

Inadequate tools, religious implications among concerns regarding genome synthesis project

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

More than 130 scientists, ethicists, and government funding officials [met behind closed doors](#) at Harvard University to discuss a follow-up to the Human Genome Project—one that would write a genome rather than read it. The event, named HGP Write, was meant to rally interest around the idea of synthesizing all six billion DNA letters of a human genome and using the results to “boot up” a cell.

That decision, however, came under sharp criticism from Gen9 cofounder Endy, who exposed the proceedings in a [critical tweet](#). Even though Endy owns shares in the company, and strongly agrees that better DNA construction tools are needed, he penned an editorial questioning whether “an enormous moral gesture” like creating a human genome is “an appropriate demand driver” for cheaper DNA methods. He suggested that scientists focus instead on printing bacterial chromosomes.

One concern is that making a human genome could have weighty religious and ethical implications. Although the prospect remains remote, people could in theory be designed on computers and born without parents. Other critics said organizers did an inadequate job of laying out their ties to startups.

Read full, original post: [Ethical Questions Loom Over Efforts to Make a Human Genome from Scratch](#)