

Remove Millikan's Name from Caltech

<http://chwe.net/millikan/>

Michael Chwe (Caltech BS 1985)

michael@chwe.net

1. Caltech should remove the names of Millikan and other leaders of the Human Betterment Foundation from campus buildings and spaces.
2. Caltech is the direct institutional successor of the Human Betterment Foundation.
3. The Human Betterment Foundation's activities had widespread and severe effects, in both the US and Nazi Germany, and its leadership took pride in these effects.
4. Responses to possible counter-arguments.
5. Why rename now?

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A publication of the  
HUMAN BETTERMENT FOUNDATION  
Pasadena, Calif.

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# HUMAN STERILIZATION TODAY

With the Compliments of  
THE HUMAN BETTERMENT FOUNDATION  
321 PACIFIC SOUTHWEST BUILDING  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

During the last twenty-eight years, California state institutions have sterilized nearly 12,000 insane and feebleminded patients.

The following pages embody results shown by a case-study of the first 10,000 of these sterilizations.

“Human Sterilization Today,” pamphlet published by Human Betterment Foundation, Pasadena, 1938.

The number of insane persons in hospitals is growing from year to year. Only 435,000 are cared for at any one time, but the turnover is rapid, 95,000 new admissions being reported each twelve months. Statisticians have calculated that nearly 5% of the American population or 6,000,000 people, will at some time during life be legally committed as insane. There are many others who break down to an equal degree, enough to prevent them from carrying on their regular work, but who are not committed to hospitals by the courts. Calculations by Dr. W. F. Ogburn of the University of Chicago show that these amount to an additional 5%, making the total number of the mentally diseased about 10% of the entire population.

The generally admitted trend of the population toward degeneracy is real and vital. The protection of these unfortunate defectives and their potential children, as well as posterity, is the people's problem. They must decide it. They should have all the material facts before making that decision.

#### EUGENIC STERILIZATION IS NOT A PANACEA

Sterilization is no panacea for these ills of mankind, but it is one of the many measures indispensable to any far-sighted and humanitarian program for dealing with society's tremendous burden of mental disease, deficiency, and dependency.

The principle of compulsory sterilization by the state, under proper safeguards, was upheld as constitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Buck vs. Bell (1927). In writing the decision, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes remarked: "Three generations of imbeciles are enough."

Agreeing with this view, state after state is now extending the application of sterilization to such of its defectives as are legally committed to state institutions. In this practice, every state benefits by the experience of California, studied intensively and continuously since 1925 by the Human Betterment Foundation.

The first study (1926-1929) covered 6,000 California sterilizations. Its details were published in a score of technical papers in various scientific journals. A bound volume of these,

The Human Betterment Foundation distributed 140,000 copies (Kline 2005) in a mass campaign.

It saw forced sterilization as potentially applying to millions of people.

It advocated for compulsory sterilization of "defectives."

It appealed to scientific expertise.

## WHAT IS THE HUMAN BETTERMENT FOUNDATION?

The Human Betterment Foundation is a non-profit corporation, organized under the laws of California. Its members, eminent in a wide range of professional and business activities, are as follows (members of the Board of Trustees being marked with an asterisk):

- \*E. S. GOSNEY, *President*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- HARRY CHANDLER, *Pres., Los Angeles Times*  
Los Angeles, Calif.
- HENRY M. ROBINSON, *Banker, (Dec'd)*  
Los Angeles, Calif.
- \*GEORGE DOCK, *M.D.*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- HERBERT M. EVANS, *Experimental Biology, Univ. of Calif.*  
Berkeley, Calif.
- SAMUEL J. HOLMES, *Prof. of Zoology, Univ. of Calif.*  
Berkeley, Calif.
- RABBI RUDOLPH I. COFFEE  
San Francisco, Calif.
- LEWIS M. TERMAN, *Prof. of Psychology*  
Stanford University, Calif.
- DAVID STARR JORDAN, *Chancellor Emeritus*  
Stanford University, Calif. (Dec'd.)
- \*C. M. GOETHE, *Philanthropist*  
Sacramento, Calif.
- JUSTIN MILLER, *Justice U.S. Court of Appeals*  
Washington, D. C.
- CHARLES H. PRISK, *Publisher Star-News and Post*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- \*REV. ROBERT FREEMAN, *Pastor 1st Presbyterian Church*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- REV. MERLE N. SMITH, *Pastor Em. 1st M. E. Church*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- \*A. B. RUDDOCK, *Philanthropist*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- \*WILLIAM B. MUNRO, *Calif. Inst. of Technology*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- \*HERBERT L. HAHN, *Attorney*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- MRS. E. S. GOSNEY  
Pasadena, Calif.
- JOHN VRUWINK, *M.D.*  
Los Angeles, Calif.
- \*JOE G. CRICK, *Horticulturist*  
Pasadena, Calif.
- MRS. JOE G. CRICK  
Pasadena, Calif.
- MRS. LOIS G. CASTLE  
Pasadena, Calif.
- A. D. SHAMEL, *Physiologist, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture*  
Riverside, Calif.
- OSCAR FORD, *Former Mayor of Riverside, Calif.*  
Riverside, Calif.
- PAUL McBRIDE PERIGORD, *U. of C. at L. A.*  
Los Angeles, Calif.
- R. B. VON KLEIN SMID, *President Univ. of So. Calif.*  
Los Angeles, Calif.
- \*ROBERT A. MILLIKAN, *Chairman, Executive Board*  
Calif. Inst. Tech., Pasadena, Calif.

This organization is not designed to take up original scientific research work, but rather to investigate the results and possibilities for human betterment by a safe, conservative application of the discoveries made by scientists, and to give this information to the public.

Its first major problem is to investigate the possibilities for race betterment by eugenic sterilization, and to publish the results. When the public is familiar with these facts, some other major subject will be substituted. The scope of the Foundation is as broad as its

The President of the Human Betterment Foundation was E.S. Gosney.

