

Gregory Stock & Francis Fukuyama “The Clone Wars”

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Lectures in Applied Ethics

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- *The End of History* (1989)
anticipated collapse of communism

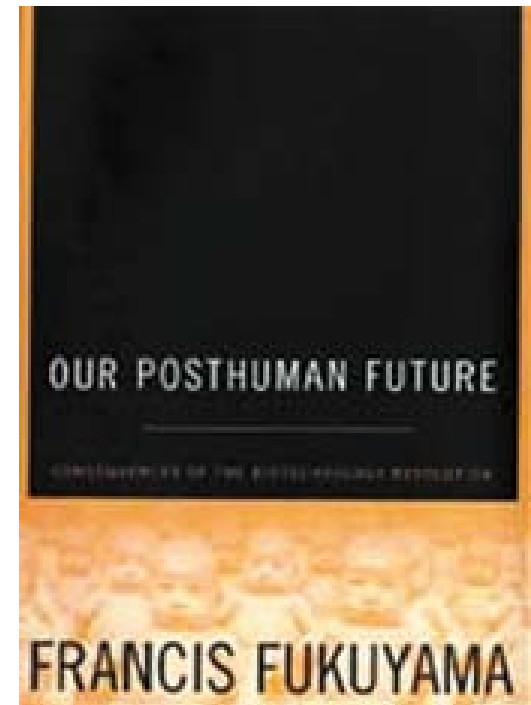


- Home Page: <http://www.sais-jhu.edu/faculty/fukuyama/>

Our Posthuman Future

The threat that biotechnology
“will alter human nature and
thereby move us into a
`posthuman' stage of history.”

The state should regulate
biotechnology

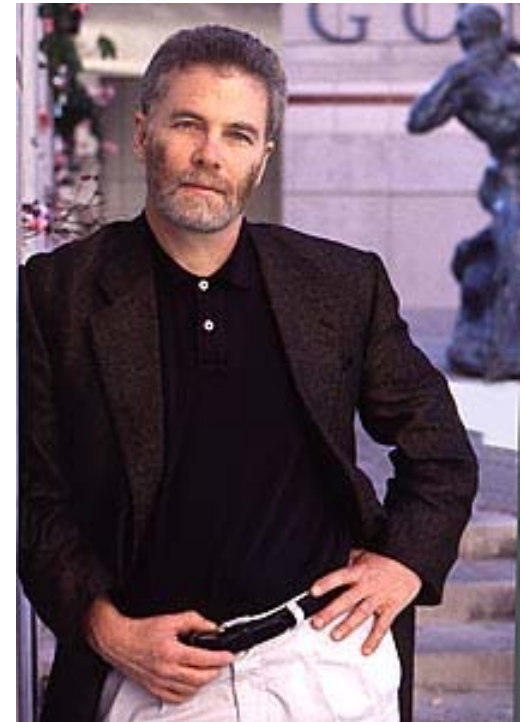


Gregory Stock

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Trained in both biophysics (Johns Hopkins) and business (Harvard Business School), he is the author of *Metaman: The Merging of Humans and Machines into a Global Superorganism*, which examines our likely evolutionary future, and edited the recent volume, *Engineering the Human Germline: An Exploration of the Science and Ethics of Altering the Genes We Pass to Our Children*.

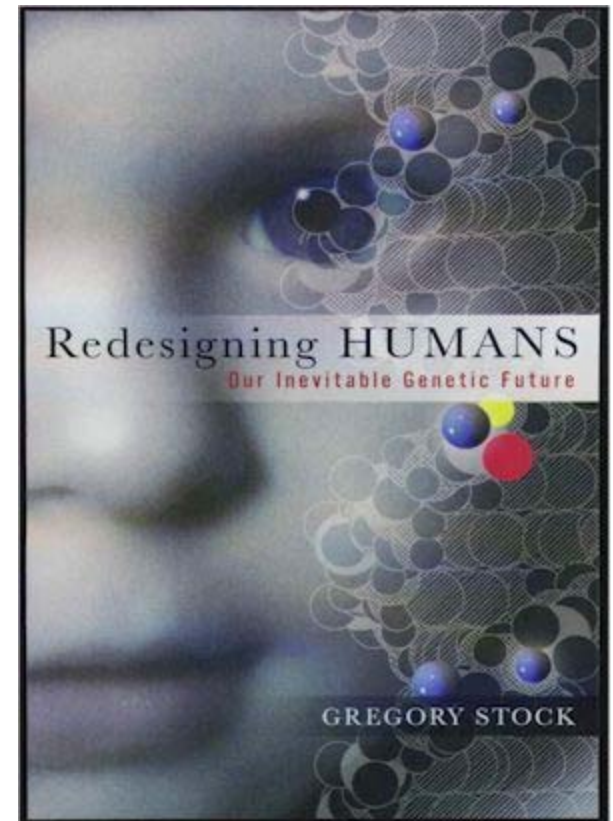
- Home page:
<http://www.arc2.ucla.edu/csig/stock.htm>



