"Baby's Picture is Always Treasured": Eugenics and the Reproduction of Whiteness in the Family Photograph Album

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Figures

"A baby's photograph, to all save doting parents and relations, is a stupid thing."  

-- R.H.E., Godey's Lady's Book, April 1867

To twentieth-century readers accustomed to the now-ubiquitous "baby's photograph," R.H.E.'s observation about the stupidity of these images seems either shocking or wonderfully perverse. Despite the fact that such photographs typically depict fleshy, wrinkled creatures, with eyes not quite focused, and expressions rather startled, baby pictures remain highly valued commodities in contemporary culture. Today the family photograph albums that protect these images are nearly sacred records. Indeed it is almost impossible to imagine dismissing the importance of those documents which twentieth-century Americans consistently herald as the most important things to save from the imagined disasters of proverbial floods and fires.

Considered in its own historical moment, R.H.E.'s proclamation continues to surprise. Where is the nineteenth-century rhetoric of maternal love and pride? Wasn't R.H.E. addressing, in Godey's, a reading audience of white middle-class women raised on the rhetoric of True Womanhood?  

The sentimental response to baby's photograph that one might expect to find here surfaces only thirty years later in an 1898 advertisement for the Cyclone Camera in the Ladies Home Journal. This advertisement, which encourages white middle-class women to buy newly manufactured hand held pocket cameras, proclaims: "Baby's Picture is Always Treasured."  

This utter reversal in the estimation of baby's picture does not settle the question of how or why the transformation itself occurred. Surely baby's photograph did not change dramatically over the course of 30 years. Perhaps focus was improved with shorter exposure times, but was there really anything more to see in a sharp rendering of baby's corpulence? What, then, did transform white middle-class evaluations of baby's picture over the course of the late nineteenth century? What transformed a "stupid thing" into a marketing "treasure"?

In attempting to resolve this dilemma, I have been led only to further questions and even more
striking evaluations of baby's picture. In the period that separates R.H.E.'s disdain for these photographs from later exuberance over such images, "baby's photograph" came to emblematize a racial fantasy as eugenists claimed it [End Page 197] for scientific evidence. The family album was a particularly important evidentiary document for Francis Galton, the founder of eugenics, who defined "race" as an essential, biological characteristic rooted in heritable moral and intellectual capacities. ⁴ In eugenics the family became central to the discursive production of race and of racial hierarchies, as the family album became one of the social institutions through which heredity was charted. Within this eugenicist context, photographs of children became powerful familial records through which racial hierarchies could be reproduced and maintained. ⁵ In this way, the "science" of eugenics transformed the signifying context for baby's "private" picture. What I propose to consider here is whether or not eugenicist appropriations of baby's picture in turn informed the shifting evaluation of these representations in popular white middle-class venues. How can we make sense of the uncanny formal consonance and temporal congruence of popular and eugenicist family albums? To what degree do these parallel representational practices share ideological contingencies? Does the "stupid" picture of baby become a popular "treasure" as it becomes a sign of the reproduction of middle-class whiteness?

In asking these questions, this essay interrogates the genealogies that informed the seemingly innocuous practice of photographing baby in the late nineteenth century, and suggests that this sentimentalized middle-class ritual was also a racially inflected act. Such a perspective compels us to query the history of white normalcy and eugenicist desire, and to participate in efforts made by Deborah Willis and others to rethink the family photograph album as a site of cultural contestation, as a place in which competing American identities are posed and projected. ⁶ Today the family photograph album provides an important genealogical archive for Americans of color, as evidenced by the contemporary work of artists such as Clarissa Sligh. [End Page 198] Carrie Mae Weems, Deborah Willis, and Julie Dash, and scholars such as Deborah Willis (again), bell hooks, and Christian Walker. ⁷ At the turn of the century, however, the same medium that enabled African Americans, according to bell hooks, to "disprove representations of us created by white folks," ⁸ might also have allowed white Americans to reinforce dominant misrepresentations of themselves as good, healthy, natural, powerful, elite. What exactly did white middle-class parents learn from the popular articles that taught them how to photograph children "correctly"? [End Page 199] Did they learn how to transform disparate experiences into normative eugenicist fantasies? Did they learn how to transform "stupid" images into racialized "treasures"?

**Mechanically Reproducing Baby**

From the moment of its 1839 invention in daguerreotypy, the first photographic process, ⁹ the photographic image has been conceptualized as a means of preserving family history and of documenting family genealogy. Even though portrait sitters had to be harnessed into body and neck braces in order to remain immobile for the 30 to 40-second exposures required in the early days of daguerreotypy, the daguerrean portrait nevertheless became extremely popular in the United States throughout the 1840s and 1850s. ¹⁰ For many members of the middle classes, daguerreotypy provided the first affordable means of recording their own images, and of collecting representations of their loved ones. ¹¹ Parents frequently had their daguerreotype portraits made in order to give them to their children as heirlooms and keepsakes. ¹² The daguerreotype enabled members of the middle classes to mimic the practices of their wealthier neighbors, displaying proudly the representatives of their family lines, after pseudo-aristocrats who enjoyed a longer tradition of decorating parlours and halls with the more costly, time-consuming painted portraits of their forebears. This early function of the photograph as heirloom is important as it connects the photograph, through inheritance, both materially to the circulation of goods and the preservation of likenesses, and ideologically to the continuation of
the family blood line. As the later discussion of eugenics will demonstrate, the relationship between family photographs and racial hierarchies became particularly problematic as the photograph began to play a role in the definition of heredity that provided the foundation for Francis Galton's racial theory of eugenics.  

Attesting indirectly to the cultural use of the daguerreotype as heirloom, T. S. Arthur, a popular nineteenth-century writer for *Godley's Magazine and Lady's Book* proclaimed: "If our children and children's children to the third and fourth generation are not in possession of portraits of their ancestors it will be no fault of the Daguerreotypists of the present day; for, verily, they are limming faces at a rate that promises soon to make every man's house a Daguerrean Gallery." Describing family photograph collections as "Daguerrean Galleries," Arthur subtly links the early practice of family photography to Mathew Brady's famous "Daguerrean Gallery," a national archive of "Illustrious Americans" devoted primarily to exalting the images of American political leaders. As Brady's Daguerrean Gallery reproduced the "fathers" of the nation, presenting a national patriotic ideal, the family archives Arthur describes might be said to reproduce the "children" of the nation. The association of photography with the reproduction of national identities continued throughout the nineteenth century, but by the turn of the century, the "nation" itself was posed as a racial construct. Indeed, it is between the two terms of the family and the nation that Francis Galton, the founder of eugenics, located the site of racial reproduction. For Galton, the nation was simply the congregation of racialized families.

