

ers interested in the genetic basis of crime consistently focus on street crime—the province of the poor and non-white—while failing to investigate the possibility that middle- and upper-class forms of deviance, such as white-collar crime, also have genetic causes.

In its conclusions, *Backdoor to Eugenics* offers two broad insights. The first is that in seeking to fix the cause of “aberrant” or “undesirable” behavior in genetics, society depoliticizes these issues and absolves itself of any responsibility for correcting unjust or inhuman social conditions: if crime, low IQ or mental illness is caused by bad genes, then we need not change the conditions of poverty, racism and bad schools that are often suggested as the nonhereditary causes for such pathologies.

A second significant conclusion is that despite the powerful and impressive accomplishments of genetic research, technology is never value free. The public’s perspective about the implications of genetic technology is constantly framed in terms of the definitions, interests and concerns of scientific elites. As a consequence, few other social, cultural or political questions concerning the meaning and impact of genetic knowledge are seriously considered or debated by those who will ultimately consume genetic technology.

*Backdoor to Eugenics* would have benefited from the inclusion of some detailed information about the ways in which lower-class and minority populations actually understand the meaning of genetic technologies. While Duster consistently posits that these groups have different beliefs about genetic screening, amniocentesis and the like, he fails to fully demonstrate the content of their beliefs. Perhaps this task will be taken up in a later work.

In conclusion, *Backdoor to Eugenics* is a soundly researched and thought-provoking study. Although it is well written, it requires a careful reading because much of the material—advanced genetic research—is a new topic (at least for this reviewer). All in all, it is an important and valuable contribution. It links technology and science to the social categories of race, ethnicity, class and socially constructed notions of “normality” in a way that considerably broadens our understanding of these phenomena.

— Steve Gold  
Whittier College

**A. Roy Eckardt. *Black, Woman, Jew: Three Wars For Human Liberation*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989) 229 pp., \$35.00.**

In this book, A. Roy Eckardt uses his anger against oppression in its various forms and his extensive knowledge of the literatures in the field to craft a work of the first magnitude. He views oppression, as he explains, from the perspective of a “white, male gentile . . . a privileged minority: the nonoppressed of the world.” Yet his honesty and compassion for the oppressed represented in this

study take him into the center of the battle which he wages: the battle for human liberation. His new book is, he explains, a sequel to *For Righteousness' Sake: Contemporary Moral Philosophies*, published in 1987.

His work is divided into six sections, entitled respectively "Black Liberation," "The Black Woman," "Women's Liberation," "The Jewish Woman," "Jewish Liberation," and "Foregone Conclusion." Each chapter incorporates quotations, paraphrases and references to a varied list of forces within the field, among them scholars, ministers and rabbis, poets, philosophers, and those people who have somehow made their mark upon this ongoing struggle. Extensive notes of both reference and commentary to each chapter are included at the end of his book, as well.

A quotation from Elie Wiesel's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, given in 1986, establishes the tone and argument of the book:

We must always take sides.  
Neutrality helps the oppressor,  
never the victim. Silence  
encourages the tormentor,  
never the tormented.

In "Black Liberation," Eckardt presents a history of the movement for black liberation both within the black church and among black leaders. Throughout, Eckardt condemns any movement which seeks to be exclusive, whether it be the black separatist movement or the male dominated clergy, both black and white. In "The Black Woman," the author begins by alluding to the double jeopardy of black women, who are subjected to both racism and sexism. He discards the term "feminist" and adopts Alice Walker's term "womanist," and establishes his position with a quote from Frances Hooks: "Black women hold the key to the future of America."

In "Women's Liberation" Eckardt argues for the ordination of women and asserts, "The ultimate factor that has excluded women from religious leadership is the bodily power of men to keep them out, and, if need be, to throw them out." In "The Jewish Woman," the author once again notes double jeopardy: in this case from sexism and anti-Semitism. He refers to the hostility of an anti-Semitic environment within the Christian woman's movement as "double jeopardy incarnate." The anti-Semite, he notes, works to insure that "Jews are never forgotten, never ignored." ". . . Judaism can, with the aid of its final norm of human justice," he concludes, "be a deliverer of humankind. The Zionist movement is affinal to struggles for national integrity and independence all around the world."

In "Foregone Conclusion," Eckardt argues that each oppressed group must "be met and responded to on its own terms." Finally, he tentatively raises the banner of hope, but with it sadly flutter the emotions of anger and despair. He asks: "What kind of God—or at least what kind of religion about God—would wish blacks, women, Jews, or anyone else to suffer for the sake of others?"

Would that this one good man be multiplied many times over.

— Suzanne Stutman  
Penn State University