

Dear Editor,

First, here are my dues for '84--a real bargain!

I do believe that the Eugenics Bulletin of the Eugenics Special Interest Group is now the outstanding eugenics publication in the country. Nothing the old eugenics society, whatever its new name, has put out is as basic and to the point as this material. The Fall Issue, with the Jensen article and the Bajema interview, was a milestone.

Robert K. Graham
Escondido, CA

Dear Editor,

Carl Bajema had some wise things to say in that interview. Perhaps we should just jettison the word "eugenics" and begin from another vantage point.

I am most unclear in my own mind about the way to proceed with eugenic concerns. The history of the past half century has left eugenics in such tatters that it is hard to know how to proceed from here. At the most basic level, the eugenic concerns make sense. But rational discussion becomes almost impossible because of the intrusion of: knee-jerk responses to the word "eugenics"; great concern for "human rights" and negligible concern for "human responsibilities"; envy; the atrophy of patriotism; and the overpowering of community interest by radical individualism.

Garrett Hardin
Santa Barbara, CA

MALADAPTIVE AND DYSGENIC REPRODUCTION IN EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

By Marian VanCourt

The basic tenet of evolutionary biology is that individuals strive to increase inclusive fitness, defined as number of offspring. Adaptive behavior is that which results in an increase of offspring; maladaptive behavior is defined as that which ultimately reduces the number of offspring. A rise in the standard of living and lowered mortality produce population growth in most species. In the



Marian VanCourt

industrial nations, the past two centuries have witnessed unprecedented advances in material well-being and mortality declines. Contrary to the principle of maximizing fitness, these advances have been accompanied by sharp secular declines in birth rates. Today, if it weren't for accidental pregnancies, the United States and Europe wouldn't approach population replacement. Vining (1983) showed that there is at present a negative correlation between intelligence and number of offspring in the United States among young adults. Furthermore, it has recently been shown that U.S. reproduction has been predominantly dysgenic extending as far back as 1912 (VanCourt and Bean, 1984). These findings along with previous reports of fewer unwanted pregnancies among the more intelligent, provide evidence that, within a certain