Trustees included:

A.B. Ruddock

William B. Munro

Robert A. Millikan

Members included:

Harry Chandler

Their goal was to “investigate the possibilities for race betterment by eugenic sterilization.”

## **Article 7 (1) (g)-5**

### **Crime against humanity of enforced sterilization**

#### **Elements**

1. The perpetrator deprived one or more persons of biological reproductive capacity.<sup>19</sup>
2. The conduct was neither justified by the medical or hospital treatment of the person or persons concerned nor carried out with their genuine consent.<sup>20</sup>
3. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.
4. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (2002) specifies widespread or systematic forced sterilization as a crime against humanity.

1a. The Human Betterment Foundation zealously advocated for mass forced sterilization, a crime against humanity.

1b. Millikan, Ruddock, and Munro were trustees of the Human Betterment Foundation and responsible for its activities. Chandler was a member.

1c. By naming campus buildings and spaces after these people, Caltech honors them.

1d. Caltech cannot honor people who advocated for crimes against humanity and claim moral decency.

The end.



2. Caltech is the direct institutional successor of the Human Betterment Foundation.

## Caltech May Get Foundation Fund

Petition to transfer the assets of the Human Betterment Foundation, reported to be in excess of \$100,000, to the California Institute of Technology was filed yesterday in Pasadena Superior Court.

Founded in 1931 by the late E. S. Gosney and a group of educators and philanthropists including David Starr Jordan, Albert Ruddock and William B. Monroe, the foundation's research in the field of eugenics will be continued by the institute under the terms of an agreement signed by James R. Page, president of the Caltech board of trustees.

Physical assets of the foundation include extensive citrus acreage in the Gosney estate near Upland and real property in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Pasadena, according to the petition.

On November 21, 1943, the Los Angeles Times reported that the assets of the Human Betterment Foundation were being transferred to Caltech.

“[T]he foundation’s research in the field of eugenics will be continued by the institute under the terms of an agreement signed by James R. Page, president of the Caltech board of trustees.”

## The Gosney Research Fund

IN 1929 Mr. E. S. Gosney founded and endowed a non-profit organization, known as the Human Betterment Foundation, for the purpose of fostering and aiding constructive and educational forces for the protection and betterment of the human family. In collaboration with Dr. Paul Popenoe and other scientists Mr. Gosney carried on an extensive study in the field of eugenic sterilization, including particularly its medical, legal and social aspects. In 1929 and 1930 an exhaustive survey was made of 6000 cases of sterilization of eugenically unfit. Eight years later a second similar survey of 10,000 cases was made.

Following the death of Mr. Gosney in 1942, the Trustees of the Human Betterment Foundation agreed that the best interests of the Foundation would be served by transferring its activities to the California Institute of Technology. As a consequence in October 1943 an agreement was drawn up according to which the Human Betterment Foundation was to be dissolved as such and its assets turned over to the Institute. The Institute agreed to use these assets "and the proceeds thereof to establish the Gosney Research Fund, the income from which will be devoted in perpetuity to the promotion of research into the biological bases of human qualities and for making known the results of such research for the public interest."

At the present time the income of the Gosney Research Fund is used in support of post-doctoral fellowships in those branches of biological science basic to our understanding of human welfare. Gosney Research Fellowships are available to qualified investigators who hold the Ph.D. degree or its equivalent and who have demonstrated exceptional ability in original research. Preference is given to candidates who desire to carry on research in the general field of heredity. The Gosney Research Fund is currently administered by a Gosney Fund Committee made up of Professors A. H. Sturtevant, chairman, E. G. Anderson, Max Mason, and A. H. van Harreveld.

In effecting the transfer of the material assets of the Human Betterment Foundation to the Gosney Research Fund of the Institute special credit is due Mrs. Lois Gosney Castle, daughter of Mr. E. S. Gosney. Mrs. Castle spent approximately a year in putting the affairs of the Foundation in good order and in converting properties and other assets into fluid form. In addition she has maintained a keen interest in the research activities supported by the Gosney Research Fund.

G. W. B.

In May 1947, Caltech announced in Engineering and Science that Gosney and Paul Popenoe "carried on an extensive study in the field of eugenic sterilization."

After Gosney's death, "the Trustees of the Human Betterment Foundation agreed that the best interests of the Foundation would be served by transferring its activities to the California Institute of Technology."

According to its own public announcements, Caltech accepted the “research in the field of eugenics” and “activities” of the Human Betterment Foundation.

Lois Gosney Castle, daughter of E.S. Gosney, who helped with the transfer, wrote that it was understood that “substantially the same activities [would] be carried on” (Spicer 2015).

Caltech has not made a public statement saying that it is no longer pursuing these activities, including public advocacy for forced sterilization and research in eugenics (as far as I am aware).

In his July 22, 2020 announcement, Caltech President Thomas Rosenbaum mentioned the Human Betterment Foundation but did not express an opinion about its activities.

Gosney Postdoctoral Fellowships are still being awarded today.

3. The Human Betterment Foundation's activities had widespread and severe effects, in both the US and Nazi Germany, and its leadership took pride in these effects.

Gosney was the eugenic sterilization movement's "chief public relations agent. . . . When Gosney died in 1942, the [Human Betterment] foundation was known worldwide. Hundreds of thousands of its studies, pamphlets and books were distributed to policymakers, schools, and libraries."

Popenoe, chief employee of the Human Betterment Foundation, wrote that people who should be sterilized "are numbered not in the thousands, not in the hundreds of thousands, but in the millions" (Anton 2003).

Between 1909 and 1979, over 20,000 people, some still living today, were forcibly sterilized in California, far more than in any other state in the US.

The Human Betterment Foundation was proud of this and took credit.

### *Man's Best Friend*

**I**F YOU were asked to name the man now doing more than any other person to improve humanity, who would your candidate be? Mine is E. S. Gosney—a small-sized, elderly, modest Pasadena philanthropist. Hard of hearing on most subjects, he can hear the faintest whisper if it relates even remotely to “sterilization.” That is his hobby and life work. It can hardly be called his business, because he can never hope to make a penny out of it. Yet the work is conducted in a business-like manner under the name of the Human Betterment Foundation, financed largely by Mr. Gosney.

