

Genetic screening



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Genetic Screening by Employers: A Misuse of Good Science There was a time when you would sweat your way through a job interview only to receive a letter a week later saying, " Sorry, but we found someone more qualified". If you're looking for a job today, chances are your interview will be in a clinic where they will swab you for DNA and a week later you will get a letter that says, " Sorry, but we found someone who doesn't have a predisposition for trimethylaminuria". Genetic testing has worked its way into the workplace and has replaced the background check of the past. Employers can now check your genetics for susceptibility to heart disease, injury, and allergens. Advocates have praised the method as being for the safety and welfare of the employee, but at what cost Genetic testing is an inaccurate invasion of privacy that has a high probability of misuse and employers should be banned from using this procedure to determine a potential employee's fitness.

Genetic testing does not reveal if you have a disease. It can only show that you are predisposed to getting an ailment. Barring a worker because they may one day develop a fatal disease is like throwing someone in jail because they may someday steal a car. There is no certainty that the disease will ever develop just as there is no way to profile who may become a thief. According to the American Medical Association (AMA), " Genetic tests alone do not have sufficient predictive value to be relied upon..." (" Genetic Testing"). Our limited knowledge of the complex interactions of numerous genes and our environment makes this new science little more than guesswork.

If employers begin guessing who may have a genetic marker for a physical ailment, it won't be long before they look at brain scans for a predisposition

of a personality trait. Medical ethics would dictate that, " Genetic privacy, like medical privacy in general, involves notions of the dignity and integrity of the individual" (Bereano). Peering inside the person's physical and mental makeup is a violation of our personal right to privacy.

In almost every case where the citizenry has lost their right to privacy, the information has been misused. Employers will use the information to reduce health care costs. The information will be compromised or sold to other database services just as credit reports and television viewing habits are now. According to the National Human Genome Research Institute, "... genetic information can also be used unfairly to discriminate against or stigmatize individuals on the job". Employers will naturally fall to the temptation to misuse this sensitive data.

To sum it up, there are too many dangers in allowing an employer to have this kind of information. The inaccuracy does not lend itself to be interpreted by a middle manager with a business degree. It should be treated as part of a medical record and subject to the same confidentiality concerns. In the hands of the corporation there is little doubt that it would be misused and abused. The personal risks to privacy and individual dignity are far too great and this process should be forbidden.

Works Cited

Bereano, Philip. " Does Genetic Research Threaten Our Civil Liberties." Action Bioscience. Aug. 2000. American Institute of Biological Sciences. 24 Feb. 2007 .

" Genetic Information and the Workplace." Information and the Workplace Report. 20 Jan. 1998. National Human Genome Research Institute. 24 Feb. 2007 .

<https://assignbuster.com/genetic-screening/>

" Genetic Testing by Employers." American Medical Association. 16 Aug. 2005. AMA. 24 Feb. 2007 .