Indilemmapolis, IN

As affluence increases, so does poverty and despair

"I don't think Indianapolis has ever been a place for radical or even progressive politics. Historically, it has been a place where you rear your family and people smile even when there's nothing to smile about. Everybody acts right and stays in their place."
~ The Rev. Thomas Brown, Ebenezer Baptist Church

"What may set Indianapolis apart, though, is the local emphasis on getting along. Being a team player, fitting in, seems more crucial here than in many other places. To get ahead in Indy, you mustn't want to change things, but improve them, oh so gradually."
~ David Hoppe, *NUVO* magazine columnist

"The most frightening thing about Indianapolis *is* Indianapolis, the fact that it continues to undermine itself by being someone other than what it is or who it is."
~ Transcript from Callers #43-#47, *The Manufactured History of Indianapolis*

"For a span of my memory this has been a city of opposing wills, two faces firmly set toward different directions—one covertly determined to maintain the status quo, to continually block any access to power, or to parity; the other advocating an active morality and its right to inclusion as an equal entity rather than a colonized one. This has been a city of perpetual confrontation, however cloaked, between the powerless and those who influence, control, and engineer the city's movement in the inexorable and often ruthless march toward 'greatness'…"
~ Mari Evans, a local nationally acclaimed poet, writer and activist

Overview: *Indianapolis is at a critical juncture. Indeed recent business, political, and educational efforts to make Indianapolis a tourist, convention, and entertainment center and central Indiana a business, education, research, medical, and bio-technology hub are promising. However, recent observations also see increases in poverty, despair, crime, violence, school dropouts, dead-end service   jobs, and many other socio-economic problems and issues creating an underclass for many as affluence increases for some.*

Indianapolis is a city with many important questions that need answering and consequently many decisions to make, decision that as things stand, create a dilemma: How can we maintain this progress at the expense of others?

This paper will use insights from state and local critics to give a historical perspective of the situation. It will quote data that support an alternative view of Indianapolis not as one, but two cities. It will propose many questions concerning: Are we two cities, or one? How do we include all citizens in the prosperity? As we enter the 21st century, what past influences have created a climate for this dilemma? Is there a" New Indianapolis" as city fathers claim, or is this a tale of two cities with new problems built on top of old unsolved problems?

The New Indianapolis*

Initiatives by local political and community leaders over the past 20 years have fulfilled the goals of making Indianapolis the destination of conventions and tourism and have shown progress in attracting emerging industries in the areas of technology and health sciences, all with the goal of making our city a world-class place to live and raise a family!

Local corporations have organized (Indy Downtown Inc., Indianapolis Partnership, Central Indiana Corporate Partners) to improve our city. Their stated goal is to create a city that attracts good jobs and new revenue from tourism. Meanwhile, individual and cooperative initiatives by Purdue University, Indiana University, and Eli Lilly to make the region a home for high tech businesses, medical research, life sciences, and bio-technology have been finalized!!

These outstanding news flashes from our city's leaders provide an exciting and positive picture of a city on the move, ready to provide access to the American dream for all its citizens as we enter the 21st century!!!

*All of this sounds fantastic. It should make each of us look forward to a prosperous city and a better tomorrow. In spite of this fanfare, some are asking: *Is there really a "New" Indianapolis, or is this a tale of two cities: New problems built on top of old unsolved problems?*

"The city [Indianapolis] shows us the things we want to see while we ignore the things you cannot face. In this way the city becomes a fractured mirror."
> ~ "Axes & Mirrors" *The Manufactured History of Indianapolis*

Indy at a Crossroads: Recognizing and confronting the underbelly of a city
Unfortunately, if we look beyond this progress, success, and public relations spin, and shine a light on all aspects of Indianapolis, we will expose the underbelly of a city not heading towards success, but at a crossroads.

Indianapolis at a Crossroads (SEIU, 2007) is a recent report by the Service Employees International Union. Subtitled, "Will working families get left behind as our city transitions to a service-sector economy?" the report provides another view of Indianapolis and the unintended consequences of "progress."

Indeed, attempts to improve Indianapolis by making it a convention and entertainment hub are working. According to the Indianapolis Convention and Visitor Association, Indianapolis experienced an "incredible tourism year." Attendees of business conventions and meetings packed 530,000 rooms and spent $528,000,000 in 2006 (Smith, 2006). Wow!

