

Debate and Diplomacy in History: Can Eugenics be Ethical?

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ABSTRACT

We must look upon significant instances in the history of Eugenics, such as the California sterilization legislation, as an example of what can happen if regulatory policies are not enacted. The stories of the primarily Latina women who were involuntary sterilized serves as a warning, and reminder of what can happen when vague language in laws allows for the manifestation of personal bias in the reproduction rights of others. A variety of personal and societal factors influence our individual opinions on Eugenics, however, regardless of our opinion we must acknowledge the negative consequences for many disadvantaged groups when Eugenics goes unregulated. When examining eugenics in a modern context (Gene therapy,) there must be legislation that regulates what genes can, and cannot be altered, to prevent personal prejudices from eradicating entire groups of people with a certain disability or disease.

“Ever since the operation, I am very inattentive. Not forgetful, inattentive. People sometimes have to tell me things twice. It's not that I don't understand them... it's that I'm not there.” -- Guadalupe Acosta ¹

Guadalupe Acosta was only in her mid-twenties when she experienced labor pains and was rushed to Los Angeles Community Hospital.² Upon arrival, obstetricians attempted to induce labor by violently hitting and punching her stomach.³ Not only was Acosta's infant stillborn, she found out months later that doctors had sterilized her, via tubal ligation.⁴ Sterilized against her will. Without her consent. Without regard for her desires for the future... or her identity as a Latin American woman. This could be perceived to be archaic. However, the actions of the doctors at LA Community Hospital and their director of Obstetrics EJ Quilligan were not some obscure, isolated incident buried in the past. Guadalupe's story is far from unique. Indicative of flawed legislation, and a greater discriminatory sociocultural environment, what happened to her is simply one example of the 20,000 Californians who were involuntarily sterilized between 1909 and 1979 in the State of California.⁵

¹ Antonia Hernandez, “Chicanas and the Issue of Involuntary Sterilization: Reforms Needed to Protect Informed Consent,” *Chicano Law Review*, 1976, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/35v8r48h>.

² Ibid.

³ Karina Cardenas, “Who Makes the Decision to Sterilize Mexican Women?” *California State Library*, (n.d.), Retrieved November 11, 2021, from www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Perspectives/Vol45/who_makes_the_decision_to_sterilize_mexican_women.pdf.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ “Bill Text - AB-3052 Forced or Involuntary Sterilization Compensation Program,” *California Legislative Information*, November 5, 2020, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB3052.

Social and Legislative Movement Against the Fertility of Mexican American Women

The legislation that permitted this represents a larger social disdain for the fertility of Mexican American women.⁶ It specifically authorized medical attendants in state homes and hospitals to “perform asexualization on patients... identified as afflicted with mental disease which may have been inherited and is likely to be transmitted to descendants.”⁷ This definition was intended to be ambiguous, allowing for individual providers to make potentially life-altering decisions on behalf of their patients, all within the boundaries of state legislation. Furthermore, this ambiguity has also provided legal protection for manifestations of prejudice in sterilizations. Upon analysis of existing records, the state of California found that Latinas were 59% more likely to be sterilized than white women,⁸ despite making up a much smaller portion of the total population of California at that time.⁹ The initial passing of this flawed eugenic legislation was built upon throughout the next few decades, further capitalizing on the gross violation of human rights.¹⁰ The Hispanic population of California quickly took notice of these cruel, discriminatory practices, and began to organize,¹¹ rallying in city parks and street centers. This was countered by state-sponsored propaganda, primarily from the so-called “Human Betterment Foundation.”¹²

