Slide 1:
No Narration

Slide 2:
You, along with other professionals and parents, are engaged in the exciting enterprise of early intervention. Each person brings to this enterprise their knowledge, hopes and convictions about improving the future for young children and families. Plans and activities within the field of early intervention are affected by broader social contexts, such as developments in science and technology, economic conditions, changing demographics of our state and nation, and governmental policies and funding levels. Furthermore, current early intervention efforts are influenced by courses of action that were taken in the past by other Americans who were also driven by their hopes and convictions about what is best for humanity.

Slide 3:
Chapter 1 of this module presents four early 20th Century trends which had significant impact on medical, therapeutic, educational treatment as well as on social expectations and opportunities for children with disabilities and their families. These include:
- Theory of static intelligence
- Eugenics
- Medical model of disability, and
- Social segregation.

Slide 4:
This lesson discusses the eugenics movement as it influenced the treatment of persons with disabilities in the United States and elsewhere.

Slide 5:
Eugenicists had a plan for everyone. Eugenics was a pseudo-scientific, socio-political ideology that presumed to engineer human evolution. Eugenicists arbitrarily determined which characteristics made up the ideal human being. Then they advanced social policies designed to ensure that only the “best and the brightest” individuals would have opportunity to reproduce and pass on their characteristics to future generations.


Slide 6:
According to eugenicists, men were the superior gender. Among the various human racial groups, Americans with the best genetic traits were those who had ancestors from the areas shown in red on the map. Peoples from southern and eastern Europe, the Mediterranean and Africa were believed to carry undesirable characteristics. Drawing upon terminology used by associations of animal breeders, eugenicists referred to human “blood lines,” “pedigrees,” “specimens,” and “stocks.”

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Slide 7:
A leader in eugenic research was the Harvard educated biologist, Charles Davenport. In 1910, he established the Eugenics Records Office in Cold Spring Harbor, NY. Through this office, he directed a long-term project of studying human heritage. Davenport developed a family history research method as a means to identify degenerate individuals who had inherited and were passing on deviant traits such as criminality, feeblemindedness, alcoholism, promiscuity,
disease and so on. Field workers interviewed people about their family members, and then proceeded to examine their ancestral school, court, marriage, military, and medical records in search of hereditary patterns of deviancy. Well into the 1930s, Davenport’s influential textbook on eugenics was required reading in science classes at colleges and universities. As a result, most medical professionals, educators, social workers and policy makers in the U.S. had received training in eugenic principles.

Photo permission for Charles Davenport image: Permission was granted on December 5, 2007 by the Museum of disABILITY History. Doug Platt, Curator, would like you to credit the Muesum of disability. The picture is under the Eugenics Timeline.

Slide 8:
Princeton educated professor, Harry Laughlin, was the person most responsible for translating eugenics research to social policy. As superintendent of the ERO, he addressed two major eugenic concerns – immigration of degenerate populations, and sterilization of deviant individuals.

Permission for photo - Harry Laughlin  Permission was granted on November 29, 2007 by Elaine M. Doak, Head Special Collections Librarian/Archivist, Pickler Memorial Library, Truman State University. The picture is located http://library.truman.edu/manuscripts/laughlinbio.htm.

Slide 9:
Laughlin called upon eugenic researchers to conduct studies of immigrants. One study involved administration of IQ tests, in English, to 35 Jews, 22 Hungarians, 50 Italians, and 45 Russians as they arrived at Ellis Island. Despite obvious methodological flaws of the study, Laughlin presented findings to the House of Representatives Committee on Naturalization and Immigration as “scientific evidence” that 80% of the new immigrants were “mentally defective”. Congress passed The Immigration Restriction Acts of 1921, 1924, and 1927, setting quotas on immigration, and limiting countries in Southern and Eastern Europe to only 9% of the total.

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Slide 10:
Laughlin also worked with legal experts to author a Model Eugenic Sterilization Law. Twenty-one states used the model to enact laws that would permit forced sterilization of persons with so-called hereditary defects. Virginia was one of the first states to enact a law based on Laughlin’s model. The first person sterilized under that law was a young woman named Carrie Buck. The child of an unmarried mother, Carrie had been placed in foster care with a family named Dobbs. As a teenager, she became pregnant by the Dobbs’ nephew. Embarrassed by this, the family had Carrie declared feebleminded and promiscuous. She was committed to a state institution. After giving birth to a daughter, Carrie was sterilized. A group opposing eugenic sterilization took her case to the U.S. Supreme Court to test the Constitutionality of Virginia’s law.

