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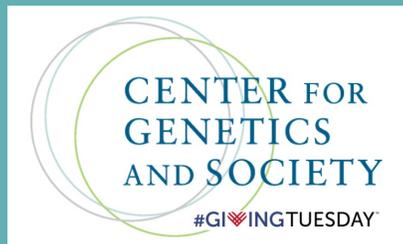
CENTER FOR  
GENETICS  
AND SOCIETY

# BioPolitical

## News&Views

December 2, 2021

## SPOTLIGHT



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### Thank you

Thanks to your generosity, this Giving Tuesday was our most successful yet. We are almost halfway to our goal of raising \$12,500 by the end of the year! We are so grateful for your support.

And there's still time to donate. In fact, thanks to some generous CGS supporters, all donations made by December 31 – up to \$3,000 – will be doubled!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### Tomorrow! Catch Day 2 of “The Meaning of Eugenics”

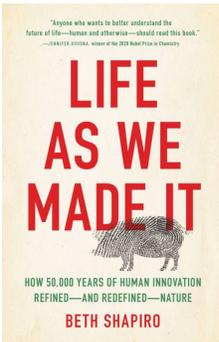
The National Human Genome Research Institute is hosting a two-day symposium December 2-3 with presentations by historians of science and medicine examining the history of eugenics and scientific racism and their complex legacies in the modern health sciences. Agenda and registration available [here](#).



## GM 'Designer Babies': Breakthrough or Nightmare?

Three years after the world's first genetically modified babies were created, what are the implications for society? Stop Designer Babies is hosting a conversation on December 8 at 7pm GMT/11am PST with feminist bioethicist Sigrid Graumann and clinical geneticist Angus Clarke on the case against "GM babies." CGS' Marcy Darnovsky and biologist Stuart Newman will also comment. Registration and additional info [here](#).

## COMMENTARY



### Book Review: Life as We Made It by Beth Shapiro

[Pete Shanks](#), *Biopolitical Times* | 12.1.2021

Shapiro uses her expertise in ancient DNA as a springboard to promote unproven, unnecessary and deeply unfortunate speculations about the future of the planet.

## WHAT WE'RE READING

GENOME EDITING | GENOMICS | ASSISTED REPRODUCTION | VARIOUS

### GENOME EDITING

#### The CRISPR children

[Vivien Marx](#), *Nature Biotechnology* | 11.24.2021

Three years after the 'CRISPR babies' burst into the public eye and caused outrage, their fate remains shrouded in secrecy amid swirls of rumors. It's hard to know what lies ahead for the girls, given the incomplete assessment of the genetic changes that were introduced into them and the widely differing viewpoints on how those changes might impact their physical and mental health.

#### As gene-editing moves mainstream, a pioneer in the field is testing whether it could prevent Alzheimer's

[Allison DeAngelis](#), *Business Insider* | 11.22.2021

David Liu, whose laboratory developed base and prime gene editing, is trying to develop a method of protecting people against Alzheimer's disease. The idea is to turn the APOE4 gene, which is strongly linked to the disease, into APOE2, which appears to protect against it. The work is still in the very early stages, but experiments in mice are underway.

## CRISPR gene editing causes whole chromosome loss

[Claire Robinson](#), *GMWatch* | 11.19.2021

Two recent studies add to the evidence of harms from unintended on-target effects of CRISPR gene editing. One demonstrated the loss of whole chromosomes in mouse embryos, and the other found that editing human cells with CRISPR led to rejoining the pieces of shattered individual chromosomes in a haphazard order.

## GENOMICS

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### The Genetic Lottery is a bust for both genetics and policy

[Kevin Bird](#), *Massive Science* | 11.29.2021

In *The Genetic Lottery*, Kathryn Paige Harden tries and fails to show that behavioral genetics is not only scientifically valuable but an asset to the social justice movement. She distorts Richard Lewontin's work, valorizes Charles Murray's, and tries to sell us on research we don't need that is based on faulty premises and incapable of delivering what she promises.

### The UK Government Wants to Sequence Your Baby's Genome

[Grace Browne](#), *Wired UK* | 11.25.2021

Genomics England plans to test a program that will offer whole genome sequencing to newborns—opening a Pandora's box of ethical concerns.

### FDA approves first drug for genetic cause of dwarfism

[Damian Garde](#), *STAT* | 11.19.2021

The daily injection for children with achondroplasia will cost about \$320,000 per year. In a clinical trial, patients who got the drug grew 1.6 centimeters more over the course of a year than those who received placebo, but there is no data on whether it prevents other complications of achondroplasia, like hearing loss or sleep apnea. Treatments for achondroplasia have been fervently debated among people with dwarfism. To thousands of little people, the short stature that comes with achondroplasia is not a disability in need of treatment but a difference to be celebrated.

## ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

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### Clampdown on useless IVF extras

[Ben Spencer](#), *The Times* | 11.28.2021

Julia Chain, the new chairwoman of the UK Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, is seeking fundamental changes to the 1990 laws that govern the fertility sector. She wants to fine clinics that mislead patients and make it easier for same-sex and trans couples, or single people, to access fertility treatment. She also wants to reconsider the current 14-day limit on culturing human embryos in the lab.

### New research casts fresh doubt on a common procedure that promises to increase the odds of IVF

[Isabella Cueto](#), *STAT* | 11.26.2021

Preimplantation genetic testing for aneuploidy (PGT-A), which screens embryos for chromosomal abnormalities, does not improve healthy patients' chances of a baby, according to research published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. Well-intentioned providers are offering patients an unproven, expensive, and possibly risky procedure.

# How Egg Freezing & IVF Clinics Are Putting Women At Risk

Vicky Spratt, *Refinery29* | 11.22.2021

There is increasing concern that the high doses of hormones involved in fertility treatments, for IVF or egg freezing, are putting women unnecessarily at risk. Statistics suggest that at least a third of women undergoing IVF, and likely many more, will develop mild or severe ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS).

## VARIOUS

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### Gene-edited livestock: robust rules needed before approval, say ethicists

Ian Sample, *The Guardian* | 12.01.2021

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics has published a report about the social and ethical issues raised by the use of genome editing in breeding farm animals. It stresses the need for public discussion before this practice becomes widespread, and for continuing government oversight to ensure animal welfare and encourage reducing the consumption of animal products.

### Biology is a spectrum: Life on Earth is complex and irreducible

Dan Samorodnitsky, *Massive Science* | 11.29.2021

Divisions in biology are drawn by humans, reflect the desires and biases of the person holding the pencil, and inevitably become so unclear as to not exist at all. Sex, genes, and species, for example, are just boxes with limited and crushing dimensions. You cannot succeed by making biology simple. It's not simple and would not be biology if it were.

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