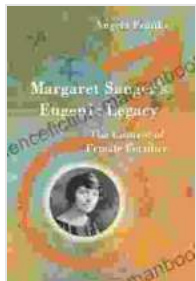


# Margaret Sanger's Eugenic Legacy: A Complex and Controversial History



Margaret Sanger (1879-1966) is widely regarded as one of the most influential figures in the history of reproductive rights. Her work as a nurse, activist, and writer helped to lay the foundation for the modern birth control

movement. However, Sanger's legacy is also complex and controversial, as she held views on eugenics that are considered deeply problematic by many people today.



## Margaret Sanger's Eugenic Legacy: The Control of Female Fertility by Angela Franks

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 3486 KB

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 352 pages



### Sanger's Early Life and Work

Margaret Sanger was born in Corning, New York, in 1879. Her father was a stonecutter and her mother was a devout Catholic. Sanger's family was poor, and she was forced to work at a young age to help support her siblings.

Sanger's early experiences with poverty and illness shaped her views on reproductive health. She witnessed firsthand the suffering that unwanted pregnancies could cause, and she became convinced that women should have the right to control their own fertility.

In 1914, Sanger founded the American Birth Control League (ABCL). The ABCL's mission was to provide women with information about contraception and to advocate for the legalization of birth control. Sanger's work was met with fierce opposition from both the medical establishment

and the government. However, she persevered, and her efforts eventually led to the legalization of birth control in the United States.

## **Sanger's Views on Eugenics**

In addition to her work on birth control, Sanger was also a vocal advocate for eugenics. Eugenics is the belief that human beings can be improved through selective breeding. Sanger believed that eugenics could be used to eliminate certain "undesirable" traits from the population, such as mental illness and criminality.

Sanger's views on eugenics were shaped by her experiences with poverty and illness. She believed that many of the social problems that she witnessed were caused by "bad genes." She also believed that eugenics could be used to create a more just and equitable society.

Sanger's support for eugenics was controversial at the time, and it remains so today. Many people believe that eugenics is a dangerous and discriminatory ideology that has no place in a democratic society. However, it is important to remember that Sanger's views on eugenics were shaped by the social and scientific context of her time.

## **Sanger's Legacy**

Margaret Sanger's legacy is complex and controversial. She was a tireless advocate for reproductive rights, but she also held views on eugenics that are considered deeply problematic by many people today.

Sanger's work has had a profound impact on the world. Her efforts helped to legalize birth control in the United States and to reduce the number of

unintended pregnancies. However, her views on eugenics continue to cast a shadow over her legacy.

It is important to remember that Sanger was a product of her time. Her views on eugenics were shaped by the social and scientific context of the early 20th century. However, we should not let her views on this issue overshadow her many contributions to the cause of reproductive rights.

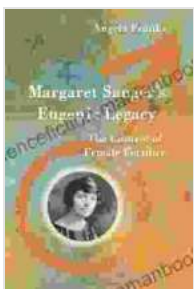
Sanger's work has helped to make the world a more just and equitable place for women. Her legacy will continue to be debated for years to come, but there is no doubt that she was a pioneer who made a lasting impact on the world.

## Additional Resources

\* [Margaret Sanger: A Biography]

(<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Margaret-Sanger>) \* [The American Birth Control League]

(<https://www.library.upenn.edu/collections/rbml/pacscl/abcl/>) \* [Eugenics: A Historical Overview](<https://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005143>)



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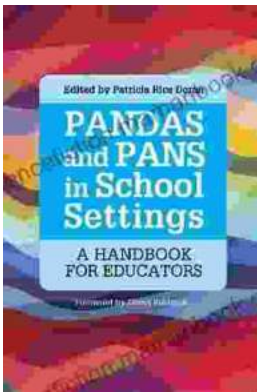
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