

# The Astounding New Theory That Men Should Marry Their Sisters

Dr. Helen King, After Years of Scientific Research and Laboratory Experiment With Animals, Declares She Has Proved That Blood Marriages Would Produce a Superior Race, and Tells Some of the Reasons Why.



Dr. Helen Dean King, university faculty member, advocates the inter-marriage of close kin.



Reproduction of Hans Makart's "Cleopatra." She was the last Ptolemy, a line which practiced consanguineous marriage.

"Inbreeding with selection," is the new theory of eugenics which Dr. Helen Dean King of Philadelphia, has offered to a somewhat startled world. "If you would produce a vigorous race," she says in effect, "marry your sister, your brother or your cousin. By doing this you consolidate and perpetuate the virtues of your line. Be sure, however, that you prevent defects from marrying at all."

Dr. King supports her argument with scientific analogy. For years she has conducted experiments with rats. She has carried the process of close inbreeding down through innumerable successive generations. After reaching a point analogous to 1200 years of human life, she has produced a rat much bigger and much sounder than any of his forebears. This rat, she says, is the result of a successive inbreeding of brother and sister.

BY ROBERT B. VALE.

DR. HELEN DEAN KING, who has started other scientists with her quiet assurance in declaring that consanguineous marriages are eugenically sound, is a very human young woman who likes baseball and dime novels and who doesn't care a rap what prudish folk may say about her or her theories.

She has spent more than eight years investigating the subject of inbreeding; studying cause and effect through scores of generations of animals. When she arrived at the conclusion that intermarriage between members of the same family can produce a better race of humans, it was not a hasty, half-baked decision. She is regarded at the University of Pennsylvania as a woman of unusual ability and she already has an international standing.

The world has believed since Biblical days that it is wrong for brother and sister, cousin and cousin, uncle and niece to marry. In many lands laws have been passed to prevent such unions. And now comes Miss Helen King to say that by interbreeding small animals she has produced a better type. It is very upsetting, to say the least; quite improper, according to the view of the populace. Most of her tests have been made with rats, and conservative persons refuse to place the human race on a par with rodents.

Dr. King is not arbitrary. She has as is the way with true scientists, placed the results of her experiments before the thinking world and she is quite ready to accept the deductions of those who can prove that she is mistaken. For the present she stands on this declaration:

"When the time comes that marriage is based not only on the physical

fitness of the individuals but also on their recorded pedigree for generations, and is absolutely forbidden to the unfit, the surest means of improving the race will be through consanguineous marriages in families in which the members show exceptional mental and physical endowment in ways that are of value to themselves and to the community at large."

It was this bold summary that created the sensation among the theologians, the doctors and the lawyers, not to speak of the common variety of man and woman who viewed inbreeding as something fearful and awful. Biologists were intensely interested. From all parts of the world came requests for her views and a record of her experiments. Skeptical and prejudiced persons cried "bosh," not knowing that Miss King had, by her great ability, unusual fund of knowledge and keen analytical mind, made a place for herself. She is a graduate of Vassar. For a few years she had charge of the research work at Bryn Mawr. It was there that she attracted the attention of the authorities of the University of Pennsylvania and was induced to join the faculty.

## Thirty Generations of Rats.

She began her experiments with four rats. Today she has a colony numbered by the tens of thousands. Each generation is pedigreed. There is a record of the physical development and, in so far as is possible, a record of the brain quality. There is one colony of more than 100 rats, each one showing a defective eye. Some have small eyes, some have one large and one small eye. The reason is that they have been bred from mothers with defective eyes.

There are rats in the King laboratory with verified pedigrees going back to the 39th generation. All of the traits of the families have been followed and charted. It has been a fond tradition among breeders of animals that interbreeding will produce runts. This is not true. Dr. King has developed through interbreeding the largest rat known. It was given the name "Goliath" and was the product of the seventh breeding of brother and sister. He was nearly twice the size of the average white rat. Of course, it is true that if runts are bred with runts a stunted progeny will be produced. But if the physical perfect and the mentally sound are bred, a higher type will result, according to this noted woman scientist.

And do not lose sight of the fact that Dr. King is one of the few women in the world to hold a full professorship in research work.

Nor does Dr. King take herself too seriously. She has plenty of time for social life and for sports. She delights in parties, knows how to tell a good story, reads the latest novels, finds joy in detective tales, attends

the movies, knows more about baseball than most men, and sometimes goes fishing. She knows more about rats than most biologists because she takes a real interest in them. Some of them she calls by name. She knows all about their great-great-grandfathers.

And, after all, there isn't much difference between a race of rats and us in the human kind.

Dr. King has discovered that we are wrong in saying there are more females than males produced. It is just the reverse, and this is true with rats; 107 males to 100 females. Also, the female has greater power of resistance with humans as with rats; more males die soon after birth than females. The rat shows a proportionate decline with humans. Rats are on the other side of the hill at an age that corresponds with 40 years in the human kind.

How inbreeding works out. Dr. King has bred rats down through generations that might correspond with 1200 years for the human race, and she has found that inbreeding did not show any injurious results. Here are her views on the subject:

"Inbreeding invariably brings to light the latent characters that were hidden by outbreeding; it cannot from its very nature introduce any new characters into the stock. Random matings in an inbred stock will not suppress the undesirable traits, but if only the superior individuals are permitted to breed, the unwanted traits in the stock gradually can be eliminated, if linkage does not exist, and they will not reappear unless through mutation, because the germ-plasm of the stock no longer will contain the genetic factors on which these traits depend.

