

## Biological Racism, Part 1: Digression of a Darwinist

Previous to the 16th Century it seems people of various cultures mostly made the prejudice assumption they were superior to others based on cultural differences - colour did not equal culture and culture was not defined by colour. It was not until Darwin's evolutionary theory became popular that biological racism and colour inferiority received its powerful prejudice momentum. In Professor Stephen Gould's book *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* he makes the point that "biological arguments for racism may have been commonplace before 1859, but they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of the evolutionary theory" (Gould, 1977, 127). The evolutionary theory being 1) the controversial claim that people evolved from apes over millions of years and 2) the well accepted claim that humans are able to adapt in different environments all over the world thanks to evolution. Darwin was equal to evolution but the effect of Darwin could not be safely contained to those two claims (and that is why I explored the book *The Darwin Effect* by Jerry Bergman which I refer to in this piece).

Bergman agrees the theories of Darwinism were viewed as positively progressive to its non-Christian and non Bible believing fans as they took hold of Darwinian theories like natural selection and the origin of species, but many (including myself) will admit those theories not only contradicted the Creation account of Genesis but it also deeply digressed into biological racism especially when the wrong hands took hold of it, particularly hands who had an unchecked lust for power... people such as Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, and Chairman Mao - the trio of whom caused the genocide of about 400 million people... or those in Nazi Germany during WWII who advocated for the abolition of the 'unfit', diseased, addicted, and mentally ill and who justified themselves through the Darwinist eugenics program of that time (Bergman, 2014, 8-9, 27).

I discovered through reading web article *Introduction to Eugenics* that eugenics is a movement aimed at improving the genetic composition of the human race through processes such as selective scientific human breeding or genetic altering technologies such as sterilization. It was Sir Francis Galton, the British father of eugenics and related associate of Charles Darwin, who first used the term 'eugenics' to describe those who were 'well born' and asserted that the human race should selectively choose its future through programs of selective breeding. America caught on to their idea during the 19th Century but from another angle - they focused on selective breeding from the standpoint of breeding out undesirable generational traits even as far as those who had traits of promiscuity and feeble-mindedness. As World War II and other civil wars waned with the complete devastation it all brought so did the trustworthiness of eugenics and its popular use for the justification of genocide through theories of evolution (<http://knowgenetics.org/history-of-eugenics/>). In other words, it took communism, Nazism, and other totalitarian regimes to make it known that "racism [is] only one step away from eugenics, a school of applied Darwinism founded by Francis Galton" (Bergman, 2014, 57).

The end of war time is full of people re-establishing their sense of context and belonging. One way people do that is by looking back to the origin stories of humankind and their civilizations and vowing not to repeat the wicked errors of things like racism and totalitarianism. Bergman discusses that Many Western and modernized civilizations find their origin stories by looking back at Middle East-Mediterranean writings which are dated back before the time of Christ. Bergman rightly says that whether those civilizations took their cues from Aristotle, Plato, Moses, or Jesus, one thing is for certain: long before any of them dabbled in the arenas of cultural philosophy, science and religion, a melting pot of numerous ethnic profiles and civilizations existed. Bergman also mentions the historical accounts of those civilizations were not often classified according to skin tone or colour but according to culture, tribe, language, religion - each of them having contributed to the shaping of 21st Century society in their own ways (Bergman, 2014, 26). According to those helpful ideas, origin stories should not be birthed out of cold selective scientific breeding nor should they be birthed out of the prejudice classifications of ones skin colour. Origin stories are birthed out of everyday people of all backgrounds, tones and colours. Those everyday people become mothers and fathers who

give their hands to the raising of their children and who lend their hands to the building of society and the shaping of its culture in which we find ourselves - and hopefully that is a culture built on a foundation of lovingkindness.

If modern civilizations and societies could reach out one hand with a sincere handshake and another hand with food/water instead of tearing down each others building blocks of lovingkindness we would have no need to delve into biological racism and hopefully not digress into cultural prejudice either - how difficult that has been for humanity to do with such principles in mind! And to point to the Bible (to hopefully keep those principles in mind), many families and individuals find the teachings of Jesus and the apostles a helpful reminder of considerate everyday basics of lovingkindness - how easily we forget the basics of loving one another and treating one another other well! Here are two examples from the Bible which I find to be helpful:

“Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is *the* first and great commandment. And *the* second *is* like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” - Matthew 22:37-40 (NKJV).

“Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” - 1 Corinthians 13: 4-6 (NKJV).

The digression of Darwinism and the path it took into the dark world of eugenics means that many of us should not have the wonderful privilege of raising our beautiful children. I believe every one of us has an important personal origin story. And I believe all biological racism is counter-culture to the Word of the Bible and to my personal conscience.

**Jasmin Hall-Hembree** | October, 2017

### **Bibliography:**

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