

BioPolitical

News&Views

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SPOTLIGHT



Serial Entrepreneur and “Frankenstein’s” Ex Launches (Another) New Germline Editing Startup

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 03.27.2026

Cathy Tie's biotech business ventures all serve to normalize the technologies they embrace — specifically including heritable human genome editing. So far, fortunately, they seem to fizzle before they even fail to deliver on their alarming claims.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Eugenics and the Modern Synthesis, Parts I and II

Jessica Riskin, *Los Angeles Review of Books* | 03.23.2026

In a two-part essay in the CGS-supported [Legacies of Eugenics](#) series, Jessica Riskin shows that “virtually all of the powerful voices in 20th-century evolutionary biology” embraced the core principles of both “modern synthesis” and eugenics. Scientific evidence that calls into question the key tenets of modern synthesis also shows that eugenics is “just nonsense.”

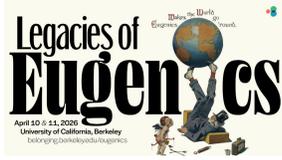
Untidy Feminist Entanglements

Margaret R. Eby, *Los Angeles Review of Books* | 03.15.2026

In a recent installment of the CGS-supported [Legacies of Eugenics](#) series, Margaret Eby asks, “What are we to make of white women physicians who... contributed toward improved care for women and



children, celebrated women’s participation in civic and professional leadership, and were avid eugenicists?”



Legacies of Eugenics Conference

Join the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley on **April 10-11** for an in-person gathering that will explore the persistence of eugenic logics and practices in science, medicine, and technology and how we can build a better future. Panelists include CGS Executive Director Katie Hasson, former ED Marcy Darnovsky, Advisory Board members, and several CGS partners and colleagues. Find out more and register [here](#).

COMMENTARY



The Global Economy of Human Eggs: An interview with Diane Tober

Gabriele Pichlhofer and Tino Plümecke, Guest Contributors, *Biopolitical Times* | 03.25.2026

Diane Tober, professor of anthropology at the University of Alabama, spoke with Gabriele Pichlhofer and Tino Plümecke from the NGO biorespect about her research on egg donors’ experiences in the U.S. and Spain. She emphasizes the financial incentives and hidden risks that donors face and the need for more data collection, transparency, and regulation to protect the interests of egg donors.

WHAT WE’RE READING

GENE EDITING | GENE THERAPY | EUGENICS
SURROGACY 360 | ASSISTED REPRODUCTION | STEM CELLS | FDA POLICY | VARIOUS

GENE EDITING

Q&A: Embryo editing entrepreneur Cathy Tie closes one startup and begins another in biology’s most taboo frontier

Ryan Cross, *Endpoints News* | 03.24.2026

Self-proclaimed “biotech Barbie” Cathy Tie abruptly shut down Manhattan Genomics, her embryo editing startup launched less than a year ago. Now, she says she is beginning a new venture that will focus on embryo editing and mitochondrial replacement therapy.

Genome editing’s third act

Laura DeFrancesco, *Nature Biotechnology* | 03.17.2026

Two companies are poised to begin testing “mutation-agnostic” gene therapies, which could respond to different mutations in the same gene by targeting underlying commonalities with transfer

RNAs or with “gene writers.” If they succeed, they could make gene therapies applicable to more people more quickly.

How a new tool for large-scale gene editing could power novel genetic medicines

[Darren Incorvaia](#), *Fierce Biotech* | 03.11.2026

Researchers have successfully used circular, single-stranded DNA to “sneak” large bits of DNA into mouse genomes and lab-grown human cells. The technique, called INSTALL, could be used to deliver gene therapies without eliciting an immune system response to inserted DNA.

GENE THERAPY

Genetic Therapies for Rare Diseases: Developing Ethical Regulatory Policies

[Carolyn Riley Chapman and Nirvan Bhatia](#), *Hastings Bioethics Forum* | 03.12.2026

Two researchers argue that in order to balance gene therapy access, transparency, and trust with effectiveness and safety, the FDA should adopt a differentiated approval system, which allows regulators to assign approval in tiers based on levels of evidence.

Can a “Living Drug” Cure Autoimmune Diseases?

[Jason Liebowitz](#), *The New Yorker* | 03.06.2026

Clinical trials suggest that CAR-T cells, which scientists create by extracting T cells from the immune system, genetically reprogramming them to destroy specific cells, and infusing them back into the body, could treat autoimmune conditions in addition to blood cancers.

EUGENICS

The gen AI Kool-Aid tastes like eugenics

[Charles Pulliam-Moore](#), *The Verge* | 03.21.2026

The documentary *Ghost in the Machine* features AI researchers, historians, and critical theorists, who together make the case that AI technologies and the companies that create them have been profoundly shaped by eugenics and Francis Galton’s comparison of human brains to machines.

