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August 2019



CENTER FOR  
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WHAT WE'RE READING

## SPOTLIGHT



### Scientists Can't Be Trusted on Gene Editing

What we can learn from the Jeffrey Epstein case? CGS' Pete Shanks breaks it down.

## COMMENTARY



### Book Review: 'Superior: The Return of Race Science'

**Pete Shanks**, *Biopolitical Times* | 07.11.2019

In her latest book, science writer Angela Saini covers the appalling history of racism, worldwide and throughout known history. Her focus on contemporary uses of modern genetics as a prop for centuries-old racist biases makes this an invaluable resource.

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**CGS Statement on the Introduction of the Senate Resolution on Gene-editing Research**

**CGS Press Statement** | 07.16.2019



A bipartisan Senate resolution introduced in July highlights the importance of international cooperation and broadly inclusive public deliberation in making the consequential decision about whether to allow heritable genome editing. Says CGS' Katie Hasson, "We hope this resolution passes and that its passage serves as a catalyst for these deliberations."



## Disability Rights and Heritable Genome Editing: Resources for Teaching and Learning

**Center for Genetics and Society**, *Biopolitical Times* | 07.19.2019

Ableism distorts narratives about human biotechnologies. In light of Denis Rebrikov's proposal to use human germline editing to prevent deafness, we compiled a selection of resources about disability and heritable gene editing.

## CGS IN THE NEWS



### The New Techno-Eugenics

**Dan Cloer**, *Vision* | 07.16.2019

CGS co-founder Richard Hayes discusses how our newfound power to manipulate the genes of future children compels us to answer foundational questions about whether we are using science and technology in ways that benefit the common good.



### Bipartisan Resolution Urges Creation of International Gene-Editing Standards

**Samara Rosenfeld**, *Inside Digital Health* | 07.19.2019

The Senate resolution recognizes that the question of whether to proceed with heritable genome editing touches all of humanity. Says CGS' Marcy Darnovsky, "We are at a tipping point with this issue, which is why this resolution is so important now."

## WHAT WE'RE READING

[Animals](#) | [Assisted Reproductive Technologies](#) | [Eugenics](#) | [Genomics](#)  
[Heritable Gene Editing](#) | [Society](#) | [Stem Cells](#) | [Surrogacy](#)

## HERITABLE GENE EDITING

### Following 'CRISPR Babies' Scandal, Senators Call for International Gene Editing Guidelines

**Andrew Joseph**, *STAT+* | 07.15.2019

A bipartisan trio of senators has introduced a resolution underscoring their opposition to the experiments last year in China that led to the birth of the world's first genome-edited babies.

### Nature Beyond Control: How Expectations Should Inform Decisions About

## Human Germline Engineering

**Brendan Parent & Angela Turi**, *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics* | 07.16.2019

Scant attention has been paid to whether human germline editing can be reconciled with psychological well-being. CGS fellow Brendan Parent and colleagues argue that our limited understanding of how genes interact would conflict with our expectations of the results this technology could actually produce.

## Should the Rich Be Allowed to Buy the Best Genes?

**Walter Isaacson**, *Air Mail* | 07.27.2019

In this preview of his new book, author and scholar Walter Isaacson reports on the conversations he's having about CRISPR and inequality as he travels across North America.

## The World Health Organization Says No More Gene-edited Babies

**Megan Molteni**, *Wired* | 07.30.2019

The WHO's director-general put out a statement urging "that regulatory authorities in all countries should not allow any further work in this area until its implications have been properly considered."

## The Untold Story of the 'Circle of Trust' Behind the World's First Gene-edited Babies

**Jon Cohen**, *Science* | 08.01.2019

A public relations specialist hired by He Jiankui has cataloged five dozen people who were not part of the controversial study but knew or suspected what He was doing before it became public. None of them spoke up publicly until after the news broke.

## China Approves Ethics Advisory Group After CRISPR Babies Scandal

**Hepeng Jia**, *Nature* | 08.08.2019

The goals of the committee are to establish a coordinated, consistent system of ethics governance for science and technology, identify loopholes in the enforcement of regulations, and advise on appropriate punishments for those who violate the rules.

## Why Human Germline Editing Might Never Be Legal in the U.S.

**Jennifer M. Gumer**, *The Hastings Center* | 08.09.2019

It's unclear that clinical germline editing could ever satisfy the risk/benefit requirements of current research laws—a fact conspicuously absent from the CRISPR debates.

## ANIMALS

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### Japan Approves First Human-Animal Embryo Experiments

**David Cyranoski**, *Nature* | 07.26.2019

Hiromitsu Nakauchi plans to grow human cells in mouse and rat embryos and then transplant those embryos into surrogate animals. His ultimate goal is to produce animals with organs that can be transplanted into people.

## ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

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### The Former Medical Director of the Fertility Clinic That Mixed up 3 Couples' Embryos Was Once Sued for Having a Sexual Relationship With One of His Patients

**Ashley Collman**, *Business Insider* | 07.12.2019

The CHA Fertility Center, currently in crisis over a massive IVF mix-up, has been at the center of an ethics scandal before.

## **Don't Put All Your (Frozen) Eggs in One Basket**

**Ruthie Ackerman**, *The New York Times* | 07.19.2019

The medical establishment sells women the fantasy that they can have it all, on their own schedule. In the case of this author and many other patients, it's sadly not the case .

## **What Ever Happened to the Mysterious Nobel Prize Sperm Bank?**

**Anna Silman**, *The Cut* | 08.01.2019

The "Nobel Prize Sperm Bank" was operational for 20 years, from 1979 to 1999; founder Robert Graham, an admirer of eugenics who believed the human race was getting progressively dumber, touted it as part of his plan to "save mankind."

## **EUGENICS**

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### **What If an Algorithm Could Predict Your Unborn Child's Intelligence?**

**Oscar Schwartz**, *OneZero* | 07.09.2019

Genomic Prediction, a company founded by the controversial Michigan State University professor Stephen Hsu, is offering an embryo screening test that will inform parents about the risks of potential intellectual disability, defined as 25 points below the average IQ.

### **Alt-right Women and the "White Baby Challenge"**

**Alexandra Minna Stern**, *Salon* | 07.14.2019

One response to "white extinction anxiety," which stokes white nationalist fervor, is to produce many more white babies. As CGS Advisory Board member Alexandra Stern reports, white women are among the loudest voices advocating this strategy.

### **Jeffrey Epstein Hoped to Seed Human Race With His DNA**

**James B. Stewart, Matthew Goldstein & Jessica Silver-Greenberg**, *The New York Times* | 07.31.2019

The late financier, who had been accused of sex trafficking, was also said to be obsessed with transhumanism and discussed his techno-eugenic plans with several prominent scientists, whose work he reportedly also supported financially.

### **Citing 'Nerd Tunnel Vision,' Biologist George Church Apologizes for Contacts With Jeffrey Epstein**

**Sharon Begley**, *STAT* | 08.05.2019

The prominent Harvard University biologist says he regrets that he and other scientists weren't more cautious in their dealings with the recently deceased Epstein, and notes that scientists are as vulnerable to flattery and attention from prominent people as anyone.

### **What Is Transhumanism and Why Do People Associate It With Eugenics?**

**Aditi Murti**, *The Swaddle* | 08.07.2019

Transhumanism intends to use sophisticated technology to engineer and upgrade the human population's intellect and physiology to superhuman levels.

## **GENOMICS**

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## How White Nationalists See What They Want to See in DNA Tests

[Heather Murphy](#), *The New York Times* | 07.12.2019

Even members of white supremacist groups who fail to meet their own genetic standards will sometimes share their ancestry genetic test results.

## Senior Doctors Call for Crackdown on Home Genetic Testing Kits

[Hannah Devlin](#), *The Guardian* | 07.21.2019

Doctors in the UK are seeing more and more patients who have been wrongly told they are carrying dangerous mutations linked to cancer or other devastating conditions.

## 23andMe Had Devastating News About My Health. I Wish a Person Had Delivered It

[Dorothy Pomerantz](#), *STAT* | 08.08.2019

When consumers get their results from direct-to-consumer genetic testing companies, they may not know how to interpret them. In addition to being unsettling, this could lead to dangerous conclusions.

## SOCIETY

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### We Should All Be Science Critics

[John Hogan](#), *Scientific American* | 08.05.2019

Sheila Jasanoff of Harvard University's Program on Science, Technology and Society explains why it's important for scholars and academics to own their mistakes if science is truly to serve the public good.

## STEM CELLS

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### California Stem-cell Agency's Supporters Reveal Plan for \$5.5-billion Ballot Initiative

[Jonathan Lambert](#), *Nature* | 07.24.2019

CIRM's supporters must convince roughly 620,000 voters to sign a petition in favor of placing the proposal on the ballot. If voters reject the plan, the agency's path forward is unclear.

### Wind-down of Stem-cell Institute Leaves a Void

[Jeanne F. Loring](#), *Nature* | 08.07.2019

While the intentions may have been laudable, the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine inflated the public's hopes and inadvertently helped to boost unregulated, for-profit clinics.

## SURROGACY

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### Gay Couple Sues Over U.S. Refusal to Recognize Child as Citizen

*NBC News* | 07.24.2019

Americans Derek Mize and Jonathan Gregg are suing because their daughter Simone, born via surrogacy in England, is being denied U.S. citizenship

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