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Biennial Report
of
The Eugenics Board
of North Carolina

JULY 1, 1958
TO
JUNE 30, 1960
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EUGENICS BOARD OF NORTH CAROLINA

ELLEN WINSTON, Ph.D., Commissioner of Public Welfare, Chairman

T. WADE BRUTON, Attorney General of North Carolina

J. F. ELLIOTT, M. D., Superintendent, Murdoch School, Butner, N. C.

EUGENE A. HARGROVE, M. D., Commissioner of Mental Health, Hospitals Board of Control

J. W. R. NORTON, M. D., State Health Director

ETHEL SPEAS, Executive Secretary
LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To his Excellency, LUTHER H. HODGES
Governor of North Carolina

Dear Sir:

I have the honor of submitting herewith the report of the Eugenics Board of North Carolina for the biennial period dating from July 1, 1958 through June 30, 1960.

Sincerely yours,

Chairman
INTRODUCTION

The eugenical sterilization program of North Carolina is administered under Article 7, Chapter 35, of the General Statutes of North Carolina, enacted in 1933. This law provides for the sterilization of persons who are either mentally ill, mentally retarded, or epileptic. The law refers to the first two disabilities as the "mentally diseased" and "feebleminded." In addition to objective evidence of one of the three impairments, it must be shown as the result of social, medical, psychiatric, and psychological study that sterilization is applicable to the needs of the particular individual.

The purpose of sterilization as it is administered under the North Carolina program is to protect persons from parenthood whose impairments would seriously handicap them in assuming the responsibilities of parents.

The law protects the individual in that it provides for the written consent of the husband or wife or the nearest relative. It also provides for the right of a hearing and an appeal. These latter rights are seldom exercised due to the fact that the individual and husband, or wife, or close relative usually participate in the plan and make their own decision in favor of the operation before signing the consent.

Petitions for the sterilization of non-institutional persons are submitted to the Eugenics Board by the county superintendents of public welfare. Petitions for the sterilization of State institutional residents are submitted by the superintendents of the institutions.

The program is administrated by the Eugenics Board of North Carolina with the assistance of an Executive Secretary. The Board is composed of five members: The Commissioner of Public Welfare of North Carolina; the Director of the State Board of Health; the Chief Medical Officer of a State hospital for the mentally ill, or a school for the mentally retarded of North Carolina; the Chief Medical Officer of the State Hospitals Board of Control; and the Attorney General of North Carolina.

An amendment enacted by the North Carolina Legislature of 1959 provides for the Chief Medical Officer of the State Hospitals Board of Control to be a member of the Board, and removes the requirement that the Chief Medical Officer of the State Hospital in Raleigh be a member of the Board.

The eugenical sterilization program has now been in operation for a little over twenty-five years. During this time the increased knowledge in the field of mental health has revealed many causative factors for mental illness and mental deficiency. Hereditary factors, which are in evidence, take their place among a vast number of other reasons for these disabilities.

In keeping abreast of the expanding knowledge in the field of mental health, the Eugenics Board has recognized that in order for the sterilization program to be effective it must be regarded
as an integral part of a broad system of protection and supervision of those individuals unable to meet their responsibilities as parents.

Over a period of years there has been a trend toward giving increased emphasis to the value of sterilization for the particular individual. Seldom is there evidence that sterilization is considered as a single means of solving a problem. To the contrary, the provision is used increasingly as one among many of the essential resources in taking care of the needs of certain individuals. This improvement in the use of the sterilization program is attributed in a large degree to better qualified staffs in public welfare departments and in institutions and to the increased interest and cooperation on the part of the medical profession.

**DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE BIENNIAL**

The Eugenics Board has continued to use every available means to promote the proper and most effective use of the legal provision for eugenic sterilization. The first approach has been through the county departments of public welfare, the State hospitals, and the State schools for the mentally retarded. State and local public health departments, private physicians, and nurses have also been recognized as essential to the growth of the program.

Provision has been made for all the State hospitals, schools for the mentally retarded, county public welfare and health departments to participate in discussions of the sterilization program. The Executive Secretary has conducted nearly one-half of these discussions. The field representatives, consultants, and psychologists of the State Board of Public Welfare, and the consulting nurses of the State Board of Health have regularly interpreted the program through staff meetings and through individual case discussion.

Another helpful process has been the meetings that the Executive Secretary has held with the Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics of Duke, Memorial, and Bowman Gray Hospitals.

