rights formulated in 1930 by the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection.¹¹¹

Olden now worked tirelessly on Birthright Inc. matters and a variety of writing projects. While the number of opportunities to make presentations at meetings had declined because of the war, she continued to promote sterilization wherever and whenever she could.¹¹² She also had to contend with Birthright managerial and operational problems, getting members to carry out what she felt was necessary, and lightening her ever-increasing work load.¹¹³ In 1946, she was granted an assistant and then had the time to continue writing her seventh booklet, “The Survival of the Unfittest.”¹¹⁴ This became widely distributed and well-received, increasing Olden’s reputation and knowledge of sterilization as a eugenics procedure.

Administrative changes in Birthright, Inc., for which Olden had not planned, now took place with Olden being moved into the position of Executive Director. It was called a promotion and her assistant was assigned to the position Olden had to

vacate, that is Executive Secretary.¹¹⁵ This did not stop further actions to lessen Olden's power and resulted in the separation of the physical places where she worked and where the affairs of Birthright would be maintained. As she demanded, Olden would keep her office in her Princeton home, which had always been the office of first, the Sterilization League of New Jersey and then Birthright, Inc., and would have the title of Director of Publication and Research. The Business Office, maintained by the Executive Secretary who would now be under the direction of the Executive Committee and not Olden, would be located in downtown Princeton.¹¹⁶ These changes, however, did not end the disagreements and conflicts Olden had to endure.

Without Olden's knowledge, a new Executive Director, George Rundquist of Brooklyn, New York, was recruited and engaged.¹¹⁷ Olden was disappointed further by these moves when she learned that Mr. Rundquist knew nothing about sterilization and did not have experience in directing an organization like Birthright. She wrote to him that it was necessary for them to "reach a plan of procedure that is mutually agreeable and that will prevent our locking horns to the detriment of the work we want to accomplish."¹¹⁸ It turned out he had a plan which was, as Olden stated it, that

the Executive Committee appoint a publications committee and that I would not be the

chairman. ... [I would] write only what I was told to write and proceeded to cut my catalogue to pieces. He expurgated my highly praised “Your Questions About Sterilization Answered” saying he would allow no references to Catholics for “If you will stop fighting the Catholics they will stop fighting you.” This proved his ignorance of the nature and tactics of the opposition.¹¹⁹

With all the opposition to her, Olden still remained steadfast in wanting to continue as chairman of publications and being responsible directly to the Executive Committee. That body, or at least some members of it, supported her in her desires; that led to Rundquist resigning from the Executive Directorship, a position he had occupied for only “eleven weeks.”¹²⁰ Still, other members of the Executive Committee wanted Olden out of Birthright and on 12 March 1948, H. Curtis Wood, Jr., the president of Birthright wrote a letter to her and her husband in which he metaphorically likened the need for Olden to separate herself from the organization as a mother one day parts from a child:

Now Birthright has “grown up”. It is no longer merely Mrs. Olden’s baby and it is time for the child to leave the fold and to go out into the world to further grow and prosper. As is so often the case in real life the strong and sensible mother has so dominated the child that this break is very difficult for both. Yet it must be done for the benefit of both, but especially the child ... Let me emphasize the point that the mothers are always completely sincere in feeling they have done and are doing the best for the child and no one else could do as good a job. The comparison holds true for Birthright. It owes its very

existence to Mrs. Olden, but the time has come when it must leave home and get out from under the old influences, if it is ever to attain maturity and manhood.¹²¹

Because a physician had recommended she take a rest from work, Olden requested on 23 April 1948 “a leave of absence [from Birthright] without pay for a four-month period.”¹²² Instead of that, as Wood informed her, the Executive Committee granted her three months pay and that she would no longer have a salaried position with Birthright, Inc.¹²³ Any more work she would do for that organization would be “on a business basis of so much per job.”¹²⁴

Thus, Olden was suddenly separated from Birthright.¹²⁵ However, her departure was not without a “an “open and frank” account of the year’s work” which she “had been doing ever since 1933.”¹²⁶ She concluded with a bit of righteous indignation

Some will ask >What do you expect to accomplish by exposing these unpleasant things?’
To them I reply >Results concern me far less than my responsibility to hold to truth, to straightforward dealing, to fulfilling my obligations. Therefore I must give an honest accounting to all who have responded to Birthright’s call. If this letting in of light into dark places does harm, the blame lies with those who work in the shadows.’¹²⁷

LIFE IN “RETIREMENT”

No longer being in a public position demanding her time – which, of course she did more than willingly – for a cause she strongly believed in, Olden undertook more mundane projects concerning her house and attending to her grandchildren.¹²⁸ However, her reputation and abilities in matters concerning sterilization were so good that in the late spring of 1949, she was invited by Clarence Gamble to return to work in that field.¹²⁹ She did not accept his offer and it wasn't until 1952 that she dealt again with sterilization, to write an article on that subject for the *Encyclopedia Americana*.¹³⁰ Then, in 1969, she agreed to accompany a professor of history in Franklin and Marshall College to the University of Minnesota and review the records of the Association for Voluntary Sterilization (AVS), a descendant of Birthright, Inc., which had been deposited in the Social Welfare History Archives.¹³¹ She found the archives did not have many items she knew should have been there and noted “The only sign I had ever existed was my name and address which I had written in pencil” on a document.¹³² Moreover, a reading of documents in the archives “were enough to outline the course followed in forsaking a eugenic solution to pursue an easier goal.”¹³³ From those papers, Olden gleaned information of particular significance to her for the years 1949 to 1964 and included them in her *History of the Development of the First National Organization for Sterilization*.¹³⁴

