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Mark K. Bauman, *Editor*

MarkKBauman@aol.com

Bryan Edward Stone, *Managing Editor*

bstone@delmar.edu

Scott M. Langston, *Primary Sources Section Editor*

sclangston@charter.net

Stephen J. Whitfield, *Book Review Editor*

swhitfie@brandeis.edu

Jeremy Katz, *Exhibit and Film Review Editor*

jrkatz@thebreman.org

Adam Mendelsohn, *Website Review Editor*

adam.mendelsohn@uct.ac.za

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rheimovics@cfl.rr.com

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For submission information and author guidelines, see <http://www.jewishsouth.org/submission-information-and-guidelines-authors>. For queries and all editorial matters: Mark K. Bauman, Editor, *Southern Jewish History*, 6856 Flagstone Way, Flowery Branch, GA 30542, e-mail: MarkKBauman@aol.com. For journal subscriptions and advertising: Bryan Edward Stone, Managing Editor, PO Box 271432, Corpus Christi, TX 78427, e-mail: bstone@delmar.edu. For membership and general information about the Southern Jewish Historical Society, visit www.jewishsouth.org or write to PO Box 71601, Marietta, GA 30007-1601.

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PERSONALITY PROFILE

Esther Kahn Taylor: Hadassah Lady
Turned Birth Control Advocate

by

Ellen G. Rafshoon*

When Betty Friedan was writing *The Feminine Mystique*, she had in mind the plight of women like Esther Kahn Taylor. Described in a 1965 *Atlanta Constitution* article as “an attractive woman with steel gray hair and a flashing smile,” Taylor had yearned to go to college yet married at eighteen to take up homemaking.¹ While raising her son, she channeled her intellectual gifts into music and Jewish philanthropy. At fifty-five, however, Taylor “was at a crossroads in her life” and was not one to fill the void playing mah-jongg.² In 1960, she traveled to New York to visit an old friend, someone Taylor called an “ardent feminist.”³ Their lunchtime conversation transformed Taylor’s life and improved the well-being of southern women for generations to come.

Her friend explained that she was involved in the Planned Parenthood Foundation of America (PPFA). Founded in 1942 as one of the iterations of the birth control movement launched by renegade obstetrical nurse Margaret Sanger, the organization oversaw 350 clinics by 1960.⁴ Restrictive laws, chauvinism, and the challenge of dispensing medical treatment in a country where health care delivery was haphazard stymied its growth, but Esther would learn that a renaissance in family planning was at hand.⁵ The Food and Drug Administration had recently approved a “magic pill” – the first safe and effective oral contraceptive, which was unlike any other in freeing couples to engage in spontaneous sexual activity.⁶

* The author may be contacted at erafshoo@ggc.edu.

Taylor's New York friend "was very disappointed that a large city like Atlanta didn't have a Planned Parenthood affiliate," and, while unloading a pile of literature into Taylor's arms, she "encouraged [her] over and over again . . . to initiate one."⁷ Among major American cities, the Sunbelt metropolis was the only one without an outpost of the organization. Reading through the brochures on her flight home, Taylor was intrigued but hesitant. She was personally drawn to the poverty-fighting potential of family planning but wondered: could such a risqué cause take root in Dixie? The answer to that question, as this essay explains, was a resounding yes, largely because of Taylor's involvement.

In 1964, this former "Hadassah Lady" initiated the founding of PPFA's first affiliate in the Southeast. Building on her success in Atlanta, the organization went on to expand its services throughout the region. Taylor's activism necessarily extended to the political arena. Although Georgia was among a minority of states which had never passed a "Comstock" law banning the advertising, sale, or distribution of contraceptives, only married women could legally obtain doctor-prescribed birth control.⁸ Moreover, the stigma associated with anything of a sexual nature hindered many from seeking assistance. "Birth control is taboo as a subject for public or polite discussion even more in the South than in the North," observed Nobel Prize-winning sociologist Gunnar Myrdal.⁹ In any event, most of Georgia's women were too poor to afford to see a doctor for any reason. On Taylor's watch as president of the Planned Parenthood Association of Atlanta (PPAA), all of the legal barriers to accessing birth control fell away, as well as some of the economic and cultural hurdles.¹⁰

The outcome of Taylor's engagement in the birth control movement was quite radical. After all, her actions fostered unprecedented sexual and reproductive freedom among southern women. Moreover, her efforts significantly improved public health, as maternal mortality declined as a result.¹¹ But this article will demonstrate that Taylor's advocacy was far from revolutionary, and she was, in fact, reluctant to challenge existing gender relations. As such, her activism provides a compelling case study supporting historical interpretations of the American birth control movement as "liberal reform" that has "served conservative ends."¹² In advancing contraceptive use in the tradition-bound South, Taylor adopted Planned Parenthood's most conservative

goals. Termed the “population control strategy” by historian Linda Gordon, this campaign touted smaller families as the answer to vexing social problems such as crime, juvenile delinquency, poverty, mental illness, rising welfare costs, and dwindling natural resources.¹³ Absent from this approach were references to how preventing and planning childbearing might enhance a woman’s autonomy or sexual pleasure beyond her role in pleasing her husband. Although in hindsight Taylor acknowledged sharing feminist aspirations, she did not attempt to link the birth control cause with the struggle for women’s rights that emerged in the late 1960s.¹⁴ Indeed, when local feminists and public health physicians spearheaded an abortion rights campaign that would have national repercussions, the Atlanta chapter remained on the sidelines. Had Taylor and her cohorts strayed from their seemingly unthreatening positions, they would not have been as successful in attaining their core goal of expanding access to contraceptives to needy women.¹⁵

Esther Kahn Taylor

Born in 1905, Esther was the only American-born child of Polish-Jewish immigrants Marcus and Jennie Kahn. Marcus was typical in leaving his young wife and two sons behind in Europe for an extended period of time while he secured the means to make a living in America.¹⁶ After four years selling clothes door-to-door from a horse-drawn buggy, he resettled the family in downtown Atlanta. Esther’s childhood home was on a corner lot, surrounded by hospitable Christian neighbors.¹⁷ A devout man, Marcus was among the founders of the city’s second Orthodox congregation, Shearith Israel, which met in a Methodist church until funds were raised for a structure after World War II.¹⁸ Esther stressed the patriarchal structure of the Kahn family when recounting her childhood to an interviewer. “Father made the rules in the house,” she said, adding that Marcus’s pastimes ranged from Zionism to Italian opera. Jennie, however, “worked . . . harder than anybody I have ever seen or known,” despite suffering from chronic tuberculosis.¹⁹ Quiet observance of the Sabbath was her singular respite. Largely bedridden by middle age, her mother died shortly after Esther’s wedding; her father passed away four years later.

Although Esther’s parents insisted that their children observe Jewish rituals, they were encouraged to acculturate. A photo taken when

Esther was a toddler shows the family wearing typical American clothes. Marcus's beard is neatly trimmed, and neither he nor his sons wear any sort of head covering.²⁰ Like other middle-class city girls, Esther took piano lessons, played in her girlfriends' homes, and attended public schools. A girl named Norma Rae taught her to read before she entered kindergarten, and Esther entertained her brothers' friends by playing popular ragtime songs she heard on the radio. A precocious student, Esther skipped two grades, so she was only twelve when she entered Girls High School, known for its rigorous academic curriculum.²¹ In her senior year, she was caught by surprise when her peers elected her class president. As far as Esther knew, a Jewish girl had never before received this honor, which included acting as the commencement speaker. She rose to the occasion, delivering her address before an audience of five thousand.²²

Kahn family portrait, c. 1910.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Meyer, Marcus, Esther, Samuel, and Jennie.

