

CRISPR gene editing scientist who illegally manipulated embryos wants to cure genetic diseases. Should the scientific community trust him?

In November 2018, Chinese scientist He Jiankui shocked the world when he announced, [first on YouTube](#) and then at an [international scientific gathering](#) in Hong Kong, that he had used [Crispr](#) to alter the genetic makeup of human embryos.

Follow the latest news and policy debates on sustainable agriculture, biomedicine, and other 'disruptive' innovations. Subscribe to our newsletter.

[SIGN UP](#)

In recent months, He has [taken to Twitter](#) and the Chinese social media platform Weibo to publicize his next steps. Previously a researcher at Southern University of Science and Technology in Shenzhen, He says he has started a new, independent lab in Beijing and wants to pursue [gene therapy](#)—an approach that attempts to correct inherited diseases by replacing faulty genes with new, healthy versions—as well as gene editing.

...

Some scientists and ethicists think He deserves a chance to prove that he's capable of producing scientifically valid and ethically sound work. "His case is publicly known enough that the world will judge his credibility," says Sheila Jasanoff, professor of science and technology studies at Harvard University. "I think anything he says will be treated with considerable skepticism." But she doesn't see a moral basis for banning He from publishing future work if his research holds up to the peer-review process.

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the full article here\*\*](#)