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BioPolitical

News&Views

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SPOTLIGHT



Weaponizing Trivialities: The Engineered Ouster of Claudine Gay and its Link to Eugenics

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 01.16.2024

The rightwing critics who worked to oust Claudine Gay from Harvard's presidency cited a data scientist who co-authored several papers in collaboration with a network of scholars who have been widely criticized as eugenicists or scientific racists.

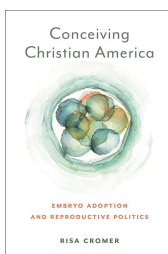
ANNOUNCEMENTS



Beginning the year with gratitude!

Many thanks to our colleagues, friends, and subscribers who contributed to our very successful end-of-year fundraising campaign! Your support for CGS' mission keeps us going strong. We can't wait to share the exciting work that **your generosity makes possible**.

COMMENTARY



Review: *Conceiving Christian America: Embryo Adoption and Reproductive Politics*

Emma McDonald Kennedy, *Biopolitical Times* | 01.18.2024

Risa Cromer argues that embryo adoption is a strategy that a subset of White evangelicals employs to advance the project of white saviorism and to literally reproduce a Christian nation.

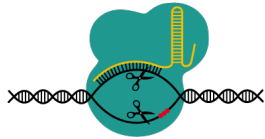


Biopolitics in 2023

CGS Staff, *Biopolitical Times* | 01.08.2024

In 2023, CGS stepped up its efforts to put social justice and human rights at the center of discussions about powerful new human biotechnologies, from challenging the international gene editing summit to scrutinizing “hipster eugenics” and developments in AI.

CGS IN THE NEWS



2023 was a big year for CRISPR-based gene editing but challenges remain

Malak Saleh, *Endgadget* | 12.20.2023

Discussing the FDA’s approval of the sickle cell gene therapy treatment Casgevy late last year, CGS’ Katie Hasson commented, “It’s not just about who gets access to the medication once it comes on the market but really how can we prioritize equity in the research that’s leading to these treatments.”



Is it safe to have your ancestry data online? Here's what experts say.

Cathy Cassata, *Yahoo* | 12.15.2023

After the recent 23andMe data breach, CGS’ Katie Hasson expressed concerns about “the potential that genetic data will start to get folded into [personal data]” since that can be tracked, collected, and sold.

WHAT WE’RE READING

GENE EDITING | EUGENICS | ASSISTED REPRODUCTION
SURROGACY360 | VARIOUS

GENE EDITING

FDA widens approval of Vertex’s CRISPR medicine to treat beta thalassemia

Ned Pagliarulo, *BioPharma Dive* | 01.16.2024

The FDA first approved the CRISPR gene therapy Casgevy for the treatment of sickle cell disease, and has now expanded its approval for the inherited blood condition beta thalassemia.

Genotoxic Effects of Base and Prime Editing

Kamal Nahas, *The Scientist* | 01.12.2024

A risk-benefit analysis of gene editing tools in stem cells revealed that base and prime editing carry “genotoxic effects” similar to those of CRISPR-Cas9, but at a reduced rate.

Danaher Partners with IGI, Doudna, & Urnov, on Beacon for CRISPR Cures

GEN, *Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News* | 01.11.2024

A newly launched center aims to bring together academic research, regulators, and industry to streamline the development of CRISPR-based gene therapies for a variety of diseases.

How CRISPR could yield the next blockbuster crop

Michael Marshall, *Nature* | 01.09.2024

Researchers are trying to “domesticate” crops like rice using CRISPR, but there are issues with the technical aspects of the approach and concerns about exploitation of Indigenous communities’ knowledge.

Gene Editing Needs to Be for Everyone

[Jennifer Doudna](#), *Wired* | 01.08.2024

2023 brought the first-ever FDA approval of a CRISPR gene therapy – a major milestone in gene editing treatments. But more work is needed to make cutting-edge gene therapies accessible and equitable.

EUGENICS

Trump’s dangerous echoes of the eugenics movement

[Paul Moses](#), *CNN* | 01.16.2024

Trump’s recent speeches echo the 20th century eugenics movement, adopting nativist, pseudoscientific rhetoric to stoke anti-immigrant sentiment.