Unfortunately, these outstanding hospitality industry numbers also require a number of poverty-wage dead end jobs in nearby hotels, restaurants, tourists spots and creates a third world climate of rich and poor.
As suggested in *Indianapolis at a Crossroads*, how well our city is doing must be measured against its effectiveness in confronting the "crisis of working poverty."

> While tourism has increased and new businesses arrive, the conditions in our most troubled Indianapolis neighborhoods have worsened. The poverty rate has doubled, real wages for working people have declined, more Hoosier find themselves without healthcare, and our communities face an increasing crime rate and deteriorating schools. (p. 3)

As we progress, we must not fail to realize that if we are to continue to prosper, we must admit to, confront, and unite the two "cities" and make Indianapolis into one city. *What is vital is that we must first realize that this situation is not new and our own Mari Evan can help.*

Comments by Mari Evans: A Tale of Two Cities--An ethos of contradictions, limitations, bias, and inertia
Nationally acclaimed local writer Mari Evans notes in *Concept as Clarity* (2006) in the chapter, "Where We Live: The Importance of Ethos to Creativity" that

> Indianapolis is truly dichotomous; a city in which contradictions is truly the norm. It is easy to be deluded here, especially when one prefers delusion to clarity. (p 21)

Why the dichotomy: Two opposing wills
"For a span of my memory this has been a city of opposing wills, two faces firmly set toward different directions—one covertly determined to maintain the status quo, to continually block any access to power, or to parity; the other advocating an active morality and its right to inclusion as an equal entity rather than a colonized one. This has been a city of perpetual confrontation, however cloaked, between the powerless and those who influence, control, and engineer the city's movement in the inexorable and often ruthless march toward 'greatness'…"

"It is a classic American story, the leitmotif of a nation whose contradictions are all the more searing in a prospering highly visible 'all-American City,' than elsewhere."

What resulted? "The Haves" (Indy I) and "The Have-nots" (Indy II)
Mari Evans goes on to make these observations and statements about Indianapolis:

"Don't make waves; don't be unpleasant; and if Truth is unpleasant, then avoid Truth."

"What is more acceptable, more comfortable, is a high level of acculturation. Acculturation being defined as 'to alter…through a process of conditioning.'"

"Indianapolis, I tell my friends in other places, is a city where the preservation of Euro-American cultural traditions and the enhancement of those traditions has been consistent."

"And so it is with Indianapolis. Looking back over the last 40 years, everything has changed and nothing has changed. This is a tale of 2 cities."

Consequently: "Locked in" to one city, "locked out" of the other
"Being 'locked out'…one has to *experience* the acid psychological locking out that depends on color as the referent—not money, not manners, not clothing, not caste. Color."

"'Locked out' is something that can be changed, something that must be changed, because for me, even at an early age, it produced an enormous rage, a rage that should not be dismissed as merely youthful or isolated."

All is ethos: Indianapolis as a place to leave or waste away if you stay

Ethos: The character or values peculiar to a specific person, people, culture, or movement.

"All this is ethos," according to Evans--this dichotomy of two cities within Indianapolis which produces a climate "that in matters that are substantive, are limiting and restrictive," both discourages creativity and encourages the creative to leave to find freedom and recognition elsewhere. See Appendix A "The Babyface Syndrome."

For those who stay in Indianapolis apathy sits in and a sense powerlessness surfaces followed by chaos, anger, and hostility. "We began to hear more and more about 'Black on Black crime' as the powerless began to fight among themselves since the real opponent was too well entrenched."

"If the creative urge, responding to what for the black community is a ongoing stress and trauma of Ethos, is not empowered or enabled to produce positively because that possibility has not been disclosed, the creative fruit may either atrophy unexpressed, or it may find expression in ways that are negative and socially destructive."

"Ethos must be a concern of the arts before giant steps can be taken to maximize the uses of culture in order to enhance the quality of life for all of Indiana citizens."

A shameful legacy: The beginning of our ethos as "Up South" (Evans, 2007; A shameful legacy, 2007)

Evans realized, as she grew up, that Indiana was the most northern state of the south, a place many southerners migrated to after WW I and II.

> *Many Black folk thought of Indianapolis as urban, "Up South." It was better than being*
> *'down South,' but it retained many of the negative propositions of the deep South and was*
> *not yet enlightened of "progressive" as the West or East Coast counterparts. Conservatism*
> *and racism were alive and compatible. (p. 27)*

What she did not mention, our Indiana soil was tilled and awaited the seeds of conservatism and racism early in the 20th century. Indiana, in 1907, became the first place in the world to enact a eugenics sterilization law.

