

'Cancel Culture' Comes Knocking at Planned Parenthood's Door

Margaret Sanger (1879-1966) was the founder of [Planned Parenthood](#), the largest provider of abortion services in the U.S. and the political flagship of the pro-choice movement there.

She was also a fervent eugenicist – and in the era of Black Lives Matter progressives have eugenics in the cross-hairs.

Sanger's views on "racial hygiene" are beyond dispute. Before the world learned about Nazi atrocities committed in the name of Aryan eugenics, being a eugenicist was nothing to be ashamed of.

A sentence from "The Eugenic Value of Birth Control Propaganda" (1921) is typical of her numerous bon mots about eugenics, "Today eugenics is suggested by the most diverse minds as the most adequate and thorough avenue in the solution of racial, political and social problems."

Like other progressives of the early 20th century, she favored sterilization of the genetically unfit, keeping the diseased and "feebleminded" from immigrating, and segregating so-called illiterates, paupers, unemployables, criminals, prostitutes, and dope fiends. She endorsed the Supreme Court's notorious 1927 *Buck v. Bell* decision.

So it came as no great surprise that [Planned Parenthood of Greater New York announced](#) last week that it will remove her name from its Manhattan health clinic because of her "harmful connections to the eugenics movement".

"The removal of Margaret Sanger's name from our building is

both a necessary and overdue step to reckon with our legacy and acknowledge Planned Parenthood's contributions to historical reproductive harm within communities of color," the group's chair said in a [statement](#).

PPGNY also wants to replace Sanger's name on a street sign that has hung near its offices on Bleecker Street.

PPGNY did not specify what it meant by "Planned Parenthood's contributions to historical reproductive harm within communities of color" but black pro-life activists have often described the effect of abortion amongst African-Americans as "[genocide](#)".

According to a group called [Black Genocide](#), half of African-American women who become pregnant abort their babies and a black baby is five times more likely to be killed in the womb than a white baby. According to the head of Black Genocide, Rev. Clenard H. Childress Jr, "The most dangerous place for an African American to be is in the womb of their African American mother."

People are rioting because African Americans are 3.5 times more likely than whites to be killed by U.S. police – but abortion kills far more than the police. And Planned Parenthood has had a big role to play in this. Blacks make up only 13 percent of the population but have [37 percent of all abortions](#).

Like other groups defending "cancelled" figures from J.K. Rowling to Robert E. Lee to Winston Churchill, Planned Parenthood has vigorously defended its "visionary" founder. [In a 2016 PDF on its website](#), it insisted that embarrassing quotations have been taken out of context and that she has to be understood as a woman of her times.

For instance, in 1939 in a letter to Dr. Clarence J. Gamble, a stalwart of the birth control movement, Sanger wrote: "We do not want word to get out that we want to exterminate the Negro

population.”

Tweets less inflammatory than this have lost people their jobs and ruined their careers. But Planned Parenthood pleads for more understanding, more nuance, more context. “Sanger describes her strategy to allay such apprehensions – because exterminating an entire population was not her goal. A larger portion of the letter makes Sanger’s meaning clear.”

But actually it doesn’t. Sanger wanted to counter the vehement conviction of black nationalist Marcus Garvey and others that birth control was being used to “[eradicate the black race](#)”. She proposed enlisting black doctors and ministers of religion in Planned Parenthood’s public relation campaign to reduce the numbers of black babies. How is that not racist?

If appeals for nuance and context don’t work for Winston Churchill, should they excuse Margaret Sanger?

The real problem for Planned Parenthood is not Margaret Sanger’s odious views. It’s abortion. “Planned Parenthood’s contributions to historical reproductive harm within communities of color” are its core business.

–

This [article](#) has been republished from MercatorNet under a Creative Commons license.

Image Credit:

Flickr-Fibonacci Blue, CC BY 2.0