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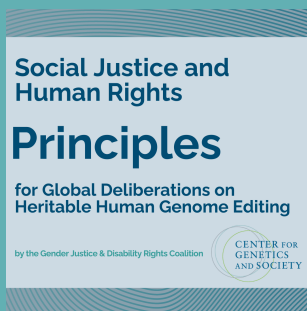
BioPolitical

News&Views

February 15, 2024

SPOTLIGHT

Groundbreaking Social Justice Principles on Heritable Human Genome Editing



An international coalition convened by CGS just released groundbreaking principles that put social justice at the center of policy making and public engagement on heritable human genome editing. Endorsed by 70 individuals and organizations worldwide, the 11 principles outline why there's no argument for pursuing heritable genome editing that aligns with feminist, anti-eugenic, and human rights commitments.

Read the [Principles](#) and learn more in a [blog post](#) by Coalition coordinator Emily Galpern.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



DNA Identities: Narrative and Authority in Genetic Ancestry Performance on YouTube

Leah Lowthorp, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Folklore at the University of Oregon and former CGS Program Manager, will discuss her prize-winning study on the rise of direct-to-consumer genetic ancestry testing, YouTube “reveals” of results, and what these performances tell us about conceptions of racial and ethnic identity and genetic determinism. She'll be joined by Jonathan Marks and Theodore Schurr. February 21 from 2-4pm PT. More information and registration [here](#).

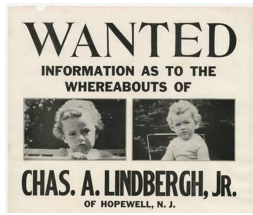
COMMENTARY



Transhumanism in Practice: Don't Do It

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 02.13.2024

Transhumanist fantasies fuel the escapades of billionaires and the dreams of people for whom reality is simply not enough. They exist to aid the exploitation of some people by others, and to encourage eugenic dreams of impossible worlds that only get in the way of improving the real world we share.



Why the Newest Lindbergh Baby Conspiracy Theory Isn't All That Out There from a Disability History Perspective

Emily Beitiks, Guest Contributor, *Biopolitical Times* | 02.09.2024

A new theory about the kidnapping has chilling implications for disability history and brings to light Lindbergh's little-discussed enthusiasm for Nazism and eugenics. Can it also help us understand the obsessions of today's tech elites?



Social Justice and Human Rights Principles for Global Deliberations on Heritable Human Genome Editing

Katie Hasson, *Gen-ethische Informationsdienst (GID)* | 01.29.2024

An international coalition of civil society advocates and academics has developed a set of principles meant to shift the focus of heritable genome editing debates toward social justice and human rights. Part of a **special issue** focused on international debates about germline editing.



The Tangled Web of Presidential Politics, AI, Transhumanism and Eugenics

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 01.24.2024

AI and its makers are sidling into the race for U.S. President. Silicon Valley elites, including some known to support transhumanist trends that veer into eugenics, appear to have funneled some of their AI-linked fortunes to the campaign of one Biden challenger.

WHAT WE'RE READING

GENE EDITING | GENE THERAPY | GENOMICS
EUGENICS | SURROGACY360 | ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE | VARIOUS

GENE EDITING

Ethics of germline genome editing to prevent genetic diseases from an Islamic perspective

Sayed Muhsin and Alexis Heng Boon Chin, *BioNews* | 02.12.2024

The overwhelming majority of Islamic scholars agree that heritable genome editing for human enhancement is prohibited. In addition, Islamic law draws attention to the risks associated with germline gene editing to treat disease and the availability of less risky alternatives.

New gene-editing tools may help wipe out mosquito-borne diseases

Greg Allen, *NPR* | 01.26.2024

Male mosquitoes that have been gene-edited to produce female offspring that won't survive to adulthood have been released in the Florida Keys and Brazil, despite public resistance amid concerns about safety and environmental impacts.

A Gene-Edited Pig Liver Was Attached to a Person—and Worked for 3 Days

Emily Mullin, *Wired* | 01.18.2024

Surgeons at UPenn attached a genetically altered pig liver to a brain-dead person and found that the organ functioned normally for 72 hours. The experiment is part of an effort to see whether pig organs can treat patients in liver failure.

GENE THERAPY

Gene therapy at CHOP allowed a deaf boy to hear. But some deaf people object to the treatment.

Tom Avril, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* | 02.08.2024

For many deaf people, deafness is not something that needs to be fixed. Unlike other conditions that have been treated with gene therapy, it is not a disease and doesn't preclude a long, rich life.

Texas Medicaid agrees to fully cover gene therapy for Afghan refugees' infant

Megan Molteni, *STAT* | 02.05.2024

Citing equity concerns, Orchard Therapeutics offered its multimillion-dollar gene therapy treatment for metachromatic leukodystrophy, a genetic disorder that is typically fatal, free of charge to the Pashai family. Eventually Texas Medicaid agreed to pay for associated costs.

Gene Therapy's Promise Meets Nigeria's Sickle Cell Reality

Morenike Samuel, *Sapiens* | 01.25.2024

Breakthrough treatments can now cure sickle cell anemia in the U.S. But the pricey therapies will hardly help in Nigeria, where social changes could do more for millions impacted by the disease.