To Olden, the goal of the Sterilization League of New Jersey, her original organization, had been reversed and was now “dysgenic by becoming merely another form of birth control usable only by responsible people.”¹³⁵ To support this contention, she relates the action of the president of the AVS, H.W. Stinson, on the move to make changes to the sterilization law of the state of Delaware.¹³⁶ In 1923, the legislature of Delaware had passed “An act to provide for the sterilization of certain defectives” which made it legal to sterilize “undesirable people living in state institutions.”¹³⁷ It was proposed in 1968 to include in that law mothers on welfare who bore “two or more illegitimate children.”¹³⁸ Stinson believed this would be “a violation of human rights;” to Olden, however, this statement indicated “the AVS was actually thwarting efforts to enlarge the scope of the very laws that we had worked hard to have enacted.”¹³⁹

She now wondered about the opinions of others who had been in the past proponents of involuntary sterilization. Paul Popenoe, president of the American Institute of Family Relations in Los Angeles, was such a person and she asked him about his current opinions on the matter.¹⁴⁰ In his reply, he said that in the future “when an individual is incapable of giving valid consent, the state will have to practice it.”¹⁴¹ Olden did not agree with Popenoe’s idea that involuntary sterilization would become a reality in time and to wait for that to happen but

rather, as one learns from her writings, it should be brought about now by actions of legislatures.

At the age of 87 and having lost her vision four years earlier, Olden, in 1974, reflected on the history to which she had been a major contributor and wrote:

To me it was essential that we preserve two cardinal principles upon which our organization had been founded. One was to prevent parenthood, by court-ordered sterilization, of those manifestly unfit physically or mentally for its responsibilities. The other was to adhere strictly to truth whatever the consequences.¹⁴²

One can safely assume that Marian Stephenson Olden remained true to her convictions to the day she died, 10 September 1981, at the age of 93, in Gwynedd, Pennsylvania.¹⁴³

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Brunswick, N. J. The author also wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Internet, the search engines for it and the individuals and organizations who have posted so much of the information comprising this article. To one and all, thank you.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

Abbreviations:

RU-SC: Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ.

MSOP: Marian Stephenson Olden Papers.

1. Portions of this paper were read at the Symposium of The Lunar Society of the Medical History Society of New Jersey, “A Cautionary Tale: The Eugenics Movement in New Jersey,” The Rutgers Club, New Brunswick, NJ, Tuesday, February 2, 2016.
2. “Animal Domestication Table of Dates and Places,” About Education, accessed November 25, 2015, <http://archaeology.about.com/od/dterms/a/domestication.htm>. The origin of the domesticated dog is still being debated and investigated. See David Grimm, “Dogs may have been domesticated more than once,” Science, June 2, 2016, accessed June 3, 2016, doi:10.1126/science.aaf5755.

3. “Selective Breeding,” The Dire Wolf Project, accessed November 25, 2015, <http://www.direwolfproject.com/selective-breeding.html> .
4. “Origins of Eugenics: From Sir Francis Galton to Virginia’s Racial Integrity Act of 1924,” Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, accessed November 25, 2015, <http://exhibits.hsl.virginia.edu/eugenics/2-origins>.
5. Ibid. A “race” of humans is a social construct. In biology, “race” is a taxonomic category determined by chromosomes, geography or physiology.
“Race (biology),” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, (accessed June 3, 2016),
[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Race\(biology\)&oldid=715411758](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Race(biology)&oldid=715411758)
6. “Page Act of 1875,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, (accessed November 26, 2015), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Page_Act_of_1875.
Also known as The Immigration Act of 1875, the law was sponsored by Horace F. Page, a Republican Representative from the State of California.
See also Nancy Ordover, *American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p. xvi. Keeping Asian prostitutes out of the United States did not, apparently, affect the homegrown prostitution business from thriving. See the review of *A Renegade History of the United States*, by Thaddeus Russell, (New York:

Free Press/Simon & Schuster, 2010), accessed December 1, 2015,

<http://www.alternet.org/story/148327/>.

7. “Genetic Timeline,” accessed December 2, 2015.

<https://www.genome.gov/Pages/Education/GeneticTimeline.pdf>.

8. Ibid.

9. Alan M. Kraut, *Germs, Genes and the Immigrant Menace*,” (Baltimore: Johns

Hopkins University Press, 1994), p. 5. As Kraut notes in his book, Native

Americans were severely harmed by the diseases the first European settlers

in America brought with them. Later, descendants of those immigrants,

nativists, associated particular diseases with particular immigrant groups,

such as Irish with cholera (p. 32), Italians with polio (pp. 4, 108 and 110),

and Jews with polio (p. 110) and tuberculosis (p. 155).

10. Ordover (Ref. 6).

11. “Birth control in the United States,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia ,

accessed December 9, 2015,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birth_control_in_the_United_States .

Margaret Sanger was a pioneer in birth control in the United States. With

regard to eugenics, she wrote in 1921, “The campaign for Birth Control is

not merely of eugenic value, but is practically identical in ideal with the final

aims of Eugenics ... the most urgent problem today is how to limit and discourage the overfertility of the mentally and physically defective.”