Recent researches show that twenty-eight States now have sterilization laws and, up to 1929, 16,066 operations had been performed—more than half of which, due to educational efforts directed by the Human Betterment Foundation, were performed in California.

Los Angeles Times,  
July 30, 1933



The Human Betterment Foundation worked hand-in-hand with California state officials.

When Gosney died in 1942, California Governor Culbert Olson stated that his death was a “blow to [the Department of Institutions], as it [was] to all friends of social progress. Mr. Gosney’s Foundation was an outstanding force in the advancement of the practice of sterilization of mental deviates” (Spicer 2015).

fective, but people of low mentality cannot thus help themselves—which of course increases the disparity on the side of mediocrity—and many thinking people believe mediocres should be given gratuitous training in the use of contraceptives. This suggestion will be found running through almost all recent books on human relations.

#### Law Vs. Courage

California has a sterilization law, which authorizes rather than obliges the sterilization of inmates in certain State institutions who are "afflicted with mental disease which may have been inherited and is likely to be transmitted to descendants," or who have been committed to a State prison at least two times for rape, assault with intent to commit rape or seduction, or at least three times for any other crime.

Under this law more than eight thousand persons have been sterilized in California—more than in any other State or country. From Dr. Haynes I have learned that it takes considerable courage to execute this very wise law. "For ten years," he states, "I was a member of what was then the State Board of Charities and Corrections, now called the Social Welfare Commission. We were supposed to be the Governor's eyes to investigate State institutions, prisons, insane asylums, feeble-minded institutions, children's homes and so on, and report directly

to the Governor upon conditions prevailing in these institutions with suggestions for the improvement of service. During the ten years I was on the board, I made a special point of interesting the superintendents of insane asylums and the Sonoma institution for the feeble-minded in the sterilization of all inmates before they were discharged. But before I left the commission the superintendents became fearful of being personally liable in case of litigation and practically ceased operating. Although I got a number of people to agree to put money in a fund of \$25,000 to relieve these men of personal liability in case litigation should arise, it had no effect.

"What has been done in the last few years can be found in the publications of the Human Betterment Foundation. Mr. Gosney and Mr. Popenoe have kept the ball rolling with a great deal of enthusiasm, tact and energy. They deserve the gratitude of all people who want to see the foul stream of nervous diseases stopped at its source for the benefit of the citizenship of the world."

A good beginning has been made, but much more remains to be done. Despite the simplicity of the remedy, however, and its obvious need, bad breeding will probably continue lowering the level of human life in this country until some biologically-wise dictator takes matters in hand.

John R. Haynes, member of the State Board of Charities and Corrections, is quoted saying that "Mr. Gosney and Mr. Popenoe have kept the ball rolling with a great deal of enthusiasm, tact and energy" on forcibly sterilizing California inmates (Los Angeles Times, October 8, 1933).

In 1933, Nazi Germany passed the “Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases,” mandating forced sterilization of people with certain disabilities.

This law caused the sterilization of 400,000 people.

In 1933–1934, the Human Betterment Foundation mailed its pamphlet “Human Sterilization” to Nazi administrators responsible for enforcing the law.

Arthur Gütt and Herbert Linden, Nazi politicians advocating for sterilization, used the Human Betterment Foundation’s pamphlet to argue for the law (Kühl 2002).

In 1934, Popenoe wrote, “The law that has been adopted is not a half-baked and hasty improvisation of the Hitler regime, but is the product of many years of consideration by the best specialists in Germany. . . . I must say that my impression is, from a close following of the situation in the German scientific press, rather favorable” (Kühl 2002).

# THE GERMAN STERILIZATION LAW

PAUL POPENOE

*Human Betterment Foundation, Pasadena*

GERMANY'S eugenic sterilization law, which went into effect on January 1, 1934, is no hasty improvisation of the Nazi regime. It has been taking shape gradually during many years, in the discussions of eugenicists. From one point of view, it is merely an accident that it happened to be the Hitler administration which was ready to put into effect the recommendations of specialists.

But Hitler himself—though a bachelor—has long been a convinced advocate of race betterment through eugenic measures. Probably his earlier thinking was colored by Nietzsche, but he studied the subject more thoroughly during his years in prison, following the abortive revolutionary movement of 1923. Here, it is said, he came into possession of the two-volume text on heredity and eugenics, by E. Baur, E. Fischer, and F. Lenz, which is the best-known statement of eugenics in the German language, and evidently studied it to good purpose.

In his book, *Mein Kampf*, most of which was written during these prison years, and which outlines most of the policies since adopted by the Nazis as a political party, he bases his hopes of national regeneration solidly on the application of biological principles to human society.

"He who is not sound and worthy in body and mind, should not perpetuate his handicaps in the bodies of his children," Hitler declares in this book.

"The state must take care that only he who is sound shall be a parent.

"To prevent defective persons from producing equally defective offspring, is an act dictated by the clearest light of reason. Its carrying out is the most human act of mankind. It would prevent the unmerited suffer-

ing of millions of persons, and above all would, in the end, result in a steady increase in human welfare."

That he has no illusions about producing immediate and miraculous results, but is taking the long time view, is evidenced by his remark that, "If for only 600 years the reproduction of the physically defective and mentally diseased were prevented, not only would mankind be freed from an unmeasurable misery, but it would reach a vigor which today is hardly dreamed of.

"In an age when races are poisoning themselves," he concludes, "any state which devotes itself to the care of its best racial elements must some day dominate the earth."

He recognizes, however, that negative measures are not enough to safeguard the racial values of a people. There must be an encouragement of sound parenthood, and he declares that "the fertility of sound women must not be limited by the disgusting materialism which transforms the blessing of children into a curse for their parents." While he points clearly to the need for financial reforms, such as the family wage, he seems to lay the greatest stress on educational changes and reforms in public opinion, that will promote earlier marriage and larger families among the fit.