(Courtesy of Judith Taylor.)

One of Esther's older brothers attended Emory University, and she expected to follow after him to prepare for teaching, then considered one of the few suitable professions for educated women. But her father refused to send her despite conceding that she was "smart enough."²³ This decision was the most traumatic event of Taylor's youth, one that perhaps explains why she later became enamored with a cause that enhanced a woman's control over her own destiny. Because Marcus Kahn knew of his daughter's career aspirations, he arranged for her to take a job teaching Hebrew, making her Shearith Israel's first female employee.²⁴ Marcus also intended to pair Esther with a rabbi, and, to improve her marriage prospects, he amassed a dowry by collecting a portion of her weekly paycheck. Overhearing her father discuss his matchmaking plans for her, Esther vowed she would never accede. After all, young women in the Roaring Twenties were choosing their own mates and having fun doing so.²⁵ To circumvent her father's intentions, the vivacious teenager began dating furiously. Esther's suitors, buddies of her older brothers, took her to dance halls and fraternity parties, although they were subject to questioning from her father before they drove away.²⁶

Around her eighteenth birthday, Esther Kahn secured a marriage proposal from Herbert Taylor, a pharmacist a decade older than she, who had treated the Kahns to ice cream from the drugstore he owned with his brother. When Marcus reluctantly approved the union, he told his future son-in-law: "Esther is too young to get married but her mother is sick, and she really should be out of this house. . . . If you'll raise her . . . and take good care of her, I think I can let her marry." It was jarring for Esther Kahn to hear herself discussed in such demeaning terms. Nevertheless, she was elated because she understood that Herbert Taylor would not be overbearing. "[The] wonderful part was that my husband permitted me to do almost anything I wanted to do. I didn't ask for the world, but I could feel the liberty of being my own person and doing whatever I chose to do for the first time."²⁷

During the early years of her marriage, Taylor continued teaching Hebrew and helped out in a drugstore that she encouraged her husband to open separately from his brother. She stopped working when she gave birth to her first and only child, Mark, in 1928. It is not clear why Esther did not have more children. In her oral history, she mentions having suf-

ferred from gynecological problems that culminated in a hysterectomy. But family members speculate that the onset of the Great Depression and the prospect of financial hardship prompted her and Herbert to refrain from having more children like so many of their peers.²⁸ In all likelihood, both factors were germane.

When she became a mother, Taylor largely conformed to societal norms holding that one put aside youthful exuberances as well as paid employment to assume domestic duties. But for some time, it had been acceptable for middle-class women to expand the bounds of domesticity by volunteering in the nonprofit sector. For Jewish women, philanthropic activity was in keeping with the tradition of *tzedekah* but also served as an “invisible career” when paid work was out of reach.²⁹ In Taylor’s case, these ventures offered vital training in speechmaking, fundraising, and logistics, which would give her the confidence to initiate the Planned Parenthood chapter. In the South as elsewhere, Jewish women gravitated toward certain societies based on their ancestry and synagogue affiliation. For example, the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) was initially composed of upper-class Reform Jews of central European origin, but Hadassah, the Zionist organization, was dominated by Orthodox Jewish women whose parents had fled the shtetls of eastern Europe.³⁰

Taylor bridged the divide by participating in both groups, reflecting the need for united action to combat Nazi persecution and the diminution of ethnic, class, and religious divisions within the American and Atlanta Jewish communities. Taylor served as president of Atlanta Hadassah in the 1930s when the group worked to secure the immigration of victims of Nazism to Palestine. Hadassah put heavy pressure on its local chapters to meet quotas for memberships and fundraising. “My phone was busy every hour of the day,” Taylor recalled, adding that the experience warned her against accepting future leadership positions prior to fully understanding the attendant responsibilities.³¹ After the United States entered World War II, she acted as an NCJW lobbyist. In 1942, Taylor was part of an NCJW delegation that met with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt in the White House regarding refugee resettlement in Palestine. After the war, she and her husband made their first “ocean crossing,” taking a trip to the fledgling state of Israel. The tour included visits to refugee camps inhabited by families from North

Herbert Taylor (far left) and Esther Taylor (far right) at a PPAA public affairs event, c. 1970. (Courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library, Atlanta, used with permission of Planned Parenthood Southeast.)

Africa, and Esther was shocked by their dire circumstances; some of the children were visibly malnourished. But the families were not neglected: the Jewish charity World-ORT was establishing schools and looking to provide job training. Upon her return home, Taylor was inspired to start an ORT chapter in Atlanta, a harbinger of her subsequent immersion in the birth control movement, which also made fighting poverty the centerpiece of its advocacy.³²

In midlife, Taylor aggressively pursued involvement in civic groups including those that had a history of excluding Jewish women. She participated in the League of Women Voters and the Atlanta Music Club, and she rose to become a vice-president of the Atlanta Woman's Club, a position she held for two decades.³³ Such undertakings brought her into contact with local movers and shakers among mainstream elites, a network she tapped into when she embarked on her Planned Parenthood quest. By this time, Taylor was a wealthy woman. Her hus-

band had opened more drugstores around the city and ventured into real estate development. The couple lived in posh Brookhaven, the first planned “country club” community in Georgia, and the Taylors entertained guests frequently.³⁴ An accomplished pianist, she set up pianos side-by-side in the living room so she could hold duet recitals. No matter what the occasion, Taylor evoked the disciplined elegance later epitomized by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy. “She was a grande dame,” said her daughter-in-law Judith Taylor.³⁵ No doubt Taylor was more energetic than many of her peers. But what truly set her apart was her independence. Most notably, she delved into a variety of pursuits that took her away from Atlanta and her husband for prolonged periods. Herbert Taylor, enmeshed in running his business, had scant interest in foreign travel, so Esther Taylor saw the world on her own. Besides taking in the sites, she made up for her lack of higher education, enrolling in university courses in Paris, Montreal, and New York. For eight summers, she was a music student at the famed Juilliard School in Manhattan.³⁶

Planned Parenthood

Taylor’s initial qualms about proselytizing for birth control after being approached by her New York friend stemmed from its “hush hush” nature.³⁷ It was still a crime in some states to prescribe contraceptives, and “the word ‘sex’ was not used in polite conversation.”³⁸ As Taylor mused getting involved in family planning, she worried that doctors would be unreceptive out of fear that free clinics would compete for patients. She believed that physicians failed to realize “that there were thousands of people out there who never went to a doctor, who didn’t have the money to go to a doctor.”³⁹ On the other hand, many favorable circumstances prompted her to accept the challenge. By 1964 millions of women were already on the pill, making it the most popular contraceptive in America.⁴⁰ And for good reason. “I simply take a pill every evening and my God, it’s wonderful not to worry,” a suburban mother exulted in the pages of the *Saturday Evening Post*.⁴¹ This breakthrough in reproductive medicine was heralded despite alarming reports of side effects.

