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BioPolitical

News&Views

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SPOTLIGHT



Photo by Darius Riley

CGS Senior Fellow Osagie Obasogie awarded a Guggenheim fellowship

Congratulations to Osagie Obasogie on his 2022 Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. “I am delighted to have this opportunity as a Guggenheim Fellow, which will support research that looks closely at the history of ‘excited delirium,’ and how this questionable psychiatric condition is often misused by medical professionals to obscure and excuse police violence,” Obasogie said.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SE 20
PS 22

Katie Hasson spoke on “Possibilities and Pitfalls of CRISPR”

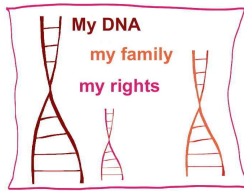
On April 10, CGS Associate Director Katie Hasson presented at the Science, Ethics, and Policy Symposium, [From Plants to Privacy: Science Ethics for the Modern Era](#), hosted by the Science Policy Groups at UC Berkeley and UC San Francisco. She joined Françoise Baylis and Lea Witkowsky for the discussion “The Possibilities and Pitfalls of CRISPR.” Videos from the event will be available this summer.

BATTLING EUGENICS:
DEBATES AND THE RISE OF OPPOSITION
IN SCIENCE AND CULTURE
26–27
APRIL 2022

Battling Eugenics: Debates and the Rise of Opposition in Science and Culture

This hybrid conference at the University of Warsaw on April 26-27 will explore international opposition to eugenics and debates within the eugenics camp among scientists in the 20th century. It will also examine how eugenic discourse has resurfaced and been contested in science, culture, and through political activism. Registration for online participation can be found [here](#).

COMMENTARY



Is Your Genetic Information Private?

Pete Shanks, *Biopolitical Times* | 04.11.2022

My DNA, My Family, My Rights is a new website, with accompanying Twitter feed, that focuses on the information that can or may be derived from your own DNA. It provides guidance about what rights you have – and should have – to control your genetic information and its uses.

WHAT WE'RE READING

SURROGACY360 | GENOME EDITING | ASSISTED REPRODUCTION
EUGENICS | GENOMICS | POLICY

SURROGACY360



Ukraine as International Surrogacy Destination

Surrogacy360 | 04.14.2022

Surrogacy360's new page offers background on how Ukraine became a global hub, impacts of COVID on the industry, and circumstances surrogates, babies, and intended parents are facing during the war. All conditions point to the need for comprehensive regulation, if the industry survives the war.

GENOME EDITING

The Story of He Jiankui, Now Out of Jail After Editing DNA of Unborn Babies

Ed Browne, *Newsweek* | 04.11.2022

Widely condemned for his rogue experiment, He Jiankui's release from prison brings renewed attention to the well-being of the children whose genes he edited. It remains a mystery whether his crude use of CRISPR will have negative effects on their health.

The creator of the CRISPR babies has been released from a Chinese

prison

[Antonio Regalado](#), *MIT Technology Review* | 04.04.2022

Chinese biophysicist He Jiankui served three years for his rogue gene editing experiment. While responsibility fell on He and his Chinese team members, other scientists, including Michael Deem, formerly of Rice University, and John Zhang, head of a large IVF clinic in New York, knew of and encouraged the experiment.

CRISPR Pioneer Expects to See Gene-Edited Babies Within 25 Years

[Angelica Peebles](#), *Bloomberg* | 04.04.2022

Jennifer Doudna said she is “not advocating for human germline editing, simply stating that it is likely to happen in the next 25 years given the direction of research and technology development.”

ASSISTED REPRODUCTION

Couple sues fertility clinic, saying they had to abort stranger's baby

[Andrea Salcedo](#), *The Washington Post* | 04.06.22

A Massachusetts couple is suing the New York Fertility Institute for allegedly impregnating the mother-to-be with a stranger's embryo, losing her embryos, and failing to disclose whether those were implanted into a stranger, potentially giving away their biological child.

Desperately Seeking Surrogates

[Danielle Braff](#), *The New York Times* | 04.02.2022

Vaccine debates, pandemic parenting, and general burnout have converged to create yet another shortage in the United States: surrogates. Intended parents and agencies report a 60% decrease in potential surrogates, along with doubled wait times and significantly higher fees.

'Maeve's Law' passes Senate hurdle to legalising mitochondrial donation through IVF

[Anna Salleh](#), *ABC News* | 03.30.2022

Australian advocates, from affected families to scientific heavyweights, are celebrating the decision. But other experts are calling for caution, with some arguing the decision to legalise the technology was premature.

Jury Gives \$5.25 Million To Woman Impregnated By Fertility Doctor's Sperm

[Wilson Ring](#), *Huffington Post* | 03.30.2022

A federal court jury in Vermont awarded a Florida couple \$5.25 million from a doctor who used his own sperm to impregnate her during an artificial insemination procedure in 1977.

She got a job at Starbucks for access to IVF treatment. It cost more than her actual paycheck.

[Leticia Miranda and Louise Matsakis](#), *Yahoo News* | 03.28.2022

Starbucks is known among people struggling with infertility as one of the very few major U.S. employers to offer insurance coverage for procedures like IVF to part-time workers. But the premiums they paid almost or completely exceeded their paychecks.

EUGENICS

Why Biology Is Not Destiny

[M.W. Feldman and Jessica Riskin](#), *New York Review of Books* | 04.21.2022 issue

In *The Genetic Lottery*, Kathryn Harden disguises her radically subjective view of biological essentialism as an objective fact. Although Harden acknowledges and disavows the eugenic origins of statistics, she also reproduces the old statistical illogic of eugenics, which confuses correlation and

causation to suggest the importance of innate genetic differences.

Canada's Right-Wing Think Tanks Love Race Science

[Mitchell Thompson](#), *Jacobin* | 04.11.2022

Canadian conservatives present their animus toward social spending as nothing more than fiscal prudence. A review of their arguments reveals a deeply misanthropic racism that led to policies anchored in social Darwinism and deeply contemptuous of people of color and the poor.

University of Richmond strips names of enslavers from campus buildings

[Nick Anderson](#), *The Washington Post* | 03.28.2022

The University of Richmond has removed from six buildings the names of people who supported slavery, racial segregation, and eugenics.

GENOMICS

'It's a thorny issue.' Why a fight over DNA data imperils a global conservation pact

[Erik Stokstad](#), *Science* | 04.05.2022

Developing nations worry that richer countries and companies can exploit their biodiverse ecosystems by accessing organisms' digitized genetic sequences from public databases and using them to engineer bacteria or other organisms, without the countries that host those species receiving any compensation.

The map of our DNA is finally complete. Here's what that means for humanity.

[Karen Weintraub](#), *USA Today* | 03.31.2022

Almost two decades after the first draft, scientists have completed the map of the human genome, adding the missing 8% of genetic material. Researchers believe it could offer insights into human development, aging and disease, human diversity, and prehistoric evolution and migration patterns.

Biopiracy row at UN talks in Geneva threatens global deal to save nature

[Patrick Greenfield](#), *The Guardian* | 03.30.2022

During negotiations in Geneva for a Paris-style agreement on nature, African countries insisted that any deal must include a financial mechanism to compensate them for discoveries using digital forms of their biodiversity.

POLICY

Politics and expertise: How to use science in a democratic society

[Zeynep Pamuk](#), *LSE European Politics and Policy Blog* | 03.30.2022

The Covid-19 pandemic has underlined the importance of scientific advice to modern policy-making. But how can the use of expertise in politics be aligned with the needs and values of the public?

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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