Out of this scientific justification for the politics of human and social engineering came a legacy of Hoosier hierarchy. We knew who got what share of the American pie and what was most politically important, why. See Appendix B "A Shameful legacy."

"I woke up in the middle of the night screaming from a dream. This had never happened to me before. I was running downtown [Indianapolis] through a park filled with war memorials and tombstones, giant obelisks and monuments to the dead, and a small man stood on the marble steps, his face covered by a hood and he told me to turn around, but I did not."
                    ~ Transcript from Caller #12, *The Manufactured History of Indianapolis* (Reeves, 2013)

Local society determined what one's place was and folks were supposed to stay there.

Indianapolis became like a small southern town "where everybody knows their place."

To understand what Ms. Evans is saying about the historical social-political climate, or ethos of Indianapolis, another perspective is necessary.

Polite Protest: For the good of our town, let's deny Indianapolis is actually 2 cities
Historically, in many ways, Indianapolis African Americans appears to be the model community. They strove for educational advancement, home ownership, and practiced hard work and thrift. Instead of violent protest, confrontations, or public sit-ins to gain normal rights and equality, Black leaders worked behind the scenes in what turned out to be slow, drawn out, but fruitful negotiations for change.

Although the "minority community" and the city progressed and Blacks had to continue to look the other way, show restraint and patience, when compared to other neighboring urban centers Indianapolis routinely outpaced them in quality of life measures.

This is the "ethos" developed in Indianapolis as seen from the perspective of University of Notre Dame Professor Richard Pierce in his book *Polite Protest* (2005). He argues that local Black leaders, from the Civil War on, came to realize that directly challenging the status quo was unproductive. As long as protest that was "polite" so as not to loose what gains had been made, Blacks believed change would come.

Yet, in most instances, according to *Polite Protest*, the restraint made little difference as the city fathers took advantage of the compromise:

> Blessed with model African American citizens, Indianapolis chose to marginalize and demean
> African Americans through policy measures that restrained African American liberty. (p. 7)

Attucks High School, the Butler University quota, written/unwritten housing, trade union and employment restrictions/clauses, increased segregation throughout the 40s, the Citizens School Committee, the building of the I-70/I-65, Unigov, redlining, school redistricting and the drawn out IPS school desegregation litigation, the Michael Taylor shooting—the list goes on.

Local Black folk had to take these realities on the chin, while according to Pierce, "…maintaining a posture of a civil, patriotic, and hard-working population deserving full civil rights." This "ethos" allowed city leaders to grow a city without fear of massive civil unrest knowing Blacks leaders would not risk their many accomplishments by engaging in loud public disturbances.

This white hypocrisy and Black "cooperation" allowed groups like the Chamber of Commerce to promote "…the calm race relations in Indianapolis in national magazines in an effort to promote business and economic development. They marketed Indianapolis as a '100% American city' where people owned homes, went to work during the week, and prayed on Sunday." Richard Pierce concludes his book's Introduction with this rationalization:

> Black and white city leaders, for differing reasons, were willing to participate in protracted negotiations because it was the course of actions that allowed them to preserve their city. (p. 8)

Comments by Amos Brown: As affluence increases…
Local *Indianapolis Recorder* columnist, Amos Brown, agrees that there is trend of Indianapolis toward 2 cities.

He states Indy's portrayal of itself as a booming city and metro area is true. Since 2000, the 10-county surrounding Marion has had the largest percentage-growth and 3rd largest actual population growth of any Midwestern metro area. This makes Indianapolis the engine of growth that keeps Indiana from stagnating.

…and so does poverty and despair: Growth of an underclass (Brown, 2007)
Along with the good things that are happening, he reveals:

The *middle class is shrinking* in Indy/Marion County.
  --since 2000 lost more than
    2,443 households making $15-25,000/year
    5,169 households making $35-50,000/year
    1,503 households making $50-75,000/year

While the *upper echelon is growing,*
  --since 2000 gained more than
    8,999 making over $100,000/year

so is the size of the working class.
  --since 2000
     3.155 more households are earning less than $10,000/year
     2.087 more are earning between $10,000 and $15,000/year

 Although the number of black households in all incomes increased by 9,707, the spread was not even:
  --17.9% earned a poverty income of under $10,000
  --27.5% earned between $10-15,000
  --45.3% earn less than poverty wages annually

Mr. Brown's quotes
 "The growth of the city/county's poor and working poor, the under class…could be a major factor in the city's crime wave."

