

Viewpoint: 'Gattaca' reminds us that gene editing has dark possibilities

[Editor's note: Osagie Obasogie is a professor of bioethics at the University of California-Berkeley.]

Set in the not-too-distant future, the film [Gattaca] tells the story of a young man born through natural conception (and with all its mundanity) trying to make it in a world where genetically screening embryos for better bodies, sharper minds and enhanced talents has become the norm.

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Revisiting Gattaca at this time is important precisely because it coincides with the emergence of new genetic technologies that are making a then-futuristic vision put forth two decades ago more a matter of science than fiction.

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Technological developments like gene editing, if safe and accessible for existing patients, can make remarkable contributions to improving human health. But altering the genes of not-yet-existing people is not so much medicine as human experimentation with "better breeding." As science moves forward in these treacherous times, we must be mindful of our ideological surroundings to ensure the most vulnerable are not targets once again.

White supremacy under the guise of public health, technological progress or human betterment is nothing new. Thus, the very fields of science and medicine that let down so many during past eugenic eras must now step up to make sure these political fantasies do not taint their endeavors once again.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Revisiting "Gattaca" in the Era of Trump](#)