Angela Franks, “The Connection Between Birth Control and Eugenics: Archival Resources.” Mendel Newsletter, New Series, No. 9 (February 2000), accessed January 16, 2016,

<https://amphilsoc.org/mendel/2000.htm>.

12. “Contraceptive Effectiveness,” Guttmacher Institute Fact Sheet, accessed December 10, 2015, http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_contr_use.html.

See also “Female Sterilization Fact Sheet” and “Male Sterilization Fact Sheet,” U.S. Department of Human Services, Office of Population Affairs, accessed December 9, 2015,

<http://www.hhs.gov/opa/reproductive-health/contraception/>.

Basically, sterilization in females is the prevention of sperm reaching an egg through either tying off the fallopian tubes (tubal ligation) or creating a blockage in the tubes with an implant; in males, sperm is prevented from being discharged by cutting, tying or blocking the tubes (vas deferens) that transport sperm from the testicles to the urethra.

13. Dowbiggin, Ian, *The Sterilization Movement and Global Fertility in the*

Twentieth Century, (Oxford: New York, 2008), page 23.

14. Ibid.

15. Dowbiggin (Ref. 13, p. 25).

16. Davenport, C.B. *Eugenics: The Science of Improvement by Better Breeding*.

(New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1910), pp.33-34, accessed December 10, 2015,

<https://books.google.com/books?id'uC4KAAAIAAJ&pg'PA3&dq'euge>.

Davenport was a biologist and founded the ERO in 1910 at Cold Springs Harbor, New York. He and the eugenicist Harry H. Laughlin (1880 B 1943) were members of the American Breeders Association where they learned to produce “the strongest and most capable members of a species while making certain that the weakest members do not reproduce.” Laughlin became the director of the ERO. “Eugenics Record Office (ERO),” Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement, accessed December 10, 2015, http://eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/topics_fs.pl?theme'20&search'.

17. “Compulsory sterilization, “United States.” ” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed December 13, 2015,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compulsory_sterilization#United_States.

18. “Eugenics: Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States,” Lutz Kaelber,

accessed December 11, 2015, <https://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/>.

Table 1 below shows in the United States, 34 of the 50 states had compulsory sterilization laws. New Jersey was not one of them. New York had such a law on the books from 1912 to 1920 and 42 persons, all female, were sterilized. Pennsylvania had no law but 270 were sterilized (sex unknown). Indiana's law of 1907 was repealed in 1974. During that time about 2,500 men and women of about equal numbers were sterilized. However, for eight years *before* compulsory sterilization was legal in Indiana, 465 prisoners, all men, underwent "eugenic sterilization."

Anastazia Schmid, *Sexual Conquest and Nineteenth Century Institutions: Dr. Theophilus Parvin's Captive Patients and His Connections in Medical Science*, Manuscript privately printed, 14 pp., provided to the author.

19. "Eugenic Sterilization Laws," Paul Lombardo, Image Archive on the American Eugenics Movement, accessed December 11, 2015, <http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/html/eugenics/essay8text.html>. The popularity of eugenics extended into movies and stage plays. See, for example, "The Black Stork," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed May 23, 2016, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Black_Stork.
20. Kaelber (Ref. 18).

21. Dowbiggin (Ref. 13, p. 25).

22. Kaelber (Ref. 18).

23. Ibid. “Smith” was Alice Smith, a patient in the New Jersey State Village for

Epileptics at Skillman. In 1913, New Jersey Supreme Court Justice Charles Grant Garrison handed down a decision that creation of “the Sterilization board is invalid by reason of taking from victims of the law constitutional rights to which they are entitled.” “Rules Sterilization Law is Invalid,” The New York Times, November 19, 1913, p. 11, accessed December 15, 2015, <http://query.nytimes.com/>. This web address continues with:

[gst/abstract.html/D03EEDC1730E233A2575AC1 A9679D946296D6CF](http://query.nytimes.com/gst/abstract.html/D03EEDC1730E233A2575AC1A9679D946296D6CF).

The 14th amendment, passed on July 9, 1868, is concerned with “Rights Guaranteed Privileges and Immunities of Citizenship, Due Process and Equal Protection.” Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, accessed December 15, 2015,

http://www.14thamendment.us/amendment/14th_amendment.html.

In 1927, in *Buck v. Bell*, the Supreme Court upheld a Virginia law that sanctioned involuntary sterilization. In his opinion on this, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. wrote these often-repeated words, “It is better for all the world if, instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime or

to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind ... Three generations of imbeciles are enough.” Adam Doerr, “Three Generations of Imbeciles Are Enough,” Genomics Law Report, accessed January 16, 2016, <http://www.genomicslawreport.com/index.php/2009/06/25/three-generations-of-imbeciles-are-enough/>.

24. For a review of Olden’s life, see John C. Spurlock, “Marian Stephenson Olden, 1888-1981,” in *Past and Promise: Lives of New Jersey Women*, Joan N. Burstyn, Ed. The Women’s Project of New Jersey, Inc., (The Scarecrow Press: Metuchen, NJ and London, 1990), pp. 370-372.