Erected in 1928 by Ezra Seymour Gosney, it was inspired by the early 20th-century novel written by Henry Laughlin, *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States*.¹³ This eugenicist manifesto was one of the first widely publicized and accessible arguments supporting the sterilization of “unfit” populations, against their will. It unabashedly cited Latinos specifically.¹⁴ The Human Betterment Foundation was simply an extension of this flawed ideology, pedaling striking pamphlets to the urban city population of the state of California.¹⁵ One such pamphlet even claiming the families contributing “feebleminded” children to society are multiplying at an elevated rate.¹⁶ This was an attempt to justify the involuntary sterilizations that were occurring. In addition, many of these pamphlets proudly touted the eugenicist nature of the laws, creating a movement in support of these involuntary sterilizations.¹⁷ The work of Gosney and other unapologetic eugenicists orchestrated a greater socio-cultural movement in favor of sterilization legislation,

⁶ Miringoff, Marque-Luisa, “The Impact of Population Policy upon Social Welfare,” *Social Service Review* 54(3), 301–316, 1980, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30015839>.

⁷ “Statutes of California: The Thirty-Eighth Session of the Legislature,” California Clerk Assembly, 1909, https://clerk.assembly.ca.gov/sites/clerk.assembly.ca.gov/files/archive/Statutes/1907_09/1909.pdf#page=53.

⁸ “Bill Text - AB-3052 Forced or Involuntary Sterilization Compensation Program,” *California Legislative Information*, November 5, 2020, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB3052.

⁹ “Census Tracts, Los Angeles-Long Beach California,” United States Department of Commerce, US Census Bureau, 1970, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1970/phc-1/39204513p11ch11.pdf>.

¹⁰ “Health Inspection Bills to Come Before Assembly,” United Press Leased Wire. Imperial Valley press (El Centro, Calif.) 1907-current, Page 9, Image 9, *Chronicling America*, March 4, 1937, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn92070146/1937-03-04/ed-1/seq-9/#date1=1777&index=1&rows=20&words=eugenics+sterilization&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=California Date2=1963&proxtext=Eugenics+sterilization y=5&x=10&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

¹¹ Rachel Romero, “Stop forced sterilization,” The Library of Congress, 1953, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2015647473>.

¹² Jane Briggs, “Human Betterment Foundation (1928–1942),” The Embryo Project Encyclopedia, 2013, Retrieved February 4, 2022, from <https://embryo.asu.edu/pages/human-betterment-foundation-1928-1942>.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Henry H. Laughlin, *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States*, Psychopathic Laboratory of the Municipal Court of Chicago, 1922.

¹⁵ Jane Briggs, “Human Betterment Foundation (1928–1942),” The Embryo Project Encyclopedia, 2013, Retrieved February 4, 2022, from <https://embryo.asu.edu/pages/human-betterment-foundation-1928-1942>.

¹⁶ “Human sterilization today,” Human betterment foundation, The Library of Congress, 1938, <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.0020380g>.

¹⁷ “Effects of eugenic sterilization as practiced in California,” The Human Betterment Foundation, The Library of Congress, 1937, <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.0020380f/>.

citing “logical” and economic reasons¹⁸ why the reproduction of minority populations must be limited for the greater good of humanity.

Madrigal v. Quilligan and Applicable Legal Precedent

In 1977, ten Hispanic women, Acosta amongst them, sued the people responsible for their wrongful sterilizations in the landmark *Madrigal vs Quilligan* case.¹⁹ The primary goal of the lawsuit was to raise awareness of the effect of the outdated sterilization laws on patients, specifically the Latina population of California.²⁰ It demonstrates the shift in the rationale used to justify compulsory sterilizations and places an emphasis on accountability from physicians as well as the state government.²¹ Antonia Hernandez, the chief attorney on behalf of the plaintiffs, expresses a similar sentiment in an essay written years before the lawsuit, claiming the “doctors and hospitals which receive government subsidies to perform sterilization surgery but violate a patient’s right to informed consent.. raises the issue of inadequate government enforcement.”²² The issue of enforcement, in this case, is the lack of government oversight or protection of disproportionate sterilization of marginalized groups.