"The growth of poor households isn't talked about by Indianapolis policy makers, opinion leaders, and community leaders."

"The business and philanthropic community is clueless about it."

"Unless we develop the will and the ways of dealing with the economic consequences of growing numbers of households living below a living income, don't be surprised if Indianapolis deteriorates into a city none of us will be proud of."

Let's look at some other factors that reveal all sides of our state and city (SEIU, 2007)

Indiana was the first state to feel the effects of the national 2000-03 economic recession.
Indiana was the only state (in East North Central region) to experience an increase on unemployment rate between 2004-05.
Indiana's poverty rate has nearly doubled since 1999 (6.7%). By 2005 the single-year poverty rate was 12.2% (740,000 Indiana citizens).
Indiana has 15% of its children (35% of black children) living in families at or below the poverty level (Recorder May 11, p. A3, More families in poverty, Perry, Brandon)
Indianapolis families need to earn $22,000 to afford the fair market rent of $544. But almost 25% of local residents do not earn that much.
Indianapolis census data shows that 16% of households earned less than $15,000 and 29% earn less than $25,000.
Indianapolis area's wealthiest areas mask the real poverty that exists in the city's neighborhoods that surround downtown. In the near eastside 46201 (zip code area), 24% of the population lived in poverty in 2000, doubling the 11.9% citywide average.
Indianapolis slipped from 10th to 27th in *Forbes* magazines annual ranking of best places for careers and businesses.

Indianapolis ranks near the top in services that foster poverty (Kim, 2006)
Payday Loans: About 25% of the loans taken out by low-income households are high-
   cost, *the highest* in the 12 metro cities of various sizes in the survey. Many have to pay
   fees of $70 for every $300 borrowed
   --Ranked 2nd in the number of low-income residents who buy "instant refund" tax
     loans which can come attached with interests rates as high as 400%
Rent to own: 2nd highest concentration of Rent to Own stores 1/20,000 residents. A 20
   inch TV that cost $200 can cost over $700 over an 18 month period.
Grocery Stores: The average grocery store in Indy's low-income areas is about 1/4th the
   size of other areas—*the biggest disparity in the survey.*
   --smaller stores charge more. To avoid this, the poor spend extra on transportation to
     larger stores.

Indianapolis crime rates (Mean Streets, 2006)
In August of 2006 in and editorial, "Mean Streets: Indianapolis tops New York, Detroit, in some categories of crime," the *Indianapolis Star* compared 2000-2005 Indianapolis Police Department crime statistics (incidents per 100,000) and how they ranked with 8 other cities: Austin, Cleveland, Detroit, Jacksonville, Milwaukee, New York, and San Francisco.

   Rate of Burglaries Indianapolis ranked *No. 1* at 1,472.8, up 44%
   Total Burglaries   Indianapolis ranked *No. 1* at 11,548, up 43%
   Aggravated assaults Indianapolis ranked *No. 3* at 515.1, up 9%
   Total aggravated assaults Indianapolis ranked *No. 3* at 4, 039, up 7.6%
   Robberies Indianapolis ranked *No. 2* at 417.5, up 30%
   Total robberies Indianapolis ranked *No. 1* at 3,274, up 38%
   Murders Indianapolis ranked No. 5 at 13.5, 4.6%
   Total Murders Indianapolis (IPD only) ranked No. 5 at 108, up 13 %

Indianapolis had a 24.11% increase in murder in 2006 (Bartner, 2007).

95% were caused by gunshots
86% of the suspects had a criminal history
88% of the suspects were males
85% of the victims were male

Indianapolis' FBI Violent Crime Rate Outpaces National Numbers (SEIU, 2007)

	National rate/100,000	Indianapolis rate/100,000
2000	506.5	891.0
2001	504.5	930.8
2002	494.4	935.1
2003	475.8	883.6
2004	463.2	882.3
2005	469.2	993.5

Marion County No Comfort Zone: 2006 homicide statistics (Higgins, 2006).

153: Number of reported homicides—only 9 less than 1998, the worst year

 83: Percent of homicides in which guns were used

 54: Percent of all homicides in which victims were black males

 40: Percent of homicides occurring outside city's core (north of 38th St., south of Troy Ave., west of Holt Rd., and east of Arlington Ave.)

