ABSTRACT

TITLE:	The Roots of Eugenics: Key Shifts in the Early Development of Eugenic Ideology, 1869-1883
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ABSTRACT: This thesis attempts to establish a distinct timeline in the development of the idea of Eugenics, which is the theory that a superior race of humans can be created through the manipulation of marriage, reproduction, and genetics. The most important changes in eugenic ideology occurred not in the 1900's, but between 1869 and 1883, the years between which Francis Galton published his theories on Eugenics. In 1869, Eugenics was simply a theory on how human traits, such as intelligence and morality, might be hereditary; however, by 1883, the idea had already evolved into a radical philosophy, due to the influence of Darwinism, scientific racism, and Progressive Era activism. This research was conducted by analyzing the works of early Eugenicists and contemporary scholars such as Cesare Lombroso, Ernst Haeckel, and Ludwig Bchner; secondary sources analyzed the existing scientific and social environments that influenced these scholars. Significant changes occurred between 1869 and 1883, leading to a new understanding of Eugenics before it came to prominence in the 20th Century.