Since the Nazis came into full power, changes have been so frequent that it has been difficult to keep track of them. The sterilization law was one of the first eugenic measures to be adopted. Its text, in full, is as follows:

## SECTION 1

(1) Anyone with hereditary disease may be rendered sterile by surgical means, when, according to medical experience, it is highly probable that the offspring of such person will suffer from severe inherited mental or bodily disorders.

(2) The law applies to all who suffer

In 1934 in the Journal of Heredity, Popenoe, writing with the affiliation of the Human Betterment Foundation, discussed the German forced sterilization law in depth and quoted from Adolf Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* liberally and without criticism.

the value of any people. The present prevailing philosophy, therefore, is that if the social and cultural standards of the nation are to be maintained, the interest of the community must take precedence over individual interests even in very personal matters. Individuals afflicted with diseases believed to be hereditary in origin ought voluntarily and of their own free will to renounce procreation. The more intelligent and the more responsible people have in many instances lived up to such ideals. The mentally incompetent, however, cannot be relied upon to exercise self-control or to practice any control measures designed to limit their families. Hence a sterilization law has been passed.

The German sterilization law is not a hasty enactment, as some people believe. Educational work along eugenic lines goes back four decades. The first sterilization legislation was discussed before the Reichstag in 1907, about the time an American sterilization measure first became law in Indiana. Indeed the legal sterilization of mental incompetents originated in the United States, although sterilization in the interest of public good was begun by Professor Forel in Zurich, Switzerland, some 40 years ago. The leaders in the German sterilization movement state repeatedly that their legislation was formulated only after careful study of the California experiment as reported by Mr. Gosney and Dr. Popenoe. It would have been impossible, they say, to undertake such a venture involving some one million people without drawing heavily upon previous experience elsewhere. The main features of the present German sterilization law were very extensively discussed and approved at a meeting called by the Prussian Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare in July, 1932, before the present Nazi regime came into power.

Five mental and three physical groups are specifically named as hereditary in origin, and hence come under the provisions of the law. The mental groups are (1) hereditary feeble-mindedness, (2) schizophrenia, (3) manic-depressive insanity, (4) hereditary epilepsy, and (5) hereditary Huntington's chorea. The physical groups are (6) blindness, (7) deafness, and (8) severe physical deformity, so far as any of these are hereditary. The law also covers (9) severe habitual drunkenness. The term habitual drunkard applies legally to a person who, as a result of persistent drinking habits, has degenerated physically and mentally so as to need repeated institutionalization or imprisonment for acts done under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. Such alcoholism is not assumed to be hereditary in the same

In 1936 in the American Sociological Review, Marie E. Kopp wrote, "The leaders in the German sterilization movement state repeatedly that their legislation was formulated only after careful study of the California experiment as reported by Mr. Gosney and Dr. Popenoe."

C.M. Goethe, also a trustee of the Human Betterment Foundation, wrote to Gosney:

“You will be interested to know that your work has played a powerful part in shaping the opinions of the group of intellectuals who are behind Hitler in this epoch-making program. Everywhere I sensed that their opinions have been tremendously stimulated by American thought, and particularly by the work of the Human Betterment Foundation. I want you, my dear friend, to carry this thought with you for the rest of your life, that you have really jolted into action a great government of 60,000,000 people.” (Kühl 2002).



4. Responses to possible counter-arguments.

4a. “Many people, including political progressives, supported eugenics back then. Millikan was not unusual.”

This is not mainly about Millikan’s beliefs, but his actions.

It was extremely unusual to be a trustee of an organization which was one of the world leaders in advocating for forced sterilization, which even Nazi leadership looked up to for guidance and inspiration.

4b. “How do we know that Millikan was actively involved with the Human Betterment Foundation?”

Trustees are responsible for an organization. That’s the entire point of being a trustee.

Millikan was a trustee starting from 1925 until the foundation dissolved (Platt and O’Leary 2015).

He could have resigned at any time, including after the beginning of World War II.

4c. “Millikan’s [anti-Semitic] biases were typical at the time of a man of his upbringing and background” (Goodstein 2001).

Lots of people were not anti-Semitic at that time, including Jews.

Why should we refer to the mores of one particular ethnic and social grouping (Millikan’s) as opposed to others’ or our own?

Also, the issue is not so much Millikan’s beliefs but his actions.

In any case, Millikan expressed racist views in his public communications.

Millikan wrote that “California marks now, as England did three centuries ago, the farthest western outpost of Arian civilization” (Kay 1993).

Millikan wrote that Southern California “is today, as was England two hundred years ago, the westernmost outpost of Nordic civilization,” with the “exceptional opportunity” of having “a population which is twice as Anglo-Saxon as that existing in New York, Chicago or any of the great cities of this country” (Waxman 2000).

## The Practical Value of Pure Science

ing of that inner urge simply to know, to explore, to understand, two new ideas completely foreign to the ancient world and to many races of the modern world as well have come into our western civilization. The one is the idea of the possibility of progress, of continuous development; and the other the idea of man's ability to control and in the Providence of God (and I say it in all reverence) to determine to a large extent his own destiny, the idea of his own responsibility for the kind of an external world in which he lives. And if you wish to see the practical result of this changing of "the way men think," look at the difference between our own civilization and the static civilizations of Asia, where Nirvana is the goal of human life and a large fraction of the population reaches it quickly through starvation. Why is it that "fifty years of Europe is better than a cycle of Cathay"? Is it not simply because in certain sections of the world, primarily those inhabited by the Nordic race, a certain set of ideas have got a start in men's minds, the ideas of *progress* and of *responsibility*?