However, as Taylor pointed out, if one did not have a private physician, the only place in Georgia to get a prescription for this miracle drug was at Atlanta’s public hospital, Grady Memorial. In 1963 Emory

University physicians had established a family planning clinic at Grady, dispensing the pill and intrauterine devices (IUDs), that served about five thousand mostly African American women each year.⁴² But the program had built-in limitations. Only indigent and married mothers from two metropolitan counties were offered contraceptive services. Single women, teenagers, and women who had never given birth were turned away. Consequently, researchers with the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), based in Atlanta, estimated that the contraceptive needs of at least ten times as many of the city's women were unmet.⁴³ Statewide, the situation looked even grimmer. Georgia's Board of Public Health declined to distribute the pill and IUDs at its clinics and instead dispensed contraceptive foams while teaching couples the precarious "rhythm" method—timing sexual intercourse to avoid fertile periods. In 1964, these meager services only reached seven thousand women in the entire state.⁴⁴

Coinciding with the advent of medically sound contraceptives was a revised view that the purpose of sex within marriage was wider than procreation. Although a woman might finish bearing children by the age of thirty, how would the marriage last if the couple became celibate afterwards?⁴⁵ In addition, family planning came to be viewed as crucial to reducing poverty and overpopulation. This "neo-Malthusian" perspective figured heavily in postwar U.S. foreign and domestic policy and captured the imagination of most major religious groups including evangelical Protestants. Only Catholics expressed qualms.⁴⁶ Methodists were the first major denomination to sanction the use of artificial aids to plan parenthood, and in 1961 the representative body for thousands of mainline Protestant denominations followed suit.⁴⁷ Among people of faith, Jewish couples were exceptional in their vigilant use of contraception even when access and methods were limited. One of the few scientific studies of fertility patterns among Jews concluded that in the absence of strong religious dictates encouraging large families, socioeconomic factors such as educational attainment and income that were determinants of white Protestant family size also had the greatest influence on Jewish childbearing.⁴⁸

In 1963 Congress began allocating foreign aid for population reduction measures where poverty was endemic.⁴⁹ But the most noteworthy official development regarding family planning was the 1965 Supreme

Court ruling in *Griswold v. Connecticut* involving the Planned Parenthood affiliate in New Haven. This landmark decision struck down all remaining laws preventing married couples from obtaining a doctor's prescription for contraceptives and prompted Senator Ernest Gruening of Alaska to hold hearings on a bill that would ensure that every American had access to birth control.⁵⁰ Consequently, the Lyndon B. Johnson administration took the unprecedented step of devoting federal monies that had been allocated for the War on Poverty to local programs interested in distributing the pill. Rural Pennsylvania women were the first beneficiaries, but in part because of Esther Taylor's activism, poor Atlanta women would be early recipients as well.

Critical to her decision to move forward was Herbert Taylor's promise that he would provide his wife with five thousand dollars in seed money. Her next step was to request that New York PPFA officials hire a southeast representative to assist. Field director Naomi Gray must have sensed Esther Taylor's determination, because in a few months she relocated the organization's executive director, Russell "Russ" Richardson, to Atlanta to assume the new position. Richardson, a social worker and zealot for the cause of family planning, worked in tandem with Taylor and leveraged her experiences as a model for other southerners seeking to do the same in their cities.

Taylor's web of acquaintances proved essential to rooting Planned Parenthood in Atlanta. One can imagine her rifling through her Rolodex searching for names of prominent women she surmised would be receptive to the organization's innocuous slogan: "every child a wanted child."⁵¹ Jewish women were identified, but she aimed for a broad cross section of civic-minded matrons: Junior Leaguers, PTA presidents, and service-oriented club officers. About forty of these "outstanding women leaders" visited her home on October 20, 1964, to have coffee and hear a pitch from Richardson advancing Planned Parenthood's population control strategy. As Richardson explained, when parents had children who were "not wanted," the children risked growing up with "emotional problems." Rapid action was necessary as "rising population" threatened to outstrip national and global resources.⁵² Richardson closed his talk by asking the women if they supported bringing the birth control organization to Atlanta. All hands went up, Taylor fondly remembered. It was an auspicious start.⁵³

Esther Taylor's handwritten invitation to a gathering at her home that led to the establishment of the Planned Parenthood chapter in Atlanta. (Planned Parenthood Southeast scrapbook 5, courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library, Atlanta.)

After this gathering, Taylor employed techniques she had learned from her prior voluntarism. Every other week for months on end, housewives with time to spare gathered around her dining room table stuffing envelopes and licking stamps. The first mass mailing of fifty thousand letters sought donations and volunteers. Meanwhile, Taylor met with representatives of the local power structure including county commissioners, the editors of Atlanta's daily newspapers, and the director of the state board of health. "All they did was to be very courteous," she said. "They didn't promise anything."⁵⁴ She also supervised a volunteer army that dispersed seventeen thousand brochures titled "The Children of the World Deserve to be Planned." These documents, adorned with photos of adorable white toddlers, attributed "problems in housing, employment, education and taxes and the amount of social welfare" to population growth.⁵⁵ Taylor reported receiving a deluge of queries subsequent to their dissemination. "There isn't a single day that I don't get a call from someone asking about the group and wanting to join," she told a reporter.⁵⁶ By the following year, the nascent chapter had gleaned 177 dues-paying members plus a twenty-person board of directors.⁵⁷

*Planned Parenthood
Foundation of America
brochure, c. 1965.
(Courtesy of the Sophia
Smith Collection, Smith
College, Northampton, MA.)*

The Atlanta chapter's leadership included more than the ladies who lunch. The maiden governing board, evenly divided between men and women, was composed of businessmen, academics, public health officials, philanthropic homemakers like Taylor, liberal Jewish and Protestant clergy, and obstetricians affiliated with the Grady-Emory family planning program.⁵⁸ If a surname can be relied on to hint at the bearer's ethnicity, then it is clear that Jews did not dominate the board, although they may have been disproportionately represented given that less than 2 percent of Atlanta's population in 1964 was Jewish.⁵⁹ Taylor recognized that the most important figure associated with the affiliate during its formative period was Emory's Dr. Luella Klein, chair of the medical advisory committee and later chief of Maternal Health at Grady.

One of six women to graduate the University of Iowa Medical School in 1949, Klein was one of the few female gynecologists licensed to perform surgery in the United States.⁶⁰ Besides her medical acumen, Klein brought a "demanding personality" to her work for Planned Parenthood, which she used to make inroads with the predominantly male public health community as well as the state legislature.⁶¹ When Taylor called on Governor Lester Maddox, Klein did the talking.⁶² Based on her work at Grady, Klein keenly understood the needs of poor women; it was she who raised the idea of providing free transportation to birth control clinics.⁶³

At a time when blacks and whites lived parallel lives and white resistance to integration was fierce, PPAA was noteworthy in including black participants. Dr. William Mason, a Yale-educated physician with the Georgia Department of Public Health who had been forbidden from caring for white patients earlier in his career, served on the maiden board. In 1972 he became the chapter president.⁶⁴ Dr. Walter Chivers, chair of the sociology department at Morehouse College, was a board member until his death in 1969 and functioned as the chapter's emissary to the black community. He recruited many of the African American volunteers and employees to work in the clinics. Chivers possibly secured office space at the Atlanta University Center's Interdenominational Theological Center (associated with Morehouse College) to house the chapter's first clinic. Chivers and his wife had been members of Planned Parenthood since the 1940s, when the organization set up a National Negro Advisory Council to raise the organization's profile among black health professionals and to educate black southerners about contraception. Although African Americans were as receptive to using birth control as whites, some were wary that Planned Parenthood was advocating eugenics, or racially selective childbearing.⁶⁵ A beloved professor of Martin Luther King, Jr., Chivers attained the civil rights leader's endorsement of the birth control struggle, assuring King that Planned Parenthood operated with "integrity, honesty, and complete lack of racial prejudice."⁶⁶

Establishing credibility among the black community was imperative for the PPAA because more than 80 percent of its clients during Taylor's tenure as chapter president were African American. The rationale given by Sylvia Freedman, the chapter's executive director from

1965 to 1978, was that “they live in areas where most of the poverty is.” Freedman observed that predominantly African American neighborhoods had the city’s highest birth rates as well as the highest rates of maternal death.⁶⁷ In keeping with this rationale, the first PPAA clinics were located in black neighborhoods, most where local activists had organized “community action centers” authorized to receive federal anti-poverty funding.