 80: Percent of all Marion County neighborhoods that have at least one homicide since 2000.

 34: Average age of 2006 victims.

 60: Percentage of victims who were younger than 34 years of age

854: Number of people killed in violence in Marion County since 2000.

Indianapolis responded to the 2006 crime wave not by proactively attacking the causes poverty, but by reactively spending money on street lighting and security cameras in "high crime areas" in an $11,100,000 anti-crime package (Murray, 2006; Ryckaert, 2006).

Teen sexual behavior   (Evans, T., 2006)

Indiana ranked *49th* in availability of contraceptive information and services.

Indiana ranked *last* in quality of its sex education policy.

Indiana has 31 teens getting pregnant every day and 10 of the 31 are under 17.

"I am continuing my history of the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) because our schools are a part of the selling of Indianapolis as a great place to be, how everybody gets along, and this is not true at all. History has proven that [IPS] schools are in the middle of perpetuating inequality and this is why I continue my research – so that people don't fall for the okey-doke that Indianapolis is a great place to live."
          ~ Transcript from the Caller #51, *The Manufactured History of Indianapolis* (Reeves, 2013)

Indianapolis Public Schools--Johns Hopkins researchers reported between 1990-2002 IPS was the *only district in the nation* where each of its high schools had a very weak promoting power of less than 30%--thus, the only district in the nation where students had no choice but to go to a dropout factory.
http://web.jhu.edu/CSOS/images/ListofSchoolswithaWeakThreeYearAveragePromotingPowerRatio.pdf p. 10
Indianapolis Public Schools According to a 2004 Harvard/Urban Institute, the total graduation rate for IPS was 30.6 (nationally 43%). Following state guidelines, the graduation rate formula allowed IPS to report a 91.1 percent 2000/2001 rate and a 92.5 percent for 2001/2002 (Indianapolis Star, 2003)!
Indianapolis Public Schools according to the Indiana State Commission on Higher Education the 2004 graduation rate at Arlington High School was 12.5 percent. Arlington reported a 2004 graduation rate of 99%.
http://rishawnbiddle.org/RRB/Starfiles/leftbehind/Dropout_factories.pdf
Indianapolis Public Schools 2004 Schott Foundation reported the IPS 2001/2002 grad rate for black males 25 percent, and an astounding 23 percent for white males. http://schottfoundation.org/report/public-education-and-black-male-students-2004-state-report-card See p. 10.

Indianapolis Public Schools Grad rates got worse in the 2006 Schott report! IPS *leads the nation as having the worst grad rates in the nation for males:* 22 % for black and the same 23% for white males. See p. 5.
http://schottfoundation.org/report/public-education-and-black-male-students-2006-state-report-card
Indianapolis Public Schools According to the same Schott report, IPS *leads the nation* in the over-diagnosis of black males as mentally retarded and by 5 times the norm. http://schottfoundation.org/report/public-education-and-black-male-students-2006-state-report-card See p. 13-14.
Indianapolis Public Schools, in the fall of 2007 will create/open 15 alternative schools (Gammill, 2007) for those "…who don't fit in" to normal classroom setting (Tailoring teaching sites, 2007). This begs the question: How is it a problem not to "fit in" to a dropout factory, the normal IPS classroom setting? One would think it is a good thing not fit in to such a school climate.
Indianapolis Public Schools have a student population of which 75% qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch program (SEIU, 2007).
Indianapolis Public Schools has a poverty rate 4 times the statewide average—24.3% live in poverty compared to 6.7% (SEIU, 2007).

Indiana Department of Education
--A Chamber of Commerce study on Indiana graduation rates prepared by the Sagamore Institute showed a
   downward trend in rates contradicting the state's reported trend and numbers (Gammill, 2006 Sept 7).
--In July of 2006, the Annie B. Casey Foundation reported Indiana as having th*e worst dropout rate in
   the nation* with 13% of students 16-19 quit school in 2004 (Hupp, 2006).
 --The 72 percent figure from the 2005 Manhattan Institute study disputed the 91 percent rate for 2002
    claimed by the state.
-- Local "Y-Press" youth reporters story indicates Indiana lacks key to educating all equally. The quote
    Indiana University's Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) study concludes that a
    significant number of poor and minority Hoosier students are falling through the cracks. By the 8th
    grade black and Latino students are 3 grade levels behind (St. Claire & Troy, 2006).
--According to a 2004 Harvard/Urban Institute the 2001 Indiana graduation rate was 72.4 percent. The
    Indiana African-American rate was 53 percent (nationally50%/black males was 43%).
--2005 Schott Foundation noted the 2002 national graduation rate for black males was 41 percent. In
    Indiana, the rate was 39 percent.