An understanding of this discursive context, in which the photographic portrait [End Page 200] was posed as a signifier of both national and racial identity, enables one to begin to make sense of the postmortem images of babies that abounded in the nineteenth century, images of dead babies that strike twentieth-century viewers as truly uncanny. While the proliferation of postmortem portraits of children might be attributed, on a superficial level, to high infant mortality rates and even to the technological difficulties of making images of squirming babies under long exposures, the possible cultural import of such images is more telling. Throughout the mid-nineteenth century, daguerreotypists advertised their services to bereaved mothers, and they travelled with angelic figures and bouquets of flowers, the accessories and props of nineteenth-century mourning. Thus, nineteenth-century Americans apparently assumed not only that children could and would die, but also that images of dead bodies should be preserved for posterity. Given late-twentieth century understandings of the political nature of images of dead babies, most notable today in anti-abortion propaganda materials, one can begin to ask what cultural and ideological function the photograph of a dead child might have served in the nineteenth century. In a period of eugenicist anxiety about the "death" of the Anglo-Saxon race, images of dead white babies may have served not only as memorials, highlighting the importance of every member of the race, but also as reminders to white adults of the "need" to continue procreating. Thus, nineteenth-century postmortem infant portraits may have functioned in much the same way as Theodore Roosevelt's early twentieth-century warnings about the threat of "race suicide" encouraged "native" Anglo-Americans to reproduce prolifically, in order to combat the cultural influence of "less desirable" immigrants. In other words, individual images of dead babies may have generated anxiety about white racial death, transforming private grief into a public mandate to reproduce. In this way, the photograph as sentimental family memento may have also performed a racial function, in much the same way that photographs of live babies came to signify in racial terms in a culture permeated by eugenicist thought, as my discussion below will suggest.

The documentation of the family, and of individual members within the family, grew and was practiced with increasing enthusiasm as the invention of new photographic technologies dramatically expanded the potential for photographic consumption. As early as the 1850s, with the invention of the negative/positive, collodion/albumen process, exposure times were shortened significantly, and photographic images became mechanically reproducible. Unlike
the daguerreotype, which was a single, unique, non-reproducible image, the negative/positive process enabled unlimited copying of any given image, and consequently, photographs became both easier to obtain and easier to circulate. As a result of such innovations, photographic reproduction began to expand exponentially. In this era of mechanical reproduction, technological advances which shortened exposure times, combined with new business ventures, served to instigate popular new fads, and by the 1860s, people began to collect mass-reproduced carte-de-visite and cabinet card portraits of famous actors and actresses, of politicians, of one's own friends, and of family members. To assist collectors in organizing, preserving and cataloguing all these images, the photograph album became a popular cultural form. 22

The family photo album remains the most enduring colloquial register developed [End Page 201] during the period of photographic expansion. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the family photograph album came to function as a visual family archive, a record of ancestral legacies--the site where individuals were positioned within a family history. 22 By the turn of the century, according to Philip Stokes, "photography had thoroughly permeated family life... ." 24 With the invention of paper roll film and the hand-held Kodak camera in 1888, photography pervaded the family as one of its self-defining mechanisms to an even further extent, as the camera became an accessible source of home entertainment. Once the domain of professional portraitists who could both afford and manage cumbersome camera apparatus, the photographic portrait became a product of family life itself at the turn of the century, as the hand-held camera enabled non-professionals to become not only portrait sitters, but also portrait makers. George Eastman aggressively targeted middle-class consumers in his popular advertising campaigns, and by the turn of the century, photography had become a self-defining element of middle-class family life.

In fact, by the 1890s, the family became a social unit increasingly constructed through the process of representing itself photographically. Almost as soon as the hand-held pocket camera was invented, it was promoted as an instrument for documenting the family. The advertisement for Kodaks in the Ladies' Home Journal of December, 1897 reads: "The annual family gathering at the Thanksgiving table, the children's Christmas tree, groups of friends gathered to pass a winter evening--all make delightful indoor subjects for winter Kodaking... Put a Kodak on your Christmas list." 25 Situated as both the subject and the object of the verb "to kodak," the family becomes one holiday package among others. Things central to holidays regarded as particularly familial, objects around which the family is constructed--the Thanksgiving table, the children's Christmas tree--become ideal subjects to photograph: "Holidays are Kodak Days." 26 And, of course, holidays were not the only camera days: as we have already seen, by the end of the nineteenth century, anytime was the right time to photograph children--"Baby's picture is always treasured."

As the family was posed as a photographic reproduction at the turn of the century, the photographic industry situated white middle-class women at the cornerstone of its technological process. As previously noted, the Cyclone camera ad of 1898 designates mothers as the producers of infant photographic treasures. More directly, in 1898, the Ladies' Home Journal featured two articles instructing white middle-class mothers in how to photograph children successfully. In "Getting Good Pictures of Children," E. B. Core gives "a few suggestions to the mother," acknowledging her role as orchestrator of the photographic documentation of children, and offers eleven photographs of children as "... models of their kind for the guidance of parents." 27 While "Getting Good Pictures of Children" assumes that parents will want to employ a professional photographer to enact their instructions, an article published ten months later, entitled "Photographing Children at Home," addresses parents themselves as photographers. 28 Isaac Porter, Jr., author of "Photographing Children at Home," offers parents "at home" photography tips in how to "... preserve little records of their [children's] life, such as nothing but a good photograph can do. ..." 29 Again, sample
photographs are reproduced in order to spark the reader's imagination, and extensive preparation is emphasized: "... having [End Page 202] all the details in readiness before the child is called upon to take its part in the process of taking the photograph makes success almost sure of attainment." 30 Porter's detailed instructions, and the emphasis he places on "proper" preparation, suggest that "family life" was not only technologically mediated but also construed with rather serious intent.

