

China's cultural revolution: Why widespread personal gene sequencing may be inevitable

[Editor's note: Razib Khan is a PhD candidate in genetics at the University of California-Davis.]

If you've been hiding under a rock, please see [Baby Genome Sequencing for Sale in China](#):

A Boston-based DNA sequencing company [called Veritas] is offering to decode the complete genomes of newborns in China, leading some to ask how much parents should know about their children's genes at birth.

[Despite the presence of uncertainty,] I don't see why sequencing should not be allowed as a choice by parents nevertheless. And widespread adoption of sequencing would actually allow us to start obtaining more data that we could use to make better decisions in the future.

...

Like in vitro fertilization I see neonatal sequencing as inevitable in regards to whether it will be ubiquitous. It will be common. And "ethical problems" won't really come up in the future because people will be comfortable with it.

This is in sharp contrast with CRISPR. That's a technology that will have real consequences, and like male circumcision may be difficult to reverse for someone who as an adult was modified in infancy. In contrast a genome sequence is just more information.

For years many people have speculated that genetic testing technology will really begin to take off in Asia because for various reasons Americans and Europeans are wary. To me this is a signal that that might be occurring, depending on how successful Veritas' venture is.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [The cultural revolution that will happen in China](#)