



CENTER FOR
GENETICS
AND SOCIETY

BioPolitical

News&Views

October 24, 2025

SPOTLIGHT

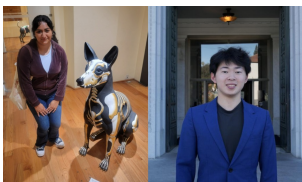


Does One Size Fit All?

Jay S. Kaufman, *Los Angeles Review of Books* | 09.27.2025

The 10th essay in the CGS-supported Legacies of Eugenics series explores how early eugenicists' preoccupation with "optimal" body size measurements influences current racialized growth charts, which often mask legacies of oppression in their framing of what counts as "normal."

ANNOUNCEMENTS



CGS Welcomes HSI Interns Jennifer and Sean!

Jennifer Silva and **Sean Wang**, both UC Berkeley undergraduate students, have joined CGS as interns this semester! Jennifer is majoring in Molecular Cell Biology with a minor in Chicanx Latinx Studies, and Sean is majoring in Nutrition and Metabolic Biology. Learn more about their interests, background, and goals for working with CGS on our website.

COMMENTARY



Experimental Human Cell Division Does Not a Baby Make

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 10.22.2025

Recent headlines claimed that researchers "created" human eggs from skin cells, promising a future solution to infertility, despite the study finding that the created eggs would not be usable. Scientists and biotech startups remain optimistic about IVG, while consistently sidestepping safety risks and ethical concerns.

WHAT WE'RE READING

GENE EDITING | GENOMICS | GENE THERAPY | EUGENICS
SURROGACY 360 | IVF POLICY AND REGULATION | ASSISTED REPRODUCTION | VARIOUS

GENE EDITING

Will it be the Wild West for designer babies?

[Abby McCloskey](#), *The Dallas Morning News* | 10.10.2025

Heritable genome editing, the creation of human embryos, and “making superhumans” are on the horizon, unless public pressure helps create political momentum to strengthen regulation of new biotechnologies.

Beyond dire wolves: Could Colossal's de-extinction work transform human health?

[Meagan Parrish](#), *PharmaVoice* | 10.10.2025

Colossal Biosciences is not just attempting to “de-extinct” animals like the dire wolf, it’s also working on biotech for people, including artificial wombs and gene editing techniques that would deliver multiple edits at once. Its human-oriented efforts are likely to receive ethical scrutiny, just as its de-extinction efforts have.

GENOMICS

He Was Expected to Get Alzheimer's 25 Years Ago. Why Hasn't He?

[Pam Belluck](#), *The New York Times* | 10.07.2025

Researchers are closely studying what has protected Doug Whitney from developing Alzheimer's, despite the rare genetic mutation that “essentially guaranteed” he would develop the disease in his late 40s or early 50s and die within a decade. His brain appears to be resistant to developing tau, a protein that accumulates in Alzheimer's and is associated with cognitive decline.

The REPAIRome: A catalog of DNA scars sheds light on a path to fighting cancer resistance

[Jessica Mouzo](#), *El País* | 10.03.2025

Researchers in Spain have created a catalog that identifies how each of the 20,000 human genes affect DNA repair. They anticipate that it could help researchers developing cancer treatments and improve the precision of genetic editing techniques.

US serial killer case opens door to using cutting-edge DNA data in courts

[Katherine Bourzac](#), *Nature* | 09.25.2025

A recent ruling in a high-profile case of serial murders in New York paves the way for a type of whole-genome sequencing to be admitted as evidence in US criminal trials. The ruling could impact cold-case DNA investigations across the country.

GENE THERAPY

Exposure to any germs could've killed her. 11 years later, she's living a normal life thanks to a gene therapy treatment.

[Kaitlin Sullivan](#), *NBC News* | 10.15.2025

An experimental gene therapy restored immune system function in 95% of children with a form of severe combined immunodeficiency. A recent research update reported that the effect has persisted for several years after the initial treatments, given between 2012 and 2019.