The attendance of the Executive Secretary at local, State, and National meetings has continued to provide a valuable means for interpreting the program. The following meetings are mentioned in this connection: The annual administrative conference of the county superintendents of public welfare; the Public Welfare Institute; North Carolina Caseworkers Association; State Community Health Conference; State Conference for Social Service; State Public Health Association; Conference on the Handicapped Child; the North Carolina Family Life Council; and the National Conference on Social Welfare.

The Eugenics Board is a member of the North Carolina Health Council and of the State Mental Health Council and has been represented regularly at the meetings of each of these organizations.
Use has been made of the press and publications of the various State agencies in presenting articles on the program.

A revised manual of the Eugenics Board has been issued to incorporate the various changes that have taken place since the first manual was written in 1948.

Various forms essential in presenting the petition to the Eugenics Board have been revised.

A leaflet, "The Sterilization Program in North Carolina," designed to give the average citizen an understanding of the program, has been printed. Through the courtesy of the Medical Society of North Carolina, this leaflet has been mailed to the Society's 3,350 members. The Old North State Medical Society has mailed copies to its 150 members. This leaflet has also been given wide distribution among public welfare and health groups and the general public.

The records of the operations authorized from the beginning of the program in 1929 to 1949 have been microfilmed. This procedure made it possible to condense twelve filing drawers of records into eight reels filed in a 4" x 8" box.

**PROGRAM STATISTICS**

During the biennium 576 petitions were presented to the Eugenics Board for review. Operations were authorized in 564 cases, amounting to 97.9 per cent of the petitions. There were 535 operations performed, or 94.9 per cent of the operations authorized. Some of the operations performed had been authorized in the previous biennium, and some of the operations authorized during the 1958-60 biennium could not be performed until the following biennium.

Of the 535 operations, 492 were performed upon women and only 43—8.0 per cent of the total—were performed upon men. Institutional operations account for a relatively large proportion of the operations upon men; 34.9 per cent of the operations upon men originated in State institutions, as compared with only 18.3 per cent of the operations upon women.

Operations for asexualization are rarely ordered by the Eugenics Board. Only eight were performed during the biennium—one castration and seven ovariectomies.

One hundred and five operations performed were for persons in State institutions: 20 at Caswell School; 26 at Broughton Hospital at Morganton; 49 at Cherry Hospital at Goldsboro; and 10 at the Dorothea Dix Hospital at Raleigh. There were none for patients at the John Umstead Hospital at Butner. The remaining 430 persons having operations were non-institutional cases. Petitions for their operations originated in county departments of public welfare.

The 463 non-institutional operations authorized were upon petitions received from 80 of the 100 counties of the State. The
430 non-institutional operations performed were for 78 different counties. Counties with the highest number of non-institutional operations performed during the biennium were Mecklenburg—86 operations, Guilford—19, Pitt—18, Hertford—16, Person—14, Scotland—12, Wilkes—12, Gaston—10, and Lenoir—9.

Of the 535 persons having operations, 209 were white, 315 Negro, and 11 Indian. The majority of the persons sterilized were adolescents or young adults; 96.4 per cent were under 30 years of age, and 28.2 per cent were under 20.

The operations for sterilization were performed because of the following conditions: 443, or 82.8 per cent, because of "feeblemindedness;" 84, or 15.7 per cent, because of "mental disease;" and 8, or 1.5 per cent, because of "epilepsy."

Three-fifths (60.4 per cent) of the persons sterilized were single. Another 27.7 per cent were married, and 12.0 per cent were widowed, divorced, or separated from their spouses.

Three-fourths of the 535 persons having operations (404 persons) had already had children prior to the operations, including 130 who had had five children or more. The 404 persons were the parents of 1,519 children; 632 of these children were reported to have been born out of wedlock.

There has been a marked decline in the last few years in the number of operations originating in State institutions. On the other hand, the number of non-institutional operations performed in the 1959-60 period was higher than in any previous biennium.

The Eugenics Board extends its appreciation to the professional persons and to those of the general public who have given generously toward the success of the sterilization program.
## FINANCIAL REPORT OF EUGENICS BOARD, 1958-1960

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<th>Item</th>
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<td>Equipment</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,286.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,768.00</strong></td>
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STATISTICAL REPORT ON EUGENICAL STERILIZATIONS
DURING THE 1958-1960 BIENNUM
TABLE 1
Operations Performed, by Type of Operation and Origin of Petition
July 1958 - June 1960

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Vasectomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Institutions</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Institutional</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>222</td>
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TABLE 2
CasesHandled by Fiscal Year
July 1958 - June 1960

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<th>Fiscal Year</th>
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<th>Operations Performed</th>
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<td>564</td>
<td>535</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1958 - June 1959</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>287</td>
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<td>July 1959 - June 1960</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>246</td>
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TABLE 3
Operations Performed, by Length of Time Between Authorization and Operation
July 1958 - June 1960