In several northern cities, male Black Power activists, claiming birth control was part of a white conspiracy to reduce black political influence, sought to drive Planned Parenthood out of business.⁶⁸ There is scant evidence that black militants impeded operations in Atlanta, but occasionally questions arose in the press about whether African American women were being singled out. When board member Mason was asked if birth control was “black genocide,” he responded: “I’m black and I know that’s not true. Genocide is the concept of people who have fears. . . . I would rather see quality people than to have a teeming mass of sick, unwanted, uneducated children.”⁶⁹

*Planned Parenthood Association
of Atlanta certificate for Esther
Taylor, January 20, 1967.
(Planned Parenthood Southeast
scrapbook 8, courtesy of Special
Collections and Archives,
Georgia State University
Library, Atlanta.)*

Russ Richardson, Planned Parenthood's southeast director, was similarly defensive after the *Atlanta Constitution* published a letter castigating the organization for targeting black families. His rejoinder contended that the provision of reduced-fee birth control distribution represented the "removal of one more element of discrimination." He emphasized that Planned Parenthood's clients were not subject to coercion. "We have fought to make voluntary birth control services available to all women as a basic human right. Surely we cannot deny children the right to be born into a home where they will be wanted, loved and cared for," he wrote.⁷⁰ Planned Parenthood would "get black folks to trust us," said Helen Howard, a black community organizer in Vine City, as long as it was not perceived as a "movement operated by white persons."⁷¹

Taylor frequently held board meetings at the downtown offices of the Trust Company Bank, Atlanta's leading financial institution closely associated with the Coca-Cola Company.⁷² A review of the organization's paperwork reveals that these were no-nonsense sessions that accomplished important business. Under Taylor's management, the

Planned Parenthood Foundation of America certificate of appreciation for Esther Taylor, March 18, 1972. The certificate marks the first day of issue of a U.S. commemorative stamp honoring family planning. (Planned Parenthood Southeast scrapbook 8, courtesy of Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library, Atlanta.)

chapter aimed to create favorable public opinion toward “birth control for all who desire it” and to “alert the citizens of Atlanta to the gravity of the population crisis.”⁷³ Rhetoric, in printed or oral forms, touted the cost savings accrued to taxpayers through reduced welfare payments. Preventing “illegitimacy” and abortion were additional selling points. “Why should we have over one million abortions a year reported,” Taylor asked members of the Northside Kiwanis Club in a 1965 luncheon speech delivered at the Biltmore Hotel.⁷⁴

The chapter’s publicity campaign included contracting with the city to affix posters to buses and canvassing well-trafficked spaces like Lenox Square Mall.⁷⁵ In addition, Taylor and her cohorts assiduously cultivated positive media coverage. For help with media relations, Taylor turned to successful Atlanta freelance writer Nan Pendergrast, who was concurrently involved in public school desegregation.⁷⁶ Although Planned Parenthood was rarely front page news in Atlanta’s daily newspapers, the stories reported were overwhelmingly sympathetic to widening access to birth control. The newspapers’ reporters faithfully transmitted the organization’s warnings about “bringing unwanted babies into a society that cannot take care of them.”⁷⁷ The papers’ coverage enhanced the respectability of the enterprise, which was one of Taylor’s fundamental objectives. For example, a multipage feature on the clinics, published in 1967, included photos depicting black and white female volunteers attired in crisply ironed blouses and skirts conducting educational sessions and meeting one-on-one with patients as if they were in private doctors’ offices.⁷⁸ Copies of every article ever written about the chapter were clipped and preserved in scrapbooks currently held in Georgia State University’s archives.⁷⁹

Taylor’s forays to venues across the city to sell Planned Parenthood’s mission to Rotarians, church groups, and politicians were integral to erasing stigmas about birth control. On these occasions, Taylor donned a skirt suit and blouse set off with a string of pearls. She often chose to wear white, as that color conveyed dignity, she told her granddaughter Elaine Taylor-Klaus, who worked for Planned Parenthood during the 1980s.⁸⁰ Esther Taylor had no qualms about standing in front of dark-suited businessmen displaying the Lippes Loop, a snakelike IUD, or the iconic pink compact containing a month’s supply of the pill. When she was not delivering speeches, Taylor introduced an array of

nationally recognized family planning boosters to Atlanta's civic elite, such as Planned Parenthood president Dr. Alan Guttmacher.⁸¹ In 1966, PPAA hosted an appearance by Eleanor Burrows Pillsbury, the first wife of food products mogul Charles A. Pillsbury and a noteworthy birth control philanthropist. Pillsbury delivered an address titled "The Businessman's Stake in the Population Explosion" to a group of small-business owners Taylor had assembled. Later in the day, Pillsbury advocated for the Atlanta chapter on an interview program broadcast on local television station WAGA.⁸²

The most important function of the PPAA was the direct provision of reproductive health services to patients too poor to see a gynecologist yet not poor enough to qualify for services at Grady Memorial. By 1969 PPAA operated nine clinics including one in suburban Roswell.⁸³ These employed a small staff of doctors and nurses while relying heavily on the voluntary services of retired black professionals, especially school teachers, and students from historically black colleges.⁸⁴ The clinics had night hours to accommodate working women's schedules and survived on new federal family planning funding as well as discounted supplies from pharmaceutical companies.⁸⁵ Herbert Taylor donated a major portion of the operating funds; the rest was left to Esther Taylor to raise.⁸⁶ When asked later in life if she specifically lobbied Jewish organizations given her background, she indicated that she had been discouraged by their lack of enthusiasm. For example, the Atlanta section of the National Council of Jewish Women once gave her only five minutes to make her pitch. "I said, 'Thank you, but no thank you.' I couldn't possibly tell the story I had to tell in five minutes." She reached the conclusion that Jewish organizations "needed as many volunteers [as they could get] and they had a specific mission. This really didn't belong in that kind of an organization."⁸⁷

Taylor had Richardson, the southeast director, take the lead on crucial legal matters. In 1966 the group scored a major victory when state representative George Busbee, a Democrat from rural Albany who later served as governor, sponsored the Georgia Family Planning Services Act, which passed by a nearly unanimous vote.⁸⁸ The law called on public health clinics to begin offering the pill and IUDs to their married clients. Two years later, greater progress was achieved when the law was amended to cover "any woman requesting such services," and the PPAA

as well as other private and public birth control providers interpreted this as a green light to serve women regardless of age or marital status.⁸⁹ Serving single women was seen as crucial to Taylor and the chapter's other leaders, as they had repeatedly stressed the need to reduce the number of children born "out of wedlock" as a way of uplifting the poor. "With four or six children, and usually one parent, a working mother," Taylor had warned in a 1968 speech, "how many of these children will go to a mental hospital? How many will fill our criminal institutions?"⁹⁰

Moving On

In 1968 Georgia became the fourth state to repeal criminal penalties against doctors performing abortions.⁹¹ The procedure was permitted when there was a "grave" risk to the mother's physical or mental health, the fetus might be born deformed, or if the pregnancy was the result of rape. The patient was required to be a Georgia resident, and each request was scrutinized by at least two hospital administrators before a doctor could proceed. These standards were applied rigorously so that from 1968 to 1970, fewer than five hundred abortions were performed statewide.⁹² Under Taylor's leadership, PPAA took no official position on this law, nor did the board members discuss it at their meetings. From what can be discerned from a review of newspaper articles about PPAA, it appears that Taylor and the chapter's chief medical adviser, Luella Klein, preferred that the chapter concentrate on its core mission of disseminating contraceptives as a means to avert recourse to abortion rather than promoting abortion per se.

