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## CENTER FOR GENETICS AND SOCIETY

BIOPOLITICAL  
VIEWS & NEWS

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The next issue of *Biopolitical Views & News* will be on January 8, 2015.

### [Biopolitical News of 2014](#)

by Pete Shanks, Jessica Cussins and Marcy Darnovsky

This is everything important that happened in biopolitics in 2014 (or close to it).



### [Top Biopolitical Times Posts of 2014](#)

by Jessica Cussins and Pete Shanks

In 2014, CGS staffers and contributors posted 107 blogs in *Biopolitical Times*. These are twelve of our favorites.



### [Prenatal Tests: Oversold and Misunderstood](#)

by George Estreich, *Biopolitical Times* guest contributor

A scathing investigative report on the accuracy of noninvasive prenatal testing is likely to shift the terms of this important conversation.

## NEWS

#### ► [Couple Spends \\$50K to Choose Baby's Sex, Shining Light on Trend](#)

[Quotes CGS's Marcy Darnovsky]

by Beth Greenfield, *Yahoo*

What if a boy wants to write poetry? What if a girl wants to play basketball? Not wear dresses? Announce that she's transgender?

#### ► [Private Hospitals Carrying Out Illegal Gender Selection](#)

*Saudi Gazette*

Private Saudi hospitals are providing preconception sex selection procedures. Many wives fear their husbands will replace them if they do not conceive a boy.

#### ► [Rules for Babies 'From Three People'](#)

by James Gallagher, *BBC*

With the regulations now finalized, MPs will soon vote on whether to make the UK the only country in the world to legalize a form of human germline modification.

▶ [Build a Pet Dinosaur or Your Perfect Child](#)

by Christine Rosen, *Slate*

Synthetic biology entrepreneurs want each of us to become gods of our own creations.

▶ [Commercialisation and the Moral Obligation to Create 'Designer' Babies](#)

by John Galloway, *BioNews*

Julian Savulescu made the case for a new 'eugenics', without ever using the word, at Progress Educational Trust's 2014 annual conference.

▶ [Yesterday's War; Tomorrow's Technology](#)

by Nicholas G. Evans and Jonathan D. Moreno,  
*Journal of Law and the Biosciences*

What's wrong with the prospect of the US military using genetic screening and germline genetic engineering to select or "enhance" soldiers?

▶ [Sperm Donor, Life Partner](#)

by Alana Semuels, *The Atlantic*

Just because women can create and raise a baby alone doesn't mean they want to. An increasing number of women and lesbian couples are seeking an involved father for a donor.

▶ [Have New Prenatal Tests Been Dangerously Oversold?](#)

by Beth Daley, *New England Center for Investigative Reporting*

Many prenatal testing companies promise more than they can deliver. Two studies show that results can be a false alarm half of the time.

▶ [Cell Free DNA Screening is not a Simple Blood Test](#)

*Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine*

By its very nature, a screening test does not tell with 100% certainty whether or not a fetus will be affected by a given disorder.

▶ [The 'Science' of Eugenics: America's Moral Detour](#)

by Marilyn M. Singleton, *Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons*

Within 100 years, our deep thinkers went from declaring that in our new country "all men are created equal" to espousing the idea that "some men are more equal than others."

▶ [Taking your Genome to the Bank](#)

by Harry Glorikian, *Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News*

Your genome has huge implications for you and your children. Institutions that store it should be regulated on how they store it, use it, and potentially share it.

▶ [Geneticists Begin Tests of an Internet for DNA](#)

by Antonio Regalado, *MIT Technology Review*

Scientists are starting to open their DNA databases online, creating a network that could pave the way for gene analysis at a new scale.

[Genetic Discrimination Means the Choice Between Life and Life Insurance](#)

by Shimon Koffler Fogel and Bev Heim-Myers, *Huffington Post [Canada]*  
Unfortunately, Canadians across the country currently face real as well as

potential future discrimination based on their DNA.

▶ [\*\*NHMRC Releases Guidelines After Concerns Online Genetic Tests May Not Meet Quality Standards\*\*](#)

by Sophie Scott, *ABC.au [Australia]*

Experts are warning Australians to be extremely careful when ordering genetic tests online.

▶ [\*\*23andMe and the Future of Home DNA Testing\*\*](#)

by David McNamee, *Medical News Today*

The Google-associated home DNA test company 23andMe will launch its kit in the UK. In the US, however, health results from 23andMe remain unavailable.

▶ [\*\*Myriad Loses Appeals Court Bid to Block Breast Cancer Tests\*\*](#)

by Susan Decker, *Bloomberg Businessweek*

Myriad Genetics can't block competitors' DNA tests to determine risk for breast and ovarian cancer after a US appeals court said three patents on the tests never should have been issued.

▶ [\*\*European Court Opens Door for Stem Cell Patenting\*\*](#)

*Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News*

The European Court of Justice ruled that human embryonic stem cell patents could be allowed if organisms can't develop into human being.

▶ [\*\*The NFL Has a Problem with Stem Cell Treatments\*\*](#)

by Antonio Regalado, *MIT Technology Review*

Professional athletes are getting injections of stem cells to speed up recovery from injury. Critics call it a high-tech placebo.

▶ [\*\*Did NBC News Err On Key Part of Their Stem Cell Report?\*\*](#)

by Paul Knoepfler, *Knoepfler Lab Stem Cell Blog*

Overall this was a well-done report, but NBC made the bombshell claim that the FDA does not regulate unapproved stem cell "treatments." This seems very difficult to believe.

▶ [\*\*Stem Cells: The Black Box of Reprogramming\*\*](#)

by David Cyranoski, *Nature News*

Scientists have been reprogramming adult cells into embryonic ones for decades — but they are only now getting to grips with the mechanics.

▶ [\*\*California Launches \\$50 Million, Fast-Track Stem Cell Drive\*\*](#)

by David Jensen, *California Stem Cell Report*

The California stem cell agency approved a plan that will radically reshape its efforts to produce a widely available stem cell treatment, a goal it has not yet reached after 10 years of trying.

▶ [\*\*Still No Stem Cells Via Easy 'STAP' Path\*\*](#)

by David Cyranoski, *Nature*

The Japanese stem-cell biologist whose papers caused a sensation earlier this year before being retracted has failed to replicate the controversial experiments.

▶ [\*\*How Exercise Changes Our DNA\*\*](#)

by Gretchen Reynolds, *The New York Times*

The human genome is astonishingly complex and dynamic, with genes

constantly turning on or off, depending on what biochemical signals they receive from the body.

▶ [Study Points to Press Releases as Sources of Hype](#)

by Chris Woolston, *Nature News*

Scientists, press officers and journalists online are pointing fingers in light of a paper that traces the origins of exaggerated claims in health news.

▶ [Ethical Overkill: Institutions should take a unified look at protections for research on human subjects](#)

*Nature Editorial*

They walk among us. Natural experiments, living ordinary lives, Investigators are clamouring for unified procedures to allow them to compile genetic information into databases without creating a legal thicket of differing privacy protections.

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