And these ideas have come about, I think, because in a few sections of the earth men have been led to follow simply the urge to know. First, to know this earth geograph-

In his book *Science and Life* (1924), Millikan wrote, "Why is it that 'fifty years of Europe is better than a cycle of Cathay'? Is it not simply because in certain sections of the world, primarily those inhabited by the Nordic race, a certain set of ideas have got a start in men's minds, the ideas of progress and of responsibility?"

In a letter to his family in 1925, Millikan wrote, “I am sitting down in the Santa Fe station in Chicago. . . . surrounded with Coons and many other kinds of colored elegance” (Platt and O’Leary 2015).

In a letter to his wife in 1951, Millikan wrote, “more than half of the population in this state is made up of negroes—a very serious situation. For it means that under universal suffrage they could control the state now, an unthinkable disaster in view of the sort of people they now are” (Platt and O’Leary 2015).

Millikan's anti-Semitism influenced the hiring of Caltech physicists.

In a letter to Hale in 1921, Millikan wrote, "I am still hesitating about [Paul] Epstein but will certainly write him at once if Darwin can't come. Do you think we might want to get Epstein anyway even though a Jew?"

"If Fuller is coming with us you might show him the enclosed in re Tyksciker. But alas another Jew!! . . . . His knowledge of Westinghouse processes would be of the greatest value. But we can't get more than about one Jew anyway!" (Kargon 1982)



While Millikan was chair of the board of the Huntington, no Jews were hired, and “staff were expected to identify potential researchers who might be Jewish” (Platt and O’Leary 2015).

4d. “Eugenics is not necessarily about white supremacy, racism, or anti-Semitism.”

There are several book-length treatments of the history of eugenics movements.

“In the early years of the Nazi regime, most mainline eugenicists in the United States and Britain could not know—and likely did not want to imagine—that a river of blood would eventually run from the sterilization law of 1933 to Auschwitz and Buchenwald” (Kevles 2013).

that the Negro's own social heritage is at a level far below that of the whites among whom he is living in the United States. No matter how much one may admire some of the Negro's individual traits, one must admit that his development of group traits is primitive, and suggests a mental development which is also primitive.

If the number of original contributions which it has made to the world's civilization is any fair criterion of the relative value of a race, then the Negro race must be placed very near zero on the scale.<sup>1</sup>

The following historical considerations suggest that in comparison with some other races the Negro race is germinally lacking in the higher developments of intelligence:

1. That the Negro race in Africa has never, by its own initiative, risen much above barbarism, although it has been exposed to a considerable range of environments and has had abundant time in which to bring to expression any inherited traits it may possess.

2. That when transplanted to a new environment—say, Haiti—and left to its own resources, the Negro race has shown the same inability to rise; it has there, indeed, lost most of what it had acquired from the superior civilization of the French.

3. That when placed side by side with the white race, the Negro race again fails to come up to their standard, or indeed to come anywhere near it. It is often alleged that this third test is an unfair one; that the social heritage of slavery must be eliminated before the Negro can be expected to show his true worth. But contrast his career in and after slavery with that of the Mamelukes of Egypt, who were slaves, but slaves of good stock. They quickly rose to be the real rulers of the country. Again, compare the record of the Greek slaves in the Roman republic and empire or that of the Jews under Islam. Without pushing these analogies too far, is not one forced to conclude

<sup>1</sup> The Negro's contribution has perhaps been most noteworthy in music. This does not necessarily show advanced evolution; August Weismann long ago pointed out that music is a primitive accomplishment. For an outline of what the Negro race has achieved, particularly in America, see the *Negro Year Book*, Tuskegee Institute, Ala.

What about the views of the Human Betterment Foundation in particular? This is from Popenoe and Johnson, Applied Eugenics (1920).

# THE GERMAN STERILIZATION LAW

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ing of millions of persons, and above all would, in the end, result in a steady increase in human welfare."

That he has no illusions about producing immediate and miraculous results, but is taking the long time view, is evidenced by his remark that, "If for only 600 years the reproduction of the physically defective and mentally diseased were prevented, not only would mankind be freed from an unmeasurable misery, but it would reach a vigor which today is hardly dreamed of.

"In an age when races are poisoning themselves," he concludes, "any state which devotes itself to the care of its best racial elements must some day dominate the earth."

He recognizes, however, that negative measures are not enough to safeguard the racial values of a people. There must be an encouragement of sound parenthood, and he declares that "the fertility of sound women must not be limited by the disgusting materialism which transforms the blessing of children into a curse for their parents." While he points clearly to the need for financial reforms, such as the family wage, he seems to lay the greatest stress on educational changes and reforms in public opinion, that will promote earlier marriage and larger families among the fit.

Since the Nazis came into full power, changes have been so frequent that it has been difficult to keep track of them. The sterilization law was one of the first eugenic measures to be adopted. Its text, in full, is as follows:

## SECTION 1

(1) Anyone with hereditary disease may be rendered sterile by surgical means, when, according to medical experience, it is highly probable that the offspring of such person will suffer from severe inherited mental or bodily disorders.

(2) The law applies to all who suffer

In his 1934 article in the Journal of Heredity, if Popenoe had any disagreement with Hitler's characterizations of Jews in *Mein Kampf*, he did not express them.

# Caltech May Get Foundation Fund

Petition to transfer the assets of the Human Betterment Foundation, reported to be in excess of \$100,000, to the California Institute of Technology was filed yesterday in Pasadena Superior Court.

Founded in 1931 by the late E. S. Gosney and a group of educators and philanthropists including David Starr Jordan, Albert Ruddock and William B. Monroe, the foundation's research in the field of eugenics will be continued by the institute under the terms of an agreement signed by James R. Page, president of the Caltech board of trustees.

Physical assets of the foundation include extensive citrus acreage in the Gosney estate near Upland and real property in Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Pasadena, according to the petition.

