

# MARGARET SANGER'S RACISM STILL DEFENDED

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on attempts to salvage Margaret Sanger's racist history:

Aside from pro-abortion activists, everyone who has taken a serious look at the writings and speeches of Margaret Sanger admits that she was a racist. Indeed, she was as big a racist as any Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan ever was. The evidence is overwhelming. Yet there are those who are still trying to rescue her legacy. Worse, some are in total denial about her racism.

On July 21, Planned Parenthood of Greater New York announced it would remove Sanger's name from its Manhattan clinic. It cited her "harmful connections to the eugenics movement," as if that were breaking news; it has been known for a century. But it stopped short of calling her out for her racist agenda.

It is impossible to separate eugenics from racism: it was built on it. Angela Franks, who authored *Margaret Sanger's Eugenics Legacy*, said "she believed that if you eliminated the poor, then there would be no more poverty. Instead of eliminating the problem, she would eliminate the people who had the problem." That was the purpose of her birth control crusade.

The organization she launched continues to serve her goal of eliminating the poor, albeit with greater certainty: it facilitates killing them *in utero*. This means, of course, that a disproportionate number of black babies are killed every year. Even today, almost 8 in 10 Planned Parenthood abortion clinics are in minority neighborhoods.

Sanger opened her first birth control clinic in Brooklyn in 1916. After officials at the abortion giant recently admitted

that her record was tainted, they adjusted the section on their website titled, "100 Years Strong." In their concluding statement on "Margaret Sanger—Our Founder," they said, "Like all leaders—Sanger had many flaws."

In other words, Sanger's targeting of African Americans for extinction was merely a "flaw." This is the best Planned Parenthood can admit to today. If a white supremacist had her legacy, he would be condemned.

Sanger's friends in Marxist circles continue to defend her. "People's World," which is the successor of the Communist Party USA organ, the "Daily Worker," published a piece on August 6 saying, "While Sanger did have ideas we find intolerable today, *bigotry* and contempt for workers were not among them (my italic)."

Lying about Sanger's racist past is commonplace.

Ellen Chesler wrote the most celebrated volume on Sanger, *Women of Valor*. After carefully documenting all of Sanger's work that served racist causes, she concludes that while her subject was "rabidly anti-Catholic," she was not a racist. This is what happens when feminist ideology discolours the mind. It poisons the ability to reason.

Edwin Black wrote an influential book about Sanger's contribution to the eugenics movement, *War Against the Weak*. He admitted that "Sanger surrounded herself with some of the eugenics movement's most outspoken racists and white supremacists." He also wrote that "she openly welcomed" racists and anti-Semites into "the birth control movement." Yet, like Chesler, he still concludes that she "was not a racist."

The most recent defender of Sanger's racist history is Katha Pollitt, a pro-abortion extremist who writes for the *Nation*, a publication that defended Joseph Stalin. "For the record," she says, "Margaret Sanger was not a racist." Why not? Because

prominent blacks supported her. The “exoneration by association” gambit fails: They may have supported her birth control policies, but they certainly did not support abortion. As late as 1963, Planned Parenthood admitted that “An abortion kills the life of the baby after it has begun.”

It does not help Pollitt’s case to cite H.G. Wells’ support for Sanger (Planned Parenthood also notes that he was her ally). He made clear his goal. “We want fewer and better children...and we cannot make the social life and the world-peace we are determined to make, with the ill-bred, ill-trained swarms of inferior citizens that you inflict upon us.”

In case Pollitt doubts who Wells was referring to, consider what Sanger said in her book, *Women, Morality, and Birth Control*. “We don’t want the word to get out that we want to exterminate the Negro population.” Moreover, Sanger constantly called those in the lower class “weeds” and “human waste” that must be “exterminated.”

While Sanger did not campaign to make abortion legal, it is intellectually dishonest to say she was viscerally opposed to abortion. Indeed, she supported infanticide. “The most merciful thing that the large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it.” Her honesty was commendable, even if her goal was evil.

Racism is what animated Planned Parenthood from its inception, and it is what motivates it today.

Two months ago, 300 of its staffers signed a letter condemning the organization’s “climate of systemic racism.” That is an understatement. The workers were only referring to conditions in the workplace—they were not referring to the racist outcomes of their work.