25. Florence A. Burleigh, “In Memoriam - Arthur H. Stephenson,” *The Single Tax Review*, 2 (1902):35-36, accessed December 17, 2015, [http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id'nyp.33433022371367;](http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id'nyp.33433022371367;view=1up;seq=413) This web address continues with: view'1up;seq'413.

26. Ibid.

27. Spurlock (Ref. 24, p. 370) notes that Olden’s father’s “commitment to principle became the model for her later crusade for human betterment.”

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Library Catalogue of Princeton University, accessed July 15, 2015,
<http://www.princeton.edu/main/library>.
31. “Paul R. Coleman-Norton,” Family Search, accessed July 15, 2015,
<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X4X6-ZL6>.
32. Spurlock (Ref. 24, p. 371). Husband Roger Olden and daughter Dorothy, her last name now being Frank, were interviewed by Spurlock for his biography of Marian.
33. Ibid. Olden’s first publication with sterilization in its title, *Sterilization and the Organized Opposition*, was in 1936.
34. Spurlock (Ref. 24, p. 371).
35. Dowbiggin (Ref. 13, p. 40, Note 1). “For simplicity’s sake,” Dowbiggin used “Marian Olden throughout [his] book.” In addition, she at times spelled her first name M-a-r-i-a-n-n, but most often it was M-a-r-i-a-n. Therefore, except for the specific attributions in these references, Marian – one “n” – Olden is the name that is used in this paper.
36. “Early League History and Mission,” League of Women Voters of New Jersey, accessed July 18, 2015,http://www.lwvnj.org/about_history.html.
37. Ibid.
38. “Making Democracy Work,” The League of Women Voters of the Princeton

Area, accessed July 18, 2015, <http://www.lwvprinceton.org>. The first meeting of the League of Women Voters was held on 31 October 1932.

Personal communication/e-mail from Ellen Kemp, LWV of the Princeton Area, August 17, 2015.

39. Mariann S. Olden, *History of the Development of the First National*

Organization for Sterilization, (Gwynedd, PA: Privately Printed, 1974), 133 pp.

40. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 1). Social Hygiene was a movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to combat venereal diseases and vice such as prostitution.

This was an outgrowth of the 19th century Social Purity Movement. The Social Purity Movement – social being a euphemism for sexual – was based on Christian morality. Both movements were concerned with the control of social ills such as sexually transmitted diseases, through science. These and other organizations gave rise to the American Sexual Health Association in 1914 and then the American Social Health Association in 1959. This last organization is still in existence; its major mission continues to be the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. “Social hygiene movement,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed July 25, 2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_hygiene_movement .

“Social purity movement,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed July 25, 2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_purity_movement

“American Sexual Health Association,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed July 25, 2015,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Sexual_Health_Association.

41. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 1).

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. In his review of Conklin’s *Heredity and Environment* (Princeton: Princeton

University Press, 1916), Ellsworth Huntington quotes from the book:

“Wooden legs...do not run in families although wooden heads do.” and “We

are approaching the time when...either the responsibilities of life must be

reduced and the march of civilization stayed, or a better race of man with

greater hereditary abilities must be bred.” and “...there is no warrant for

thinking that the human race if left to itself will improve.” *Yale Review*, 6

(1917):668-669, accessed July 25, 2015, <https://books/google.com>. Conklin,

it should be noted, was “A deeply religious man ... concerned with the

relations between science, ethics, and religion ... [He] believed that scientific

evidence of man's animal ancestry need not undermine religious faith or belief in human dignity.” Gerhard Fankhauser, “Conklin, Edwin Grant - Princeton University,” accessed July 25, 2015, http://etcweb.princeton.edu/CampusWWW/Companion/conklin_edwin.

This web address continues with: [grant.html](http://etcweb.princeton.edu/CampusWWW/Companion/conklin_edwin_grant.html).

46. Cathy J. Cooke, “Preview of “Duty or Dream? Edwin G. Conklin’s Critique of Eugenics and Support for American Individualism.” *Journal of the History of Biology*, 35 (2002):365-384, accessed July 26, 2015, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4331737?seq=1> .

47. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 2).

48. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 3).

49. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 4).

50. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 12).

51. Ibid.

52. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 13). This may be part of “Heredity and Twelve Social Problems,” a pamphlet produced as part of a four-part series entitled *A Study of Social Problems With a Solution*, (Princeton: Princeton League of Women Voters, 1935). For a list of publications by and about Olden, see *WorldCat Identities*, Olden, Marian S. (Marian Stephenson 1888-),

Accessed July 24, 2015,

<http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n85283015/>.

53. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 14).

54. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 16) and also “The Pineys,” Pinelands and Preservation Alliance, accessed August 2, 2015,

http://www.pinelandsalliance.org/downloads/pinelandsalliance_669.pdf.

55. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 16).

56. Olden notes this on page 18 of her history of sterilization (Ref. 39) but does not provide references to those bills and when they were introduced.

Throughout her writing, in addition to the lack of references, there is an inadequacy of dates.

57. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 16-17). See also “New Jersey: State Senate, 1930s.”

PoliticalGraveyard.com, accessed January 1, 2016,

<http://politicalgraveyard.com/geo/NJ/ofc/stsen1930s.html>.

58. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 19).