## The Gosney Research Fund

IN 1929 Mr. E. S. Gosney founded and endowed a non-profit organization, known as the Human Betterment Foundation, for the purpose of fostering and aiding constructive and educational forces for the protection and betterment of the human family. In collaboration with Dr. Paul Popenoe and other scientists Mr. Gosney carried on an extensive study in the field of eugenic sterilization, including particularly its medical, legal and social aspects. In 1929 and 1930 an exhaustive survey was made of 6000 cases of sterilization of eugenically unfit. Eight years later a second similar survey of 10,000 cases was made.

Following the death of Mr. Gosney in 1942, the Trustees of the Human Betterment Foundation agreed that the best interests of the Foundation would be served by transferring its activities to the California Institute of Technology. As a consequence in October 1943 an agreement was drawn up according to which the Human Betterment Foundation was to be dissolved as such and its assets turned over to the Institute. The Institute agreed to use these assets "and the proceeds thereof to establish the Gosney Research Fund, the income from which will be devoted in perpetuity to the promotion of research into the biological bases of human qualities and for making known the results of such research for the public interest."

At the present time the income of the Gosney Research Fund is used in support of post-doctoral fellowships in those branches of biological science basic to our understanding of human welfare. Gosney Research Fellowships are available to qualified investigators who hold the Ph.D. degree or its equivalent and who have demonstrated exceptional ability in original research. Preference is given to candidates who desire to carry on research in the general field of heredity. The Gosney Research Fund is currently administered by a Gosney Fund Committee made up of Professors A. H. Sturtevant, chairman, E. G. Anderson, Max Mason, and A. H. van Harreveld.

In effecting the transfer of the material assets of the Human Betterment Foundation to the Gosney Research Fund of the Institute special credit is due Mrs. Lois Gosney Castle, daughter of Mr. E. S. Gosney. Mrs. Castle spent approximately a year in putting the affairs of the Foundation in good order and in converting properties and other assets into fluid form. In addition she has maintained a keen interest in the research activities supported by the Gosney Research Fund.

G. W. B.

In the 1943 and 1947 announcements that it was accepting the activities of the Human Betterment Foundation, Caltech did not disavow eugenic sterilization.

This was after the start of World War II and the discovery of the Nazi death camps.

4e. “Removing Millikan’s name is an attempt at rewriting history or even censorship.”

No one is asking for Millikan to be erased from history.

Rather, we need a richer understanding of Caltech’s history, and Millikan’s.

No one is asking for people to not talk about Millikan.

Rather, we need greater and more informed discussion about Millikan.

4f. “Removing Millikan’s name does not lead to a nuanced understanding of his legacy.”

Putting someone’s name on a building and putting a bust of him on campus does not lead to a nuanced understanding either.

A nuanced understanding, as opposed to hagiography, is exactly what we need.

It should be possible to set up a physical manifestation of many aspects of Caltech’s, and Millikan’s history, such as a series of plaques, a set of exhibits, etc.

4g. “It is OK to name buildings after people because of their scientific achievements, regardless of their moral actions, about which standards change over time.”

Surely there are some morally terrible actions which would cause us to reconsider naming a building after a person, for example if we discovered that Millikan murdered someone.

Leading an organization that advocated for the forced sterilization of hundreds of thousands of people, and succeeded, and took pride in this success, is worse.



4h. “If we remove Millikan’s name, what about everyone else who did things back then that we do not approve of today?”

There are plenty of people from the past and today who are laudable by today’s standards.

It is possible that people who have lots of things named after them did so because of “reputation laundering” (Milken Institute, Nobel Prize, Rhodes Scholarship, etc.).

Our own choice, right now, indicates our own values.

5. *Why rename now?*

# REMOVE MILLIKAN'S NAME FROM CALTECH

Please go to <https://bit.ly/2AgRIWg> to sign this petition.

This petition was covered in the *Los Angeles Times*: [Caltech faces reckoning over its links to eugenics and sterilization movement](#), by Michael Hiltzik, July 7, 2020. More press coverage is available [here](#).

This petition was [transmitted](#) to Caltech administrators on July 22, 2020. In response to many calls to rename campus buildings and spaces, Caltech President Thomas F. Rosenbaum [announced](#) a "task force to explore naming and recognition policies at Caltech" which plans to produce a report by the end of 2020.

Please continue to circulate this petition and encourage all interested people to sign.

The Black Scientists & Engineers of Caltech (BSEC) is also circulating a [petition](#) on several racial justice issues including the removal of Millikan and others from campus buildings. To sign it, contact [caltechbsec@gmail.com](mailto:caltechbsec@gmail.com).



