

Eugenics and Education: Implications of Ideology, Memory and History

Memory and History

Title:	Eugenics and Education: Implications of Ideology, Memory and History
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Abstract:	Eugenics has been variously described "as an ideal, as a doctrine, as a science (applied human genetics), as a set of practices (ranging from birth control to euthanasia), and as a social movement" (Paul 1998 p. 95). "Race suicide" (Roosevelt 1905) and the ensuing national phobia regarding the "children of worm eaten stock" (Bobbitt 1909) prefaced an era of eugenic ideology whose influence on education has been largely ignored until recently. Using the concept of collective memory, I examine the eugenics movement, its progressive context, and its influence on the aims, policy and practice of education. Specifically, this study examines the ideology of eugenics as a specific category and set of distinctions, and the role of rhetoric and collective memory in providing the mechanism whereby eugenic ideology has shaped and fashioned interpretation and action in current educational practice. The formation of education as a distinct academic discipline, the eugenics movement, and the Progressive era coalesced during the first decades of the twentieth century to form what has turned out to be a lasting alliance. This alliance has had a profound impact on public perception of the role of schools, how students are classified and sorted, degrees and definitions of intelligence, attitudes and beliefs surrounding multiculturalism and a host of heretofore unexplored ramifications. My research is primarily historical and theoretical and uses those material and media cultural artifacts generated by the eugenics movement to explore the relationship between eugenic ideology and the institution of education.
Date:	2004-04-08
Degree:	PhD
Discipline:	Educational Research and Policy Analysis
URI:	http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/resolver/1840.16/4234

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Contents. Francis Galton. Eugenics in America. Forced Sterilizations. Adolf Hitler and Eugenics. Josef Mengele. Genetic Engineering. Sources. Eugenics is the practice or advocacy of improving the human species by selectively mating people with specific desirable hereditary traits. It aims to reduce human suffering by “breeding out” disease, disabilities and so-called undesirable characteristics from the human population. Early supporters of eugenics believed people inherited mental illness, criminal tendencies and even poverty, and that these conditions could be bred out of the gene pool. Eugenics in Education: Apologetics for Oppression For many people an esoteric educational topic is eugenics. This brief text analysis will provide a textual as well as contextual analysis of Dr. Ann Gibson Winfield’s book (2007) *Eugenics and Education in America: Institutionalized Racism and the Implications of History, Ideology, and Memory*. Winfield objectively critiques eugenic apologetics. This text analysis will assess how well Winfield’s book accomplishes the following: (1) discussion of the scientism-or pseudo-nature of eugenics, (2) description of the compositional and structural eugeni... Eugenics and education in america: institutionalized racism and the implications of history, ideology, and memory. Creator. Winfield, Ann Gibson. FINAL SOLUTIONS: BIOLOGY, PREJUDICE, AND GENOCIDE, by Richard M. Lerner; THE MISMEASURE OF MAN: REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION, by Stephen Jay Gould; THE NAXI CONNECTION: EUGENICS, AMERICAN RACISM, AND GERMAN NATIONAL SOCIALISM, by Stefan Kuhl; THE RACE GALLERY: THE RETURN OF RACIAL SCIENCE, by Marek Kohn; AND THE SCIENCE AND POLITICS OF RACIAL RESEARCH, by William H. Tucker].