The troubling history of state-sponsored involuntary sterilization began with the 1927 Supreme Court *Buck* decision.²³ The Virginia state policy that all women committed to mental health institutions be sterilized prior to their release was upheld, under the condition the sterilization went through an “approval” process, which was still entirely out of the control of the individual being sterilized.²⁴ Upon announcing the verdict of the High Court, then Chief Justice Oliver Holmes correlated mandatory vaccinations with tubal ligation, claiming that state governments have a similar right to enforce both of the latter as they see fit.²⁵ He expressed that it is better to prevent the reproduction of groups “manifestly unfit from continuing their kind” than to deal with the problems they could potentially oppose upon society.²⁶ Such an endorsement of the government’s ability to deprive individuals of the right to procreate infringes on personal freedom and bodily autonomy, in addition to further contributing to the greater societal belief in support of this revocation of autonomy and dignity.²⁷

The *Relf* decision was another such event that set an unfortunate legal precedent regarding involuntary sterilizations. Two young African American women Mary Alice and Minnie Relf, 14 and 12 respectively, were sterilized in an Alabama clinic. Their mother, who was known to be illiterate, signed an “X” on the dotted line of papers she thought to be for birth control shots for her two daughters.²⁸ This time, the lawsuit resulted in victory for the *Relf*

¹⁸ John Peixotto, *The Control of Poverty*, Amsterdam University Press, 1920.

¹⁹ “Research Guides: A Latinx Resource Guide: Civil Rights Cases and Events in the United States: 1978: *Madrigal v. Quilligan*,” Library of Congress, 2020, Retrieved March 3, 2022, from <https://guides.loc.gov/latinx-civil-rights/madrigal-v-quilligan>.

²⁰ Renee Tajima-Pena, dir, “No Más Bebés,” PBS, 2015.

²¹ Alexandra Minna Stern, “STERILIZED in the Name of Public Health,” *American Journal of Public Health* 95(7), 1128–1138, 2005, <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2004.041608>.

²² Antonia Hernandez, “Chicanas and the Issue of Involuntary Sterilization: Reforms Needed to Protect Informed Consent,” *Chicano Law Review*, 1976, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/35v8r48h>.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Oliver Holmes and The Supreme Court Of The United States, “U.S. Reports: *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 200,” The Library of Congress, 1938, <https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep274200/>.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ “Sterilization is Upheld by Court,” United Press Leased Wire, Imperial Valley Press (El Centro Calif.) 1907-current, Image 1, *Chronicling America*, May 2, 1927, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn92070146/1927-05-02/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=1777&index=0&rows=20&words=eugenics+sterilization&searchType=basic&sequence=0&state=California Date2=1963&proxtext=Eugenics+sterilization&y=5&x=10&dateFilterType=yearRange&page=1>.

²⁸ “*Relf* Original Complaint,” Southern Poverty Law Center, (n.d.), https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/d6_legacy_files/Relf_Original_Complaint.pdf.

Family.²⁹ Despite this, the outcome of *Relf vs Weinberger* is regarded as a monumental setback in the fight for reproductive justice. District Judge Gershard Gesell pandered to the vocal critics and activists by emphasizing these “deplorable incidents.”³⁰ There were no efforts made to prevent or punish coercion or manifestations of personal prejudice in sterilizations, simply a newly instated requirement for the sterilized to sign a consent form.³¹ This is a policy meaningless to women illiterate in the English language, leaving them vulnerable to the authority of physicians privy to the overwhelming social disdain for the fertility of minority women.³² The broad language of this decision set the framework for legislation such as the 1929 sterilization laws in California that permit arbitrary sterilizations.³³