In China, a low-cost push to rival a life-saving, \$2M medicine

[Jared Whitlock](#), *Endpoints News* | 10.09.2025

The one-time gene therapy Zolgensma can stop the progression of spinal muscular atrophy, but its \$2.1M price tag makes it difficult to access. Four Chinese companies are working on competing low-cost gene therapies.

They advised federal health agencies on the ethics and impact of scientific research. They're no longer wanted

[Megan Molteni and Anil Oza](#), *Stat* | 10.07.2025

The Trump administration has disbanded dozens of science and bioethics advisory committees. One panel of scientific experts, clinicians, and patient advocates was advising the NIH on biosafety and ethical issues related to CRISPR gene drives, gene therapies, and data privacy.

EUGENICS

Who Gets to Procreate and Parent? A Black Feminist Critique of the Pronatalist Agenda

[Jallicia A. Jolly, Sydney Curtis, and Nicole Sessions](#), *Ms. Magazine* | 10.17.2025

Pronatalism is not neutral: "It is a calculated political project to consolidate power by using narrative, reproductive technologies and coercive laws/legislation in ways that are rooted in racism." Reproductive justice offers a framework to counter 21st century eugenics and pronatalism.

Under a Mask of AI Doomerism, the Familiar Face of Eugenics

[Emile P. Torres](#), *Truthdig* | 10.17.2025

Beneath AI doomers' dire warnings about the threats that superintelligent AI could pose to humanity is a curiously anti-human combination of transhumanism, techno-futurism, and eugenics. While they are right to see AI ventures as risky, their underlying ideals are equally problematic.

The race to create the perfect baby is creating an ethical mess

[Julia Black](#), *MIT Technology Review* | 10.16.2025

Parents opting to receive polygenic risk scores for their embryos may not get what they pay for given the lack of evidence showing the tests are effective. The tests' growing popularity shows the continuing influence of genetic determinism, a specious theory that took root in the early 20th century eugenics movement.

The Trump administration's approach to autism is tangled up with ableism, eugenics, and pronatalism

[Shoumita Dasgupta](#), *Stat* | 10.03.2025

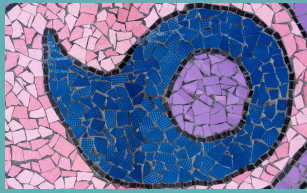
Trump and RFK's framing of autism as an epidemic dehumanizes autistic people in ways that echo 20th-century eugenic judgments. Although some Silicon Valley pronatalists seem to support neurodiversity by opting not to screen embryos for autism, their interest in enhancing intelligence via polygenic risk scores and embryo selection still reinforces eugenic biases and specious IQ "science."

The New Eugenics: Biohacking, Fertility Startups, and the Future of Choice

[Daniel Hildebrand](#), *The Humanist* | 10.01.2025

Eugenics has been rebranded to fit 21st century Silicon Valley values of optimization and biohacking. The technology and vocabulary may have changed, but the underlying logic hasn't: some lives are deemed more worth living than others.

SURROGACY 360



Surrogacy reform bill gets big boost in Upper House as Greens pledge support

Oliver Lane, *The West Australian* | 10.13.2025

Surrogacy reforms that passed Western Australia's lower house of Parliament in September now have a better chance of passing the Upper House due to pledged support from the Greens. The reforms would expand access to surrogacy to LGBTQIA+ individuals and couples.

IVF POLICY AND REGULATION

Trump moves to push employers on IVF coverage and lower fertility drug costs

Carter Sherman, *The Guardian* | 10.16.2025

The Trump administration's long-awaited IVF policy updates were finally announced, and so far, they seem to fall flat. The administration is urging employers to cover IVF via new fertility benefit options and will lower some fertility drug prices, but the recommendations don't deliver the detailed updates promised earlier this year.