Experimental Gene Therapy Allows Kids with Inherited Deafness to Hear

Laura Ungar, *Time* | 01.25.2024

Responding to recent developments in gene therapy for deafness, bioethicist and philosopher Teresa Blankmeyer Burke reminds us that deafness is not a life-threatening illness in need of treatment and emphasizes the need to engage with deaf community members.

GENOMICS

Inside the Fight for Indigenous Data Sovereignty

Kate Nelson, *Atmos* | 02.06.2024

"As Native people, we've been so overanalyzed, surveyed, and researched—often to our detriment rather than our benefit... There needs to be a shifting of power that not only gives power back to us, but supports us telling our stories through the data."

It's time to admit that genes are not the blueprint for life

Denis Noble, *Nature* | 02.05.2024

The genome is not the "instruction manual" for life that scientists often present it as being. Instead of focusing on genetics alone in treating disease, we need to assess cellular processes more holistically.

When testing costs you: the genetic dilemma confronting Australians with life insurance

Daisy Dumas, *The Guardian* | 01.31.2024

In Australia, an exception to anti-discrimination legislation allows insurance companies to use genetic information to deny, cap, or increase the cost of life insurance, which discourages people from getting genetic testing for a variety of conditions.

Congress wants to ban China's largest genomics firm from doing business in the

U.S. Here's why.

Ken Dilanian, *NBC News* | 01.25.2024

Proposed bipartisan legislation would effectively ban BGI from doing business in the U.S. The move follows years of warnings from intelligence officials that Beijing is gathering genetic information in ways that could harm national security.

Unethical studies on Chinese minority groups are being retracted — but not fast enough, critics say

Dyani Lewis, *Nature* | 01.24.2024

Unethical studies of the genetics of vulnerable Chinese minority groups, including Uyghurs and Tibetans, are being retracted. Critics say work to address exploitation of these groups in research is moving too slowly.

EUGENICS

‘Second age of eugenics’: Would you select an embryo for its chances of higher intelligence?

Sienna Rodgers, *The House* | 02.05.2024

Genetic testing and selection of IVF embryos is gaining traction in the U.S. While the U.K. appears to be resisting these specious techniques, the NHS’ rollout of whole genome sequencing of newborn babies brings its own ethical concerns.

Activist who led ouster of Harvard president linked to ‘scientific racism’ journal

Jason Wilson, *The Guardian* | 01.31.2024

The rightwing activist who led the ouster of Harvard’s president has links to a self-styled “sociobiology magazine” that is focused on the supposed relationships between race, intelligence, and criminality, and which experts have characterized as an outlet for scientific racism.

Cops Used DNA to Predict a Suspect’s Face—and Tried to Run Facial Recognition on It

Dhruv Mehrota, *Wired* | 01.22.2024

Some U.S. police departments are using DNA to algorithmically generate 3D models of faces in efforts to crack cold cases. Critics point out that these techniques are likely to misidentify suspects and have a disturbingly bad track record when it comes to minority groups.

SURROGACY360



Two men wanted to start a family. Soon, they could be outlaws.

Anthony Faiola and Stefano Pitrelli, *The Washington Post* | 02.05.2024

Italy’s right-wing government is targeting international surrogacy through local legal measures and national legislation, part of a larger government effort to limit the rights of LGBTQ+ parents.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

‘Obviously ChatGPT’ — how reviewers accused me of scientific fraud

E.M. Wolkovich, *Nature* | 02.05.2024

“We need to be able to call out fraud and misconduct in science. But I worry about a world in which a reviewer can casually level an accusation of fraud, and the editors and journal editor simply

shuffle along the review and invite a resubmission.”

How AI is quietly changing everyday life

[Olivia Olander, Mackenzie Wilkes, Katy O'Donnell, Daniel Payne, and Ruth Reader](#), *Politico* | 02.04.2024

Despite research demonstrating bias and errors in AI, lack of regulation allows businesses, schools, and medical professionals to employ it to screen job candidates, guide medical decisions, and determine healthcare coverage.

VARIOUS

Her pregnant wife filed for divorce. The lawsuit changed who gets to be a parent in Pa.

[Zoe Greenberg](#), *The Philadelphia Inquirer* | 02.06.2024

A recent ruling by Pennsylvania's Supreme Court sets a new precedent called "intent-based parentage," which legally recognizes parties' expressed intentions to be a parent, even in lieu of a marriage or a genetic relationship to a child.

'The situation has become appalling': fake scientific papers push research credibility to crisis point

[Robin McKie](#), *The Guardian* | 02.03.2024

Medical research is being compromised, drug development hindered, and promising academic research jeopardized thanks to a global wave of published sham science that is sweeping laboratories and universities.

Elon Musk's Neuralink brain chip: what scientists think of first human trial

[Liam Drew](#), *Nature* | 02.02.2024

Elon Musk's company Neuralink has implanted a "brain-reading" device into a person for the first time, but researchers critique the lack of transparency about the clinical trial's safety and goals.

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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