

BioPolitical

News&Views

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SPOTLIGHT

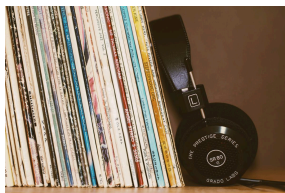


Faster, Higher, Stronger: The Enhanced Games fall flat

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 06.04.2026

The failure of the billionaire-backed Enhanced Games makes the hollowness of transhumanist hopes obvious. That's not stopping the organizers from using the competition to hawk unproven supplements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

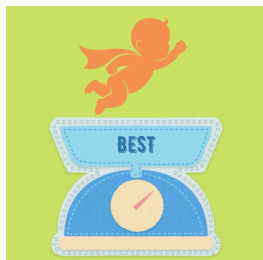


The Measured Listener

Daniel Shanahan, *The Los Angeles Review of Books* | 05.31.2026

The latest installment in the CGS-supported **Legacies of Eugenics** series explores the dark history of Spotify's promise to use algorithms to predict and direct your taste in music. The eugenics movement introduced and spread the concept that being a "good listener" was part of eugenic "fitness" and developed tests that purported to identify those with "musical genes."

CGS IN THE NEWS



The start-ups dreaming of creating genetically modified babies

Alexandre Piquard, *Le Monde* | 05.22.2026

In case you missed CGS Executive Director **Katie Hasson's** comments in *Le Monde*, the article is now available in English. In it, Hasson emphasizes that Silicon Valley's efforts to "move fast and break things" by experimenting with gene editing of embryos introduces significant threats to future generations.



These companies help parents try to pick their babies' traits. Experts are wary

Rob Stein, *NPR* | 05.06.2026

It's "very troubling" to see Silicon Valley startups pursuing the so-called "Gattaca Stack" of technologies, which would combine polygenic embryo screening, embryo editing, artificial wombs, and lab-grown eggs and sperm, said CGS' **Katie Hasson**. This "vision of producing a superior form of humanity," involves attempting to "mass-produce genetically enhanced people."

WHAT WE'RE READING

GENE EDITING | GENE THERAPY | SURROGACY360
EUGENICS | ASSISTED REPRODUCTION | IVF | VARIOUS

GENE EDITING

In a First, Scientists Precisely Edit Human Embryo Genes

Carl Zimmer, *The New York Times* | 06.04.2025

In a controversial experiment that could pave the way toward genetic engineering, reported via a non-peer-reviewed preprint, researchers at Columbia University used base editing to edit the DNA of early embryos. While the edits did not appear to cause the "extensive damage" reported in earlier CRISPR embryo-editing experiments, they still introduced unintended changes and mosaicism, which could cause unknown health effects in any individuals born from edited embryos.

'There is no way to stop this': 'Biotech Barbie' Cathy Tie on her mission to genetically modify babies

Jenny Kleeman, *The Guardian* | 05.30.2026

In her efforts to persuade the public to ignore the risks of heritable genome editing, Cathy Tie claims to be committed to transparency, but she won't answer any questions about who worked for her gene-editing startup, who funded it, or why exactly it shut down.

Fetal gene therapy inches closer. Will embryo editing follow?

Ryan Cross, *Endpoints News* | 05.20.2026

Are developments in fetal gene editing a step toward or away from editing embryos for reproduction? Academic researchers continue to present heritable genome editing as crossing a red line, even as biotech startups claim they'll do it — despite legal prohibitions.

GENE THERAPY

The Cancer Nobody Saw Coming: What One Gene Therapy Tumor Tells Us About a Broken Safety Surveillance System

Moe Alsumidaie, *The Clinical Trial Vanguard* | 05.26.2026

The report of a case of cancer linked to a gene therapy reveals what is missing in the FDA's approach to safety surveillance and risk assessment. Protocols should include longer-term safety surveillance and should ensure the infrastructure to carry it out is in place.

One-and-Done Heart Disease Prevention? Scientists Show It May Be Possible.

Gina Kolata, *The New York Times* | 05.25.2026

A small study of 35 patients found that an experimental gene-editing treatment significantly lowered LDL cholesterol levels and that the drop persisted over 18 months. A larger study with 200 patients will test whether the preliminary result holds up.

Fetal Gene Therapy Makes Strides Toward the Clinic

Rebecca Roberts, *The Scientist* | 05.20.2026

A research team aims to test a fetal gene therapy for a fatal lysosomal storage disease. The phase 1 trial will test whether the therapy is safe, and whether the disorder can be diagnosed early enough for the therapy to be effective.

SURROGACY360



Ukraine war 'led me to surrogacy' to earn money but a new law could end those plans

Sofia Bettiza, *BBC News* | 05.07.2026

Ukraine's parliament is considering a bill that would establish stricter regulations over the country's surrogacy industry and would effectively ban surrogacy access for foreigners, who currently make up over 90% of intended parents. The bill, which has widespread support in parliament, is a response to concerns that Ukraine's surrogacy industry does not address issues of exploitation of surrogates — a critique that agencies reject.

EUGENICS

How to fall in love with humanity again

Sigal Samuel, *Vox* | 05.17.2026

Anti-humanism is an understandable response to human failures, like climate change and colonization, but it also fuels transhumanism, a movement that aspires to “transcend” humanity through technology. Instead of a transhumanist utopia, we ought to strive for a humanism that prioritizes sustainability, care, solidarity, and mutual aid, argues philosopher Shannon Vallor.

