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The Ann Cooper Hewitt Trial: Eugenics as a Tool for Intersectional Disinformation

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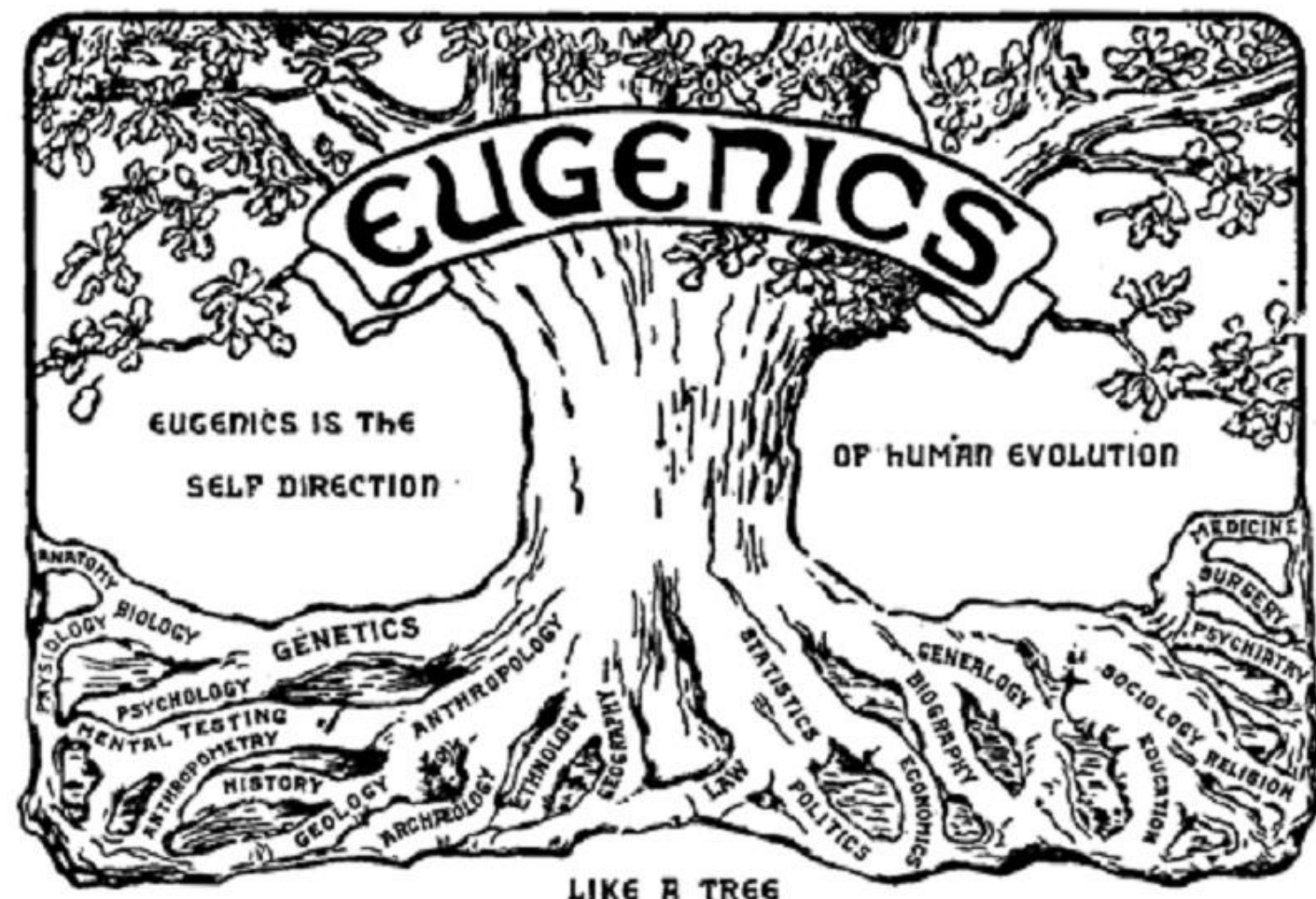
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The Ann Cooper Hewitt Trial

Eugenics: **Bad science** or an attempt to further **false gender and racially motivated goals**?



Second International Exhibition of Eugenics/HathiTrust

ANN COOPER HEWITT TRIAL:

Ann Hewitt was nonconsensually sterilized after refusing to take an intelligence test. Her mother and the doctors then manipulated those results and deemed her mentally unfit (Kline, Farley).

Why did they lie and use misleading content?