Madrigal vs Quilligan began with whistleblower Dr. Bernard Rosenfield, a young physician at Los Angeles Community Hospital. He combed through hundreds of medical records of Latina patients, and recognized clear patterns of coercion, even observing nurse chart notes reporting no medical indication for sterilization and markedly distressed handwriting.³⁴ He reported his disturbing discoveries to the Model Cities Center for Law and Justice, where Charles Navarete assisted Antonia Hernandez in litigating a case for the victims.³⁵ The contested witness, medical student Karen Benker, was the only first-hand witness of the coercion and discrimination that occurred who was willing to testify.³⁶ What Benker said would prove that these were not simply individual transgressions, but a collective concerted effort to reduce the family size of Mexican American women.³⁷ The defense built their case on discrediting the experiences of the plaintiffs, claiming that they acted under the jurisdiction of existing legislation and that any omission of information was due to the inability of the women to sufficiently understand the doctors.³⁸ The prosecution attempted to emphasize the social repercussions of these actions: the ability to reproduce and mother children was a core tenant of the identity of many Mexican-American women. Judge Jesse W. Curtis dismissed this, ignorantly asserting “It is not surprising that the staff of a busy metropolitan hospital... would be unaware of these atypical cultural traits.”³⁹ In a motion consistent with the previously established sociocultural trends, he ruled against the ten plaintiffs.⁴⁰

²⁹ “*Relf v. Weinberger*,” Southern Poverty Law Center, (n.d.), Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <https://www.splcenter.org/seeking-justice/case-docket/relf-v-weinberger>.

³⁰ “*Relf v. Weinberger*, 372 F. Supp. 1196 (D.D.C. 1974),” Justia Law, 1974, <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/372/1196/1421341/>.

³¹ “*Relf v. Weinberger*,” Southern Poverty Law Center, (n.d.), Retrieved April 8, 2022, from <https://www.splcenter.org/seeking-justice/case-docket/relf-v-weinberger>.

³² Jane Silliman, Marlene G. Fried, Loretta Ross, and Elena Gutiérrez, *Undivided Rights: Women of Color Organizing for Reproductive Justice (Second ed.)*, Haymarket Books, 2016.

³³ Antonia Hernandez, “Chicanas and the Issue of Involuntary Sterilization: Reforms Needed to Protect Informed Consent,” *Chicano Law Review*, 1976, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/35v8r48h>.

³⁴ Elena R. Gutiérrez, *Fertile Matters: The Politics of Mexican - Origin Women’s Reproduction (Chicana Matters)*, University of Chicago Press Chicago Distribution Center, 2008.

³⁵ Oliver Holmes and The Supreme Court Of The United States, “U.S. Reports: *Buck v. Bell*, 274 U.S. 200,” The Library of Congress, 1938, <https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep274200/>.

³⁶ Elena R. Gutiérrez, *Fertile Matters: The Politics of Mexican - Origin Women’s Reproduction (Chicana Matters)*, University of Chicago Press Chicago Distribution Center, 2008.

³⁷ Jessica Enoch, “Survival Stories: Feminist Historiographic Approaches to Chicana Rhetorics of Sterilization Abuse,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35(3), 5–30, 2005, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40232471>.

³⁸ Karina Cardenas, “Who Makes the Decision to Sterilize Mexican Women?” *California State Library*, (n.d.), Retrieved November 11, 2021, from www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Perspectives/Vol45/who_makes_the_decision_to_sterilize_mexican_women.pdf.

³⁹ Elena R. Gutiérrez, *Fertile Matters: The Politics of Mexican - Origin Women’s Reproduction (Chicana Matters)*, University of Chicago Press Chicago Distribution Center, 2008.

⁴⁰ Karina Cardenas, “Who Makes the Decision to Sterilize Mexican Women?” *California State Library*, (n.d.), Retrieved November 11, 2021, from www.calstatela.edu/sites/default/files/groups/Perspectives/Vol45/who_makes_the_decision_to_sterilize_mexican_women.pdf.