The "charm" of the sample photographs Porter offers as models for the production of middle-class family life is created through references to the adult world, representing children as mini-adults: young boys and girls are shown reading, holding their babies, and staring at their reflections in the mirror. "Photographing Children at Home" becomes a guide in how to perpetuate middle-class "family values": photographs of children project them into the educated, heterosexual, reproductive future of their parent's world, tracing the imaginary trajectory of the middle-class familial line. 31 By mapping their aspirations onto their children, middle-class parents not only normalize, but also naturalize, their own adult activities, making them part of the imagined process of "growing up" white and middle-class. Commenting on the staged rigidity of turn-of-the-century amateur photographs made of children at play, Philip Stokes remarks that parents (the probable photographers) may have felt "an unwillingness to record the disorder and untidy behavior of the children, who were, after all, the family's centre and its future." 32 In Stokes' description, family photography becomes a technology that enables parents to monitor and to reproduce middle-class "family values." In this new context, "baby's photograph" ceases to be a stupid thing as it becomes the document through which the middle-class family's future is imagined and mechanically replicated.

Increasingly, at the advent of the twentieth century, photographing baby becomes essential to the social reproduction of the middle-class family, and the practice itself is most frequently represented as a maternal act. In addition to the Cyclone Camera advertisement that depicts a white woman photographing a small girl, and the Ladies' Home Journal articles that target white middle-class mothers as photographers, some of George Eastman's famous "You press the button we do the rest" advertisements for the Kodak camera also depict white women photographing their children. As the art of photographing baby is enacted by mothers upon daughters, it is also bequeathed from mother to child. A 1902 stereograph card produced by H. C. White further demonstrates how the act of photographing baby was becoming a normative performance, a kind of family heirloom or ancestral legacy in and of itself. White's stereo card depicts a young white girl photographing her own "baby," and the text reads: "Now smile a little dolly, while I take your picture." By the turn of the century, family photography had permeated white middle-class culture so thoroughly that photographing baby had itself become a self-reproducing act.

Reproducing "Racial" Inheritance

As popular women's magazines targeted white middle-class women as the engineers of the mechanical reproduction of the white middle-class family, scientific discourses posed these women as the biological reproducers of whiteness. As the New Woman of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries began to challenge the [End Page 203] reproductive destiny of the antebellum True Woman, physicians and sociologists condemned her freedom and independence as a threat to the future of the white middle and upper-middle classes. 33 By choosing education, professional work, and homosocial bonds over marriage, motherhood and domesticity, the New Woman supposedly threatened the livelihood of her elite white social class by refusing to procreate. In arguments aimed at containing middle and upper-middle class women within the home, the white woman emerged as the foundation of racialized class and national discourses. 34

Writing in the early 1920s, Albert Edward Wiggam, journalist, author, speaker, and prominent
popularizer of eugenics in America, encouraged white middle and upper-class women to use their newly acquired political power to advance the cause of eugenic marriages and motherhood. In Wiggam's vision, voting rights need not unsex women; such power could make them better race mothers. Wiggam declared: "Woman's new Promised Land, the objective of her exodus from political bondage, science has at last discovered for her, and, through her, for the race. Its name is Eugenics. It is the land of the well-born. It is for woman to determine whether or not the race shall enter it." 35 Acquiring rhetorical speed, Wiggam proclaims: "...eugenics means that the production of a great race shall become the sum and meaning of all politics, the one living purpose of the state." 36 And Wiggam emphasizes women's role in this fantasy of white perfection: "It is peculiarly to woman that America looks for the realization of this ideal. She is the natural conservator of the race, the guardian of its blood." 37

As "healthy" white middle- and upper-class women were hailed as the physical vessels through which a "great race" of white Americans was to be born, these women also played an important role in gathering the data that reinforced their positions as guardians of good blood. According to Marouf Arif Hasian, Jr., thousands of women became field workers collecting family data for American eugenicsists such as Charles Davenport, founder of the Eugenics Record Office in 1910 and first president of the New York Galton Society in 1918, and Henry Goddard, director of a New Jersey institute for the feebleminded and author of the famous family study The Kallikak Family. 38 Among this small army of eugenics workers, Gertrude C. Davenport, author of "Hereditary Crime" and Elizabeth S. Kite, author of "Two Brothers" and "The 'Pineys'" were perhaps the most influential. Both of these researchers promoted "the idea that mothers are more responsible than fathers in generating bad offspring," 39 a sentiment shared by many eugenists, and one that helped to shape racist anti-immigration sentiments among Anglo-Americans in the early twentieth century. 40

By the turn of the century, white women were situated at the center of a new kind of "moral order," posed as the foundation of white propagation. If the rhetoric of motherhood in the antebellum period construed white middle-class mothers as the moral educators of their children, racialized discourses in the postbellum era situated white middle-class mothers at the locus of biological inheritance. While a child's character was deemed the result of the True Woman's training in the antebellum period, it was seen as the gift of the white woman's biological heritage in [End Page 204] the latter half of the nineteenth century. In the context of eugenics, white womanhood came to represent not the moral, but the biological superiority of white middle-class character.

The role of the middle-class white woman as both the mechanical reproducer of "baby's picture" and the biological reproducer of whiteness (in baby's body) converged in the nineteenth-century science of eugenics. It is within eugenist research that "baby's picture" came to function most directly as a sign of racial inheritance. Situated within this cultural context, R.H.E.'s cantankerous rejection of the sentimentalized image of baby begins to take on new meaning. Indeed, a closer look at R.H.E.'s essay uncovers a new signifying register in which baby's picture might be treasured, ultimately, as the emblem of racial reproduction.

The image of a baby holds no great value for R.H.E. because one cannot read in the "features of obese babyhood" the "resemblances to those who have worthily wrought out their own lineaments of face and character." 41 In other words, a baby's pudgy body does not yet resemble that of its progenitors; family resemblances are not yet visible in an infant's rolls and folds--one cannot trace familial heritage in the baby's face. R.H.E. explains further in a particularly morbid passage that decisively situates the author beyond the pale of maternal affection: "Death will give you a more worthy picture of your baby's face than any mortal artist can do. Sharpened by disease, its little rigid features shall stand out to you with a storied distinctness, so that you may read, as from an open page, your child's possible and probable character and bearing." 42 For R.H.E., baby's face (and any representation of that face) does not
become interesting until it has been "sharpened," either slowly by age or more rapidly by disease and death, into a gaunt, adult face. Baby's physique holds no intrigue for R.H.E. until it becomes like "an open page," on which one can read baby's inherited character. Thus, for R.H.E., the "worth" of a baby's picture (indeed the worth of the child's little body) is its ability to illustrate the "character" the child will assume in maturity, a character inherited from "worthy" parents. In these terms, baby's photograph is valued as the documentation of an ancestral trace, the visible continuation of the hereditary line. The baby's pudgy body does not signify sufficiently the "origins" of its physical features, indices to ancestral character, and therefore, according to R.H.E., there is no good reason to record the corpulent physique.