Mere months after Georgia liberalized its abortion law, national Planned Parenthood called on states to forgo all restrictions on abortion as long as the pregnant woman and her physician were willing. This stance was in keeping with the demands of the nascent feminist movement and also represented the preference of many doctors who wanted ultimate discretion over the practice of medicine.⁹³ It signaled an end to the population control strategy, which had emphasized the organization's commitment to societal goals. On the other hand, the radicalism inherent in promoting abortion with respect to women's rights was not new for Planned Parenthood. Margaret Sanger's activism in the early twentieth century had been motivated by her desire to protect women from the heinous effects of "back alley" abortions, and she and her com-

patriots understood fertility control to be central in overcoming patriarchy.

Atlanta newspaper accounts reveal that the abortion issue was divisive within the chapter. Klein was content with letting the current abortion restrictions stand. She contended that free access to abortion would deter women from diligently using contraceptives. Moreover, she maintained that women who were “very hostile early in pregnancy” moved towards acceptance once they realized “there is nothing they can do about it.” In contrast, Dr. Newton Long, Emory’s chief obstetrician and a founding member of PPAA, argued that the current law unduly hampered the professional discretion typically awarded physicians. “I am philosophically opposed to having any law. The legislature has never felt it had to pass laws on tonsillectomies. I think it would be best to leave medical decisions to the medical profession,” he contended.⁹⁴ Taylor did not take part in this debate, as she resigned the presidency of the chapter at this juncture, leaving in charge Dr. Raphael “Ray” Levine, a Lockheed Corporation engineer.⁹⁵ The PPAA board subsequently followed the dictates of its parent body in New York and passed a resolution demanding that abortion be “governed by the same rules as apply to other medical procedures.” The affiliate promised it would refer patients seeking an abortion to Grady Memorial, Emory’s Crawford Long Hospital, or a private physician.⁹⁶

Given Taylor’s ambivalence about abortion, it makes sense that she chose to exit the chapter as controversy developed around this issue. Always politically savvy, she likely understood that her time had come and gone. The original justifications for launching Planned Parenthood in Atlanta, rooted in her personal social justice concerns, were being supplanted with discourse that held that women’s advancement was contingent on abortion rights. She likely presumed she would not have been the right person to deliver this message.

In the immediate years after Taylor’s retirement from the chapter, some of PPAA’s public health professionals emerged as central figures in the abortion rights struggle. They collaborated with local feminists, liberal clergy, and civil libertarians to seek passage of a Georgia law aligned with Planned Parenthood’s proposal invalidating all restrictions on abortion within the first twelve weeks of pregnancy.⁹⁷ When that effort proved futile, they sought recourse in the federal courts, a move that had

national repercussions.⁹⁸ In 1970 the activists sued Grady Hospital for refusing an abortion to a twenty-two-year-old mother who had been incapable of parenting her three children. The Supreme Court heard the case, *Doe v. Bolton*, as a companion to the Texas-based *Roe v. Wade*.⁹⁹ The landmark 1973 ruling held that “all factors—physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman’s age—relevant to the well-being of the patient” were grounds for terminating a pregnancy without state interference.¹⁰⁰ This legal victory, to which PPAA served as an original plaintiff, fundamentally altered Planned Parenthood’s operations to include abortion referral and services. Consequently, Planned Parenthood’s work turned more contentious in light of the right-wing backlash that followed.

In subsequent decades, Taylor remained a quiet but vital devotee of the chapter she birthed. She and her husband acted as generous patrons, as did her son, Mark, who entered his father’s real-estate business, and his wife, Judith, who, like her mother-in-law, was a leader in Jewish and Atlanta philanthropic organizations.¹⁰¹ The family made it possible for the organization to expand its footprint to serve thousands of black and white women in Atlanta and surrounding suburbs. Without the PPAA clinics, many would have missed regular gynecological exams diagnosing breast cancer and sexually transmitted diseases as well as prescriptions for birth control. Esther Taylor’s family also worked to defend Planned Parenthood as political antagonisms grew at the state and national level. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Supreme Court issued rulings giving states greater leeway to restrict abortion, and clinics were targeted by “right-to-life” protesters taunting clients with gruesome photos of fetal tissue.¹⁰²

Esther Taylor was troubled by these developments, saying that the “anti-abortion crusade [was] one of the tragedies of our time.”¹⁰³ The campaign to sustain abortion rights was taken up by the next Taylor generation, born in the early 1960s while Esther Taylor was touting the pill to Rotarians as a cure-all for poverty. Elaine Taylor-Klaus, who had embarked on a career as a lobbyist for women’s health organizations, was hired in 1991 to be the chief spokesperson for Planned Parenthood Southeast, which had grown to include forty-three chapters since her grandmother founded PPAA. In explaining her affinity for the organization, Elaine Taylor-Klaus evidenced the ideological shift that had

*"A Family of Feminists," Atlanta Jewish Times, September 13, 1991.
 Esther Taylor (seated) with her daughter-in-law, Judith Taylor, and granddaughter, Elaine Taylor-Klaus.
 (Courtesy of the Cuba Family Archives for Southern Jewish History at the Breman Museum, Atlanta. Used with permission.)*

occurred since her grandmother's retirement. "This is about controlling population but more importantly for me, it's about women's ability to control their bodies to plan their families in such a way that you can space your children more than nine or 10 months apart, to decide when and if you want to have children and how many."¹⁰⁴ Esther Taylor, of course, was delighted to see Taylor-Klaus take up where she left off. She professed admiration for feminists like her granddaughter and their focus on women's reproductive rights. "I'm certainly a great believer in choice, or I wouldn't have been interested in Planned Parenthood. I believe each person has a right to make a choice for herself."¹⁰⁵ That Taylor never voiced those sentiments a half-century earlier turned out to be of great benefit to the cause of family planning in Georgia, where acceptance of birth control was to be understood as social control and not women's autonomy.¹⁰⁶

*Esther Taylor at the
Mobilization for Women's
Lives, November 12, 1989, at
Woodruff Park in Atlanta,
Atlanta Jewish Times,
September 13, 1991.
(Courtesy of Judith Taylor,
used with permission.)*

NOTES

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¹ "Atlantans Form Birth Control Committee," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 16, 1964.

² Judith Taylor, interview conducted by author, July 8, 2015.

³ Esther Kahn Taylor, interview conducted by Margery Diamond, July 9, 1986, 28, Esther and Herbert Taylor Oral History Collection at the Breman Museum, Atlanta (hereafter cited as Esther Kahn Taylor oral history). Taylor was eighty-two years old at the time of this interview. She did not name her influential friend in this interview or any other.

⁴ Carole R. McCann, "Planned Parenthood," in *The Readers Companion to U.S. Women's History*, ed. Wilma Mankiller, et al. (Boston, 1998), 450.

⁵ For an overview of the evolution of Planned Parenthood and the challenges it faces, see Jill Lepore, "Birthright: What's Next for Planned Parenthood?," *New Yorker*, November 14, 2011, 44-45.

⁶ Margaret Sanger referred to an oral contraceptive as a "magic pill" in a 1939 letter to Clarence Gamble, an heir to the Proctor and Gamble Corporation fortune, who shared her fanaticism about birth control. The letter is cited in Lara Marks, *Sexual Chemistry: A History of the Contraceptive Pill* (New Haven, 2001), 51. Sanger and philanthropist Katherine McCormick enlisted reproductive biologist Dr. Gregory Pincus and fertility expert Dr. John

Rock to develop the drug in 1951. Searle Pharmaceutical attained FDA approval after successful clinical trials in Massachusetts and Puerto Rico. The pill quickly became the primary method of birth control distributed by Planned Parenthood, supplanting the diaphragm. For a detailed accounting of the pill's development, see Andrea Tone, *Devices and Desires: A History of Contraceptives in America* (New York, 2001), 203–31.