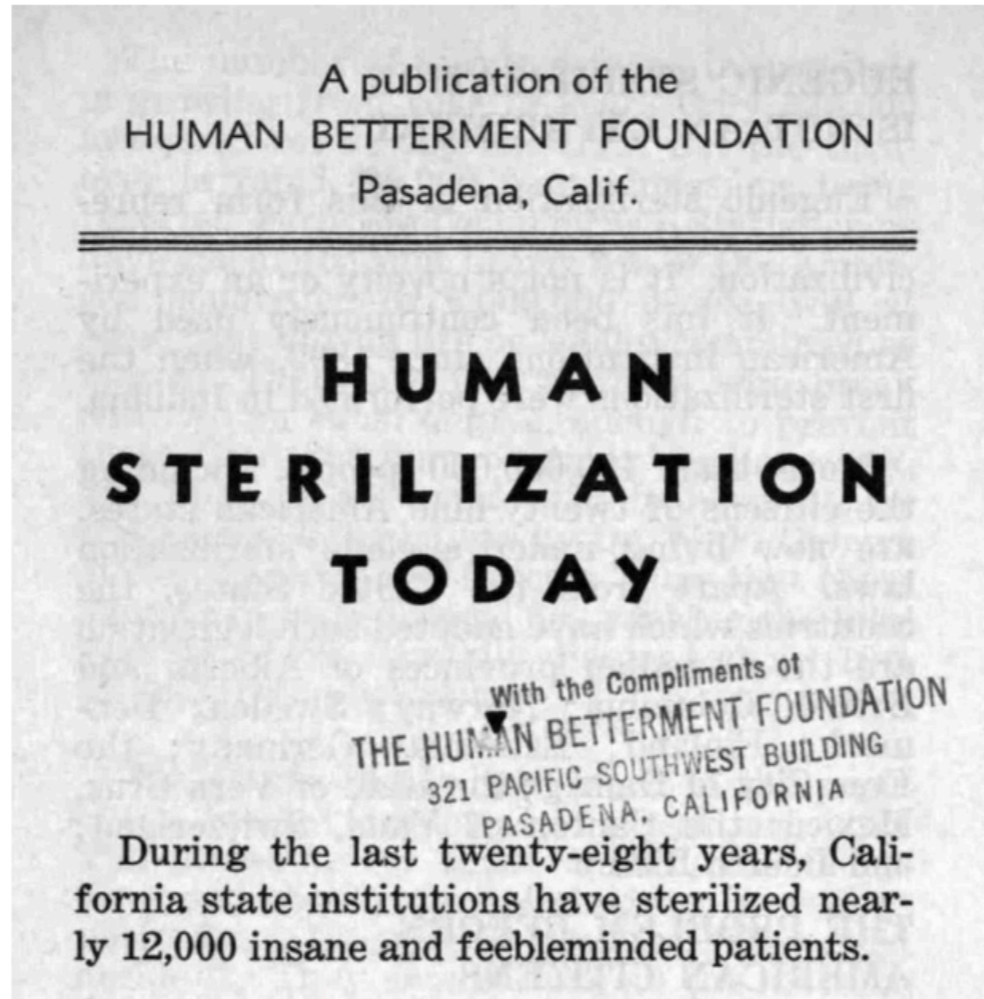
As members and friends of the Caltech community, we believe that Caltech cannot honor individuals who actively supported and encouraged crimes against humanity. Therefore, we call for Caltech to rename all buildings, spaces, and programs named after Robert A. Millikan, including the Robert A. Millikan Memorial Building, Millikan Library, Millikan Pond, and the Athenaeum's Millikan Suite. We call for the removal of the bust of Millikan on the Caltech campus.

Our petition started in June and has 1048 signatories, including 65 Caltech faculty, 98 staff, 546 alumni, 69 postdoctoral fellows, 169 graduate students, 69 undergraduate students, and 48 members of the community.



BUSINESS

# Column: Caltech faces reckoning over its links to eugenics and sterilization movement



The Human Betterment Foundation, of which Caltech's Robert A. Millikan was a trustee, promoted forced sterilization in California. (Library of Congress)

By MICHAEL HILTZIK | BUSINESS COLUMNIST

JULY 7, 2020 | 2:02 PM

To the ever lengthening list of institutions facing a reckoning with their racist pasts, add the California Institute of Technology.

### CORONAVIRUS >

Raucous parties, young adults fueling California's COVID-19 crisis

Child care has been safe during the pandemic. That could be a good sign for schools

Keep your hands clean, but avoid these dangerous hand sanitizers, FDA warns (free)

An 'unprecedented proliferation' of coronavirus scams is sweeping the nation (free)

What we are wondering: Updates, goals, links, numbers and distractions (free)

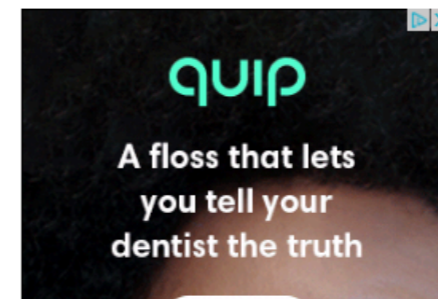
### Cases statewide »

**533,132**  
confirmed

**9,875**  
deaths

As of August 6, 9:33 a.m. Pacific

ADVERTISEMENT



The petition was covered in the Los Angeles Times and other news outlets.

This reckoning and reconsideration has been happening for a long time.

USC removed R.B. Von KleinSmid's name (June 2020).

Neighborhood Unitarian Universalist Church in Pasadena removed Millikan's name (2019).

Polytechnic School removed Gosney's name (2013).

Sacramento State University removed C.M. Goethe's name (mid-2000s).

The Burbank Unified School District removed David Starr Jordan's name (2019).

The Palo Alto Unified School District removed the names of Jordan and Lewis M. Terman (2017).

# Anti-Racism: What Can Caltech Do?

June 25, 2020

Dear Members of the Caltech Community,

By now we are all well-aware of the global protests calling for police reform following the graphic murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and countless others at the hands of the officers whose supposed duty is to protect and serve. Protestors in all 50 U.S. states and at least 12 nations have called for long-overdue corrections to the issue of police brutality, which disproportionately affects Black people. While many members of the Caltech community have been shocked at the police departments' failure to arrest and charge these perpetrators for violent crimes committed on camera, the Black community is all-too familiar with this type of overt and deep-seated racial prejudice. In the wake of this overwhelming support for reformation of racially prejudiced systems, members and allies of the Black Scientists and Engineers of Caltech (BSEC) are calling for the California Institute of Technology (CIT) to use this time to listen to, acknowledge, and **reform** the long-standing causes of racial bias which have disproportionately hurt racially minoritized members of the Caltech community. We urge you to stand with BSEC and help us in our push to make a more diverse Caltech.

- The Black Scientists and Engineers of Caltech (BSEC) and Allied Organizations

From the Caltech Statement of Community:

*"Caltech fosters an environment where various perspectives are valued by seeking out exceptional individuals from a broad range of backgrounds and experiences."*



Very recently, it has been propelled by the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Black Scientists and Engineers of Caltech started a petition in June 2020, on many issues of racial justice, including the renaming of buildings, including Watson.

As each additional institution shows its ability to reckon with its past, Caltech's failure to do so and take a clear moral stand on forced sterilization becomes increasingly alarming.