Permission for photo - Carrie and Emma Buck  Permission was granted on December 5, 2007 by the Museum of disABILITY History. Doug Platt, Curator, would like you to credit the Muesum of disability. The picture is under the Eugenics Timeline.

Slide 11:
Eugenics experts stated in testimony that Carrie, her mother, and her child were all feebleminded. The United States Supreme Court voted 8-1 to uphold the Virginia law as Constitutional. Justice Holmes wrote the majority opinion.


Slide 12:
Carrie Buck’s daughter, Vivian was adopted by the Dobbs family. Her report card provides evidence that she was successful as a primary school student. Most of her grades were As and Bs, and she made the honor roll during one grade period.

In the 1980s, when Carrie was in her 70s, she was reexamined by mental health professionals who found her to be neither intellectually disabled nor mentally ill. Neither was Carrie’s sister, Doris, who also had been institutionalized. Doris had been sterilized without her knowledge or consent.
By the mid 1930s, over 30 states had enacted sterilization laws, and by 1935 over 20,000 forced sterilizations had been performed on incarcerated persons in the United States.

**Slide 13:**
A eugenic sterilization law was enacted in South Carolina in 1935. It authorized mental hospital and prison administrators to order the sterilization of men and women who were diagnosed with “insanity, idiocy, imbecility, feeble-mindedness or epilepsy.” More than 250 people in this state were sterilized, without their consent, to prevent them from producing “unfit” offspring. The law remained on the books until 1985. In January 2003, South Carolina Governor Jim Hodges apologized on behalf of the state to the victims and their families (Crothers, 2003).

**Slide 14:**
Having achieved significant success with their efforts to prevent the entry of defective stocks and to curtail reproduction among defective individuals in society, some eugenicists began to advocate for euthanasia or “mercy killing” of physically and mentally impaired individuals. For example, the physician and prominent social reformer, Dr. John Randolph Haynes, expressed the opinion that some members of society would be better off if they were just killed – with kindness.

**Slide 15:**
Furthermore, some eugenicists promoted mercy killing of young children. For instance, the surgeon Dr. Harry Haiselden wrote and starred in a feature motion picture titled The Black Stork. The film, which appeared in theaters from 1916 until the early 1940s, was designed to popularize his idea that newborns with significant disabilities requiring surgery should be refused medical attention and left to die. Haiselden publicly asserted that he not only advocated, but practiced euthanasia (Pernick, 1996). As late as 1942, Foster Kennedy, noted professor of neurology at Cornell University, and former president of the American Neurological Association, advocated euthanasia for young children with disabilities who were deemed to be hopeless cases. Please note that he uses the word “guardians” not “parents.”

**Permission for photo - The Black Stork** Ad from the Chicago Tribune 1917. Reproduced in Martin S. Pernick, The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of “Defective” Babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures Since 1915 (Oxford University Press, 1996). Mr. Pernick gave permission on November 22, 2007 and asked that the following credit line be included From Motography Magazine (1917) reproduced in Martin S. Pernick, The Black Stork: Eugenics and the Death of “Defective” babies in American Medicine and Motion Pictures Since 1915 (Oxford University Press. 1996), Fig 5

**Slide 16:**
If America had been on track toward a eugenic future, Nazi Germany caught up and passed it. Hitler was an admirer. In 1933, Germany enacted a sterilization law based on Laughlin’s model. Operation T4, a program of early childhood euthanasia was launched in 1939, sending an estimated 5,000 babies and young children with disabilities to “Children’s Wards” where they were starved or given lethal injections. Nazis used medical facilities to kill an estimated 200,000 disabled, mentally ill and other institutionalized persons. Drugs, gas, and starvation methods were used by physicians and staff to kill disabled men, women and children in Germany, Austria, Poland and the Czech Republic. In addition, millions of members of “degenerate” ethnic minorities were incarcerated and murdered. Eugenics lost much of its popular appeal in the United States after opening of Nazi death camps revealed the moral destination of this ideology. (144)


**Slide 17:**
Activity 1:
You can explore documents, essays and photographs related to the eugenics movement visit the various exhibits at the Eugenics Archive. Just click on the hyperlink below. [http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/](http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/)
Slide 18:
Masquerading as science, eugenic ideology led to laws, court decisions, agency policies, and professional activities that profoundly affected the lives of millions of persons with disabilities, their families, and others who were considered socially undesirable.

Slide 19:
References:
- *Buck v. Bell, 274 U.S. 200 (1927)*.