⁷ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 28.

⁸ The 1873 law prevented interstate trade in any material preventing pregnancy, but Georgia was one of thirteen states, mostly southern, that refrained from passing a state version of the law. In 1937 a federal district court ruling, *United States of America v. One Package of Japanese Pessaries*, made it possible for doctors to legally prescribe contraceptives. The legal history is outlined in Jack H. Hudson, "Birth Control Legislation," *Cleveland-Marshall Law Review* 9 (May 1960): 245–257.

⁹ Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York, 1944), 176.

¹⁰ Georgia's 1966 Family Planning Services Act provided for state-sponsored birth control services, and its 1968 amendments specified that the law applied to "anyone requesting such services," irrespective of age or marital status. An analysis of states' varying birth control laws is contained in Martha J. Bailey et al., "Early Legal Access: Laws and Policies Governing Contraceptive Access, 1960–1980," 5, accessed July 15, 2015, http://www-personal.umich.edu/~baileymj/ELA_laws.pdf.

¹¹ Starting in 1965, when federal funding became available to PPAA clinics and the Emory-Grady Family Planning Program vastly expanded its client base, fertility rates among white and black women in Atlanta declined for the first time in the latter half of the twentieth century. The reductions in childbearing were sharpest among black women, who comprised most of the patient population at Atlanta's free clinics. See Carl W. Tyler, Jr., et al., "Assessment of a Family Planning Program: Contraceptive Services and Fertility in Atlanta, Georgia," *Family Planning Perspectives* 2 (March 1970): 25–29. Another study noted a significant drop in maternal mortality among Atlanta women from 1965 to 1969. This was before a state law went into effect permitting hospital abortions under limited circumstances but during the period when contraceptive distribution increased. See Roger Rochat, Carl Tyler, and Alan Shoenbucher, "An Epidemiological Analysis of Abortion in Georgia," *American Journal of Public Health* 61 (March 1971): 544.

¹² This thesis was initially offered by David Kennedy, *Birth Control in America: The Career of Margaret Sanger* (New Haven, 1970), 272. Other works that echo Kennedy's conclusions include Linda Gordon, *The Moral Property of Women: A History of Birth Control Politics in America* (Chicago, 2002); and Donald T. Critchlow, *Intended Consequences: Birth Control, Abortion, and the Federal Government in Modern America* (New York, 1999).

¹³ The population control strategy is detailed in Gordon, *Moral Property of Women*, 278–86; and Critchlow, *Intended Consequences*, 5. Melanie K. Welch shows how population control was the motivation for Arkansas to provide contraceptives to poor women in "Not

Women's Rights: Birth Control as Poverty Control in Arkansas," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 69 (Autumn 2010): 220–44.

¹⁴ Taylor described herself as "a feminist to the core." Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 52.

¹⁵ Georgia, for example, was one of fifteen states that declined to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) approved by Congress in 1970. The constitutional amendment, which the feminist movement considered vital to securing women's economic, political, and social equality, failed to pass either body of the Georgia legislature. Support from Georgia governors Jimmy Carter and George Busbee was lukewarm. STOP ERA, founded by Eagle Forum chair Phyllis Schlafly, had a strong presence in the state.

¹⁶ Marcus Kahn left Poland in 1900, and Jennie Kahn and the boys arrived in 1904. Esther was born a year later. The immigrants became citizens in 1910. Jennie's name is given as *Janice* in the oral history transcript, but *Jennie* is correct according to the family and the 1920 U.S. Census.

¹⁷ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 1–2.

¹⁸ Marcus was responsible for bringing Rabbi Tobias Geffen to the synagogue, where he remained for sixty years. Geffen, renowned for working with Coca-Cola to make its popular beverage kosher, persuaded Methodist-affiliated Emory University to accommodate Jewish students by ending the practice of giving exams on Saturdays. See Joel Ziff, ed., *Lev Tuoviah: On the Life and Work of Rabbi Tobias Geffen* (Newton, MA, 1988); David Geffen, "The Literary Legacy of Rabbi Tobias Geffen in Atlanta, 1910–1970," *Atlanta Historical Journal* 23 (Fall 1979): 85–90; Nathan Kaganoff, "An Orthodox Rabbinate in the South: Tobias Geffen, 1870–1970," *American Jewish History* 73 (September 1983): 56–70.

¹⁹ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 10, 6.

²⁰ Family portrait, Karen Kahn private collection.

²¹ Girls High, founded in 1872 as one of seven schools making up the original Atlanta Public Schools system, housed science labs, a library, and sewing rooms. Graduates were prepared for college, unlike students at Commercial High School, which provided vocational training. Jewish girls of eastern European origin tended to go to Commercial High.

²² Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 9.

²³ *Ibid.*, 10.

²⁴ Elaine Taylor-Klaus, interview conducted by author, February 17, 2016.

²⁵ John D'Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America* (Chicago, 1988), 241.

²⁶ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 11, 10.

²⁸ From the stock market crash of 1929 through the war years, the U.S. fertility rate dropped drastically from a norm of 3.5 to 2.5 children per woman. Couples were able to restrict childbearing somewhat effectively as laws regulating contraception were relaxed during the 1930s. These changes are detailed in D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 245–46.

²⁹ Susan M. Chambré, "Parallel Power Structures, Invisible Careers and the Changing Nature of American Jewish Women's Philanthropy," *Journal of Jewish Communal Service* 76 (Spring 2000): 2.

³⁰ Taylor refers in her oral history to the class conflict within the Atlanta Jewish community. Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 15.

³¹ Esther Kahn Taylor, unpublished handwritten memoir, 1986, created in preparation for her oral history, Judith Taylor private collection.

³² Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 17-18.

³³ According to Judith Taylor, her mother-in-law never advanced to the top leadership spot because she was Jewish. The Music Club was a booster for the city's orchestra and a purveyor of music education. Taylor initiated a regular radio program for the club and secured scholarships for young music students. A full account of her activities can be found in Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 19-30.

³⁴ The neighborhood, developed between 1910 and 1942, surrounds the Capital City Country Club and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There is an abbreviated description at National Park Service: Atlanta, accessed May 21, 2016, <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/atlanta/bhd.htm>.

³⁵ Judith Taylor, interview conducted by author, July 19, 2015.

³⁶ Taylor, unpublished memoir, 1986.

³⁷ Esther Kahn Taylor, undated speech [1970], Planned Parenthood Association of Atlanta Papers, Planned Parenthood Southeast Records, series 2, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University, Atlanta (hereafter cited as PPAA Papers).

³⁸ Taylor unpublished memoir, 1986.

³⁹ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 31.

⁴⁰ Nancy Gibbs, Deirdre Van Dyk, and Kathleen Adams, "Love, Sex, Freedom and the Paradox of the Pill," *Time*, April 3, 2010, accessed October 23, 2015, EBSCO Academic Search Complete (49741947).

⁴¹ Steven Spencer, "The Birth Control Revolution," *Saturday Evening Post*, January 15, 1966, 24.

⁴² Since the 1930s, when medical distribution of diaphragms was sanctioned, a "small proportion" of mothers visiting Grady Memorial for postpartum checkups were prescribed the devices. The majority received guidance in the use of less efficacious contraceptive foams. The Emory-Grady program significantly expanded these services to include distribution of the pill and the IUD after it received a \$130,000 grant from Joseph Sunnen, a self-taught chemist from St. Louis who invented Emko, a spermicidal foam that was known for its pleasant odor and packaged in individual doses. Tyler, et al., "Assessment of a Family Planning Program," 25-29.

⁴³ Nicholas H. Wright, "Vital Statistics and Census Tract Data Used to Evaluate Family Planning," *Public Health Reports* 85 (1970): 383-89.

