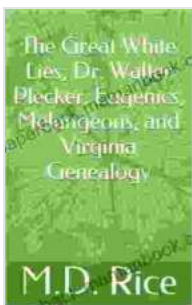


The Great White Lies: Dr. Walter Plecker, Eugenics, Melungeons, and Virginia

The eugenics movement was a social movement that advocated for the improvement of the human race through selective breeding. In the United States, the eugenics movement gained traction in the late 19th century and reached its peak in the 1920s and 1930s. During this time, over 30 states passed sterilization laws that allowed for the involuntary sterilization of people who were deemed to be unfit to reproduce. The eugenics movement had a profound impact on the lives of thousands of Americans, including the Melungeons, a mixed-race group that was targeted by Dr. Walter Plecker, the state health commissioner of Virginia.



The Great White Lies; Dr. Walter Plecker, Eugenics, Melungeons, and Virginia Genealogy by Marsha Rice

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 428 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 13 pages
Lending : Enabled



Dr. Walter Plecker and the Eugenics Movement in Virginia

Dr. Walter Plecker was a strong advocate for eugenics. He believed that the human race could be improved through selective breeding and that the

state had a responsibility to prevent the reproduction of people who were deemed to be unfit. In 1913, Plecker was appointed as the state health commissioner of Virginia. He quickly became one of the most influential proponents of eugenics in the United States. Under Plecker's leadership, Virginia passed a sterilization law in 1924. This law allowed for the involuntary sterilization of people who were deemed to be feeble-minded, insane, or epileptic. Plecker also established a system of racial classification that was used to identify people who were targets for sterilization.

The Melungeons

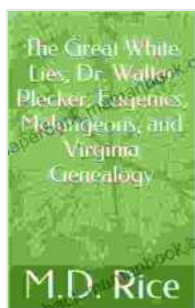
The Melungeons are a mixed-race group that has lived in the Appalachian Mountains of Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina for centuries. The origin of the Melungeons is unclear, but they are believed to be descended from a mixture of European, African, and Native American ancestors. The Melungeons have faced discrimination and prejudice throughout their history. In the early 20th century, the Melungeons were targeted by Dr. Walter Plecker's eugenics policies. Plecker classified the Melungeons as "colored" and ordered that they be sterilized. As a result of Plecker's policies, hundreds of Melungeons were sterilized against their will.

The Legacy of Eugenics in Virginia

The eugenics movement in Virginia came to an end in the 1940s. However, the legacy of eugenics continues to haunt the state. The sterilization laws that were passed during the eugenics era remain on the books in Virginia. In 2002, the Virginia legislature apologized for the state's role in the eugenics movement. However, the apology did not include any compensation for the victims of eugenics.

The Great White Lies: Dr. Walter Plecker, Eugenics, Melungeons, and Virginia is a comprehensive account of the eugenics movement in Virginia and the role of Dr. Walter Plecker in its implementation. The book provides a detailed history of the eugenics movement in Virginia, from its early beginnings in the late 19th century to its peak in the 1920s and 1930s.

It also examines the impact of eugenics on the Melungeons, a mixed-race group that was targeted by Plecker's policies. The book is a well-researched and well-written account of a dark chapter in Virginia's history.



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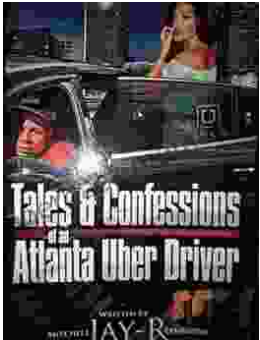
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