METHODS

1. Applying critical disinformation studies (Kuo and Marwick)
2. Analyzing disinformation definitions (Freelon and Wells, Wardle)
3. Historical analysis of the eugenics movement (Kline, Farley)

IMPACT

1. Expands critical disinformation studies content
2. Deepens understanding of intent
3. Highlights concept of intersectionality in disinformation studies



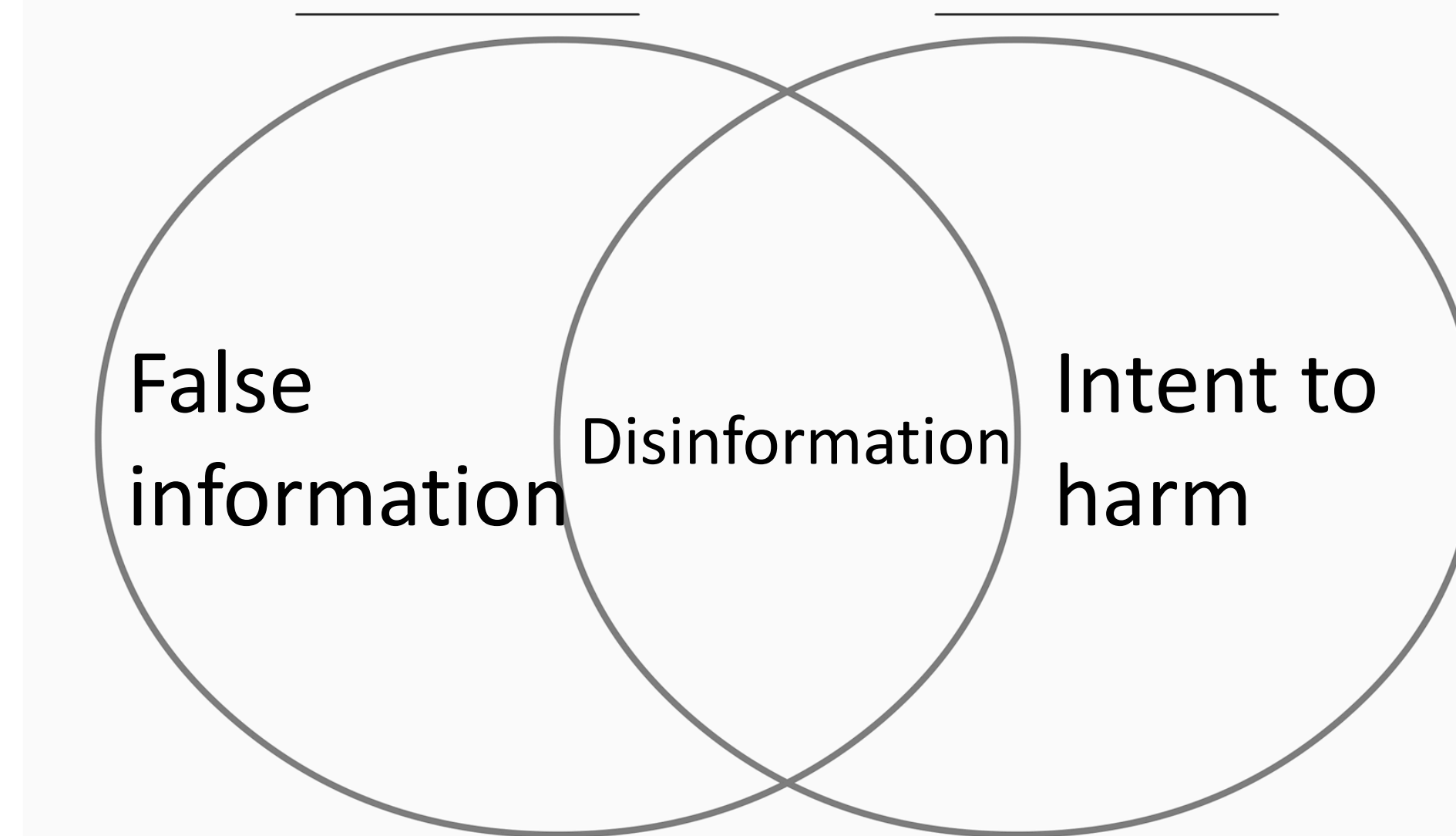
PRESENTER:
Lia Richter

Ann Cooper Hewitt's Trial shows that intersectional analysis reveals layered intent making it easier to find and prove disinformation



Bettman Archive/Getty Images

How do we prove intent?



Based on definition from Freelon and Wells

A eugenics understanding of women

Mother of Tomorrow vs. **The Moron**

Modest	Overly sexual
Focuses on domestic duties	A gateway to "race suicide"
Protects white middle class dominance	Genetically flawed and unfit

Ideas taken from Wendy Kline's historical analysis of eugenics' gender ideologies (Kline 16-23)

Gender disinformation:

Desire to protect traditional female values



Racial disinformation:

Desire to protect white dominance



Intersectional analysis/disinformation:

False information being spread to achieve those gender and racial goals

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