⁴⁴ The minutes are embedded within a Senate subcommittee report at p. 2052. Minutes of the Advisory Committee on Family Planning, Georgia Department of Public Health,

November 2, 1964, accessed September 18, 2015, https://archive.org/stream/populationcrisis04unit/populationcrisis04unit_djvu.txt. For information about the minimal birth control services Georgia provided in the early 1960s, see Russell Richardson to state senator George Busbee, October 12, 1965, Planned Parenthood Federation of America Records (PPFA II), Series V, Affiliates (Part I): Atlanta, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College, Northampton, Mass. (hereafter cited as PPFA Records).

⁴⁵ D'Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 252.

⁴⁶ Steven W. Sinding, "Population, Poverty and Economic Development," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 364 (October 2009): 3024; Critchlow, *Intended Consequences*, 13–49. Although a majority of American Catholics wanted the church to relax its policies banning the use of contraceptives and nearly one third of Catholic women (in 1970) reported having used the pill, the 1968 papal encyclical *Humanae Vitae* condemned all birth control drugs except when taken for reproductive health purposes. Tone, *Devices and Desires*, 237. For evangelical attitudes towards sexuality in the 1960s, see Scott Flipse, "Below-the-Belt Politics," in *The Conservative Sixties*, ed. David Farber and Jeff Roche (New York, 2003), 131–33.

⁴⁷ The churches approved any "non-injurious" forms of birth control, defined as any method except forced sterilization or abortion, according to William L. Davis, "Family Planning Services: A History of U.S. Federal Legislation," *Journal of Family History* 16 (October 1991): 385.

⁴⁸ Calvin Goldscheider, "Fertility of the Jews," *Demography* 4 (March 1967): 196–209.

⁴⁹ Davis, "Family Planning Services," 386.

⁵⁰ Critchlow, *Intended Consequences*, 74–75.

⁵¹ Nancy Aries, "Fragmentation and Reproductive Freedom: Federally Subsidized Family Planning Services, 1960–80," *American Journal of Public Health* 77 (November 1987): 1466.

⁵² Mary Fortson, "40 Leaders Here Support Planned Parenthood Drive," *Atlanta Constitution*, October 21, 1964. The belief that overcrowding would deplete the planet permeated American popular culture in the postwar period. For example, the cover of the New Year's issue of *Time* on January 11, 1960, depicted a crowded multicultural tableau of mothers and babies titled the "Population Explosion." In his best-selling manifesto, demographer Paul R. Ehrlich called this catastrophe *The Population Bomb* (New York, 1968).

⁵³ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 30.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁵⁵ "The Children of the World Deserve to be Planned," PPFA Records.

⁵⁶ Walker Lundy, "Planned Parenthood Tries to Meet Population Crisis," *Atlanta Journal*, March 21, 1965.

⁵⁷ PPAA earned provisional status in 1965 and became an official affiliate in 1966 based on Richardson's recommendation. Russell Richardson, memorandum to Naomi Gray, December 29, 1966, PPFA Records.

⁵⁸ Dues were three dollars per year initially. By 1967, the chapter boasted nearly four hundred members. Meeting Minutes, May 8, 1965, and August 15, 1967, PPAA Papers.

⁵⁹ *American Jewish Year Book* 66 (1965), 150.

⁶⁰ For a biography of Klein, see the Emory School of Medicine newsletter, August 27, 2015, accessed Sept. 15, 2015, <http://www.emorydailypulse.com/2015/08/27/legacy-emory-grady-luella-klein-md/>. In 1984 Klein became the first female president of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Before she retired after five decades of medical practice, she was the Charles Howard Candler Professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Emory University School of Medicine and director of the Maternal and Infant Care Project at Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta.

⁶¹ Quotation from Esther Kahn Taylor, speech at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the chapter, [1989], PPAA Papers.

⁶² Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 31–32.

⁶³ Meeting Minutes, May 15, 1965, PPAA Papers.

⁶⁴ “Dr. William Mason Heads Planned Parenthood,” *Atlanta Constitution*, January 7, 1972. In 1978, when Mason retired from the state public health service, he assumed the position of PPAA’s medical director. Emma Edmunds, “Dr. William Mason: Looking Back at a Lifetime of Service,” *Atlanta Constitution*, September 19, 1978.

⁶⁵ In the early twentieth century, the birth control movement included eugenicists, those who saw birth control as a way to limit reproduction of mentally or physically deficient people and those considered racially inferior. However, by the 1950s, eugenics no longer played a role in Planned Parenthood’s ideology and strategy, although people associated with the pseudoscience were still involved. In *Moral Property of Women*, Linda Gordon delves extensively into the links between birth control activism and eugenics from the nineteenth century to the present. For racial issues and Planned Parenthood in the 1960s, using Pittsburgh as a case study, see Simone M. Caron, “Birth Control and the Black Community in the 1960s: Genocide or Power Politics?,” *Journal of Social History* 31 (Spring 1998): 545–69.

⁶⁶ Walter Chivers to Martin Luther King, Jr., October 4, 1960; Martin Luther King, Jr., to Walter Chivers, November 5, 1960, Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, accessed July 25, 2015, https://swap.stanford.edu/20141218225601/http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/primarydocuments/Vol5/5Nov1960_ToWalterR.Chivers.pdf.

⁶⁷ Sam Hopkins, “Many Wives Wonder How to Limit Parenthood,” *Atlanta Journal*, August 19, 1967. The birth rate for Atlanta’s white residents in 1964 (the last year of the baby boom) was 21.1 per thousand people and for black residents 29.1. At this time, the national fertility rate was 25 births per thousand. Because black women died during childbirth at nearly three times the rate of their white counterparts, Georgia’s maternal mortality rate in 1965 was 20 percent higher than the national average according to Rochat, Tyler, and Schoenbucher, “An Epidemiological Analysis of Abortion in Georgia,” 544. There is scant biographical information available about Freedman, although Taylor referred to her in a speech on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the chapter as having been invaluable for writing the grant proposals that won the chapter thousands of dollars in federal funding. Taylor, twenty-fifth anniversary speech, [1989], PPAA Papers.

⁶⁸ For Black Power attacks on clinics in New Jersey, Maryland, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, see Caron, "Birth Control and the Black Community," 545–49.

⁶⁹ Maxine A. Rock, "Planned Parenthood Clinics Seek Betterment for All," *Atlanta Journal*, February 18, 1970.

⁷⁰ Russell H. Richardson, "Birth Control a Basic Right?," *Atlanta Constitution*, November 10, 1967.

⁷¹ Alex Coffin, "Vine City to Get Parenthood Clinic," *Atlanta Constitution*, April 26, 1968.

⁷² Herbert Taylor used this bank for his business dealings, according to his granddaughter, Elaine Taylor-Klaus. Elaine Taylor-Klaus, interview conducted by author, February 17, 2016.

⁷³ Minutes from January 16, 1965, board meeting, PPAA Papers. In attendance at the meeting at Taylor's home were Ralph Dickey, William Henry, Mrs. A. J. Brumbaugh, Mrs. James Selvage, Mr. Hugh Gilbert, Dr. Luella Klein, Dr. Candler Budd, Mr. Edgar Grider, Sara Mitchell, Rev. Eugene Pickett, Mrs. Lyons B. Joel, Jr., and Caroline Enloe.

⁷⁴ Frank White, "Mrs. Taylor Hits Too Many Births," *Atlanta Journal*, August 29, 1965.

⁷⁵ Wording on the pamphlets sought "to show tax payers and public officials how millions of dollars could be saved by preventing crime, poverty, delinquency and disease." Planned Parenthood Association of Atlanta Meeting Minutes, November 17, 1964, PPAA Papers.

