

What role should society play in decisions about gene editing of human germline?

The National Academies of Sciences and National Academy of Medicine [published a report that] suggests limitations on genetic engineering to the heritable “germline” code of embryos, or even earlier upstream in the process, sperm and ovum, which convey information passed on to subsequent generations.

However, the report appears to exclude the public from participation and concludes that “clinical trials using heritable germline genome editing should be permitted.” They should not—not without public discussion and a more conscious evaluation of how this impacts social standing, stigma and identity, ethics that scientists often tend to cite pro forma and then swiftly scuttle.

The statement is a striking reversal in outlook of leadership since...December 2015, when the International Summit on Human Gene Editing...declared that a “broad societal consensus” be attained before moving ahead with altering heritable code.

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Evolution does not create values, we do. And we risk molding our children into commodities we would like to have, rather than emphasizing the people they can become...The philosopher-scientist Jean Rostand wrote a generation ago, “science has made us gods even before we are worthy of being men.” But those are professional experts. It’s time to hear more from the public on what we think.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [The Public Should Have a Say in Allowing Modification of Our Germline Genetic Code](#)