In social practice, the child's photograph eventually did serve as a testament to ancestry, inheritance and continuity in family genealogies. At the turn of the century, family photography entered new cultural terrain as the images of loved ones were harnessed to science. If the photographic portrait was first circulated as a family heirloom, it was later exchanged as a document that recorded an ancestral heirloom, namely the "inherited character" heralded by R.H.E. Over the course of the nineteenth century, "baby's picture," the "treasure" of the family photograph album, became the evidence of the eugenicist album, the record of ancestral physical features and their supposed analogues, namely racialized character traits. 43 In 1884, the British founder of eugenics, Francis Galton, designed two "family albums": the Record of Family Faculties and the Life History Album. 44 Aiming to acquire practical data to support and expand his theoretical descriptions of racial improvement through planned procreation, Galton promoted the albums to "those who care to forecast the mental and bodily faculties of their children, and to further the science of heredity." 45 Galton hoped that by encouraging a standardized method of accumulating and documenting "biological histories," 46 a vast colloquial resource could be tapped for scientific purposes. As an incentive, Galton opened a national (British) competition and offered 500 pounds in prize money to those who could supply him with the best family records by May 15, 1884. 47 Similar contests were held at midwestern fairs in the U.S. in the early twentieth century; however, in the U.S. it was not the quality of genealogical documentation, but the eugenical fitness of the family itself that was judged in such competitions. 48

Galton's Record of Family Faculties aimed to help parents predict the development of their children by tracing their physical and mental attributes back through their ancestral heritage. In the Record, an entire page is devoted to each ancestor, going back at least as far as the child's great-grandparents, and 17 questions are asked about each relative. In addition to information generally recorded by the state, such as date of birth, birthplace, residences, occupation, age at marriage, and date and age at death, the record also requires information about the physical attributes and character of the person, including adult height, color of hair and color of eyes, general appearance, bodily strength, ability or imperfection of senses, mental powers, character, temperament, favorite pursuits, and artistic aptitudes. A separate section is left for ailments and illnesses, which Galton describes as "the most important of all in statistical investigations into the rise and fall of families," 49 and consequently, the rise and fall of races. In his description of the tables, Galton suggests that category number 8, for "general appearance," would be augmented by "a list of the best extant photographs or portraits of the person at various ages," which could be inserted as an extra page. 50

Designed under the guidance of Galton by a committee of the British Medical Association in 1884, The Life History Album served as a pair to the Record of Family Faculties, and encouraged parents to document the physical and mental growth of a child by following a standardized schedule of measurements and observations, and by collecting a continuous photographic record of the child's growth. If the Record allowed parents to place children (and themselves) within a history of inheritance, locating individuals in relation to a familial past, The Life History Album aided parents in projecting their bloodlines into the future, tracing their own features in the development of their immediate progeny.
The Life History Album begins with a condensed, one-page chart on which to record the child's family history, followed by a page on which to document the family's medical history. Subsequent pages are devoted to the child's individual history, which begins with a detailed description of the child at birth, including both physical and temperamental characteristics. First the Mother's labor is described, and then the child's tiny body is documented in terms of "physical peculiarities," weight, length, girth, color of eyes and hair, general health, and comportment. From this point the album divides into five-year periods, from birth to age 25, with less detailed segments devoted to the years 25-50 and 50-75. Each five-year period [End Page 206] provides a graph on which to record the child's annual stature and weight, and two blank pages on which to date and to annotate important events in the child's life. Anthropometric observations are made at the end of the fifth year, and every five years thereafter, including color of eyes and hair, chest girth, strength of pull, acuteness of vision and color vision, and hearing in each ear. Descriptions of acuteness or dullness in the other senses, of trials of physical strength and endurance, of hard intellectual work, of artistic ability, and of physical or mental attributes that resemble those of other relatives are also requested. Each period ends with a page for photographs made of the child within the five-year segment. Parents are requested to make two photographic portraits of their child every five years, "an exact full-face and a profile," 51 to be used along with other documentation to measure the child's physical and mental growth. Galton emphasizes uniformity in the photographic documentation of the child, stating that the images should be consistent in size, to enable accurate comparisons in studying a child's development. It is here, then, in The Life History Album, that the photograph becomes an important historical and scientific document.

Galton imagined that these standardized "family albums" would further enable his study of eugenics, which he deemed both a "science of heredity" and a "science of race." Initially a study of the reproduction of individual genius, Galton's study of heredity rapidly expanded to include the intellectual capacity of "races," and the "character" of races in general. Indeed, Galton's first major study, Hereditary Genius, published in England in 1869, was conceived as Galton was studying "the mental peculiarities of different races," 52 and this first study of "hereditary genius" concludes with a comparative evaluation of the supposed intellectual capacities of different races. Further, Galton devised his theory of eugenics with a practical purpose in mind; he suggested that "the improvement of the natural gifts of future generations of the human race is largely, though indirectly, under our control." 53 Ultimately, what Galton proposed with the science of hereditary he later named "eugenics" was a system of racial improvement through breeding. 54

Galton, the younger cousin of Charles Darwin, argued that there were nine biologically distinct races populating the planet, and that each race had its own distinguishing physical characteristics, and its own innate intellectual capacity and moral character. He organized these races along a hierarchical scale, placing Anglo-Saxons at the modern pinnacle of his measure of racial difference, and African-Americans two (innate) grades below. 55 Mourning the Ancient Greeks, whom he believed once claimed a now unreachable apex of racial genius, Galton warned that the fate of living Anglo-Saxons might become that of the historical Greeks, if steps were not taken to stabilize and to improve Anglo-Saxon breeding patterns. Galton's warning was aimed subtly at white upper-middle class women, and argued explicitly against miscegenation, correlating with contemporary American social opposition to the New (non-reproducing) Woman and the imagined sexual unions of white women and African-American men. In an era in which middle-class white women were prolonging marriage dates, and even foregoing them, Galton feared that Anglo-Saxons simply were not reproducing enough—enough, that is, to compete with the reproduction of other races. 56 Secondly, Galton warned against the [End Page 207] possibility of interracial reproduction, arguing that the progeny of such unions were biologically "weak," and that they diluted the potency of sacred ancestral "stock." For Galton, the "mulatto" was a "tragic" figure, not because he or she was born into a bi-racist culture that offered him or her no stable position, but because he or she
"contaminated" the hereditary pool of (white) racial genius. While Galton argued that interracial reproduction weakened both parent "stocks," he was concerned primarily to protect the purity of what he considered to be the "superior" stock, namely that of the Anglo-Saxons. Thus, Galton's vision of racial improvement through controlled breeding was one that reinforced the color line in terms of biological survival.

