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Mind Games Survival Course Manual



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Medical Ethics

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VII. Genetic Engineering

A. Definition

1. Involves either the manipulation of gametes (reproductive cells: sperm or egg) or the manipulation of a developing embryo or both.
2. Includes all aspects of genetic research, genetic manipulation, genetic breeding, and reproductive biology.

2. Genetic Manipulation

1. Gene splicing (recombinant DNA research)
 - a. Benefits
 1. Medicine (insulin, interferon, immunology)
 2. Agriculture (photosynthesis, nif genes)
 3. Basic research (aging, cancer research)
 2. Scientific considerations
 1. Early fears unwarranted (voluntary moratorium)
 2. Ecological concerns
 3. Ethical considerations (engineer the engineer)
 4. Theological considerations
 1. Genetic therapy warranted under the dominion covenant (Gen. 1:27–28)

2. Creation of new forms of life usurps the role of the Creator (hubris of evolutionary world view).

2. Cloning

- a. Scientific considerations (genetic difficulties)
2. Social considerations (social experimentation)
3. Theological considerations (sanctity of human life, each of us is created in the image of God)

- 3. *Artificial Reproduction***

1. Less-controversial reproductive techniques

- a. Artificial insemination by husband (AIH)
2. In vitro fertilization (IVF)

2. Controversial reproductive techniques

- a. Artificial insemination by donor (AID)
2. Artificial sex selection
3. Embryo transfer (ET)
4. Surrogate parenting

3. Social considerations

- a. Moral choices leading to immoral consequences (sperm banks, surrogate mothers)
2. Radically altering notion of what it means to be a parent
3. Proliferation of malpractice (wrongful death and wrongful life suits)
4. Difficult legal precedents (i.e., Baby M case). Tennessee court recently allowed for destruction of frozen embryos. {9}

4. Theological considerations

- a. Biblical view of the sanctity of human life
 1. Low success ratio--loss of fetal life
 2. Hyperfertilization

2. Biblical view of sexual relations
 1. Introduces third party into the pregnancy
 2. Commercialization (wombs for rent)
3. Biblical view of parenthood
 1. Separates the unitive (Gen. 2:24) and procreative (Gen. 1:28) aspects of marriage.
 2. Turns the marriage bed into a chemistry set.
5. Options to controversial techniques
 - a. Tuboplasty--fallopian tubes reconstructed
 2. Adoption--many children of different races are available
 3. Drug treatment
 4. Experimental techniques--GIFT, low tubal ovum transfer

Notes

1. "Logic of Biology," *Nature* 220 (2 November 1968), 429-30.
2. Ashley Montagu, *Sex, Man and Society* (N.Y.: G.P. Putnam & Co, 1967).
3. Joseph Fletcher, *Humanhood: Essays in Biomedical Ethics* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1979), 135.
4. Kerby Anderson, ed. *Living Ethically in the '90s* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1990), 199.
5. Ibid.
6. Mark Dwinnell, "A Physician's Perspective on Euthanasia," *Currents in Science, Technology, and Society* 1 (Winter 1992): 1-6.
7. "California's Proposition 161 and Euthanasia," *Currents in Science, Technology, and Society* 1 (Winter 1992): 10--11.
8. David Cundiff, *Euthanasia Is Not the Answer: A Hospice Physician's View* (Totowa, N.J.: Humana).
9. "Tennessee Court Makes Sense of Origins of Life," *Nature*, 357 (11 June 1992): 425--26.

For Further Reading

Alcorn, Randy. *Pro Life Answers to Pro Choice Questions*. Portland, Ore.: Multnomah,

1992.

An exhaustive analysis of the arguments by pro-abortion, pro-choice advocates. Provides medical, social, legal, cultural, and biblical critiques of the various arguments.

Anderson, J. Kerby. *Genetic Engineering*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1982.

A concise but comprehensive book on various aspects of genetic engineering and artificial reproduction. Provides a scientific, legal, social, ethical, and theological critique of the various genetic techniques.

Anderson, J. Kerby. ed. *Living Ethically in the 90s*. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1990.

Collection of essays on various social issues including chapters on abortion, euthanasia, artificial reproduction, and AIDS.

Beckwith, Francis and Geisler, Norman. *Matters of Life and Death*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1991.

Analysis of abortion and euthanasia by two leading Christian philosophers. Not only good philosophy but lots of practical suggestions from their debates on this subject.

Beckwith, Francis. *Politically Correct Death*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1993.

Analysis of abortion arguments. Full of practical suggestions from his classes and debates on this subject.

Cameron, Nigel. *The New Medicine*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991.

A look at the Hippocratic Oath and the legacy of the medical community (in the U.S. and Nazi Germany) that abandoned the principles of medicine.

Cundriff, David. *Euthanasia Is Not the Answer: A Hospice Physician's View*. Totowa, N.J.: Humana.

A practicing oncologist and hospice care physician believes Americans are not well enough informed to make decisions involving euthanasia. He believes proper pain control and psychological support will alleviate desires for doctor-assisted suicide.

Davis, John Jefferson. *Evangelical Ethics*. Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1985.

This book covers a number of major ethical issues (contraception, divorce, homosexuality, capital punishment). The chapter on reproductive techniques provides a helpful summary of the issues and provides a biblical analysis.

Feinberg, John and Feinberg, Paul. *Ethics for a Brave New World*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1993.

This book covers a number of major ethical issues (abortion, capital punishment, sexual morality, birth control, genetic engineering, divorce).

Garton, Jean Staker. *Who Broke the Baby?* Minneapolis, Minn.: Bethany Fellowship, 1979.

Provides an excellent critique of pro-abortion slogans.

Payne, Franklin. *Biblical/Medical Ethics*. Milford, Mich.: Mott Media, 1985.

One of the best all-around books on medical ethics by an evangelical. Chapter

nine deals with the subject of abortion; chapter twelve deals with euthanasia.

Reagan, Ronald. *Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation*. Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1984.

This represents only the second time a seated President has published a book and contains not only his essay but also the essays of Surgeon General C. Everett Koop and Malcolm Muggeridge.

Schaeffer, Francis A. and Koop, C. Everett. *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1979.

The book that accompanied the film series on abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia.



Tada, Joni Eareckson. *When Is It Right to Die?* Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.

A personal and biblical look at the euthanasia movement and the attempt to legalize doctor-assisted suicide.

Young, Curtis. *The Least of These*. Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1983.

The book surveys the legal, moral and spiritual aspects of abortion and deals with many key questions and issues. Also provides a discussion of the history and effectiveness of the pro-life movement.

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