"Inbreeding with selection thus becomes a powerful agent to purify stock, to bring about a concentration of desirable traits and to eliminate serious defects. It is through inbreeding combined with skillful selection that the most celebrated breeds of animals have been evolved.

"Man is subject to the same laws of heredity as the rest of the organic world. Not only feeble-mindedness, epilepsy and insanity, but also general mental efficiency and marked ability in music, in art and in literature undoubtedly are transmitted from generation to generation, according to the same Mendelian laws that govern the inheritance of the color of hair and eyes.

"History shows us that the prejudice against consanguineous marriages, which has persisted from the beginning of the Christian era, did not exist among the early nations, and that such marriages were common for centuries among the Greeks, Phoenicians, Jews, Persians and Egyptians. One of the longest of known human pedigrees is that of the royal Ptolemies of Egypt, noted for its close inbreeding; brother and sister marriages being very frequent. There is no evidence that consanguineous marriages were injurious to any of those nations. The decline of the Greeks and Egyptians came when they ceased to be an exclusive people and the vigor of the race was sapped by vices and luxuries introduced from other lands."

"Two might carry it off together—but one cannot alone."

"Very well," she answered; "let us not pretend. Just what is it that you have in mind?"

"I can't put it into its proper verse exactly, but something about a flower, an insect, and desert air—and all that. You left us rather precipitately back there—quite a jolt you gave us. But that aside, it has been an experience, but under the circumstances it must have been also somewhat of an experiment; one, I am forced to assume—well, let us say as I said before—short of fulfillment."

"You assume readily. Under the circumstances might we not say that almost you presume?"

"You forget. We are not pretending; I'm telling you what I see. You say that none of the old associations are carried over. I get your point. You have been avoiding me for a week, and you wish to have me believe that my old interest in you can no longer be entertained."

"Was I ever entertained?" she interrupted.

"Doesn't it mean something to a woman to have an interest manifested?" he returned with warmth. "The position you are placed in here is intolerable. And 'position' describes it about as I see it."

"So you would suggest my resigning? And I may have my old position back?"

"Look here, Helen. Face the facts. What your feeling may be you succeed admirably in concealing. He does not do so well. For some reason that heaven only knows, he does not care. He—"

"He is coming now," she broke in. "See—along the trail through the pines. May I tell him how you feel about it—or will you?"

"No—for I suppose, according to western ethics and in a glorified attitude of outraged egotism, he would start killing me with his six-shooter."

"You speak of it as though it would be a sort of drawn out process. With a revolver his technique is a marvel of dash and precision."

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The rats in the upper picture are progeny of inbreeding carried through rodent generations equivalent to 12 centuries of human life. The rodents below were not inbred. Note how inferior they are to those where the life stream was not mixed.

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## READING SIGN—By Kenneth B. Clarke

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cance of that little plain band on her finger.

Lanham was stirred as she had not stirred him before. It was not the music—it was not the mere charm of things sweet to the senses; something where at the source of these outward expressions lay something fine and beautiful yet undiscovered. It was the mystery of this hidden something that moved him as one is impelled to search out and know the flower that drifts unwonted perfume across a path.

If Helen knew of the disturbance within Lanham she gave no sign outwardly. Her attention was devoted largely to a daily period of study and reading with Don. Birds and flowers were game that these two hunted with little books during their hours in the saddle. Her evenings with Lanham passed in the same gracious, impersonal, friendly way that had marked their beginning.

But an event of the following fall brought disturbance on her own account, filling her with vague uneasiness. It was a telegram from Barclay of the New York office, stating that he was traveling eastward from the west coast and would stop off to see Lanham about some affairs at the mines.

As Helen waited for those days in the office she had been mildly annoyed by intermittent but persevering attentions of the complacent young secretary. As Helen Lanham she shrank from another meeting with peculiar aversion. And the thought that Barclay, with his inquisitive, smug little analytical habits of mind, might pry under the surface relationship of her marriage to Lanham made her flush with ready resentment.

Barclay was received by Lanham with the cordiality of the frontier home. He accepted an invitation to remain for a couple of weeks and have a try at the quail shooting. A camping trip was planned, and with a cook

and two of the punchers they made a party of seven for a ride into the hills.

Two things impressed Barclay immediately: One was open astonishment, and the other with curious wonder. The first was the change that had been wrought in Helen—both in looks and in the interests to which she gave her attention. It was difficult for him to reconcile her with the repressed professional woman of those other days. The rather striking good features she had before were now awake with life and colorful beauty. It was a new experience to hear her laughter. What had been her attraction before was now magnetic.

The other thing to cause wonder and arouse a speculative interest in him was Lanham's strange bearing toward this woman he had sought so impetuously. The man's attitude was almost that of avoidance. What could have cooled his ardor was more than Barclay could imagine, in view of his own impressions of the young wife.

At camp he found things the same way between them; the woman friendly, attentive, evenly sweet tempered; the man quiet, courteous, but stoically undemonstrative and aloof.

"That eastern guy," remarked Bud to Al Lawley over the woodpile, "don't stack up with me no higher than a pine on a stone floor. I don't like his damn white little hands, an' I don't like the look of them button eyes o' his when he looks at her."

"I reckon Milt has got you about right—you ain't delicate, too much."

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