Galton's *Hereditary Genius*, first published in Britain in 1869, was reprinted in 1892, in the period that his work first became popular in the United States. Eugenics enthralled biological racialists in the U.S. at the turn of the century, and became a very popular social movement in the U.S. over the course of the early twentieth century. According to Hasian, "In the first several decades of the twentieth century, 'eugenics' was a term that Anglo-Americans heard about from the time of their infancy." In fact, "Growing up in the Anglo-American world in the first few decades of the twentieth century meant being constantly bombarded with lectures on eugenics from ethical, debating, and philosophical societies; health, women's and medical associations--sometimes even the YMCA. Hardly a year passed without new books coming to print written by both scientists and laypersons imbued with the zeal of the new faith. Much of this rhetoric followed a familiar format, beginning with the birth of the movement founded by Galton and ending with a call that the world take up the eugenics creed." For many white Americans, eugenics resonated powerfully, and in practical terms, with Josiah Nott's mid-century study of races as distinct biological species, and coincided with a gradual ideological shift away from Christian views of monogenesis, or ultimate racial equality, toward racialist views of polygenesis, or absolute racial difference. Throughout the Progressive Era, eugenics played a central role in U.S. movements toward social reform and social control: the Eugenics Committee of America was an influential force in lobbying for the Immigration Restriction Act of 1924; sterilization was practiced on patients and inmates in U.S. mental asylums and prison wards; and laws prohibiting interracial marriages were established and upheld in most states. In a more general sense, Galton's studies of inherent racial difference provided many white Americans with a seeming scientific justification for cultural imperialism and for social segregation. Galton's work ideologically fortified the status quo, naturalizing all systems of oppression as the inevitable results of distinct biological gifts or capabilities.

Through his theory of eugenics, Galton proposed that the foundation of "race" ultimately lay in the social locus of biological reproduction, namely the family. Galton proclaimed that intellectual and moral capabilities, as well as physical characteristics, were first, ancestral heirlooms, and second, race specific. As Galton construed "race" as a genealogical construct, he posed "character" as a central artifact in the articulation of "race." [End Page 208]

Eugenicist understandings of "character" in biological and racialized terms offer a means of comprehending R.H.E.'s strange estimation of familial character in 1867. When read through Galton's work, R.H.E.'s statements ring both ideologically pregnant and racially charged, providing the foundation for a new kind of racial identity. Once again, the antebellum discourse of moral maternal influence in the formation of a child's character is transformed into a discourse of biological maternal inheritance in the scientific register of eugenics and in R.H.E.'s essay itself.

R.H.E. suggests that one's inherited character, the heirloom of "worthy" parents, eventually will be legible in the outward indices of one's body; similarly, Francis Galton believed that ancestral character (a racialized construct) was visible in one's physical features, as his family records and albums demonstrate. While it is difficult to discern the extent to which Galton's *Record of Family Faculties* and *Life History Album* were adopted by American parents, similar records were promoted enthusiastically in the U.S. in the early twentieth century. According to
Hasian, "... in the first decades of the twentieth century, thousands of families eagerly filled out their 'Record of Family Traits' and rushed to mail them to eugenicists for analysis by Davenport or other experts stationed at the Cold Spring Harbor Research Laboratory on Long Island." Albert Wiggam distributed family-record forms to the audiences he addressed on his Chautauqua speaking tours, to be filled out and mailed to the American Eugenics Society, and, as noted above, eugenicists sponsored "fitter family contests" at midwestern fairs, in addition to sponsoring eugenics displays and shows at such events. In the U.S., eugenicists augmented famous "negative" family studies with photographs of "degenerates," and often doctored the images to make subjects appear strange and even diabolical. Such works include: Henry Herbert Goddard's The Kallikak Family (1912), Frank W. Blackmar's, "The Smoky Pilgrims" (1897), Elizabeth S. Kite's, "The 'Pineys'' (1913), Mina A. Sessions's The Feeble-Minded in a Rural County of Ohio (1918), and A. C. Rogers and Maud A. Merrill's Dwellers in the Vale of Siddem (1919).

An investigation of early twentieth-century U.S. "baby books" also suggests that the construction of genealogical identity, in terms uncannily similar to those outlined by Galton, permeated early twentieth-century U.S. culture. Indeed, it appears that Galton's attempt to harness popular family albums to science was quite effective, for over the course of the early twentieth century, American baby books adopted many eugenicist terms and structures, even mirroring Galton's Record and Life History Album. As Galton appropriated and aimed to standardize the popular form of the family album, that very popular venue itself was transformed, adopting the terms of standardized data in The Modern Baby Book. It would seem that the popular and scientific forms of the family album mutually influenced one another in the early years of the twentieth century.

In The Modern Baby Book and Child Development Record, published by The Parents' Magazine (in connection with W. W. Norton) in the U.S. in 1929, John E. Anderson and Florence L. Goodenough attest to the popularity of baby books in the early twentieth-century United States: "For years parents have been attempting to keep records of the early development and behavior of their children. Pink and blue baby [End Page 209] books abound." Framed in contrast to "the old-fashioned Baby Books, containing merely a heterogeneous collection of snapshots, 'cute sayings,' locks of hair and what-not," Anderson and Goodenough designed The Modern Baby Book to standardize family records and to serve the purposes of both science and practical parenting, much as Galton had devised The Life History Album. Similar to Galton's The Life History Album (which, once again, begins with a condensed, one-page chart on which to record the child's family history), The Modern Baby Book begins with a short family history, in which parents are called upon to record the "interests and accomplishments" of the child's ancestors. In this section, photographs of the parents and all the grandparents are to be collected at the time of the baby's birth, establishing a portrait of the family line at the time in which the baby enters that ancestral lineage. Following this section in The Modern Baby Book, the baby's birth and initial stature are described in much the same terms outlined by Galton. As Galton requested a detailed description of the child's physical characteristics at birth, including an extensive record of the child's tiny body--its "physical peculiarities," weight, length, girth, color of eyes and hair, general health, and comportment--The Modern Baby Book calls for a record of the baby's weight, length and circumference. Subsequent measurements of height and weight are made every week for the first year and once a year thereafter to age 16. What Goodenough and Anderson add to the "scientific" terms of the baby book are explicit markers of class status--they ask parents not only to record the child's anthropometric measurements each year, but also to describe the child's birthday party and to list the presents he or she received.