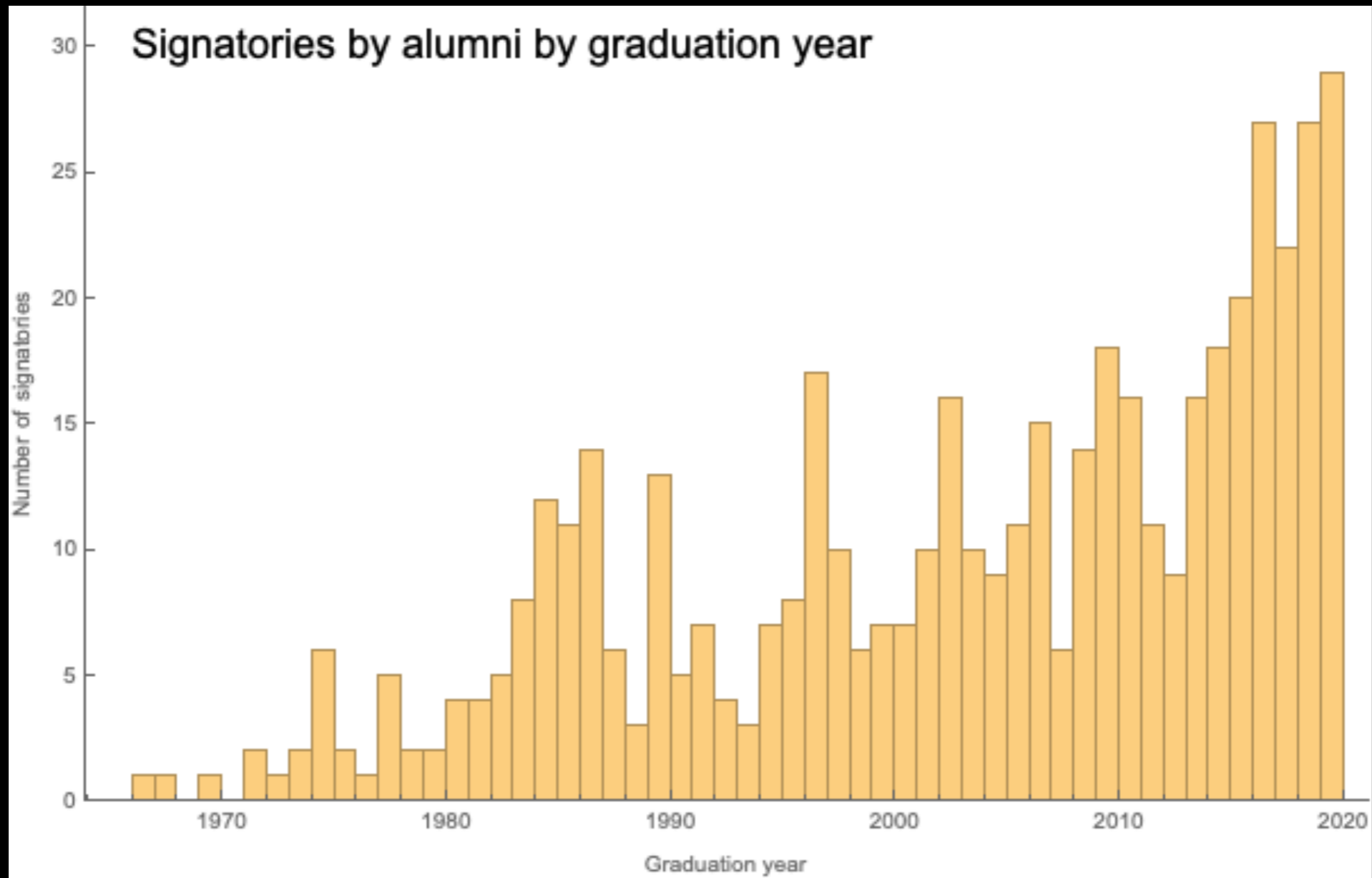
If Caltech cannot make a clear break from people who led an organization that took pride in cooperating with Nazis and implementing their policies in the 1930s, how can Caltech have any credibility in talking about issues of racial justice (or any moral issue)?

Right now, among people in the US who are 18 and under, 50 percent are people of color.

Among people in California who are 18 and under, 75 percent are people of color (KFF 2018).

These people are Caltech's future students, staff, and faculty.





Social justice concerns are increasing among young people and this trend will likely continue into the future.

The costs for Caltech not acting will only increase.

Cybele Garcia Kohel:

“I am a writer and Pasadena resident who signed your petition (my husband is a physicist at JPL as well). . . . I am Puerto Rican, and eugenics was used extensively there. It is just for some more context, and to tell you how important this is to me, and many others.”

Between 1930 and 1970, roughly one third of Puerto Rican women were sterilized (Andrews 2017).



In 1975, ten Mexican-American women successfully sued Los Angeles County Hospital for sterilizing them without their consent (*Madrigal v. Quilligan*).

These women, including Maria Hurtado above, were interviewed for the film *No Más Bebés* in 2016.



Councilmember John J. Kennedy, Pasadena City Council, District 3, former President of the Pasadena Branch of the NAACP:

“Pasadena as a City and Caltech as an institution grew up together. Pasadena was a segregated town, with racially restrictive covenants on most of the city permitting sale of real property only to ‘gentile caucasians.’ ”



“We (Pasadena NAACP) had to sue to integrate the Brookside Plunge which was open to people of color only on ‘International Day’ the day before it was cleaned. We had to sue to integrate the schools (Spangler v. Pasadena Schools). We had to sue to integrate the police department (El Centro de Accion Social). We had to sue to establish an equitable election system (Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance), and so on.”



“Where was Caltech through these early days? It was not a voice which spoke out for social justice, but a place which honored those who favored ‘race betterment through eugenic sterilization’ and so on. So this slow study of the obvious is consistent with past practice.”



“My father was the chauffeur and bodyguard for Dr. Theodore Von Karman, founder of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Von Karman was one of the most brilliant minds in the world, a Hungarian Jew. . . .

The souls of our ancestors cry out for the telling of their truth and story.”