

## The News & Observer

### **‘Act of genocide.’ Eugenics program tried to ‘breed out’ Black people in NC, report says**

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For more than four decades North Carolina’s statewide eugenics program forcibly sterilized almost 7,600 people — many of whom were Black. That wasn’t a coincidence, according to a new academic paper. Duke University professor William A. Darity Jr. co-authored a report [published in the American Review of Political Economy](#) that correlates 10 years of forced sterilizations in counties across the state with the number of unemployed Black residents, finding the program was all but [designed to “breed \(them\) out,”](#) according to a university news release. “This suggests that for Blacks, eugenic sterilizations were authorized and administered with the aim of reducing their numbers in the future population — genocide by any other name,” the paper states. Eugenics is [another word for the selective breeding](#) of humans.

From 1929 to 1974, North Carolina’s eugenics program [sterilized close to 7,600 men and women](#), making it impossible for them to reproduce or conceive, according to The Justice for Sterilization Victims Foundation.

The foundation was established by the N.C. Department of Administration in 2010 to pay reparations to the surviving victims of the state’s eugenics program. Legislators ultimately [set aside \\$10 million](#) in the state budget to pay those victims, The News & Observer reported. The first checks, written for \$20,000 each, were mailed to 220 of those survivors in 2014. The law does not, however, apply to individuals who were sterilized [by local health or welfare departments](#), The Charlotte Observer reported later that year.

North Carolina’s eugenics program was one of many in the U.S. targeting people with illnesses or disabilities living in state institutions, but it was later touted “as one of several solutions to poverty and illegitimacy,” the foundation says. That meant sterilization petitions weren’t just submitted by hospitals but also by local welfare officials and county boards of commissioners, according to Darity’s paper.