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## News&Views

August 28, 2020

### SPOTLIGHT



#### Manufacturing Opinion: What's Not to Like About a Perfect Technology?

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 08.25.2020  
A survey by human germline editing advocates found some popular support — but it required heroic assumptions and a bit of spin.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

SAVE THE DATE

#### Climate Crisis, Designer Babies and Pandemics: Challenging the Techno-Utopianism of the Genetically Engineered Age

Don't miss this webinar! Author and activist Bill McKibben, evolutionary biologist Stuart Newman and social theorist Marsha Darling consider the common threads between COVID-19, the looming climate crisis, centuries of race-based oppression and proposals for “designer babies.” Co-sponsored by Organic Consumers Association, Alliance for Humane Biotechnology, and Center for Genetics and Society. Join us at Organic Consumers Association's [Facebook home page](#) on Tuesday, September 22 at 9am PT | 11am CT | 12pm ET | 5pm UK.



## Bioengineered Gametes: Techno-Liberation or Techno-Trap?

[Marcy Darnovsky](#), *Biopolitical Times* | 08.27.2020

Should we be eagerly anticipating the development of sperm and eggs manufactured from ordinary body cells? Or is this prospect an unlikely and high-risk technical solution in search of a problem?

## WHAT WE'RE READING

HERITABLE HUMAN GENETIC MODIFICATION | GENE THERAPY | EUGENICS | DISABILITY RIGHTS | SURROGACY | STEM CELLS | SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY | FEDERAL REGULATION

### HERITABLE HUMAN GENETIC MODIFICATION

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#### Men Are Twice as Likely to Support Genetically Engineered Babies Than Women

[Emily Mullin](#), *OneZero* | 08.18.2020

A survey finds some support for heritable genome editing for so-called medical (but not enhancement) purposes. Women, parents, people with professional or personal experience with genetics or genomics, and the religious were less supportive.

### GENE THERAPY

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#### Wary hemophilia patients say they're willing to wait longer for a safe gene therapy

[Elizabeth Cooney](#), *STAT* | 08.20.2020

The FDA has asked for two more years of data to better establish the durability of a proposed gene therapy for hemophilia. Patient advocates call current therapies good, safe, and effective but remain excited about the possibilities of gene therapy.

#### Single-Gene Variant Disease Risk Impacted by Genetic Background

*GEN* | 08.20.2020

In people with a single-gene variant that puts them at high risk for certain diseases, the rest of the genome can alter that risk, according to a large study.

#### Patient Death in Poseida Prostate Cancer Study Prompts Clinical Hold

[Sarah de Crescenzo](#), *Xconomy* | 08.18.2020

A Phase 1 trial testing a cell therapy in men with prostate cancer is on hold after a patient enrolled in the study died of liver failure after receiving the treatment.

### EUGENICS

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## Reckoning with Our Mistakes

[Jen Schwartz and Dan Schlenoff](#), *Scientific American* | 08.19.2020

“Some of the cringiest articles in *Scientific American*’s history reveal bigger questions about scientific authority ... we must learn from the arrogance and exclusions of our past.”

## How anti-abortion advocates are co-opting and twisting calls for racial justice

[Becca Andrews](#), *Mother Jones* | 08.14.2020

Ultimately, these abortion bans “are now being framed as saving Black babies or saving babies that would otherwise be born with disabilities as a counteractive to eugenics,” says Michele Goodwin.

## DISABILITY RIGHTS

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### Message from the Future: Disabled Oracle Society

[Alice Wong](#), *Disability Visibility Project* | 08.06.2020

Speaking from 2029 as the Last Disabled Oracle, Alice Wong describes a world in which people with congenital disabilities are close to extinction due to technologies such as human gene editing.

## SURROGACY

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### Ads that target young women

[Alison Motluk](#), *HeyReprotech Newsletter* | 08.25.2020

“As the parent of two daughters, aged 19 and 17, I feel more strongly now than ever that targeting women in their late teens and early twenties to donate eggs or carry other people’s babies is not ethical. The word ‘prey’ comes to mind.”

## STEM CELLS

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### The false, lethal promise of ‘warp speed’ science

[Michael Hiltzik](#), *Los Angeles Times* | 08.25.2020

The critical need for a remedy for COVID-19 demands more care, not more haste. A lesson from the 2004 Proposition 71 that created the \$3-billion California stem cell program is that hype may have got the proposition passed, but set up impossible expectations.

### How do you separate scientifically sound stem cell therapies from scams?

[Natalya Ortolano](#), *STAT* | 08.18.2020

There are very few proven and approved applications of stem cells. But fringe stem cell clinics are promising to cure everything from Alzheimer’s disease to cerebral palsy. Some of their patients have been blinded or developed tumors.

## SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY

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## Gene drives and societal narratives

Brigitte Nerlich, *Making Science Public* | 08.21.2020

A detailed review of nine previous posts about gene drives, most by the same author, attempts to identify metaphors and tease out implicit societal narratives.

## 750 million genetically engineered mosquitoes approved for release in Florida Keys

Sandee LaMotte, *CNN* | 08.19.2020

A plan to release millions of genetically modified mosquitoes in 2021 has won final approval from local authorities, despite the objection of many residents and a coalition of environmental advocacy groups.

## FEDERAL REGULATION

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## Trump fetal tissue ethics board urges rejection of nearly all research proposals

Amy Goldstein, *The Washington Post* | 08.18.2020

The 14 projects reviewed by the group had been judged worthy of federal support by the National Institutes of Health.

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