

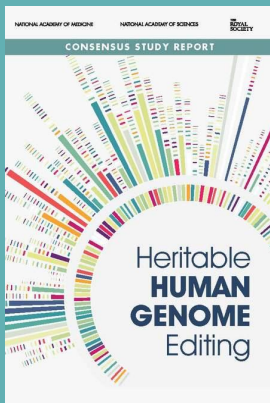


BioPolitical

News&Views

September 11, 2020

SPOTLIGHT



Genome-Edited Babies: The Latest Report and Reactions to It

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 09.09.2020

A commission convened by US and UK scientific societies concludes that heritable human genome editing is not yet safe or effective, but maps the road to future uses.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

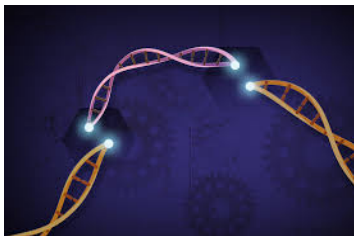


Climate Crisis, Designer Babies and Pandemics: Challenging the Techno-Utopianism of the Genetically Engineered Age

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." Join them to explore the limitations of "techno-utopianism," how social movements can redirect science and technology toward a just and sustainable future, and how we can preserve our humanity – and diversity – in a genetically engineered age. Co-sponsored by Organic Consumers Association, Alliance for Humane Biotechnology, Center for Genetics and Society, and Friends of the Earth.

View the conversation on Facebook Live by visiting Organic Consumers Association's [Facebook home page](#) on Tuesday, September 22 at 9am PT | 11am CT | 12pm ET | 5pm UK.

COMMENTARY



Setting Aside Social Concerns and Public Participation, Scientific Committee Maps a Pathway to Heritable Human Genome Editing

[Center for Genetics and Society](#), *Press Statement* | 09.03.2020

The idea that now is the time to set aside the deeply controversial question of *whether* heritable genome editing should be done at all in order to iron out the nitty-gritty details of *how* it might someday move ahead is completely backwards.



Forced sterilization policies in the US targeted minorities and those with disabilities – and lasted into the 21st century

[Alexandra Minna Stern](#), *Biopolitical Times* | 09.09.2020

All forced sterilization campaigns have one thing in common. They involve dehumanizing a particular subset of the population deemed less worthy of reproduction and family formation, merging perceptions of disability with racism, xenophobia and sexism.

CGS IN THE NEWS

Strict new guidelines lay out a path to heritable human gene editing

[Tina Hesman Saey](#), *Science News* | 09.03.2020

Questioning the premise of the report from the National Academies and Royal Society, CGS' Katie Hasson says, "The question has been and still is whether we want to move forward with editing the genes and traits of future generations. To skip ahead to how . . . seems like getting ahead of things a bit."

Genome editing for heritable diseases not yet safe, report states

[Ian Sample](#), *The Guardian* | 09.03.2020

The report came in for immediate criticism, both for being too restrictive, and for not being restrictive enough. CGS' Marcy Darnovsky warned that if heritable human genome editing was approved, even for limited uses, it was "unlikely that any boundaries would hold. We could see gene editing for embryos marketed as an enhancement technique, and from there the emergence of a market-based eugenics that would exacerbate already existing discrimination, inequality, and conflict."

Landmark Privacy Proposal To Give Consumers Control Over Their Genetic Data Advances To Governor Newsom's Desk For Signature

[George Thomas](#), *Van Nuys News Press* | 09.01.2020

SB 980 would assure consumers that direct-to-consumer genetic testing companies will use their genetic data solely for the purposes to which they have consented. This bill has support from privacy and consumer groups including the American Civil Liberties Union, Electronic Frontier Foundation, Consumer Reports, Consumer Action, Privacy Clearing House, and the Center for Genetics and Society.

WHAT WE'RE READING

HERITABLE HUMAN GENOME EDITING

Heritable human genome editing: the National Academies/Royal Society report

[Peter Mills](#), Nuffield Council on Bioethics blog | 09.08.2020

The pathway is a powerful organising metaphor for technology. The pathway drives traffic to its destination. If you have not asked for a pathway, or if you don't want a pathway, being presented with fully drawn-up plans for a pathway may seem a little presumptuous.

The U.S. must do some heavy lifting to prepare for heritable genome editing

[Josephine Johnston](#), STAT | 09.04.2020

To prepare for heritable editing — at least according to the recommendations of this commission — the U.S. would need to make health and technology policy changes that would democratize science policy, secure universal access to health care including fertility treatment, and create a reasonable regulatory framework for reproductive medicine.

Human Embryo Gene Editing Gets a Road Map—Not a Green Light

[Megan Molteni](#), Wired | 09.03.2020

The report is a road map for how to safely and responsibly get to clinical trials. But importantly, say the report's authors, it's not an endorsement. In many countries, human germline editing is either explicitly prohibited or not yet regulated at all. No country has yet decided it would be appropriate to move forward with the technology.