Both Galton's Life History Album and Goodenough and Anderson's Modern Baby Book are future-oriented, self-reproducing projects. While Galton imagines that the child will take over the process of self-documentation in adulthood, Goodenough and Anderson predict that when the child becomes an adult, the baby book will become especially significant, allowing him or
her to compare "his [or her] own early development with that of his [or her] children and grandchildren." Anderson and Goodenough imagine that the familial bloodline will reproduce itself long into future generations.

Francis Galton attempted to bridge scientific and popular uses of family photography through *The Record of Family Faculties* and the *Life History Album*, hoping that by encouraging standardized procedures he could open family archives to scientific research. The popularity of modern "baby books" throughout the Progressive Era suggests that his mission was quite successful in the United States, as many eugenicist categories appear to be central to the production of familial documentation in modern baby books. It is within this ideological context, against the scientific backdrop of eugenics, and an increasing cultural interest in heredity, that the popular form of "family photography" developed as a middle-class institution. Thus, we can begin to read the growing interest in "baby's picture" not only as a commercial fad or a sentimental ritual, but also as a desire to delineate the future of racial bloodlines through photographic artifacts. In this expanded cultural context "baby's picture" signifies not only as a sentimental memento, but also as the scientific "evidence" of the family's racial reproduction. [End Page 210]

**Sentimental Aura and the Evidence of Race**

Re-examining the advent of the popular family photograph album from the cultural position established by Galton's family albums, one can begin to see how the "treasured" image of baby secured by white middle-class mothers with pocket cameras may obscure a very troubling foundation point of racial reproduction. The slippage between the seemingly innocuous evaluation of baby's picture in the family photograph album and the explicitly racialized measure of baby's photograph in Francis Galton's "family albums" may be clarified by thinking about these two photographic practices in relation to Walter Benjamin's theories of photographic meaning. When addressing the popular form of family photography that developed contiguously with Galton's eugenicist records, the famous distinctions Walter Benjamin draws between the aural and the evidential image become significant precisely as they are effaced.  

According to Walter Benjamin, the technological shift from daguerreotypy to mechanical reproduction, which enabled both the popular form of family photography and Galton's eugenicist family records, fundamentally altered the character of photographic meaning. Dissolution of "aura" surrounding the work of art begins with the invention of mechanical reproduction, or the negative/positive photographic printing process, and heralds a revolutionary moment in art history, one that frees the work of art from what Benjamin deems its "parasitic dependence on ritual." Benjamin argues that the modern painting, in its singular originality, trapped within the museum, remains intricately tied to a tradition of religious ritual; the artist is analogue to the creator, and the modern painting, marked as an original creation, retains the "aura" of a pseudo-spiritual glow. According to Benjamin, mechanical reproduction frees the work of art from the tyranny of originality, destroying the unique in multiplicity, enabling the work of art to be harnessed to the work of politics. Negative/positive photography, with its capacity for endless reproduction, is, for Benjamin, the first revolutionary art form.

Yet even as he describes mechanical reproduction, or the negative/positive photographic process, as a gestalt, Benjamin also notes that "aura" maintains a lingering stronghold in the most popular of early photographic forms--the portrait. According to Benjamin, aura or "cult value" makes its final appearance in the photographic portrait, clinging to the representation of the human countenance, before it is finally abolished by evidential standards. Benjamin describes the "aura" of the photographic portrait as a "cult of remembrance," a privatized worship of missing loved ones, which is analogous to the worship of the religious devotee
before a cherished icon. Here we have in Benjamin's analysis the one function of the photograph that satisfies that cantankerous critic of "baby's picture," R.H.E.--the images serves as "a link between you [the viewer] and the memory of its owner." 80 For Benjamin and for R.H.E., then, the "aura" of the photographic portrait is the beholder's investment of the image with sentimentality, a sentimentality dominated by familial bonds.

Yet while sentimental familial bonds rhetorically dominated photographic meaning in the family photograph album, what Benjamin has described as the "evidentiary" quality of non-auratic images was privileged at least partially in the evaluation [End Page 211] of baby's picture in Francis Galton's *Life History Album*, in *The Modern Baby Book*, and in R.H.E.'s essay. I would like to suggest, therefore, that the photographs that Francis Galton hoped to procure with his *Record of Family Faculties* and his *Life History Album* signified at the convergence of Benjamin's auratic portraits and evidentiary documents. Benjamin distinguishes the "evidential" photographic record from the "auratic" photographic portrait by its relative "emptiness." For Benjamin it is only the "deserted" image that can replace cult ritual with "hidden political significance," 81 that can provide revolutionary evidence of "historical occurrences" like the "scenes of crime." 82 It is only when "man withdraws from the photographic image" 83 that ritual value is superseded by exhibition value, the "revolutionary" estimation of historical occurrences. And finally, even such "deserted" images require captions in order to maintain their radical import, in order to harness photographic meaning to revolutionary objects. 84

Providing detailed instructions as to the size, format and style of images to be procured, and situating those images within what one might call an extensive narrative "caption" of detailed documentation, Galton also attempted to demystify the once sentimental meaning of the individual portrait, reclaiming it for science. While certainly not "deserted," Galton's images, drained of sentiment, would not have been valued simply as keepsakes, but as testaments to the family bloodline. Transforming the portrait into a scientific record, Galton reinscribed the photographic likeness as the evidence of family character, and thus, in the terms of eugenics, as the sign of racial identity. While clearly "evidential," Galton's use of the photograph was certainly not the counter-hegemonic force that Benjamin envisioned. On the contrary, while Galton's "family portraits" are divested of a specifically sentimentalized aura, they are reinvoked with the pernicious ritualistic "aura" of racism, which not only establishes racial distinction, but also reinforces racial superiority. In Galton's albums the evidential quality of the image is reinvoked with an aura which links the viewer, through baby's picture, to a racialized family bloodline. To summarize bluntly, in Galton's albums baby's picture is treasured as the measure of white supremacy.

How does this conversion of evidence and racialized aura in Galton's albums help us to understand the sentimentalized investment of white middle-class Americans in "baby's picture" at the turn of the century? If Galton's albums infuse the sentimental image with the fantasized "evidence" of racial superiority, do popular family photograph albums perform the inverse function? Does "baby's picture" become a kind of racial document invested with sentimental aura in the family photograph album? Surely many will protest such a suggestion, proclaiming that they do not think about the future, health or dominance of their race when they photograph their children. But then how can we understand contemporary birth announcements that include baby's first photograph and document the weight and length of the newborn? And what does it mean when those same photographs are placed in baby books that reproduce so closely the terms of Galton's eugenicist albums?

