

(Free pdf) Eugenics and Other Evils

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G. K. Chesterton

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G. K. Chesterton : Eugenics and Other Evils before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Eugenics and Other Evils:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Difficult Read - Questionable ReasoningBy MichaelI'm giving up on this book about half way through. I know many people love G. K. Chesterton, but I find some of his reasoning difficult to follow, even flawed. This may be the result differences in the use of language over the past century.Physically the book appears to be printed on demand, when you order it. The paper and cover are good quality, but the typesetting

has some gaps, the most serious gap is that the pages are not numbered, making proper reference to passages difficult. I appreciate efforts to reprint old work, but these reprints should do more than just print the raw text. Copyrights, even expired ones, are useful. Original publication information, page numbers, indexes, etc are all useful and should be included. Sadly, this version does not have any of these features.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Timeless
By Dave Hunter
I found it quite surprising, how many of the arguments are still relevant today. Eugenics may not be as openly advocated as it was in 1913, but some aspects of the philosophy are afoot today in other guise. Not to mention the general busybody interference of the state in private affairs for the citizen's own good. And Chesterton has an interesting take on social problems and both Capitalist and Socialist thoughts on them.

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

One of his best
By James H. Beauchamp
After completing Michael Creighton's book, Next, I scanned his resources: much to my surprise, he listed this book by Chesterton. I cannot enhance Creighton's comments in this review, but can state that G. K. Chesterton, a man with a remarkable gift of memory and humor and insight and wisdom, did us all a service (albeit 90 years ago) by penning this book. This one is not theological (as in *The Everlasting Man*), poetic (*The Ballad of the White Horse*), or in the form of a novel or short stories (all of which he wrote during his lifetime, such as the *Father Brown* mysteries, *The Man Who Was Thursday*, etc.). This book touches on life in the 21st Century in the United States of America: from topics ranging from political correctness, to genetics and eugenics, to ecology and the environment, to evolution, and even to the topic of whether smoking should be banned. I've often pondered whether the United States has ever produced its own Chesterton (perhaps Will Rogers; but he did not write at the same depth or level as Chesterton, though his observations were always laced with humor). Notwithstanding, we should not miss Chesterton's messages. Would that our press corps and educators and political pundits learn from him. This rambling review will benefit no one; the benefit will only come if those who bother to read comments as mine buy the book and savor its delights.

When the concept of eugenics -- the practice of selecting for desirable traits in the larger population by encouraging gifted and/or attractive people to breed -- began to take hold in the early twentieth century, British thinker and writer G.K. Chesterton took a stance contrary to that of many intellectuals of the period and denounced it as evil in this bold, engaging series of essays.

About the Author
Gilbert Keith Chesterton was born in London, England, in 1874. He went on to study art at the Slade School, and literature at University College in London. Chesterton wrote a great deal of poetry, as well as works of social and literary criticism. Among his most notable books are *"The Man Who Was Thursday"*, a metaphysical thriller, and *"The Everlasting Man"*, a history of humankind's spiritual progress. After Chesterton converted to Catholicism in 1922, he wrote mainly on religious topics such as "Orthodoxy" and "Heretics". Chesterton is most known for creating the famous priest-detective character *Father Brown*, who first appeared in *"The Innocence of Father Brown"*. Chesterton died in 1936 at the age of 62.

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Eugenics "There exists to-day a scheme of action, a school thought, as collective and unmistakable as any of those by whose grouping alone we can make any outline of history. . . . I know that it numbers many disciples whose intentions are entirely innocent and humane; and who would be sincerely astonished at my describing it as I do. But that is only because evil always wins through the strength of its splendid dupes; and there has in all ages been a disastrous alliance between abnormal innocence and abnormal sin. . . . But Eugenics itself does exist for those who have sense enough to see that ideas exist; and Eugenics itself, in large quantities or small, coming quickly or coming slowly, urged from good motives or bad, applied to a thousand people or applied to three, Eugenics itself is a thing no more to be bargained about than poisoning." Institutionalizing the Unfit "I will call it the Feeble-Minded Bill, both for brevity and because the description is strictly accurate. It is, quite simply and literally, a Bill for incarcerating as madmen those whom no doctor will consent to call mad. It is enough if some doctor or other may happen to call them weak-minded." Forced sterilization "Indeed one Eugenist, Mr. A. H. Huth, actually had a sense of humour, and admitted this. He thinks a great deal of good could be done with a surgical knife, if we would only turn him loose with one. And this may be true. A great deal of good could be done with a loaded revolver, in the hands of a judicious student of human nature." The Tyranny of Science "The thing that really is trying to tyrannise through government is Science. The thing that really does use the secular arm is Science. And the creed that really is levying tithes and capturing schools, the creed that really is enforced by fine and imprisonment, the creed that really is proclaimed not in sermons but in statutes, and spread not by pilgrims but by policemen that creed is the great but disputed system of thought which began with Evolution and has ended in Eugenics." Eugenic Motives "There is no reason in Eugenics, but there is plenty of motive. Its supporters are highly vague about its theory, but they will be painfully practical about its practice. And while I reiterate that many of its more eloquent agents are probably quite innocent instruments, there are some, even among Eugenists, who by this time know what they are doing." The Poor Man and his Child "There is one human thing left it is much harder to take from him. Debased by him and his betters, it is still something brought out of Eden, where God made him a demigod: it does not depend on money and but little on time. He can create in his own image. The terrible truth is in the heart of a hundred legends and mysteries. As Jupiter could be hidden from all-

devouring Time, as the Christ Child could be hidden from Herod so the child unborn is still hidden from the omniscient oppressor. He who lives not yet, he and he alone is left; and they seek his life to take it away." **The Rich Begin To Fear the Poor** "So at least it seemed, doubtless in a great degree subconsciously, to the man who had wagered all his wealth on the usefulness of the poor to the rich and the dependence of the rich on the poor. The time came at last when the rather reckless breeding in the abyss below ceased to be a supply, and began to be something like a wastage; ceased to be something like keeping foxhounds, and began alarmingly to resemble a necessity of shooting foxes." **Scientific Regimentation** "That is the problem, and that is why there is now no protection against Eugenic or any other experiments. If the men who took away beer as an unlawful pleasure had paused for a moment to define the lawful pleasures, there might be a different situation. If the men who had denied one liberty had taken the opportunity to affirm other liberties, there might be some defence for them. But it never occurs to them to admit any liberties at all. It never so much as crosses their minds. Hence the excuse for the last oppression will always serve as well for the next oppression; and to that tyranny there can be no end." **Socialism** "In short, people decided that it was impossible to achieve any of the good of Socialism, but they comforted themselves by achieving all the bad. All that official discipline, about which the Socialists themselves were in doubt or at least on the defensive, was taken over bodily by the Capitalists. They have now added all the bureaucratic tyrannies of a Socialist state to the old plutocratic tyrannies of a Capitalist State." **The Working Classes** "The working classes have no reserves of property with which to defend their relics of religion. They have no religion with which to sanctify and dignify their property. Above all, they are under the enormous disadvantage of being right without knowing it. They hold their sound principles as if they were sullen prejudices. They almost secrete their small property as if it were stolen property. Often a poor woman will tell a magistrate that she sticks to her husband, with the defiant and desperate air of a wanton resolved to run away from her husband. Often she will cry as hopelessly, and as it were helplessly, when deprived of her child as if she were a child deprived of her doll."