The “staged rollout” of gene-modified babies could start with sickle-cell disease

[Antonio Regalado](#), MIT Technology Review | 09.03.2020

The new report aims at “salvag[ing] the damaged reputation of the genome editing field by showing how to do responsibly what [He Jiankui] did irresponsibly,” says Ben Hurlbut. A new survey currently under review found that close to 70 countries already ban the creation of genetically modified humans, whatever their purpose.

JUSTICE & RIGHTS

Weapons for when bigotry claims science as its ally

[Alondra Nelson](#), Nature | 09.07.2020

As COVID-19 reveals the toll of discrimination, racism, and inequality, a new book skewers genetic reductionism. Alondra Nelson reviews *How to Argue With a Racist: What Our Genes Do (or Don't) Say About Human Difference* by Adam Rutherford.

Looking Back At The History Of Forced Sterilisation In India And Why It Concerns Us Even Today

[Zoon](#), *Feminism In India* | 09.04.2020

India was the first nation to adopt family planning as official policy, in 1952, first focusing on men. However, the forced sterilisation programme took over the entire family planning programme in the 1970s, and women are now overwhelmingly the targets.

Targeted

[Kathleen Mcgrory and Neil Bedi](#), *Tampa Bay Times* | 09.03.2020

The sheriff of Pasco County, FL, created a futuristic program to stop crime before it happens. It monitors and harasses families across the county. One former deputy described the directive like this: “Make their lives miserable until they move or sue.”

Racial justice, disability rights, neurodiversity and cross-movement solidarity

[Sam Farmer](#), The Hill | 08.21.2020

How might greater social justice for those who have unjustly been marginalized best be achieved? Perhaps cross-movement solidarity is the answer to this question. And perhaps now is the opportune time to make it happen.

GENE EDITING

Futuristic Fat-Fighting Fantasy: Using CRISPR To Tweak ‘Bad’ Fat Into Acting Like ‘Good’ Fat

[Carey Goldberg](#), *WBUR* | 08.27.2020

Researchers have published "proof of concept" work that could eventually make the fantasy of "reengineering" fat cells for weight loss come true. They used CRISPR to make human white fat cells act more like brown fat (in mice).

COVID-19

Probe Finds Orig3n Covid Test Put Nursing-Home Patients at Risk

[Kristen V Brown](#), *Bloomberg* | 09.08.2020

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health said it had found that at least 383 coronavirus tests by Orig3n were erroneously positive. Also, Orig3n didn't use proper controls in processing its tests and didn't comply with documenting requirements.

Senegal's quiet COVID success: Test results in 24 hours, temperature checks at every store, no fights over masks

[Deirdre Shesgreen](#), *USA Today* | 09.06.2020

Senegal snagged the No. 2 slot in a recent analysis looking at how 36 countries have handled the pandemic. The United States landed near the bottom: 31st of the 36 countries.

More testing alone will not get us out of this pandemic

[Shobita Parthasarathy](#), *Nature* | 09/03.2020

Inequities and other social realities must be factored into diagnoses and tracing of COVID-19. We can't just 'tech' our way out of the pandemic. Success depends on a much more sober perspective of how technologies and their consequences are shaped by the real world.

Hong Kong's coronavirus testing drive tests negative for popularity

[Shibani Mahtani and Ryan Ho Kilpatrick](#), *Washington Post* | 09.01.2020

The government hoped for near-universal participation in a mass testing campaign, but few took up the offer — reflecting the trust deficit between residents and their leaders, particularly given the reports of mass DNA collection and surveillance by the Chinese government.

STEM CELL RESEARCH

No on 14: It's time for stem cell agency to stand on its own

[Editorial Board](#), *The Press Democrat* | 09.09.2020

Is stem-cell research more important than education? Transportation? Safety net programs? The state is struggling to balance its books, and it wouldn't be wise to take on more debt at this time.

\$5.5 Billion California Stem Cell Campaign Intensifies, Voting Begins in One Month

[David Jensen](#), *California Stem Cell Report* | 09.08.2020

California's 21 million voters soon will be receiving mail that tells them Prop. 14 is "outrageous," unaffordable and will perpetuate long-standing problems with CIRM. It also says that CIRM has made "significant progress" in developing therapies during its 15-year life.

Largest US retailers reject GM salmon ahead of potential first US sales

GMWatch | 09.02.2020

Genetically engineered AquAdvantage® salmon, planned to launch this fall, will not be sold by Walmart, Costco, Albertsons, Kroger, Ahold, Aldi, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Hy-Vee, Sprouts, Giant Eagle, Meijer, and Target.

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