

## Questions arise over US scientist's role in CRISPR baby controversy

An American scientist at Rice University was far more involved in the widely condemned “CRISPR babies” experiment than has previously been disclosed. Most notably, STAT has learned that Rice biophysicist Michael Deem was named as the senior author on a paper about the work that was submitted to Nature in late November.

Deem's prominent authorship indicates that a respected American researcher played an instrumental role in the controversial project, which sparked a worldwide furor. His involvement could have encouraged volunteers to join the experiment and lent credibility to [He Jiankui](#), the Chinese scientist who led the work.

Emails provided to STAT show that Deem was listed as the last author — which, in the life sciences, is typically reserved for the senior researcher who oversees a study. ...

The now infamous Chinese scientist created a sensation when he [announced the birth of twin girls](#), whose genes had been altered using CRISPR technology, [before an international conference](#) in Hong Kong last November.

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Researchers contacted by STAT say it's important to get to the bottom of Deem's role. “The nature of the incident would be quite different with or without his involvement,” said Jennifer Doudna, a genome-editing pioneer of the University of California, Berkeley.

**Read full, original post:** [American scientist played more active role in ‘CRISPR babies’ project than previously known](#)