

May 2020



# BioPolitical

## News&Views

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### SPOTLIGHT



#### Voices of Egg Providers

[Surrogacy360](#) and [We Are Egg Donors](#) are collaborating to bring visibility to the voices and experiences of egg providers. See our first video, [What I Want Intended Parents to Know](#). Niamh, an egg provider living in the UK, discusses her motivation to become an egg donor, the inconsistent care donors receive, and how intended parents can advocate for egg donors' health.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS



#### CGS Teaching Resources

Looking for resources to bring discussions of human genome editing into your classroom? Check out the new (and growing) collection of CGS teaching resources. Each themed module contains suggested videos, readings, and discussion questions that explore the ethical and social implications of human gene editing from a social justice and human rights perspective.

# COMMENTARY



## Confronting Racist Eugenics in the Pandemic

**Pete Shanks**, *Biopolitical Times* | 05.06.2020

The pandemic has revealed continuing discrimination against racial and sexual minorities, poor people, and others regarded as less important by the power structure of our world.

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## Disability Rights, Triage and Countering Eugenics in a Time of Pandemic

**Pete Shanks**, *Biopolitical Times* | 04.18.2020

Reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate that activism can help to counter eugenic thinking, and the importance of the disability rights community to this effort.

# WHAT WE'RE READING

[Assisted Reproduction](#) | [Disability Rights](#) | [Eugenics](#) |  
[Genomics](#)  
[Society](#) | [Stem Cells](#) | [Surrogacy](#) | [Synthetic Biology](#)

## EUGENICS

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### The near-certainty of a black depression

**Aaron Ross Coleman**, *VOX* | 05.06.2020

Recessions are always racist. This one could be catastrophic.

### When Blackness Is a Preexisting Condition

**Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw**, *The New Republic* | 05.04.2020

How modern disaster relief has hurt African American communities.

### Eugenics Must Not Be Allowed To Sneak Through The Backdoor With Coronavirus

**Gordon Macdonald**, *HuffPost UK* | 04.19.2020

Doctors will face difficult decisions over the coming weeks and months but we can't allow a return to the eugenics movement and its dark past.

### History Shows That When Prejudice Overrides Science, Public Health Is at Risk

**Mab Segrest**, *Time* | 04.16.2020

The story of the 19th-century superintendent of Georgia's State Asylum is a cautionary tale about the consequences of allowing prejudice to override the lessons of science. It should strike us as frighteningly familiar.

## Forced sterilization a symptom of 'colonial hangover' says lawyer

[Dennis Ward](#), *Face to Face* | 04.07.2020

More than 100 Indigenous women in Canada have come forward with stories of forced or coerced sterilization. Lawyer Alisa Lombard says it's nothing new in Canada, nor is it illegal.

## DISABILITY RIGHTS

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### Doctors facing grim choice over ventilators told to put patients with disabilities at the back of the line

[Deborah Hellman](#), *The Conversation* | 04.20.2020

In several states, existing policies that were developed in anticipation of an emergency – including pandemics – recommend rationing that prioritizes giving ventilators to otherwise healthy people who are most likely to benefit.

### Disability and Rationing of Care amid COVID-19

[Katrina N. Jirik](#), *Bill of Health* | 04.12.2020

As medical professionals and bioethicists deal with the conundrum involved in establishing guidelines for rationing care, the mantra of the disability community comes to mind: Nothing about us, without us.

### Joe and The Gene: A Mother's Perspective

[Lia Tremblay](#), *NPR* | 04.09.2020

Joe has my nose, his father's eyes, and facial expressions that mirror those of his grandfathers. But the unexpected "misspelling" coiled up in his DNA has also given us a child we could never have imagined—and would never want to replace.

## SURROGACY

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### The Surrogate is in Oregon. The Parents are in China. And the Baby is in Limbo.

[Libby Dowsett](#), *The Oregonian / OregonLive* | 04.05.2020

A surrogate mother explains how the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions have drastically changed the birth plan for the child, whose parents are in China. New questions arise, such as when will the child's parents be able to come to America and who will be the child's guardian in the meantime?