Indiana school expulsions and suspensions (Rausch & Skiba, 2004)
Indiana *ranks first* in the nation in its rate of school expulsions.
Indiana *ranks 8th* in the nation in out-of-school suspensions
--African-American students are 4 times more likely to be suspended out of school and 2
   ½ times more likely to to expelled as white students.
--Latino students are all also over-represented in suspensions and expulsions.

Indiana has long been known for suspending and expelling more students than most states students (Good time to focus on black males, 2006).
   --Black are 6 times more likely to be suspended than whites
   --95% of the suspensions were for subjective causes such as disruptive behavior, tardiness or truancy.
   --Marion County Schools
     --Warren Township's black males accounted for 33% of all out-of-school suspensions
       and 25% of expulsions but were only 19% of the student population in 2001-02

Providing worker health care benefits (SEIU, 2007)
Indiana: about 700,000 residents lack health care with 80% of uninsured come from working families. Indiana Health Care and Hospital
Indianapolis: 204,000 (12%) of residents lack health insurance
  --since 2000, enrollment in the local government funded health insurance program for
    the poor (Wishard Advantage) has doubled (from 20,000 to 52,000), *a 160% increase*.

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APPENDIX A

The Babyface Syndrome

David Hoppe's December 7 commentary, "Where dreams come true" (Hoppe, *Dec. 7-14*) is a needed step in the growth of our city.

The problem is we are not aware of the "Babyface syndrome." Indianapolis has a history of talented people leaving town in order to make a name for themselves elsewhere.

Knowing Indy was not a place, as Hoppe says, where dreams and "…new ideas take off," and like Kurt Vonnegut, "Babyface" Edmonds left. This was not the case for Prince and Minneapolis, Kurt Cobane and Seattle, or Outkast and Atlanta. Why?

The Babyface syndrome states: Since those with good ideas leave Indy to seek their fortune, if you have an idea and you're still here, the idea must not be any good or you'd be gone. Thus, local talent and ideas are either rejected outright or discouraged. And, this leads to thinking that only those from other cities have abilities and creativity.

The problem is Indy is stuck in a late-adolescent period. Like a teenager, it's seeking its own identity. Instead of being comfortable with who we are, we doubt, hesitate, or apologize. We hire a New York firm to help us create an identity or like Las Vegas we attempt to find a slogan that will not only attract tourists, but also finally make us a city in our own right, or as Hoppe notes, "…distinguishing ourselves in ways that emphasize our own story." Hey, after all this time, Indy should not be in this position. The very fact that we continue to discuss this shows how sadly desperate we are to be like other cities we view as having the gravitas we seek.

When will Indy overcome the Babyface syndrome? Why do we lack confidence in "our own story"? And why is Indy still having this discussion?

John Harris Loflin
Indianapolis

APPENDIX B

Indiana's shameful past

In 1907 Indiana became the first place in the world to enact a eugenics sterilization law. The act of the general assembly put Indiana at the forefront of the eugenics movement and granted superintendents of state institutions the authority to sterilize confirmed criminals, idiots, imbeciles, and rapists. This was to prevent the reproduction of those deemed unfit. Similar legislation in Nazi Germany served as the stepping-stone to the horrors of the Final Solution.

Used to justify an objective way to determine who was "fit" and "unfit," eugenics came to influence policies, both written and unwritten, that encourage the higher birthrates for some and halt the increase for others.

In practice, this translated into laws and campaigns that targeted racial minorities, ethnic immigrants, poor whites, the developmentally and mentally disabled, and others defined as "deviant" and "abnormal" in an effort to control their reproduction and the transmission of inheritable traits.

Although the discriminatory basis of eugenics may seem blatant and even shocking today, at the time th eugenics movement viewed their scientific theories as linked to human betterment. Eugenics-based hygiene (health promotion and disease prevention that could prevent more crime than any law), saving society time and money, would be the rationale for Indiana's "better babies movement" and "scientific motherhood" as routes to superior people that are "…well born, registered, rationally nourished, and who will turn out well."

In 1927 a revised law was passed and before it was repealed in 1974, around 2,500 of Indiana's most vulnerable were involuntarily sterilized.