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid. There is an interesting history to the phrase “all men are created equal” which is in the first sentence of the second paragraph of the

Declaration of Independence. In a draft for the Declaration of Independence, George Mason of Virginia wrote “all men are born equally free and independant [sic].” Thomas Jefferson rewrote that in his own drafts, the last of which is an abridgment of what Mason submitted. See Pauline Maier, “The Strange History of “All Men Are Created Equal”,” *Washington and Lee Law Review*, 56 (1999):873-888, accessed August 4, 2015, <http://scholarlycommons.law.wlu.edu/wlulr/vol56/iss3/8>.

62. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 20).

63. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 21). Abraham Myerson (1881-1948), a neurologist and psychiatrist, chaired the American Neurological Association Committee for the Investigation of Sterilization. In the committee’s report, which Myerson authored, it was noted “Eugenical sterilization is carried out for the purpose of preventing the procreation of those who will probably transmit to their offspring certain defective qualities and to prevent which, legislation is enacted.” “Summary of the report of the American Neurological Association Committee for the Investigation of Sterilization,” *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 92 (1935):615-625, accessed August 4, 2015, <http://www.ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/abs/10.1176/ajp.92.3.615>

64. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 23).

65. Spurlock (Ref. 24, p. 370). Phineas Parkhurst Quimby (1802-1866) of Belfast, Maine is considered to be the founder of the 19th century religious movement in the United States called New Thought. Today it is made up several denominations, the major ones being Religious Science, Unity Church and the Church of Divine Science. See “Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, 1802 - 1866, Father of New Thought,” Self-Improvement-eBooks.com , accessed August 15, 2015, <http://phineasquimby.wwwhubs.com/>. Also, “New Thought,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed August 15, 2015, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Thought .
66. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 24). The statement was made by the Anglican priest and Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London, William Ralph Inge, and appears in “Eugenics and Religion,” *The Eugenics Review*, 12 (1921):260, accessed August 15, 2015, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2942454/?page=4> Inge made a similar and a little more extended statement, “Either rational selection must take the place of the natural selection which the modern state will not allow to act, or we shall deteriorate as surely as a miscellaneous crowd of dogs which was allowed to rear puppies from promiscuous matings,” in his article “Eugenics,” *The Edinburgh Review or Critical*

Journal, 236 (1922):32, accessed August 15, 2015,

<https://books.google.com/books?id'ODU7AQAAMAAJ&pg>.

An extensive web address follows this. Suggestion: make a Google search using portions of Inge's phrase.

67. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 27). Pope Pius XI's given and family name was Ambrogio Damiano Achille Ratti; he served as Pope from 6 February 1922 to his death in 1939. See "Pope Pius XI," accessed January 1, 2016, <https://www.google.com/#q'Pope+Pius+XI> . "There was not only a Catholic but also a Protestant eugenics ... Prominent Catholic priests in Germany supported the eugenics movement, each with his own ideological platform...even today the Catholic Church is not opposed to eugenics per se, but only to contraception and abortion, as well as to Neo-Malthusianism, which is closely intertwined with eugenic thinking." Quotation from John Glad's review of *Katholizismus und Eugenik in der Weimarer Republik und im Dritten Reich: Zwischen Sittlichkeitsreform und Rassenhygiene* (*Catholicism and Eugenics in the Weimar Republic and in the Third Reich : Between a Reform in Morality and Racial Hygiene*) by Ingrid Richter, (Paderborn:Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001), 572 pages, accessed January 1, 2016, <http://www.whatwemaybe.org/txt/txt0001/Glad.John.2006>.

An extensive web address follows this. Suggestion: make a Google search using portions of the book's title.

68. Ibid.

69. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 31).

70. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 32 and 33).

71. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 33).

72. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 34).

73. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 45).

74. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 46). Environmentalists here are those who hold that an individual's surroundings determine his or her behavior.

75. Ibid. In today's vernacular, this would be "If you understand this, blessed are you if you do it." "John, Chapter 13," United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, accessed August 26, 2015, <http://usccb.org/bible/john/13/>. In the noted passage from the Bible, "These things" are instructions and explanations, including the washing of the disciples' feet, Jesus gives to his disciples at the feast of Passover and at which he reveals that Judas has betrayed him. It appears Olden knew the New Testament and when to introduce meaningful statements from it to strengthen her arguments.

76. Spurlock (Ref. 24, p. 371). One may wonder if knowledge of what was taking

place in Germany played a role here.

77. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 48).

78. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 49).

79. Ibid.

80. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 49-50). Olden wrote the constitution, did fund raising, wrote necessary correspondence, etc.

81. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 50). The officers of the SLNJ were a judge of the Bergen County Juvenile Court, Thomas L. Zimmerman, Jr. (President); a former mayor of Princeton, Charles R. Erdman, Jr (1st Vice-President); the President of the New Jersey League of Women Voters (2nd Vice-president); a psychiatrist, Dr. Theodore R. Roble (3rd Vice-President); an officer of the New Jersey Taxpayers' Association, A.R. Everson (Treasurer). Olden, at that time with the last name Norton, served as Secretary.

82. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 51). Dr. Stokes promoted the SLNJ goal in a talk, "Why New Jersey Should Pass a Sterilization Law," he gave at a convention of the New Jersey League of Women Voters at the Berkeley-Carteret Hotel in Asbury Park. The New York Times, 15 May 1938, p. D5.

83. Ibid.

84. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 52 and 53).

85. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 54-56). In describing places, artifacts and the political scene at that time, Olden demonstrates an admirable talent for writing.
86. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 55, 60-61). The first sterilization law in Europe was passed in 1928 in the Swiss Canton de Vaud. See Barry Mehler, "Eliminating the Inferior: American and Nazi Sterilization Programs," *Science for the People*, Nov-Dec 1987, pp. 14-18, accessed August 30, 2015, <http://www.ferris.edu/isar/archives/eliminating-inferior.htm>. For a review of sterilization in various countries, see "The Knife in the Closet: European nations begin to confront their eugenic past," James A. Miller, *Population Institute*, 1997, November 1, accessed June 5, 2016, <https://www.pop.org/content/the-knife-in-the-closet-127>.
87. One may wonder if Olden ever knew or when she learned that "The forced sterilizations [by the Nazis] began in January 1934, and altogether an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 people were sterilized under the law." It should be emphasized, however, that "Nazi Germany was not the first or only country to sterilize people considered "abnormal." Before Hitler, the United States led the world in forced sterilizations. Between 1907 and 1939, more than 30,000 people in twenty-nine states were sterilized, many of them unknowingly or against their will, while they were incarcerated in prisons or

institutions for the mentally ill.” Quotations are from “Forced Sterilization,” United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, accessed August 30, 2015, <http://www.ushmm.org/learn/students/learning-materials-and-resources/.....>

“The first German sterilization law was enacted on July 14, 1933 - only six months after Hitler became Chancellor. The Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring (the “Sterilization” Law) allowed the forced sterilization for anyone suffering from genetic blindness, hereditary deafness, manic depression, schizophrenia, epilepsy, congenital feeble-mindedness, Huntingtons' chorea (a brain disorder), and alcoholism.”

Jennifer Rosenberg, “Sterilization in Nazi Germany,” About Education, accessed August 31, 2015, <http://history1900s.about.com/od/holocaust/a/sterilization.htm>.

88. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 62).

89. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 63). Olden’s writings include references to ethnic groups but her attitude towards them is not clear. One time in Berlin, Olden offered to be of assistance to two strangers she saw on a street and identified as Jews. Nothing came immediately from that meeting but after the war, back in Princeton, she was contacted by a Jew who managed to get to Cuba and then the U.S. and had her address. She befriended the man and his fiancée who

became his wife. See Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 66 and 71). With regard to a letter that was mailed to her Princeton address but she received in Edinburgh, Olden wrote “It made me happy every time I found that my boldness in Berlin had afforded me another opportunity to give practical assistance.” Quotation from Olden (Ref. 39, p. 74). In 1942, Olden attended a meeting of and mounted an exhibit of the SLNJ at a Negro state medical society (a division of the National Medical Association?). She noted that at that time “It was a novel experience to be dining with nine Negroes.” From Olden (Ref. 39, p. 85). Despite these examples of racial tolerance, Olden was rather cool when it came to “undesirables.” In her “Report of the Department of Social Hygiene of the Princeton L. of Women Voters” of May 1934 she bemoans the fact that the U.S. has “over 1/5 of the Jews of the entire world ... [that] 10% of our population is negro-mulatto ... [and between 1890 and 1910] 8,000,000 immigrants came from Eastern and Southern Europe. With a tardy awakening in 1928 the National Origins Provision put an effective check upon the flood of undesirables from the eastern hemisphere. But the western hemisphere remains a problem to be faced in the near future.” RU-SC Box 1, Folder 1934.

90. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 65).

91. In opposition to the idea some Americans held that the Nazis used sterilization to exterminate peoples, after the war she wrote “[the Nazis] had the firing squads and the gas chambers, why would they sully their sterilization programs, of which they were justly proud, with criminal acts?” Olden (Ref. 39, p. 66). It should be kept in mind that Olden was not the only American eugenicist to look favorably upon Nazi eugenics. In addition to her, Clarence Campbell; T.U.H. Ellinger; Charles M. Goethe; Marie E. Kopp; William W. Peters; and Lothrop Stoddard visited in Europe. When they “returned to the United States, they became the most ardent defenders of the Nazi racial purification campaign.” “Eugenics and Scientific Disciplines” in *East Asia History, Politics, Sociology, Culture*, edited by Edward Beauchamp, New York and London: Routledge, 2002, p. 26, accessed September 28, 2015, <https://books.google.com>.

92. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 66).

93. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 67).

94. Ibid. Denmark’s first sterilization law was enacted in 1929 and since then, about “40,000 Scandinavians have been sterilized for eugenics reasons.” David Gems, Review Essay: Politically Correct Eugenics, *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*, 20 (1999):199-211, accessed September 30, 2015,

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/~ucbtdag/bioethics/writings/eugenics.html>.

95. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 69-72). While enjoying the beauty and peoples of these foreign countries, Olden continued to recruit Americans for her Sterilization League. See Olden (Ref. 39, p. 73).
96. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 74).
97. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 74 and 75).
98. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 75, 76 and 78).
99. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 76-77).
100. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 78).
101. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 78-79).
102. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 78-82). In 1939, Olden separated from her husband, Paul R. Coleman-Norton and divorced him in Reno in 1940. She now required an income and the League granted her a salary. Theodore R. Robie, a psychiatrist who practiced in Montclair, was the 3rd Vice-President when the Sterilization League of New Jersey (SLNJ) came into being and then Secretary. In the course of time, he strongly opposed Olden but because he did not get his way and obtain the support of the League's Executive Committee, he resigned. Sterilization being such a sensitive subject, it is important to note a major religious group, the Methodists, supported the

SLNJ. Unitarian ministers also thought sterilization to be “a good thing” and that laws allowing this were “enlightened.” The New York Times, September 17, 1962, p. 26.

103. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 79).

104. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 82). The states Olden visited were Nevada, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, New Mexico and Missouri. On these tours she met persons with whom she could discuss sterilization, learn from them what was being done with legislation on that in their state and who could provide her with information on others to contact.

105. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 83).

106. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 83-85). During a lull in this very active period for her, the summer of 1941, Marian Stephenson Norton married Roger Olden, “a refugee from Hitler who had reached New York City in 1938 with less than three dollars in his pocket and scant knowledge of English.” See Olden (Ref. 39, p 87).

107. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 85). See also, “Index to Politicians,” The Political Graveyard, accessed October 11, 2015, <http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/shepard.html#916.23.35>.

108. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 86 to 89). In addition to the legal work he did for the SLNJ,

it is interesting to note that Raymond H. Berry was the attorney for the “Radium Girls,” five women who were horribly affected by and died from radiation poisoning acquired while painting luminous watch and instrument dials at the U.S. Radium (formerly the Radium Luminous Material Corporation) plant in Orange, New Jersey. On 18 May 1927, Berry, a young attorney at that time, took on this case. The suit he filed was widely publicized and sensationalized by news reporters and journalists, including the famous Walter Lippmann, and the public became well-aware of the background of the story and the proceedings of the case. Before it went to trial, however, the case was settled in early June 1928 and each of the dying women received \$10,000 plus a \$600 yearly annuity and payment of their legal and medical expenses. The suit had called for payment of \$250,000 to each of the women, the last of whom died in the 1930s. Bill Kovarik, “The Radium Girls,” Mass Media & Environmental Conflicts – Radium Girls, Accessed October 12, 2015, <http://www.rst2.edu/ties/radon/ramfordu/pdf/files/>. This web address continues with: [The%20Radium%20Girls.pdf](#). Also “Radium Girls,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed October 12, 2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radium_Girls.

109. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 90-92). Wickliffe Preston Draper (1891-1972), was a strong advocate and benefactor of eugenics as well as a racist.
110. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 91-92).
111. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 93). The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection was convened by President Herbert Hoover and produced at least two documents, “The Children’s Charter” (dated 22 November 1930) and “The Handicapped Child's Bill of Rights” (dated 1930). It appears the former would be more applicable to the goals of the organization Birthright, Inc.
112. At a meeting of SLNJ members on November 11, 1942 at the Robert Treat Hotel in Newark, four plans for future policy were discussed. No one supported APlan No. 1 – “That the league become quiescent and cease all activities for the duration of the war” and it was dropped. “Minutes - Sixth Annual Meeting of the Sterilization League of New Jersey,” accessed January 1, 2016, http://www.indyweek.com/pdf/051811-Begos-Eugenics/sterilization_
This web address continues with: meeting.pdf.
113. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 94-97).
114. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 99).
115. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 101-102). Olden was unhappy with how this change was

brought about but it appears this relieved her of responsibilities someone else could handle and she would be able to concentrate more on the purposes of Birthright, Inc.

116. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 103-105).

117. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 107).

118. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 107 and 108).

119. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 108). Olden and the Catholics is a major subject in itself and worthy of being dealt with in a separate study. Suffice it to repeat here this statement by Olden: “Anyone who pursues the facts will become convinced that to serve the cause of eugenics it is essential to withstand the insidious encroachments of religious bigotry.” See Olden, Ref. 39, page 113.

120. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 110-112).

121. Letter from H. Curtis Wood Jr. in which he says the Executive Director, George Rundquist, “must have full authority” to carry out his duties. On Birthright stationery dated March 12, 1948. RU-SC, MSOP, 1934-1970. However, as Olden wrote, the Executive Committee “ordered Mr. Rundquist to reverse his instructions [to stop printing Olden’s publications] to the printer, which he did. This was more than Mr. Rundquist could take so he

promptly resigned on May 14.” Olden (Ref. 39, p. 111).

122. Letter from Olden to the Birthright Executive Committee, dated April 23,

1948. RU-SC, MSOP, Box 1, Folder 1948. See also Olden (Ref. 39, p. 115).

123. Letter from H. Curtis Wood to Olden dated June 12, 1948. RU-SC, MSOP Box 1, Folder 1948.

124. Ibid.

125. With public relations and the times in mind, Birthright, Inc., which originated from the Sterilization League of new Jersey, underwent changes in its mission and name. In 1950 it was renamed the Human Betterment Association of America (HBAA); in 1962, Human Betterment Association for Voluntary Sterilization (HBAVS); in 1965, Association for Voluntary Sterilization (AVS); in 1984, Association for Voluntary Surgical Contraception (AVSC); AVSC International in 1994. “To reflect the fact that its mission had expanded beyond sterilization, in 2001 the organization changed its name to EngenderHealth, added the tagline “Improving Women's Health Worldwide,” and introduced a new logo. It operates under this name today, although its logo and tagline changed in 2008.” “EngenderHealth,” accessed November 17, 2015, <https://www.engenderhealth.org/>.

126. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 115).

127. Ibid.

128. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 116).

129. Ibid. Olden states that Clarence Gamble called “to entice me back to working for sterilization” but does not name an organization or if she would work free of interference. Gamble was a physician who immersed himself in fostering population control on a worldwide basis. With money available to him as the heir to the Proctor and Gamble soap company, he supported many organizations and programs concerned with contraception.

“Clarence Gamble,” Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, accessed November 17, 2015, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence_Gamble .

130. In communicating with Drake de Kay of the Encyclopedia Americana, Olden pointed out that “No federal or state legislation prohibits a sterilization program; state laws are needed only to organize its administration.”; Buck v. Bell “upheld the principle of compulsory sterilization.”; “The only organized opposition is based on pronouncements of the Roman Catholic hierarchy.” Attachment to a letter to Drake de Kay, senior editor of the Encyclopedia Americana, dated May 5, 1952. RU-SC, MSOP, Box 1, Folder 1948.

131. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 116).

132. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 117).

133. Ibid.
134. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 117-125).
135. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 125). See Reference 125 for the names of the organizations which developed from the SLNJ.
136. Ibid.
137. “Delaware passes sexual sterilization legislation,” accessed <ay 26, 2015, <http://eugenicsarchive.ca/discover/connections/532339d6132156674b00023c>.
138. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 125).
139. Ibid.
140. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 125-126).
141. Olden (Ref. 39, p. 126).
142. Olden (Ref. 39, pp. 127, 130, 132).
143. Spurlock (Ref. 24, p. 371).

Table 1. Legal sterilizations in the United States(1)

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<u>State</u>	<u>Period When Sterilizations Occurred(2)</u>	<u>Total Sterilized</u>	<u>Percent(3) Men</u>	<u>Percent(3) Women</u>
Alabama (AL)	1919 - 1925	224	~94	~130
Alaska (AK)	No law	0	0	0
Arizona (AZ)	1929 - 1932	30	10	20
Arkansas (AR)	No law	0	0	0
California (CA)	1909 - 1964	20,108	~Equal	~Equal
Colorado (CO)	No law	0	0	0
Connecticut (CT)	1909 - 1963	557	~8	~92
Delaware (DE)	1923 - 1963	945	~50	~50
Florida (FL)	No law	0	0	0
Georgia (GA)	1937 - 1963	3,284	45	55
Hawaii (HI)	No law	0	0	0
Idaho (ID)	1933 - 1963	38	21	79
Illinois (IL)	No law	0(4)	0	0
Indiana (IN)	1907 - 1974	~2,500	~50	~50
Iowa (IA)	1910 - 1963	1,910	649	1,261
Kansas (KS)	1913 - 1961	3,032	1,759	1,273
Kentucky (KY)	No law	0	0	0
Louisiana (LA)	A law but no sterilizations	0	0	0
Maine (ME)	1925 - 1963	326	14	86
Maryland (MD)	No law	0	0	0
Massachusetts (MA)	No law	0	0	0
Michigan (MI)	1914 - 1963	≥3,786	26	74
Minnesota (MN)	1928 - late 1950s	2,350	22	78
Mississippi (MS)	1930s - 1963	683	23	77
Missouri (MO)	No law	0	0	0
Montana (MT)	1923 - 1954	256	28	72
Nebraska (NE)	1917 - 1963	902	47	53
Nevada (NV)	A law but no sterilizations	0	0	0
New Hampshire (NH)	1910s - 1959	679	22	78
New Jersey (NJ)	No laws	0	0	0
New Mexico (NM)	No laws	0	0	0
New York (NY)	1912 - 1920	42	0	100
North Carolina (NC)	1929 - 1973	>7600	15	85
North Dakota (ND)	1910s - 1962	1,049	38	62
Ohio (OH)	No laws	0	0	0

Oklahoma (OK)	1930s - 1955	556	22	78
Oregon (OR)	1921 - 1983	2,648	35	65
Pennsylvania (PA)	No law; 1889 or 1892 - 1931	270	Unknown	Unknown
Rhode Island (RI)	No law	0	0	0
South Carolina (SC)	1938 - 1963	277	8	92
South Dakota (SD)	Late 1920s - early 1960s	789	~33	~67
Tennessee (TN)	No law	0	0	0
Texas (TX)	No law	0	0	0
Utah (UT)	1925 - 1960	772	46	54
Vermont (VT)	1931 - 1941	253	~33	~67
Virginia (VA)	1924 - 1979	7,325	38	62
Washington (WA)	1921 - 1983	685	~25	~75
West Virginia (VA)	1929 - 1956	98	15	85
Wisconsin (WI)	1915 - 1963	1,823	21	79
Wyoming (WY)	No law	0	0	0

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TOTALS **34/50 States Had Laws** **~65,725**

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(1)Based on data in Lutz Kaelber, "Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States",

<https://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics>

Prepared by and responsible for any and all errors: Frank F. Katz, 27 January 2016

(2)Laws were in force during this period. While a state may not have had a statute,

"therapeutic" and/or illegal sterilizations may have been carried out.

(3)Figures are rounded off

(4)One voluntary sterilization in 1916

Key to symbols:

~ ' approximately

approximately

> ' greater than

≥ ' at least