

# Genetic engineering 10539

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Throughout history, man has been improving his race through technology. Several of these advances have been questionable, but none are close to a certain technology today. A technology that splices, alters, and manipulates genes from one individual to produce desired characteristics in the same individual... the technology of genetic engineering. This technological tool is undoubtedly changing society's relationship with nature, medicine, and perhaps it's own cultural values. The twenty-first century society is not prepared or even willing at times to accept the moral and ethical controversies genetic engineering is creating.

The competing goods in genetic engineering, i. e. creating a stronger, more advanced human race vs. a natural selective process created by God, are virtually impossible to avoid and have placed a temporary hold on the progress of this new technology and society's moral view. From a religious standpoint, genetic engineering is triggering an ethical emergency within society, and causing this new science to be cast in a dim light. These individuals of society believe that genetic engineering is not natural and defies the order of things. There are many religious groups that feel genetic engineering should not be considered for any reason whatsoever. Rev. Robert A. Martin states: " It appears that from the beginning, God reserved for Himself the right to create living souls". Others claim that many of the ethical issues being raised about genetic engineering are based in theology, the concern for preserving human dignity and individual freedom. This somehow parallels to the issue of abortion and whether or not it is morally right. Religion is the root of many individual personal values and beliefs about social matters such as genetic engineering and abortion. Many also

believe that genetic engineering will cause unseen disasters because once we decide to begin the process of human genetic engineering, there will be no logical place to stop and there will be no turning back. If diabetes, sickle cell anemia, and cancer are to be cured by altering human genes, why not proceed to other “ disorders” such as myopia, color blindness, and left-handedness? It is possible that scientists will go too far and genetically alter characteristics that will corrupt society.

From the scientific stand point, genetic engineering can help us create a stronger, more advanced human race by increasing food production, revolutionize new medicines, even enhance human intelligence, physical beauty and strength. Diseases could become weakened and cleaned out of humans’ genetic makeup. For example, if one parent had a bad gene or some type of hereditary disease, it could be removed from the embryo and replaced with another “ clean” gene. This process would certainly be beneficial for couples who are infertile and want to have children. However, the functions of all the genes are not known, only these of a very small percentage of the total genes in organisms such as humans. Things such as crops and other plants are one of the things that have been experimented on and even released into the environment. This is especially dangerous because scientists are not fully sure of what could go wrong. A genetically altered crop or plant could become dominant and take over all of the its like species and become a problem such as becoming major pests. There have been many cases where non-indigenous plants introduced into a different environment served no use and became major pest problems. Also, this scientific information could get into the hands of the economically or

politically powerful and used for ill purposes. For example, with the use of genetic engineering, individuals could be created for the sole purpose of fighting war or for creating a perfect society. Already, there is the possibility of creating new animals to be used as medicine factories. If we pick and choose the characteristics of our children, we will become a society of made-to-order humans who have lost forever the great gift of genetic diversity. A society of eugenics would be created. Eugenicists believe the human race can be improved by deliberately encouraging people with “superior” traits to reproduce, while discouraging people with “inferior” traits from bearing children. Another recent controversy is cloning. With some DNA of an organism, scientists are able to make an exact copy of that organism. A sheep and a monkey have already been successfully cloned, and with the current technology, humans could also be cloned. This raises the most ethical and moral issues because many questions would be raised about the clone. What will be the purpose of making exact human copies? We might even get to a point where humans are cloned for specific duties or even cloned for body parts needed by organ recipients. What rights would that clone have?

Genetic engineering can aid to the evolution of humans by cleansing our bodies of such ill and in some cases deadly burdens. This isolation and removing of a desired gene is a process that would have taken Mother Nature millions of years of natural selection to develop. I agree that God created the world with a mathematical structure and He had created the human mind with the capacity for grasping that structure. I also understand the view held by many that genetic engineering is unnatural and not

ethically correct, however, so would be taking medicine when sick. For those who disagree with genetic engineering, I am sure if their child could be saved from a genetic disease, they would reconsider. Genetic engineering is a powerful tool that will yield unprecedented results, specifically in the field of medicine. It will usher in a world where gene defects, bacterial disease, and even aging are a thing of the past. However, I feel that cloning, as well as genetic preference in characteristics is essentially the altering God's sacred creation. I believe that society fails to understand fully enough, correctly enough and makes mistakes. If the atomic bomb revealed original sin, the era of genetic engineering will reveal it much more. Genetic engineering is a tool that is too powerful for any man to handle. It is too dangerous and crosses many moral and ethical issues. I strongly believe that the twenty-first century society is not prepared or even willing at times to accept the moral and ethical controversies genetic engineering is creating. We should let nature take its course as it has been for over many successful generations.

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## Bibliography

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