We have already seen that popular and scientific baby albums were not static forms, but exchanged and reappropriated terms and structures from one another throughout the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. R.H.E.'s desire to [End Page 212] read ancestral character in 1867 is illuminated later by Francis Galton's theory of eugenics. Galton's desire to utilize family albums for scientific study in turn appears to inform the later production of those
popular albums, as in *The Modern Baby Book*. When we find scientific and popular forms mirroring one another, what do we make of the ideological investments that inform those converging practices? Does R.H.E.'s strange essay announce the forthcoming ideological influence of eugenics? By the 1890s, R.H.E.'s parents need no longer wait for age or death in order to take measure of their child's future character--the discourse of eugenics provides this register for them. In this same period does the family photograph album take on the ideological underpinnings of eugenics? And to what extent do the later pink and blue covers of modern baby books mask their true colors?

Photographing baby has endured as a self-defining mechanism for the white middle classes. Indeed, parents produce, and reproduce, and circulate these photographs among friends and family and collect them in albums at an ever accelerated rate. The images mark our love for and interest in the babies they depict, but they also represent adult desires, parental pride, and genealogical affiliation, perhaps reaffirming parents' own sense of their reproductive fitness. Can sentiment, then, fully account for the nature of our desire for baby's picture? As Michel Foucault reminds us, power secures its stronghold precisely in those practices which are held to be normal and natural.  

and given the present object of analysis, we might also add "cute." While it is easy to say that white middle-class investment in the health and growth of babies is only natural, and that photographs of babies function simply as sentimental mementos, what might be the price of separating such practices from their historical and discursive counterparts? Much of the insidious power of eugenicist discourse in the early twentieth century was founded in its seemingly laudable proclamations to improve "health." Indeed, what could be wrong with monitoring and promoting the health of a family line? We know, of course, that Galton's desire to promote the procreation of the "strong," and conversely to deter the reproduction of the "weak," was informed by a racial ideology in which Anglo-Saxons were always the "strongest," always morally and intellectually superior to African-Americans. Given the transmutation of the baby book in eugenicist and sentimental terms, can we really understand photographing baby as a sentimental act utterly distinct from its performance in explicitly racialized venues? And what does it mean if we very urgently desire to do so?

Richard Dyer has argued persuasively that whiteness secures its cultural power by seeming to be nothing at all, by being invisible.  

Does it not make sense, then, that the practices and rituals of white desire would also be invisible, remaining racially unmarked, perhaps masked by other terms, such as those of gender, class, or even sentiment? Today baby's picture is certainly not a stupid thing; but then again, a lot may depend upon what it is we "always treasure."

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1. The author of this article is identified by initials only, as "R.H.E." R.H.E., "My Photograph," *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* (April 1867): 341-345, 343.


The *Ladies Home Journal* and Godey's *Lady's Book* were both aimed at a middle- and upper-middle-class white female readership. In her profile on Sarah Josepha Hale, the literary editor of *Godey's Lady's Book*, Nicole Tonkovich proposes that "women across the American continent" acclaimed *Godey's* as their connection to New England values and mores, whether those values were connected to fashion, homemaking skills, language, literature, intellectual trends, or current events." Nicole Tonkovich Hoffman, "LEGACY Profile: Sarah Josepha Hale (1788-1874), " *Legacy* 47.

4. Francis Galton developed the science of eugenics, which he also deemed a science of "race," over the course of the late nineteenth century, beginning with his studies of "hereditary genius" in 1869. As my later discussion of eugenics will demonstrate, eugenics proposed that races were biologically distinct and inherently unequal in moral and intellectual attributes. Eugenicists ranked Anglo-Saxons highest among modern races, and they sought to improve Anglo-Saxon racial "stock" through controlled breeding. Galton first coined the term "eugenics" in 1884, and the science gained wide popularity in the United States in the early twentieth century.


5. I will discuss at length two family albums Francis Galton designed which utilized the photograph as evidence of heritable characteristics. Francis Galton, *The Life History Album* (London: Macmillan, 1884), and *Record of Family Faculties* (London: Macmillan, 1884).


Eugenicist desires to represent race fed a larger white nation-building enterprise in the United States at the turn of the century. Indeed, Francis Galton, the founder of eugenics, often conflated the terms "nation" and "race," and many patriotic societies attempted to do the same. The Daughters of the American Revolution, founded in the 1890s, used intricate genealogical charts in order to map a national history confined by "white" Anglo-Saxon bloodlines. In a period of increased immigration, and African-American social and economic mobilization, white supremacist nationalists evoked the eugenicist categories of Anglo-Saxon superiority, in order to privilege an imagined white American identity.


11. According to John Tagg, "to have one's portrait done was one of the symbolic acts by which individuals from the rising social classes made their ascent visible to themselves and others and classed themselves among those who enjoyed social status." John Tagg, The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 37.


13. Francis Galton, the founder of eugenics, conceptualized his early work on racial classification as a study of "hereditary genius." See his Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into its Laws and Consequences (London: Macmillan, 1892).


16. Most studies of the "nation" have focused upon the printed word, following the influential work of Benedict Anderson (Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1983)).

Vicente Rafael has begun the important task of investigating the role photography played in nation-building. See Vicente Rafael, "Nationalism, Imagery and the Filipino Intelligentsia in the Nineteenth Century" and "White Love: Surveillance and Nationalist Resistance in the U.S. Colonization of the Philippines." See also Shawn Michelle Smith, "Photographing the 'American Negro': Nation, Race, and Photography at the Paris Exposition of 1900."

17. See Davidson, "Photographs of the Dead," 678.


20. I am indebted to Laura Wexler for helping me to develop this portion of my argument.


23. In "A Small History of Photography," Walter Benjamin describes the family photograph album as the place where "foolishly draped or corseted figures were displayed: Uncle Alex and Aunt Riecken, little Trudi when she was still a baby, Papa in his first term at university . . . and finally, to make our shame complete, we ourselves. . . ." (Walter Benjamin, "A Small History of Photography," One Way Street and Other Writings (London: NLB, 1979), 240-257, 246.)


28. Although printed several months after "Getting Good Pictures of Children," Isaac Porter, Jr.'s "Photographing Children at Home," serves as a pair to the earlier article, and refers to E. B. Core's article directly. Isaac Porter Jr., "Photographing Children at Home," The Ladies' Home Journal (December 1898): 35.