As Trump administration cracks down on health care fraud, people with disabilities feel singled out

[O. Rose Broderick](#), *Stat* | 03.18.2026

Disability rights organizations protesting Trump’s recent efforts to root out fraud and waste in federal benefits, including by freezing Medicare and Medicaid funds, are highlighting the impact of cutting services crucial for disabled people’s survival.

Trump blames recent attacks on 'genetics' of assailants

[Alexandra Marquez](#), *NBC News* | 03.13.2026

In an interview with Fox News, Trump blamed “the genetics” and previous presidents’ immigration policies for recent attacks on a synagogue, on the New York mayor’s house, and on a university in Virginia. His remarks reflect his longstanding reliance on eugenic ideas to praise some groups for their “good genes” and demonize other groups and their “bad genes.”

SURROGACY 360

The price of Australia’s ‘ethical’ surrogacy laws

[Siobhan Marin and Margaret Burin](#), *ABC News* | 03.21.2026

Australia’s patchwork of surrogacy laws motivate some to seek international surrogacy arrangements, which tend to be expensive,



complicated, and potentially exploitative. Ethical issues with surrogacy have led many countries to ban the practice or eliminate compensation of surrogates, but others argue regulated compensation better recognizes the labor of surrogacy. These varied views have led to debates about how to reform Australia's surrogacy laws.

ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

Historical IVF mix-up discovery raises questions about Australian industry

Judd Boaz and Elise Kinsella, *ABC News* | 03.17.2026

After a 1995 embryo mix-up was revealed in Australia earlier this year, experts are warning that further DNA testing may reveal many more such errors. Although the industry has evolved in the 30 years since that mix-up, more recent clinic issues raise concerns about the current state of fertility regulation.

Monash IVF to pay financial settlement to families caught up in embryo bungles

Antonia O'Flaherty, *ABC News* | 03.04.2026

Australian fertility clinic chain Monash IVF will pay financial settlements to families who were involved in high-profile embryo mix-ups. The company also said they would add additional safeguards, and the state's fertility regulator imposed stricter rules on the company last November.

STEM CELLS

A Billionaire-Backed Startup Wants to Grow 'Organ Sacks' to Replace Animal Testing

Emily Mullin, *Wired* | 03.23.2026

As animal experimentation begins to be phased out federally, a biotech startup is pitching the idea of creating brainless structures of tissues and organs through a combination of stem cells and gene editing. The company's ambition is to create a human version that could respond to the organ shortage, but any regenerative organ growth remains theoretical at this point.

Japan Approves the World's First Treatment Made With Reprogrammed Human Cells

Ritsuko Kawai, *Wired* | 03.14.2026

Japan has granted authorizations to two regenerative medical products that will use reprogrammed pluripotent stem cells: one will treat heart failure, and the other, motor symptoms in Parkinson's patients.

6 key dilemmas as human embryo models get ever closer to the real thing

Paul Knoepfler, *Stat* | 03.03.2026

As embryo models using stem cells become more advanced, ethical issues – such as how long these embryo-like structures should be allowed to grow – remain unresolved. Paul Knoepfler argues that “ethical dilemmas should be front and center” for scientists.

FDA POLICY

A judge shot down RFK Jr.'s vaccine overhaul. The fight is far from over

Garrett Owen, *Salon* | 03.18.2026

A federal judge blocked key aspects of RFK Jr's paring-down of the pediatric vaccine schedule because he did not follow procedure when he bypassed the independent vaccine advisory board. The judge also blocked appointments RFK Jr. had made to the board, citing their lack of experience

with vaccines. The Department of Health and Human Services has stated they intend to appeal the judge's decision.

FDA says it wants individualized medicines. Can we get there?

Rowan Walrath and Laurel Oldach, *Chemical & Engineering News* | 03.04.2026

Drug developers for rare diseases, families of children with rare diseases, and researchers are all awaiting more details about the FDA's new regulatory pathway. While some are enthusiastic about the FDA's new direction, others point to a lack of trust among investors in the agency and the viability of individual disease-based gene therapies.

Robert F Kennedy Jr: 1 year of failure

The Lancet | 02.28.2026

From promoting misinformation and upending vaccine schedules to silencing stakeholders, dismissing experts, and advancing unethical research, RFK Jr. has blazed a trail of destruction in his 1 year leading HHS, which may take generations to repair. As calls for his resignation mount, Congress should hold him accountable for his record.

VARIOUS

The potential loophole in Trump's plan to get other countries to pay more for drugs

John Wilkerson, *Stat* | 03.24.2026

Trump's promise to make other countries pay higher prices for drugs will likely fall flat, since the deals he is arranging – and his time in office – will be over by the time the drugs become available abroad.

Henrietta Lacks's Family Settles Suit With Novartis Over Use of Her Cells

Michael Levenson, *The New York Times* | 02.27.2026

The pharmaceutical company Novartis agreed to a settlement with the family of Henrietta Lacks, a Black woman whose cells were taken from her without her consent in 1951. The family's lawyer said they were satisfied with the settlement but emphasized that true justice would only be possible in a world where she had not been harmed by medical racism in the first place.

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

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