⁷⁶ Pendergrast, a Quaker, founded Help Our Public Education (HOPE), an organization that opposed closing the public schools to avoid integration and massive resistance to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954. The report that she had begun consulting for the chapter is contained in Planned Parenthood Association of Atlanta Meeting Minutes, February 20, 1968, PPAA Papers. The *Atlanta Journal* published at least one feature story under Pendergrast's byline on the benefits of birth control in alleviating poverty and preventing the "population explosion," even though she also volunteered her services to Planned Parenthood. See Nan Pendergrast, "Battling the Population Explosion," *Atlanta Journal*, April 19, 1969.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Betty Carrollton, "Planned Parenthood—What it Means and Doesn't Mean," *Atlanta Constitution*, June 13, 1967. A review of *Atlanta Journal* and *Atlanta Constitution* articles about the chapter from 1965 to 1969 failed to turn up any stories quoting people or organizations that opposed either Planned Parenthood's reasoning or its goals.

⁷⁸ "Clinics Give Birth Control Instruction," *Atlanta Journal*, August 9, 1967.

⁷⁹ These scrapbooks can be viewed online at Georgia State University Digital Collections, accessed August 1, 2016, <http://digitalcollections.library.gsu.edu/>.

⁸⁰ Elaine Taylor-Klaus, interview conducted by author, February 17, 2016.

⁸¹ The *Atlanta Constitution* reported that the Taylors held a reception for Guttmacher at their Club Drive home on December 1, 1964. The guest list included about thirty-five white and black public health doctors, gynecologists in private practice, and clergy. Kathryn Grayburn, "Taylors Hold Reception for Dr., Mrs. Guttmacher," *Atlanta Constitution*, December 2, 1964. Guttmacher returned to Atlanta a year later to speak to a southeast regional

Planned Parenthood conference. *Atlanta Journal*, February 22, 1965. The *Constitution* later reported that Guttmacher was scheduled to deliver a speech to members of the Jewish Progressive Club and the Atlanta branch of the Association of American University Women on January 20, 1967. "Birth Control Unit to Hear Leader," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 16, 1967.

⁸² Diane Thomas, "Smaller Families Urged Despite U.S. Affluence," *Atlanta Journal*, January 19, 1966; Russell Richardson, memorandum to Dr. Alan Guttmacher, February 22, 1966, PPFA Records.

⁸³ These were listed as Bethlehem Center, Perry Homes, West End, Wheat Street Baptist Church, Georgia Avenue, Marietta Street, East Lake, Parkway Drive, and Roswell. Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 31; PPAA Board Minutes, March 19, 1968, PPAA Papers.

⁸⁴ Most of the clinic staff were volunteers, primarily African American women either from the neighborhoods, VISTA workers, or students from local black colleges such as Spelman College and Clark University.

⁸⁵ The 1964 Economic Opportunity Act (EOA), a centerpiece of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, did not specifically earmark money for family planning, but the Office of Equal Opportunity supported the allocation of funds for birth control clinics. Martha J. Bailey, "Fifty Years of Family Planning: New Evidence on the Long-Run Effects of Increasing Access to Contraception," *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity* (Spring 2013), 341–409, accessed Sept. 12, 2015, <http://doi.org/10.1353/eca.2013.0001>.

⁸⁶ Russell Richardson, memorandum to Mrs. Henry Clifford (chair, affiliation committee) and Naomi Gray (field director), December 29, 1966, PPFA Records.

⁸⁷ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 36. No records among the PPAA Papers include the identities of its dues-paying members.

⁸⁸ According to the *Atlanta Constitution*, Busbee was given the Planned Parenthood "World Federation Margaret Sanger Human Rights award" in 1967 to recognize his contributions to the birth control movement. Achsah Nesmith, "Family Planning Law Keys Award to Busbee," *Atlanta Constitution*, January 21, 1967. Busbee served as Georgia's governor from 1975 to 1983.

⁸⁹ See Bailey, et al., "Early Legal Access," 11–12. A CDC study conducted by David A. Grimes and Fredric J. Romm, "Fertility and Family Planning among White Teenagers in Metropolitan Atlanta," *American Journal of Public Health* 65 (July 1975), attributed about a 20 percent decline in births to contraceptive distribution at Planned Parenthood's clinics in the city along with those at Grady and Fulton County clinics.

⁹⁰ The speech is undated but was marked as 1968 and was most likely delivered to a business gathering. Esther Taylor expressed similar sentiments in a 1965 speech to members of the Christian Council of Churches. PPAA Papers.

⁹¹ The state legislature passed a bill in 1968 that became law without the signature of Governor Lester Maddox.

⁹² Rochat, Tyler, and Schoenbucher, "An Epidemiological Analysis of Abortion in Georgia," 548. At present, about thirty thousand abortions are carried out in Georgia per year.

Karen Pazol et al., "Abortion Surveillance—United States, 2011," *Surveillance Summaries* 63 (November 28, 2014), accessed June 8, 2016, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss6311a1.htm>.

⁹³ The 1967 Bill of Rights of the National Organization for Women (NOW) included the "right of women to control their own reproductive lives by removing from penal codes the laws limiting access to contraceptive information and devices and laws governing abortion." In 1969 NOW founder Betty Friedan delivered a speech in Chicago delineating the right to an abortion as essential in securing the "full human dignity and personhood" of women. Linda Greenhouse and Reva B. Siegel, *Before Roe v. Wade: Voices That Shaped the Abortion Debate Before the Supreme Court Ruling* (New York, 2010), 38–39.

⁹⁴ Achsah Nesmith, "Abortion Shouldn't Become Alternative to Contraceptive," *Atlanta Constitution*, December 22, 1969.

⁹⁵ Taylor briefly served as the southeast representative for Planned Parenthood when Richard departed the organization to pursue a master's degree in public health. Levine served as chapter president from 1969 to 1971. Little documentary evidence exists regarding his work or life. One of the few articles that refers to him shows that he was alarmed by the potential for reduced federal spending on birth control. See "Family Planning Called Top Problem," *Atlanta Constitution*, July 2, 1969. Taylor remembered Levine as having secured grants to PPAA from the United Way, Atlanta's largest charity. Taylor, twenty-fifth anniversary speech, [1989], PPAA Papers.

⁹⁶ The undated 1969 document ratifying the national policy can be found in the PPAA Papers.

⁹⁷ "Six Lib Groups Unite in Effort to Broaden State Abortion Law," *Atlanta Constitution*, June 1, 1971.

⁹⁸ David J. Garrow, *Liberty and Sexuality: The Right to Privacy and the Making of Roe v. Wade* (New York, 1984), 444–50.

⁹⁹ The plaintiff, Sandra Bensing Cano, was married to an abusive man, and two of her children had been put in foster care while the youngest had been given up for adoption. Two decades later, she claimed that abortion-rights activists had forced her to seek an abortion. Mark Curriden, "Doe vs. Bolton," *ABA Journal* (July 1989): 26.

¹⁰⁰ *Doe v. Bolton*, 410 U.S. 179 (1973).

¹⁰¹ Judith Taylor was the first female to be tasked with distributing funds to charities on behalf of Atlanta United Way and has taken leadership roles in the local Jewish Federation, American Jewish Committee, and Breman Museum. See Richard Bono, "A Family of Feminists," *Atlanta Jewish Times*, September 13, 1991.

¹⁰² The two most inimical rulings were *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*, 492 U.S. 490 (1989), and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833 (1992).

¹⁰³ Bono, "A Family of Feminists."

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Esther Kahn Taylor oral history, 53.

¹⁰⁶ A similar interpretation is put forth in Welch, "Not Women's Rights," 220–44.