Laundering Public Health: Using Autism to Revive Eugenics

Nanette Elster, Kayhan Parsi, and Art Caplan, *The American Journal of Bioethics* | 05.06.2026

The Trump administration, the alt-right and tech billionaires are all making the U.S.' regrettable eugenic past “an increasingly eugenic present.” One troubling example is RFK Jr.'s attempts to eliminate vaccine regulations under the guise of improving public health by eliminating autism. These policy changes will not only increase morbidity and mortality, but they also advance eugenic goals of eliminating people with disabilities in the name of “public welfare.”

America is worrying about fertility again. But it's not really about families

Sonya Borrero, Christine Dehlendorf, and Rachel Logan, *Stat* | 05.01.2026

Pronatalist anxiety in the U.S. isn't primarily about supporting families, it's about power and control of procreation – which was taken to the extreme in the early 20th century eugenics movement. Contemporary pronatalist policies should be evaluated with this history in mind to sort out which policies actually help families and which exert pressure along familiar unjust lines.

ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

Fifteen people charged in connection with egg donor exploitation in India

Tarandeep Hira, *BioNews* | 05.26.2026

Authorities charged 15 people in Maharashtra, India, who they say were part of a network that illegally paid financially vulnerable women to donate their eggs. Many of them were paid to donate

repeatedly.

Who is Nepal's egg donation ban actually protecting?

[Aarya Chand](#), *The Kathmandu Post* | 05.21.2026

In response to illegal and exploitative egg donation operations, Nepal's Supreme Court issued a total ban on egg retrieval and storage until the government regulates the procedure. While intended to protect those at risk of exploitation, it also blocks women undergoing cancer treatment from freezing their eggs.

Britons use overseas clinics to pick babies' sex

[Laura Hughes](#), *Financial Times* | 05.20.2026

U.K. couples are traveling to other countries, including the U.S., to avoid UK prohibitions on the use of embryo screening procedures for sex selection and polygenic risk score testing.

Dead Soldiers Can Make Babies, But Should They?

[Meghan Davidson Ladly](#), *New Lines Magazine* | 05.07.2026

Posthumous sperm retrieval in Israel and cryopreservation of soldiers' gametes in Ukraine show how ARTs are increasingly playing a role in global conflicts. As countries confront demographic crises, some see ARTs as a strategy for state survival, but questions persist about how these technologies should be used and what kind of nationalism they enable.

Should surrogates be paid for carrying other people's babies? And how much would be enough?

[Evie Kendal](#), *The Conversation* | 05.03.2026

Although surrogacy regulations vary across Australia, no local laws permit compensation for surrogates. An ongoing review of regulations wants to ensure that intended parents aren't going overseas for surrogacy, which could prompt reconsideration of compensation domestically. Sorting out how to compensate surrogates will require more public conversation.

IVF

Changes to Victorian law to provide 'tougher scrutiny' after Monash IVF bungles

ABC News | 06.01.2026

After high profile embryo mix-ups by Monash IVF, the Australian state Victoria is introducing new legislation that adds safeguards and increases its regulatory powers over fertility clinics to improve safety and transparency.

They Started I.V.F., Then Split. Now Who Gets Custody of the Embryos?

[Caroline Kitchener](#), *The New York Times* | 05.24.2026

Increasing usage of IVF is making tricky legal questions around embryo custody more commonplace. Most states do not have a legal framework that outlines who would have custody of frozen embryos in the event of a divorce.

Lawsuits challenging embryo disposal could hinder IVF

[Sofia Resnick](#), *Stateline* | 05.20.2026

An anti-abortion group sued seven fertility clinics in Utah, on the grounds that the clinics' disposal of embryos in the IVF process violates Utah's wrongful death law. The suit is part of a strategy by anti-abortion activists to try to apply "fetal personhood" state laws to frozen embryos.

What's next for IVF

[Jessica Hamzelou](#), *MIT Technology Review* | 05.07.2026

Some new technologies, including AI sperm tracking, automated devices, and embryo screening, are already changing IVF even as the ethical issues they pose remain unresolved. Some researchers are lobbying to introduce even more controversial techniques, like gene editing of embryos, which is currently banned in 70+ countries.

Senate Democrats call out the Trump administration for hypocrisy on IVF

[Julianne McShane](#), *MS Now* | 05.05.2026

A group of Senate Democrats are demanding that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission chair abandon her efforts to eliminate protections for workers undergoing fertility treatments, pointing out that the plan seems counter to Trump's promises to expand IVF access.

VARIOUS

When Peter Thiel and Don Jr. Lose, It's a Great Week for Humanity

[Virginia Heffernan](#), *The New Republic* | 05.29.2026

Peter Thiel's efforts to make the case for transhumanism by funding the pro-doping Enhanced Games fell flat. Through the highly publicized "ultimate MAGA competition," Thiel accidentally showcased what's magnificent about humanity.

Dark times ahead at the FDA

[Paul Knoepfler](#), *Stat* | 05.21.2026

With the ousting of FDA Commissioner Marty Makary along with two other senior FDA leaders, three crucial posts at the agency have interim leaders. The dramatic change in leadership could be a sign that Trump is attempting to "break the FDA, Project 2025-style," so that the agency greenlights Trump's priorities even as it remains in chaos.

Silicon Valley Wants to Put a Chip in Your Brain

[Calder McHugh](#), *Politico* | 05.15.2026

Neurotechnology companies trying to persuade consumers to want a chip in their brains are fueling a new "neurorights" movement concerned about data ownership and privacy. State-level government regulation is just beginning to address issues of privacy, rights, and neurotechnology, but advocacy groups disagree on the approaches to regulation.

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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