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<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>July 1958 - June 1959</th>
<th>July 1959 - June 1960</th>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>248</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 1 month</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>137</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 month, less than 3</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>3 months, less than 5</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>5 months, less than 7</td>
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<td>7 months, less than 1 year</td>
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<td>1 year, less than 2</td>
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<td>2 years, less than 4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 years or more</td>
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TABLE 4
State Institutional Operations, by Institution, Type of Operation, and Fiscal Year
July 1958 - June 1960

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<th>Institution</th>
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<th>July 1958 - June 1959</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td>Total Vasectomy</td>
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<td>State Hospitals:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broughton Hospital, Morganton</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cherry Hospital, Goldsboro</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dorothea Dix Hospital, Raleigh</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Umstead Hospital, Butner</td>
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<td>Schools for Mentally Defective:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caswell School, Kinston</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Murdoch School, Butner</td>
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<tr>
<td>O'Berry School, Goldsboro</td>
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TABLE 5
State Institutional Operations Authorized and Performed, by County of Residence
July 1958 - June 1960

<table>
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<th>County of Residence</th>
<th>Total Operations</th>
<th>July 1958 - June 1959</th>
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TOTAL: 101 Authorized, 105 Performed, 63 Authorized, 65 Performed, 38 Authorized, 40 Performed
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<th>July 1959 - June 1960</th>
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**TABLE 6**

Non-Institutional Operations Authorized and Performed, by County of Residence
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TABLE 7
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TABLE 8
Type of Operation Performed, by Age and Sex of Person
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Operations Performed, by Type of Diagnosis, Source of Petition, and Marital Status
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### TABLE 10
Individuals Having Children Prior to Sterilization, by Marital Status and Number of Children
July 1958 - June 1960

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<td>TOTAL^1</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Widowed Divorced Separated</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Single</td>
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<td>210</td>
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<td>5</td>
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^1 131 persons had no children.
^2 5 individuals had 10 children, and 1 had 11.
TABLES 11-18

HISTORICAL DATA ON EUGENICAL STERILIZATION
IN NORTH CAROLINA
TABLE 11
Cases Handled by Biennial Periods
July 1933 - June 1960

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<tr>
<th>Biennial Period</th>
<th>Petitions Presented</th>
<th>Operations Authorized</th>
<th>Operations Performed</th>
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<td>6,180</td>
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<td>July 1946 - June 1948</td>
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<td>658</td>
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<td>564</td>
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\(^1\) Forty-nine additional operations were performed prior to July 1933 under previous legislation, making a total of 5,521 operations performed.
TABLE 12
Operations Performed Annually, by Sex and Type of Operation
July 1929 - June 1960

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<th>Year</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<th>Vasectomy</th>
<th>Castration</th>
<th>FEMALE Total</th>
<th>Salpingectomy</th>
<th>Ovarietomy</th>
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1 Ninety-one of these operations originated in county institutions prior to 1953.
### TABLE 13
State Institutional Operations Performed Annually, by Sex and Type of Operation
July 1929 - June 1960

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<th>FEMALE</th>
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### TABLE 14

Non-Institutional Operations Performed Annually, by Sex and Type of Operation
July 1929 - June 1960

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<td>Total</td>
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<td>Castration</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Salpingectomy</td>
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### TABLE 15

State Institutional Operations, by Institution, Sex, and Type of Operation  
July 1929 - June 1960

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<th>Institution</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>O'Berry School, Goldsboro*</td>
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1 Opened in 1947  
2 Opened in 1958  
3 Opened in 1957  
4 Petitions for children at training schools are now initiated by county superintendents of public welfare.
### TABLE 16
Operations Performed, by Type of Operation and Race
July 1929 - June 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Operation</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Negro</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>5,521</td>
<td>3,745</td>
<td>1,755</td>
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<tr>
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<td>725</td>
<td>255</td>
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<tr>
<td>Castration</td>
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<td>Salpingectomy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ovariectomy</td>
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### TABLE 17
Type of Operation Performed, by Age and Sex of Person
July 1929 - June 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in years</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vasectomy</td>
<td>Castration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>1,047</td>
<td>982</td>
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<td>10-19</td>
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## TABLE 18

Operations Performed, by Type of Diagnosis, Source of Petition, and Marital Status

July 1929 - June 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnosis Shown on Petition</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>MARITAL STATUS</th>
<th>Widowed, divorced, separated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>State Institution</td>
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<td>Mental disease</td>
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<td>Feeblemindedness</td>
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