### Coronavirus upends years of planning for international adoptions and surrogacy births

[Carol Morello](#), *Washington Post* | 04.16.2020

"It's incredibly sad. It's incredibly frustrating. We're still very hopeful as well. I'd say if there's an emotion out there, we're probably feeling it."

### A surrogate opens up about carrying another couple's baby in the midst of a pandemic

[Beth Greenfield](#), *Yahoo* | 04.13.2020

In this article and video interview, Chelsea Hernandez, who is in the midst of her second journey as a surrogate, shares her experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, finding this time around to be much stranger and more uncertain than the first.

## Europe's COVID-19 lockdown leaves new families in limbo in Ukraine

[Orlando Crowcroft & Marta Rodriguez Martinez](#), *Euronews* | 04.04.2020

A couple navigate travel restrictions after their son was born to a surrogate in Ukraine, where the borders are closed.

## ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

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### Fertility Clinics Stay Open Despite Unclear Guidelines

[Natalie Lampert](#), *New York Times* | 05.01.2020

Despite recommendations from professional organizations, many providers have continued seeing patients through the pandemic, forcing them to choose between clients and staff safety.

### Fertility clinics push back

[Alison Motluk](#), *HeyReprotech Newsletter* | 04.21.2020

Advisory bodies generally agree that now is not the time for full-on fertility treatment. Some prominent clinics beg to differ.

## GENOMICS

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### I Donated My DNA to Help Stop the Coronavirus

[Ronnie S. Stangler](#), *Medium* | 04.19.2020

Will genetic volunteers be punished with discrimination, denial of medical insurance, and loss of employment opportunities? Our world has become a giant laboratory, a mad experiment in which we are all unwitting subjects. My personal calculus is that today, collective good trumps individual autonomy.

## SOCIETY

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### As World Joins Forces to Raise \$8 Billion for Global Covid-19 Fund, US Contributes This Much: \$0

[Eoin Higgins](#), *Common Dreams* | 05.04.2020

Trump's resistance to international cooperation on a vaccine could have severe ramifications for the country and the world.

### Black Americans Don't Trust Medicine Because Of Racism. That's Bad In A Pandemic.

[Dan Vergano and Kadia Goba](#), *Buzzfeed* | 05.04.2020

A legacy of racism has left a dangerous divide between the medical establishment and Black Americans, now dying at higher rates in the coronavirus pandemic in almost every state.

### COVID-19 Immunity Testing: A Passport to Inequity

[Françoise Baylis and Natalie Kofler](#), *Issues in Science and Technology* | 04.29.2020

In an already heavily stratified society, the introduction of immunity passports is ethically problematic. They would not only exacerbate current inequities but also create a novel layer of biological inequity.

## Slow Science, Fast Science

[Daniel Sarewitz](#), *Issues in Science and Technology* | 04.07.2020

For example, He Jiankui's transgressions can't be understood simply as the acts of a rogue scientist—they must also be seen as an outgrowth of a research system that rewards competition, and thus speed, above all other considerations.

## SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY

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### **Genetic Engineering Could Make a COVID-19 Vaccine in Months Rather Than Years**

[Charles Schmidt](#), *Scientific American* | 04.29.2020

Three different techniques based on DNA and RNA molecules are speeding to human trials, but whether they will work, or can be scaled up to millions of doses, is unclear.

### **Did this virus come from a lab? Maybe not — but it exposes the threat of a biowarfare arms race**

[Sam Husseini](#), *Salon* | 04.24.2020

Regardless of the source of this pandemic, there is considerable documentation that a global biological arms race going on outside of public view could produce even more deadly pandemics in the future.

## STEM CELLS

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### **Signature Drive Ends for \$5.5 Billion California Stem Cell Initiative; Will it Qualify for the Ballot?**

[David Jensen](#), *California Stem Cell Report* | 05.06.2020

The campaign fell slightly short of its target, but Bob Klein, chairman of Californians for Stem Cell Research, Treatments and Cures, says: "We're confident that we've submitted enough valid signatures to qualify for the ballot this November."

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