



Doctor Who Supported Women's Reproductive Rights in 1921

The issue of reproductive health became critically important for Dr. Henry Boekholt, a physician in Hopatcong, New Jersey, whose frightened patients begged him to teach them about birth control.

Life at Home

- Henry Boekholt never viewed himself as a radical or an activist.
- He didn't even like to speak in public.
- He was what he was—a simple country doctor who loved to care for the people of his community.
- Even as a small boy, he had known that he would follow in his father's—and grandfather's footsteps and become a doctor.
- In Hopatcong, New Jersey, there had been a Dr. Boekholt as far back as anyone could remember.
- Henry's Dutch ancestors helped settle the area and establish the Dutch Reformed Church there.
- Twenty-three years ago, when Henry Boekholt married Hanne Müller, a fourth-generation German, Hanne had become the first non-Dutch member of the family since the Boekholts immigrated to America in 1755.
- After the first three years of his marriage, Henry knew his wife had won family approval when his grandmother pulled him aside and said, "She works like a Dutch woman."
- Everyone in the community had sought help from him at some stage of their lives.
- Yet lately his place in the community seemed to be becoming insecure.
- Now the town was divided concerning his fitness as a doctor.
- The trouble had begun when he started talking about birth control to some of his patients, mostly farm women who begged for contraception information.
- At age 48, Henry had seen it all, but increasingly he was troubled by tragedies he could not even describe to his father.
- The women under his care who died in childbirth haunted his sleep, especially those who were ill-prepared or simply exhausted by too many births.
- He knew that in a country community, birth control was considered to be unnatural.
- Some others believed birth control to be degrading to mental health and injurious to both the husband and wife in their physical interactions.
- In medical school he had been taught that married couples who used birth control were being selfish in choosing to limit their family size.
- Moreover, they were choosing to enjoy sexual pleasure over domestic fulfillment.



Dr. Henry Boekholt

SECTION TWO: HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT

Known as the Roaring Twenties, the 1920s was marked by social, artistic, cultural, and economic peaks. Affluence roared. Income roared. GNP roared. Music, movies, even baseball roared to new heights of popularity with the general public. Also known as the Jazz Age, the decade was associated with new technologies—automobiles and moving pictures, and a break from tradition—women’s fashion, jazz music and dance clubs. Prosperity was so widespread that the second half of the decade was known as the Golden Twenties, before the Great Depression in 1929 brought everything to a screeching halt. This section highlights significant firsts and milestones of the 20s, as the Walt Disney Company was founded and Babe Ruth became a household word.

Early 1920s

- Congress overrode President Wilson’s veto, reactivating the War Finance Corps to aid struggling farmers
- The U.S. Navy ordered the sale of 125 flying boats to encourage commercial aviation
- Milk drivers on strike dumped thousands of gallons of milk onto New York City streets
- The movie *The Sheik*, starring Rudolph Valentino, was released
- The Cherokee Indians asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review their claim to one million acres of land in Texas
- New York City discussed ways to vary work hours to avoid long traffic jams
- The first successful helium dirigible made a test flight in Portsmouth, Virginia
- President Harding freed socialist Eugene Debs and 23 other political prisoners
- Sears, Roebuck President Julius Rosenwald pledged \$20 million of his personal fortune to help Sears through hard times
- J. D. Rockefeller pledged \$1 million for the relief of Europe’s destitute
- Albert Einstein proposed the possibility of measuring the universe
- Airmail service opened between New York and San Francisco
- The U.S. Red Cross reported that 20,000 children died annually in auto accidents
- The National Association of the Moving Picture Industry announced its intention to censor U.S. movies
- Junior Achievement, created to encourage business skills in young people, was incorporated
- West Virginia imposed the first state sales tax
- Congress passed the Emergency Quota Act, which established national quotas for immigrants entering the United States



SECTION THREE: ECONOMY OF THE TIMES

This section defines the 1920s by three economic elements: Consumer Expenditures; Annual Income of Standard Jobs; and Selected Prices. We highlighted three specific years for each category—1923, 1925, and 1929—for easy comparison. You'll find, for example, that there was a relatively large jump in how much people spent annually on utilities (from \$8.97 in 1923 to \$24.64 in 1929) but money spent on clothing stayed stable during the years featured. Farm laborers made less money (from \$572 in 1923 to \$378 in 1929) but the salaries of gas and electricity workers jumped from \$1,339 in 1923 to \$1,589 in 1929. Consumer electronics also skyrocketed, as the cost of a radio went from \$14.50 in 1923 to \$65.00 in 1929.

Consumer Expenditures

The numbers below are per capita expenditures in the years 1923, 1925, and 1929 for all workers nationwide.

Category	1923	1925	1929
Auto Parts	\$4.97	\$6.96	\$4.92
Auto Purchases	\$20.45	\$20.82	\$21.35
Clothing	\$64.52	\$62.04	\$63.24
Dentists	\$2.72	\$3.26	\$3.26
Food	\$128.14	\$160.59	\$160.14
Furniture	\$8.78	\$9.49	\$9.49
Gas and Oil	\$12.38	\$15.70	\$14.78
Health Insurance	N/A	N/A	\$0.82
Housing	\$94.80	\$98.89	\$96.08
Intercity Transport	N/A	\$4.95	\$4.11
Local Transport	N/A	\$9.13	\$9.03
New Auto Purchase	N/A	N/A	N/A
Per Capita Consumption	\$594.87	\$619.45	N/A
Personal Business	\$22.17	\$27.33	\$32.85
Personal Care	\$7.79	\$7.79	\$9.03
Physicians	\$7.15	\$7.68	\$8.21
Private Education and Research	\$7.26	\$7.72	\$5.75
Recreation	\$23.44	\$24.52	\$35.31
Religion/Welfare Activities	\$11.57	\$11.31	\$9.85
Telephone and Telegraph	\$2.71	\$5.88	\$4.93
Tobacco	\$11.46	\$13.13	\$13.96
Utilities	\$8.97	\$9.82	\$24.64



“\$7,000,000 for Ford Ads”
The New York Times, August 17, 1923

The Ford Motor Company has decided to spend \$7,000,000 in advertising on newspapers throughout the country, and has reorganized its advertising department, after five years of inactivity, with Newton P. Brotherton at its head.

The new plan apparently contemplates display advertising to be charged directly to the Ford Company itself, presumably in addition to the dealer system of publicity.



“Mob Charges Ring After Arbiter Calls Bout Draw”
Davenport Democrat and Leader (IA), October 5, 1923

Although McTigue of Ireland still retains his light heavyweight crown under the third decision rendered by referee Harry Ertie after the Irishman's 10-rounder bout yesterday, his opponent Young Stribling today is the rightful owner, in the opinion of Columbus, Georgia, fight fans. Promoter J. P. Jones of the local American Legion Post so informed Chairman Muldoon of the New York State boxing commission in a telegram sent to him last night demanding a thorough investigation by the commission of yesterday's tumultuous events.

Jones' telegram was sent after referee Ertie, who at first declared the fight a draw and then when the crowd of 8,000 displeased fans charged the ring, changed his decision giving the victory to the 18-year-old Georgia schoolboy, had issued a written statement officially declaring the fight a draw. The statement, issued from the obscurity of a private residence here, contained the assertion that the referee had been threatened with death if he did not give the decision to Stribling and a charge that Major Jones had forcibly held his arm and that of Stribling aloft.