Time to end self-regulation of the Australian fertility industry

Karin Hammarberg and Catherine Mills, *BioNews* | 10.13.2025

Recent embryo and sperm mix-ups in the Australian fertility industry underscore that self-regulation of fertility clinics doesn't work. Instead, independent accreditation of clinics to ensure they comply with national standards is needed.

Push for Military Coverage of I.V.F. Faces Challenge in Congress

Megan Mineiro and Caroline Kitchener, *The New York Times* | 10.05.2025

Advocates hoped that Trump's IVF promises would encourage bipartisan support of a proposal to expand military health coverage to include IVF, but divisions among Republicans have stalled the proposal's progress.

ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

A Surrogacy Silk Road: Chinese Parents Head West for Babies

Emma Belmonte, *ChinaFile* | 10.03.2025

The country of Georgia has become a popular destination for Chinese couples seeking to have a child via surrogacy, which is outlawed in China. Agencies in China facilitate surrogacy arrangements in Georgia, but loopholes and legal grey areas have allowed fraudulent practices that harm surrogates and intended parents.

A mysterious surrogacy mansion. A drug-plagued property. And a criminal known as 'Dragon'

Matthew Ormseth and Summer Lin, *Los Angeles Times* | 10.02.2025

Los Angeles authorities investigating a couple for alleged child abuse discovered that they have over 20 children via surrogacy. Further investigation has linked the husband to several criminal enterprises, including illegal gambling and drug activity.

Robots are learning to make human babies. Twenty have already been born.

Elizabeth Dvoskin and Zoeann Murphy, *The Washington Post* | 10.01.2025

Clinical trials are testing the use of AI software and robotic automation in IVF to select and collect sperm and fertilize an egg. Some see automated IVF as a promising way to expand access, increase success rates, and reduce costs, but others predict that it will introduce more problems than it resolves.

Scientists create human eggs in the lab, using skin cells

[Rob Stein](#), *NPR* | 09.30.2025

Researchers used a modified cloning technique to replace DNA from a donor egg with DNA from another person's adult skin cells to create reconstituted eggs. While they were able to fertilize some of the eggs, the embryos did not develop normally, demonstrating that the technique introduces significant safety risks as well as serious ethical concerns.

VARIOUS

Inside FDA, career staffers describe how political pressure is influencing their work

[Lizzy Lawrence](#), *Stat* | 10.14.2025

Current and former FDA employees are raising the alarm on the heavy-handed influence of political appointees. They report pressure to go on "data-finding" expeditions to support health secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s theories – few of which have scientific merit.

John Gurdon, Nobel laureate who laid groundwork for cloning, dies at 92

[Deni Ellis Béchard](#), *The Washington Post* | 10.07.2025

The first man to clone an animal (a frog) has died. His research made the cloning of the first mammal, Dolly the sheep, possible. It was also a catalyst for genetics research that has changed scientific understanding of numerous diseases and their treatment.

GM gene-edited tomatoes to be fed to humans (but no, it's not a food safety study)

[Claire Robinson](#), *GMWatch* | 09.29.2025

Is a new study that involves eating soup made of genetically engineered, vitamin D-enhanced tomatoes really just a marketing campaign? The wide availability of low-cost vitamin D supplements and the unknown risks of consuming genetically engineered foods will likely make the tomato a hard sell.

'To them, ageing is a technical problem that can, and will, be fixed': how the rich and powerful plan to live for ever

[Aleks Krotoski](#), *The Guardian* | 09.28.2025

Technologists embracing longevity biohacking projects are enjoying unparalleled political access to world leaders. As they "remodel the world in their image," they perpetuate the myth that humanity can be reduced to lines of computer code.

If you've read this far, you clearly care about the fight to reclaim human biotechnologies for the common good. Thank you!

Will you support CGS by making a donation today?

[DONATE](#)

[SUBSCRIBE](#) | [WEBSITE](#) | [ABOUT US](#) | [CONTACT](#)



[DONATE](#)

The Center For Genetics and Society | 2900 Lakeshore Avenue | Oakland, CA 94610 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!