

Designer babies

Profession



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Abstract The term “ designer baby” is used by journalist and media to refer to a baby whose genetic makeup had been artificially selected by genetic engineering combined with in vitro fertilization to make sure there is a presence or absence of particular genes or characteristics (Designer Baby, n. d.). Before, designer babies have been used to prevent genetic defects of offspring or to prevent a child from a number of mutations and diseases. Now, with our advancements in reproductive technologies, doctors are taking this to a whole new level by using genetic diagnosis or PGD to design their patient’s idea of a “ perfect baby. In this paper I will discuss the reasons why I’m against the idea of designer babies. Genetically Engineering A Designer Baby Imagine going to a hospital and ordering a baby, just like you order a meal at your favorite fast food restaurant: “ Hi, can I have a girl in the model category. Straight brown hair, brown eyes, and a bronze tan. Actually, make that green eyes, instead of brown and make her hair a little wavy, but not too wavy. Medium stature is fine, with a fit body type. Oh yeah, can you make sure that she'll have perfect white, straight teeth too. And that will do it! ” Sounds a little ridiculous doesn't it? Well believe it or not, designing your idea of a “ perfect” baby may be completely normal in the next few years because of the highly advanced reproductive technologies out there today. Some would argue that being able to genetically design their own child would be a blessing but here are my reasons why I think the idea of designer babies isn’t just morally and ethically wrong, but could eventually lead to the possibility of controlling the human population to ensure certain physical characteristics.

On March 3, 2009 an organization called Fertility Institutes offered what journalists call “ designer babies” (Designer Babies: Parents can Select Physical Traits, 2011). The technology they use is called preimplantation genetic diagnosis or PGD. It's been used to improve the likelihood of a successful pregnancy and birth for couples with either infertility related to recurrent miscarriages or unsuccessful in vitro cycles and couples who are at high risk for passing on inherited genetic disease to their offspring (Preimplantation Genetics, n. d.).

Before, PGD was strictly used only for the couples who absolutely needed it. Now they are taking this technology that we've used since the mid-1980s to a whole new level. Wanting to fulfill the desires of their patients, Fertility Institutes said that their patients could not only select the gender of their soon to be child, but could choose their baby's skin, hair, and eye color (Preimplantation Genetics, n. d.). This new technology sparked many questions and controversies. From conception and on, parents are viewed as risk factors in their child's life.

Pregnant women are constantly being reminded to eat the right food, get enough exercise, stay away from alcohol and cigarettes, and the list goes on and on. If she doesn't follow these guidelines, she is putting her child at risk (Debating ‘ designer babies’, 2003). A child is the icon of vulnerability. In using their power over a vulnerable child, parents can do harm whether they mean to or not. Parents are constantly making decisions for their child in hopes that one day they will be successful. With the idea of designer babies however, parents might replace their love with a mentality of perfection.

These parents will pay thousands of dollars to make sure their baby is born physically perfect so of course their standards of their child will be extremely high. If a child can't live up to his or her parents expectations, they might go through their whole life feeling like they're not good enough. Knowing that their parents have selected every trait about them from their gender to hair color, children will feel less free. What if parents really do replace love with wanting their child to be perfect? The child might grow up not knowing what love is since he or she has never experienced it.

I know it's a bit dramatic, but this just might be the ending of love and compassion. Eugenics is defined as " the study of or belief in the possibility of improving the qualities of the human species or a human population, by such means as discouraging reproduction by persons having genetic defects or presumed to have inheritable undesirable traits" (Eugenics, n. d.). We've all heard of the infamous Adolf Hitler. His plan was to create a world full of tall, blonde hair, blue eyed " perfect" people and to eventually obtain world domination.

He tortured and killed thousands and thousands of people because they were Jewish, African American, homosexuals, handicaps, and communists. When I first read about designer babies this is the first thing I thought of. With all the new reproductive technology, there is a possibility that someday, there will be a perfect race. This also ties into who would be able to design their baby's traits. Only the wealthy would be able to afford the luxury of designing a perfect child. So not only would these children be flawless and beautiful, but they would also be born wealthy.

The average or poor people will have normal children while the wealthy have their perfect children. There is already a fine line between the wealthy and the poor. The wealthy are constantly getting richer, while the poor remains poor. Which brings me to my next point, if we start creating these designer babies, what happens to the “ normal” children? These kids will be considered ugly and scary since they’re not perfect. The new generation of designer babies would hate anyone who doesn’t appear to have the flawless appearance they have and the normal children would hate the designer children because they’re not as good looking as them.

The designer kids would act as if they are better and look down to normal people. Our society is constantly concerned with looks as it is. I can’t even imagine how the normal children will feel. They’ll hate themselves for not looking as beautiful as the others, blame their parents for them being “ ugly,” and lose confidence in themselves. As you know, I’m against designing babies to achieve the perfect appearance, but I understand that sometimes using PGD to screen embryos is necessary. Take the story of Philippa for example. An interview done by United Kingdom BBC (2005) said that she had a problem with her DNA.

It never affected her health, but it meant that most of her eggs didn’t carry genes needed for a baby to grow healthy. Every time she got pregnant, she miscarried. The doctors suggested that she try PGD. This ensured that her baby would be free from any genetic abnormalities. Nine months after using PGD she gave birth to a healthy baby boy, named Ruiaridh (BBC, 2005). Philippa had no desire to design a perfect baby, so I don’t consider Ruiaridh a

designer baby. In cases where a parent is preventing their future child from a disease, I think it's 100% acceptable.

If I was in that position I would do the exact same thing, without a doubt. All-in-all, designing perfect babies is something we shouldn't be toying with. The results could be devastating. In my eyes, the bond between a parent and their child is something special. When I laid my eyes on my daughter for the first time, I was amazed at how much she resembled me. Her eyes, her nose, her lips, everything looked exactly like me. This is one of the best things about being a parent. I couldn't imagine designing her with different features than God didn't intend her to be born with.

Children don't need to be artificially selected by genetic engineering to be considered perfect. To a parent, every child should be born perfect no matter how they look. References Eugenics . (n. d.). Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Retrieved April 22, 2012, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugenics> Johnson, P. (2012, January 20). Pros and Cons of Designer Babies. Buzzle. Retrieved April 20, 2012, from <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/pros-and-cons-of-designer-babies.html> Lee, E. (2008, April 17). Debating 'Designer Babies'. Spiked-Science. Retrieved April 21, 2012, from www.spiked-online.com/Articles/00000006DD57.htm Luck, M. (2011, May 15). Designer Babies. ce399 | research archive. Retrieved April 20, 2012, from <http://ce399eugenics.wordpress.com/2011/05/15/designer-babies-parents-can-select-physical-traits-at-fertility-institute-2/> Pray, L. (n. d.). Embryo Screening and the Ethics of Human Genetic Engineering. Scitable. Retrieved April 20, 2012, from <http://www.nature.com/scitable/topicpage/embryo-screening-and-the-ethics-of-60561> Who's <https://assignbuster.com/designer-babies-research-paper-samples/>

Afraid of Designer Babies?. (n. d.). BBC. Retrieved April 20, 2012, from
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