Perceptions of Debate and Diplomacy in the Context of Eugenics

Despite a loss, the attention the lawsuit drew to the policies of the state of California became a vital part of overturning them. Senator Art Torres called upon his fellow state senators to render the legislation that allowed the atrocities committed against the plaintiffs of *Madrigal vs Quilligan* null and void, dubbing the bill “outdated” in his letter to then Governor Edmund Brown.⁴¹ His move was successful, and as of 1979 California no longer held compulsory sterilization laws.⁴² This decision far from compensated the victims of eugenics in this situation for the irreplaceable loss of their fertility, but it serves as a symbolic gesture of the diplomatic exchange between the oppressed party, and the seemingly indifferent state legislators. Art Torres served as a mediator between two polarized groups, his initial concern about these policies stemming from activist backlash from the lawsuit. He sought legal reform, and belated justice was served to the victims of the Los Angeles community hospital.⁴³ Due to the diplomatic exchange between activists, victims, and legislators, the women that fell victim to a state-wide eugenics campaign received justice. This is starkly contrasted by past tirades of violence and genocide, which to this day continues to cloud the debate surrounding eugenics⁴⁴, preventing us from productively combatting improper eugenics legislation as new applications of eugenics emerge within the scientific community.

One of the most notable (and unfortunate) occurrences of this violence in history is the genocide of Jewish people in Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945. In an attempt to facilitate a Germany of primarily Aryan heritage, the leader of the Nazi Party Adolph Hitler attempted to eradicate all “undesirable” people.⁴⁵ This included gypsies, homosexuals, and mentally ill individuals, but the atrocious human rights violations that occurred were primarily against all members of the Jewish population in Germany and all of the nations Hitler occupied. Several hundreds of thousands of people were sterilized, and, most infamously, millions of people were killed.⁴⁶ Although genocide and eugenics are not synonymous, they are intrinsically linked, as one primary reason for the euthanasia that occurs in genocide is to prevent the reproduction of a certain group. The resounding effects of the Holocaust are ever so present today, on both the survivors, and the global political landscape.⁴⁷ For this reason, many cannot discuss eugenics without equating it to a gross violation of human rights. In other words, “negative eugenics” are out.⁴⁸ We must not let past lapses in morality relating to eugenics, whether it be domestic sterilization laws or foreign genocidal tirades, detract from the discussions surrounding the less obvious, but very present modern applications of eugenics in society.

Future Modern Applications of Eugenics in Society

The future of eugenics in America does not lie in discrimination and prejudice, but rather in the cutting edge of scientific innovation that many would consider being for the benefit of humankind. The Human Genome Project

⁴¹ Alexandra Minna Stern, “STERILIZED in the Name of Public Health,” *American Journal of Public Health* 95(7), 1128–1138, 2005, <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2004.041608>.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Reprint ed.), Harvard University Press, 1998.

⁴⁵ Hajo Holborn, “Origins and Political Character of Nazi Ideology,” *Political Science Quarterly* 79(4), 542–554, 1964, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2146698>.

⁴⁶ Daniel J. Kevles, “Eugenics and Human rights,” *BMJ*, 319(7207), 435–438, 1999, <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.319.7207.435>.

⁴⁷ Thomas Buergenthal, “Life After the Holocaust: Thomas Buergenthal,” Ushmm.org, 2015, <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/life-after-the-holocaust-thomas-buergenthal>.

⁴⁸ Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Reprint ed.), Harvard University Press, 1998.

was a worldwide effort, over the course of many years, to map and sequence all DNA present in the Human body.⁴⁹ The scientific knowledge accrued from this endeavor is exciting, however with the completion of gene mapping comes unique ethical dilemmas. Due to the human genome project, we know the precise genes that contribute to a variety of diseases and disabilities.⁵⁰ To establish ethical standards for the use of this information, The US Humane Genome Project established the List of Ethical, Social, and Legal Implications, to address the anxieties of the public.⁵¹ This list did not include eugenics.⁵² The emerging Gene Therapy, technology to edit certain genes (using the information from the Human Genome Project,) could be utilized as it develops further to eliminate certain disabilities or diseases from embryos, removing them permanently from the human population.⁵³ This could potentially save countless lives. Altering genes that predispose people to acquire certain types of cancer is undoubtedly a good thing, however, in certain areas, there is a high level of ethical debate.