Slide 20:
References:

Slide 21:
- Operation T4
- [http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/disabilities_02/](http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/disabilities_02/)
- The Eugenics Archive
- [http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/list2.pl](http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/list2.pl)
- The Holocaust History Project
- Ragged Edge Online. November/December 2003. The eugenics apologies: How a pair of disability rights advocates scored the first state apology for eugenics, and what they have planned next.
- [http://www.raggededgemagazine.com/1103/1103ft1.html](http://www.raggededgemagazine.com/1103/1103ft1.html)
Chapter 1: Early 20th Century Influences on Treatment and Opportunity for Children with Disabilities

Lesson 2: Eugenics

Outcome: Early intervention personnel demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical, historical, philosophical, legal and organizational components that provide the foundation for Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and South Carolina’s BabyNet early intervention system.

Early Intervention Core Competency 1.0

Early Intervention Policy and Practice
- Theoretical
- Historical
- Philosophical

Early 20th Century Influences

Eugenics
- Medical model of disability
- Theory of static intelligence
- Social segregation
- Treatment and Opportunity

Controlling the Evolutionary Process

“Eugenic” means “well born”
- Eugenicists...
- Aimed to accelerate human evolution.
- Claimed principles were grounded in the sciences.
- Attempted to “purify” the gene pool by controlling reproduction.

Locating the Ideal Specimens

- Map of Europe with marked regions
- Information on map not discernible from image
Identifying the Degenerates

“We now recognize that characters are inherited as units and do not readily break up.”
- Charles Davenport

Eugenics Policy Priorities: Immigration and Sterilization

- Advocated laws to restrict immigration of nationalities with degenerate traits
- Authored the model law for eugenic sterilization

Immigration Restriction Acts 1921, 1924, 1927

Eugenacists claimed that 80% of new immigrants were mentally defective.
Set quotas on immigration to the U.S.
Limited entry from all countries in southern and eastern Europe to 9% of total.

A Test Case: Buck v. Bell

- “These people belong to the shiftless, ignorant, and worthless class of anti-social whites of the South...”
  - Harry Laughlin, in testimony regarding the character of the Buck family

U. S. Supreme Court Decision

“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.”
- U.S. Supreme Court Justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

Evidence to the Contrary

- Carrie’s only child, Vivian died at age 8. As a primary school student, she had made the honor roll.
- Later, Carrie Buck was found by mental health professionals to be neither mentally deficient nor mentally ill.
- Carrie’s sister, who was also institutionalized and sterilized, was neither cognitively disabled nor mentally ill.
What happened in our state?

Eugenics sterilization law enacted in 1935

Authorized mental hospital administrators to require sterilization of persons with diagnoses:
- idiocy
- imbecility
- feeble-mindedness
- epilepsy

Over 250 men and women forcibly sterilized

Death as a Medical Intervention

"[If a competent medical board should decide]...on the application of the guardians of the child, and after three examinations of a defective who has reached the age of five or more...that the defective has no future or hope of one, then I believe it is a merciful and kindly thing to relieve that defective...often tortured and consulted, grotesque and absurd, useless and foolish, and entirely undesirably - of the agony of living!"


Activity 1

You can explore documents, essays and photographs related to the eugenics movement visit the various exhibits at the Eugenics Archive. Just click on the hyperlink below:

http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/

Eugenics and Euthanasia

There are thousands of hopelessly insane in California, the condition of those minds is such that death would be a merciful release. How long will it be before society will see the criminality of using its efforts to keep alive these idiots, hopelessly insane, and murderous degenerates...Of course the passing of these people should be painless and without warning.

They should go to sleep at night without any intimation of what was coming and never wake up.

- Dr. John Randolph Haynes, 1910

Operation T4: A Eugenic Intervention

"There is today one state in which the beginnings toward a better conception are noticeable. Of course it is not our model German Republic, but the American Union."

- Adolf Hitler

Summary

- Human evolution can be accelerated
- All behaviors and traits are hereditary
- Individuals with hereditary "defects" contaminate the gene pool
- Defective individuals threaten the well-being of society
- Limit or prohibit social contact with "degenerates"
- Allow government control of reproductive activity
- Prohibition of marriages
- Incarceration
- Forced sterilization
- Denial of medical treatment
- Euthanasia
References

Resources
- Operation T4 http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/disabilities_02/
- The Eugenics Archive http://www.eugenicsarchive.org/eugenics/list2.pl
- The Holocaust History Project http://www.holocaust‐history.org/lifton/contents.shtml