Redesigning Humans

“As scientists rapidly improve their ability to identify and manipulate genes, people will want to protect their future children from diseases, help them live longer, and even influence their looks and their abilities”

Government and religions should not try to ban these developments.



Gregory Stock:

“Don't cause real damage to assuage phantom fears.”

“cloning has become a proxy for broader fears about the new technologies emerging from our unraveling of human biology.”

“The real danger we face today is...that opponents will use vague, abstract threats to our values to justify unwarranted political incursions that delay the medical advances growing out of today's basic research. If, out of concern over cloning, the U.S. Congress succeeds in criminalizing embryonic stem cell research that might bring treatments for Alzheimer's disease or diabetes...there would be real victims: present and future sufferers from those diseases.

A ban on new technologies would be

- Dangerous
- Wrong: limits individual liberty
- Favoritism to the rich

The Danger Argument

“Any serious attempt to block such research will simply increase the potential dangers of upcoming technologies by driving the work out of sight, blinding us to early indications of any medical or social problems.”

Presupposes the Inevitability Argument

Question: does Stock really believe that there are any medical or social problems associated with such research?

The Inevitability Argument

Advances in biotechnology are inevitable

- If banned in the United States, they will occur with less oversight in other countries—e.g., South Korea, Singapore, Eastern Europe
- Isn't it better to have them develop here with greater oversight?

The Wrongness Argument

“A ban would prevent people from making choices aimed at improving their lives that would hurt no one.”

- The premise of this argument is that individual liberty is a paramount good.
- It also presumes that these choices “hurt no one.”

Reproductive choices are highly personal, and government shouldn't intrude without a very weighty justification

The Class Argument

“Such bans would effectively reserve the technologies for the affluent and privileged.”

“Restricting emerging technologies for screening embryos would feed deep class divisions”

Those with sufficient money can simply go to another country to obtain what they want

- Abortion
- Genetic screening

Francis Fukuyama:

“There are good reasons to regulate future biotechnologies.”

Individual should not have complete freedom in choices about reproductive technologies because:

- Utilitarian argument #1: germline engineering
- Utilitarian argument #2: negative externalities
- The Ambiguity Argument: the ambiguity of what constitutes improvement of a human being

Utilitarian arguments

Rightness or wrongness depends solely on consequences for everyone

- No particular action is intrinsically right or wrong

We always ought to perform the action that produces the greatest overall benefit (utility) to everyone.

- This implies that we should always seek to maximize benefits.

An action is wrong if it produces worse consequences than its alternatives

The Germline Argument

Changes that affect the human germline—in other words, can be passed from one generation to the next—should be regulated by the state

- Difficult to predict consequences
- Possible dire results

The Externalities Argument

Sex selection imbalance in Asia:

- “117 boys for every 100 girls in China
- “at one point 122 boys for every 100 girls in Korea.”

What is rational from an individual viewpoint may not be beneficial to society overall

Possible dangers:

- “making boys less violent and aggressive”
- “girls more assertive”
- “people more or less competitive”
- “Would an African American's child be "improved" if we could genetically eliminate his or her skin pigmentation?”
 - See scene from *Gattaca* with genetic counseling.

Human Nature & Human Rights

“Human rights are ultimately derived from human nature”
If genetic technology radically splinters and fragments human nature, will human rights be undermined?