The eradication of many disabilities through gene therapy is inherently eugenicist, it fulfills the definition of attempting to facilitate the ideal human race. There is no clear answer to whether or not this is right or wrong, this adds another layer of complexity to the eugenics debate. The deeming of a certain disability as worthy or being removed is indeed a manifestation of personal bias. Many disabled people and activists speaking on their behalf cite the social model of disability as adequate explanation of their life experiences,⁵⁴ in which a person's perceived disability is determined by the way the society surrounding them is constructed.⁵⁵ Often bioethicists are more concerned with preventing the birth of people they perceive to be disabled, rather than alleviating them from the burden society imposes.⁵⁶ In the words of Solveig Magnus Reind, "The very idea of "curing" disability is the core element in the discrimination of disabled people because the "curing ideal" resides in conformity and normalcy."⁵⁷ Gene Therapy may encapsulate positive connotations; however, it is subject to the same level of personal and societal prejudice as the vague sterilization laws of California that prompted the *Madrigal vs Quilligan* case. Gene therapy has the potential to prevent many forms of human suffering but can easily join the list of other instances in history in which eugenics were abused if policies with specific language to clearly define what genes are allowed to be altered are not enacted.

Eugenics is a multi-faceted concept, and there is no one single perceptual set with which to look at it through. The debate that has existed around eugenics since its introduction can't be unified around one central purpose: protecting the groups of people, whether it be disability, race, or religion, that are most vulnerable. "History repeats itself, and the finger of blame has always pointed to the other person or other nation. The finger should turn to oneself, to enlighten one to look positively and constructively at the human family."⁵⁸ Although the attention *Madrigal vs*

⁴⁹ K. Garver, "The Human Genome Project and Eugenic Concerns," *NCIB*, 1994, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1918077/?page=8.

⁵⁰ Inder M. Verma, "Gene Therapy That Works," *Science* 341(6148), 853–855, 2013, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23491244>.

⁵¹ "Review of the Ethical and Social Implications Program and Related Activities (1990-1995)," (n.d.), Genome.gov, <https://www.genome.gov/10001747/elsi-program-review-19911995>.

⁵² K. Garver, "The Human Genome Project and Eugenic Concerns," *NCIB*, 1994, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1918077/?page=8.

⁵³ "What is Gene Therapy?" Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, July 25, 2020, Retrieved February 8, 2022, from <https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/cellular-gene-therapy-products/what-gene-therapy>.

⁵⁴ Adam Samaha, "What Good Is the Social Model of Disability," *The University of Chicago Law Review* 74(4), 1251, 2007, <http://doi.org/10.2307/20141862>.

⁵⁵ Andrew J. Hogan, "Social and medical models of disability and mental health: evolution and renewal," *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 191(1), E16–E18, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.181008>.

⁵⁶ Jerome E. Bickenbach, "Disability Studies and Bioethics: A Comment on Kuczewski," *American Journal of Bioethics* 1(3), 49–50, 2001, <https://doi.org/10.1162/152651601750418062>.

⁵⁷ Solveig Reindal, "Disability, gene therapy and eugenics - a challenge to John Harris," *Journal of Medical Ethics* 26(2), 89–94, 2000, <https://doi.org/10.1136/jme.26.2.89>.

⁵⁸ K. Garver, "The Human Genome Project and Eugenic Concerns," *NCIB*, 1994, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1918077/?page=8.

Quilligan drew to their issue resulted in the outdated sterilization laws being overthrown, the damage done to their bodies and lives rings true to this day. Only through the diplomatic exchange across the aisle, between community activists and seemingly indifferent legislators, was justice achieved. Let us refer back to history and look upon the stories of these women as a reminder, as a warning, of the potentially devastating effects of eugenics, and the precautions we must take moving forward, no matter the complexity and ambiguity of the scientific discoveries' humankind has yet to unlock.

Appendix A



This image is of women protesting involuntary sterilizations outside of a courthouse in the early 1970's. This photo is a visual demonstration of the great value of fertility as part of a Latina women's identity, and the great lengths they went to in pursuit of justice after this core tenant of their identity and autonomy was forcibly taken away from so many.

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