Scientist cited in push to oust Harvard’s Claudine Gay has links to eugenicists

[Jason Wilson](#), *The Guardian* | 01.14.2024

A data scientist cited by rightwing critics who worked to oust Claudine Gay from Harvard’s presidency co-authored several papers in collaboration with a network of scholars who have been broadly criticized as eugenicists, or scientific racists.

The US once withheld syphilis treatment from hundreds of Black men in the name of science. Newly public records are helping us understand how it could happen

[Caitjan Gainty](#), *The Conversation* | 01.12.2024

Newly public records of the Tuskegee syphilis study show the lengths to which USPHS doctors went to ensure Black men were denied treatment. A key takeaway is that structural racism in medical research and health care persist today.

Europe still sterilises disabled women despite the practice being a human rights violation

[Abby Amoakuh](#), *Screenshot* | 01.08.2024

The Istanbul Convention clearly states that all forms of forced abortion and forced sterilization violate human rights, but many of its signatories continue to allow sterilization of people with disabilities under certain circumstances.

Retired Oakland judge has shocking theory about infamous Lindbergh kidnapping. And it’s catching on

[Kevin Fagan](#), *San Francisco Chronicle* | 01.02.2024

An author and retired judge believes that celebrity aviator and eugenics advocate Charles Lindbergh offered up his child as a subject for medical experiments and faked the kidnapping to cover up the child’s death.

Trump echoes Hitler — and MAGA hears it loud and clear

[Heather Digby Parton](#), *Salon* | 12.18.2023

Trump’s recent campaign speeches echoing Hitler further confirm his support of eugenics. Even more disturbing, the response he gets from his tens of millions of followers clearly shows that they share it.

Maine considering adding discussions of Holocaust, genocide and eugenics to science curriculum

[Nicole Chavez](#), *CNN* | 12.14.2023

Educators tasked with revising Maine’s science learning standards have proposed including discussion of the Holocaust, genocide, and eugenics in the science curriculum for middle and high school students.

ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

Amid post-Roe concerns, Democratic lawmakers introduce bill to protect access to IVF

Jacqueline Howard, *CNN* | 01.18.2024

Two Democratic U.S. Senators are introducing legislation to give people the statutory right to access IVF and to retain authority over how sperm or egg cells are used, amid growing concern that anti-abortion bills may threaten access in some states.

Is the export of donor sperm explained adequately to recipients?

Grace Halden, *BioNews* | 01.15.2023

Recipients of sperm from donor banks are often led to believe only 10 UK families will use each donor's sperm, and clinics do not make it clear that the same donor sperm may be exported and sold elsewhere.

Scientists call for review of UK's 14-day rule on embryo research

Hannah Devlin, *The Guardian* | 12.30.2023

Some scientists want to overhaul the 14-day rule on human embryo research to gain knowledge on miscarriage and congenital conditions. Others are skeptical of the insights those scientists claim are in store if the limit were to be lifted.

SURROGACY360



Irish LGBTQ+ organisations respond to Pope's call to ban surrogacy

Nicole Lee, *Yahoo News* | 01.09.2024

In a recent address, Pope Francis advocated for a worldwide ban on surrogacy arrangements. LGBTQ activists in Ireland objected to the Pope's stance and reiterated their support for legislation to protect all involved in surrogacy arrangements.

VARIOUS

Cloned rhesus monkey created to speed medical research

Pallab Ghosh, *BBC* | 01.16.2024

Chinese researchers have cloned the first rhesus monkey with the aim of speeding up testing of drugs for humans, but many question whether animal suffering in the cloning experimentation process is justified.

ChatGPT Helps, and Worries, Business Consultants, Study Finds

David Berreby, *The New York Times* | 12.28.2023

Researchers' tests of AI for business consulting work showed that ChatGPT did help perform some creative tasks. But its analysis of data and transcripts was often inaccurate, and workers were uneasy about using it.

Cory Doctorow: What Kind of Bubble is AI?

Cory Doctorow, *Locus* | 12.18.2023

Massive investment in AI startups have shown few promising long-term gains. The AI bubble, like every bubble, will pop eventually. When it inevitably does, what will be left behind?

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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