

Academic book review of american eugenics by nancy ordover

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Introduction

The book “ American Eugenics” captivates the trajectory of eugenics in America. The development of eugenics from the time of its evolution to the late nineteenth century when the hysteria pertaining to the anti-immigrant was acquiring its pinnacle to evolve out to the contemporary concept of ‘ gay-gene’ has been explicitly delineated in this engaging study which is entirely original and provocative in nature.

This book locates the root of the American eugenics in history and the practice of eugenics in the United States endowed by the political and cultural climate that has supported the mass appeal and huge campaigns of eugenics to its acceptance as scientific legitimacy (Ordover, “ American Eugenics”).

Academic Review: American Eugenics: Race, Queer Anatomy, and the Science of Nationalism

Most of the books dealing with social issues tend to locate symptoms of the issue rather than dealing with the original cause of the problem. In this regards, the book “ American Eugenics” is a deviation. The book deals with the myriad justifications provided by the eugenicists to carry forward their movement and at the same plane, the book is instrumental in exposing the fallacies that are concerned with the misunderstanding of these eugenicists

regarding the past and present social conditions under which this movement thrived.

Aaron Peron Ogletree expressed a comprehensive review about the book under the topic of ' Homosexuality and Bisexuality' in the book. According to Ogletree the book, " American Eugenics" is able to provide a very decisive notion of the eugenicists regarding the most vulnerable section of the American society. And this is attained by Ordover by a thorough analysis of eugenicists' effort in the field of biological sciences, methodologies pertaining to statistics and assumptions influenced from cultural paradigm (Ordover, " American Eugenics").

American Eugenics is a very concise book throwing light on the role of the eugenics played in the American society in the past to its contemporary function in the social realm of the United States. The twenty chapters of the book divided into three parts thoroughly examine the issues related to race, gender, class and immigration in American society. The detailed bibliography is an additive attraction of the book which throws adequate light on the rich resources from which Ordover has conceived her critical theories contributing to the study of social issues in the United States.

The book is a fine combination of the visions and perspectives of eminent eugenicists, people from the political and academic world. At the same time, the visions of the social activists and scientists are capsulated in this concise version to enrich the content of the text. The first part of the book deals with the description regarding eugenicists' notion of validating the concept of discrimination. In the second part of the book, Ordover deals with issues of homosexuality. She contests the ideas of eugenicists who determine

homosexuality as sexual perversion by discussing the psychological and physiological reasons for homosexuality. The third part of the book deals with sterilization as the most invasive measures of the eugenicists to preserve their concept of status quo.

Conclusion

The book “ American Eugenics” is one of the profound and comprehensive works on the history, development and effect of the eugenic movement in the society of the United States. Not only the book contemplates and traces the development and the consequence of the eugenic movement in America, it also connects it with many social taboos across the globe which should be dealt with more sensibility and tolerance. The book “ American Eugenics” might be conceived within the socio-political background of the United States, but the spirit of the book is universal and timeless.

Work Cited

Ordovery, Nancy. “ American Eugenics”. May 15, 2012. Homosexuality & Bisexuality, 2004.