The Inevitability Argument

In fact, we often successfully regulate the development of biotechnology

- Limits of human experimentation
- Limits on involuntarily harvesting organs
- Ban on cloning similar to ban on incest
- Moving toward a global ban on cloning
- Limits on doping in sports, both national and international

The Sex Selection Argument

Fukuyama would seem to ban sex selection

Stock claims it is innocuous in the United States

- “Sex selection does not harm children; indeed, it likely benefits them when a child of the “wrong” sex would seriously disappoint his or her parents.”

Stock claims in China sex selection is:

- Illegal anyway
- Exacerbated by government intervention for one-child policy

Fukuyama replies

- “The severe sex-ratio imbalance in Korea that emerged in the early 1990s was noticed, and the government took measures to enforce existing laws against sex selection so that today the ratio is much closer to 50-50.”

Therapy vs. Enhancement

Fukuyama seems to support interventions for therapy, but not for enhancement

Stock questions the usefulness and clarity of this distinction

- Anti-aging interventions are both therapy and enhancement
- Enhancement is not wrong in itself
- Trust parents to make this judgment, not the state

Anti-Aging Interventions

Stock: Anti-aging interventions should not be limited

Fukuyama: “Anyone who has walked around a nursing home recently (as I have) can see that past advances in biomedicine have created a horrible situation for many elderly people who can't function at anything close to the levels they'd like but who also can't die.”

Sexual Orientation

Fukuyama:

- “It seems pretty clear to me that if parents, including ones who are perfectly accepting of gays today, had the choice, they would select against their children being gay, if for no other reason than their desire to have grandchildren.”
- “The proportion of gays in the population could drop quite dramatically, and I'm not at all sure that society as a whole (let alone gays as a persecuted minority) would be enhanced as a result.”

Stock

- “As to gays, if there are fewer in the future because of people's choices about the genetics or rearing of their kids, so be it.
- “But I am not at all convinced it would play out that way. Fukuyama asserts that gays can't reproduce, but they do so all the time using donor eggs or sperm, surrogate mothers, and partners of the opposite sex. Moreover, such reproduction will get ever easier.
- “If we want to be sure to maintain our gay population, additional AIDS research would accomplish more than bans on embryo screening. ”

Cloning and Incest

Fukuyama:

- “A wife decides to clone herself because a couple cannot otherwise have children. As their daughter grows up to be a teenager, the husband will find his wife growing older and less sexually attractive. In the meantime, his daughter, who will be a physical duplicate of her mother, will blossom into sexual maturity and increasingly come to resemble the younger woman the husband fell in love with and married. It is hard to see how this situation would not produce an extremely unhealthy situation within the family; in a certain number of cases, it would lead to incest.”

Stock:

- “Kids hardly need to resemble a parent to inspire incest, as many adoptees and stepchildren can no doubt confirm. If we start regulating families on the basis of hypothetical sexual attractions and perversions--and we can conjure ones more lurid and likely than Fukuyama's clone love--we will ultimately damage rather than protect the family. We have laws governing child abuse; let's content ourselves with enforcing them.”

Nietzschean Endgame

Fukuyama claims Stock's vision of the future includes:

“Reproduction could not happen outside a lab.”

“We could freely alter our personalities and moods through a combination of drugs and genetics.”

“The human race disappears.

- He suggests that there will be differentiation within our species, and, in effect, new speciation. Some groups of people may decide to enhance their children for musical ability, some for athletic prowess, others for math or literary ability. There will be a basic social divide between the enhanced and the unenhanced, and in the competitive situation that will emerge, it will be difficult for people not to join into this genetic arms race. Moreover, genetic differentiation will become a cornerstone of international politics. If we and the Germans decide not to take part, the Chinese will charge ahead with self-enhancement, and then we as a nation will be challenged to follow suit.”

Leads to a Nietzschean world: “Why shouldn't the enhanced start demanding superior political rights for themselves, and seek to dominate the unenhanced, since they will in fact be superior not just as a result of acquired social status and education, but of genetic enhancements as well? What is going to happen to international conflict, when other, hostile societies are not just culturally different, but not fully human either?”