

Made to order babies



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Imagine sitting down at a table and being handed a menu, but this is no ordinary menu to order food off of. No, this menu is at a medical clinic and it's the menu to your new customized "designer baby". Technology has advanced so much in the past couple years that this situation could happen very soon. If not in your lifetime, then in that of your children's. What is a "designer baby"? It's exactly as the words imply; a baby genetically modified to what the parents call "the perfect baby".

Today, the sex of the baby, the hair color, and the eye color can all be modified to the choice of the parent. And soon other things will be possible, such as modifying genetic defects in a baby. All of this would probably sound very appealing to someone that is just being introduced to the topic, but what about the side effects? Are there any? Is there any possibility that the baby will come out harmed or with some other defect that was caused by a "modification"? There are no answers for these questions, because even scientists and doctors do not know.

So, should society take the risk of harming innocent babies to try and create "the perfect baby"? No, we should not. The "designer baby" is immoral and should be illegal. Nobody knows the side effects of modifying a baby, not even the scientists who conduct the research. Not only physical side effects, but also emotional and societal side effects. We do not know how society would perceive a genetically modified human. Procedures that are done to modify a baby include terminating some embryos. There are a lot of people who would see this action as immoral.

If there are riots outside of clinics because they think of abortion as being immoral, those same people would most likely riot in protest to “ designer babies”. There is also the question as to what will happen once everyone is “ perfect” and “ perfectly modified”. What will these “ perfect” people think of those who already have genetic defects? They may think of them as inferior, and look down on them. That could lead to a new type of “ genetic” discrimination (Baird 12-16). If laws were made against being able to design babies, then we would not have to worry about these problems.

In 2009 an article titled Designing Rules for Designer Babies was published in the Scientific American magazine. The article says: In the U. S. , no binding rules deter a private clinic from offering a menu of traits or from implanting a woman with a collection of embryos. Physicians who may receive more than \$10, 000 for a procedure serve as the sole arbiters of a series of thorny ethical, safety and social welfare questions (29). With no binding laws or rules to this, some doctors will do the procedures just to get the money.

It would definitely bring up questions about the doctor's morals and if he/she really cares about their patients. Take, for example, Nadya Suleman, whom was implanted with genetically altered embryos. The doctor implanted her with a collection of six embryos. Two of those embryos split, making her pregnant with eight children. It does make everyone question her, but also the doctor. Did he take into account that she already had six children? Did he consider her financial status? (Designing Rules 29)

Another question to ask is; how far do we go in “ designing” our babies? The same article from Scientific American gives a perfect example of a situation

that could happen: We could get carried away "correcting" perfectly healthy babies. Once we start down the slippery slope of eliminating embryos because they are diseased, what is to stop us from picking babies for their physical or psychological traits? What if this does happen? We could create a whole new generation based on what traits are the best for someone, or how knowledgeable everyone should be.

In doing this, are we not doing the same thing Hitler tried to do; create the perfect humans? It didn't get him very far, and won't get society anywhere today. Some might say that designing a baby would be a great thing. That we could cure diseases and disorders before the baby is even born. But when a baby is "designed to get rid" of disease and disorders, there are embryos that are killed in order to find "the perfect baby". It could be considered the same thing as abortion. Our technological advances in the past couple years have greatly enhanced society. There are also technologies that will harm society. The "designer baby" is one of those technologies. It sounds very appealing to be able to create the child that you have always wanted, but we have always said that we were created the way we are for a reason, and we should keep saying that. No one knows the side effects of creating our babies, they could come out monsters for all we know. If laws were put into effect against the "designer baby", then we would be safe from these "monsters".