The white woman also emerged as the explicit font of racial reproduction in the more violent context of lynching. The 1890s, the decade in which white women were posed as the reproducers of baby's treasured image, was also the period in which the racially charged act of lynching was at an all time high in the United States. As white lynch mobs formed throughout the South, attempting to block African-American economic and social advances with brutal terrorism, they most frequently proclaimed their raison d'être to be the protection of white womanhood. "Justifying" the murder of black men as a retribution for the alleged rape of white women, white male lynch mobs supposedly reinforced the "purity" of white bloodlines.

Increasingly in the 1890s, the black male was mythologized as a threat to a reconfigured white Southern patriarchy, as a kind of bestial atavism particularly enticed by the bodies of white women. Underlying the gendered discourse of patriarchal protection forwarded by white lynch mobs was a racialized discourse whereby lynching exemplified the white man's determination to protect the "integrity" of the white race, and to punish any black man who might attempt to "pollute" the white bloodline. By dismembering the bodies of black men, white males demonstrated their control over African-American men and white women, asserting their ability to maintain the dominance of a white patriarchy unaltered by the abolition of slavery. Acts publicly committed and condoned in the name of white womanhood, were performed to display the prowess and power of a white patriarch, now legally defined as equal to (if still "separate" from), his black victims. Thus, in the discourse of lynching, the "protection" of white womanhood functioned less to denote the privilege of white women than to signify, ultimately, the social power of white men.

The practices that purported to protect the sanctity of white womanhood monitored and disciplined the white woman's sexual behavior, deeming perverse the heterosexual white woman who desired a black man. Even the most radical white feminists, those who did not utterly condemn interracial marriages, viewed the white woman's desire for black men as a phenomenon peculiar to the "lower" classes. In the discourses that regulated the purity of white womanhood, delineating deviant forms of white sexuality to oppose white norms, the sexuality of the black woman functioned as an ideological antithesis. Discursively posed as the "carrier" of second-class blood, the black woman's body was denigrated, her sexuality was despised, and her person was denied the privilege of national protection.


36. Wiggam, 280.
37. Wiggam, 280.
41. R.H.E., "My Photograph" 343.
42. "My Photograph," 343.
43. For examinations of the use of photography in eugenics, see: David Green, "Veins of Resemblance," and Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive."

Photography was also utilized by criminologists in the nineteenth century as they attempted to link physiognomic features to a congenital criminal character. Cesare Lombroso and William Ferrero, *The Female Offender* (New York: D. Appleton, 1899).
44. Francis Galton, *The Life History Album* and *Record of Family Faculties*.
47. This announcement was included as an insert in Francis Galton's *Record of Family Faculties*.
54. Galton first used the term "eugenics" to describe his "science of heredity," or "science of race," in 1884, in *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development*.
Francis Galton, "Influences that Affect the Natural Ability of Nations," *Hereditary Genius*, 405-415.

Among other factors, Galton identified miscegenation as one of the causes of the fall of the Athenian race (Francis Galton, "The Comparative Worth of Different Races," *Hereditary Genius*, 398).

Josiah Nott, a pro-slavery ethnologist of the mid-nineteenth century who believed in polygenesis, or the separate creation of different races as distinct species, argued that "the superior [Anglo-Saxon] race must inevitably become deteriorated by any intermixture with the inferior." (Josiah Nott as quoted in George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind*, 80.)

Again, for studies of the extended impact eugenics had on late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century United States culture, see: Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, especially pages 161-167; Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics*, and Donald K. Pickens, *Eugenics and the Progressives*.

Once again, for analyses of the role photography played in eugenics see Green, "Veins of Resemblance," and Sekula, "The Body and the Archive."


Polygenesis was theorized first by Dr. Charles Caldwell in 1830, but not widely accepted until the 1840s and 1850s. Polygenists challenged monogenesis, a belief in the singular creation of the human race corresponding to Biblical traditions, and proposed that the different races were produced at different moments, as distinct species, and were thus innately different and also inherently unequal. In the mid-nineteenth century, Josiah Nott and others associated with the American school of ethnology, contributed new studies which seemed to support the hypothesis of the separate and unequal creation of the races. Consequently, as early as the mid-nineteenth century, Africans and Anglo-Saxons were viewed by many not only as distinct races, but also as distinct species. See Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind*, 73; Appiah, "Race," 276; and Young, *Colonial Desire*, especially Chapter 5, "Egypt in America, the Confederacy in London" (118-141) and Chapter 6, "White Power, White Desire" (142-158).


Ludmerer, *Genetics and American Society*, 90-95. See also Philip R. Reilly, *The Surgical Solution*.

According to David Green, eugenics was bound directly to the ideological interests of the professional middle class, a class that differentiated itself from both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat by its claim to a recently accredited system of knowledge ("Veins of Resemblance," 19).

For a brief example of Galton's delineation of "natural" social hierarchies, see the preface to the 1892 edition of *Hereditary Genius*, 25-41.

Contrary to other historical images of the family, which define the family as an inclusive
structure indifferent to racial difference, Galton's eugenics posed the family as what Walter Benn Michaels has called an exclusive institution marking "the unequivocal source of racial difference." Walter Benn Michaels, "Race into Culture: A Critical Genealogy of Cultural Identity," *Critical Inquiry* 18:4 (Summer 1992): 655-685, 664.

67. Galton also devised a system of composite portraiture through which he claimed to be able to capture the central physiognomic characteristics of any given biological "type" of individuals. Francis Galton, Appendix A: "Composite Portraiture," *Inquiries into Human Faculty and its Development*, 221-241.


70. Hasian, *The Rhetoric of Eugenics* 43, 44.

71. For a description and the actual text of many of these documents see Rafter's *White Trash*. Rafter discusses the photographs reproduced in these texts in her preface, pages ix and x.


77. In defining non-auratic photography, Benjamin celebrates the "deserted" quality of Atget's early twentieth-century Paris photographs, heralding Atget as the first photographer to make images which signified according to exhibition or evidential value, thereby replacing cult ritual with a "hidden political significance." In Atget's work, according to Benjamin, the photograph ceases to function as a memorial to a lost loved one, and begins to provide evidence of "historical occurrences," like the "scenes of crime." ("The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," 226.)


84. Benjamin states: "What we require of the photographer is the ability to give his picture the caption that wrenches it from modish commerce and gives it a revolutionary useful value." (From "The Author as Producer," Reflections, ed. Peter Demetz (New York: Schocken, 1968), 220-238; here 230.)
