

The Johns Hopkins University Press  
2715 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21218-4363  
www.press.jhu.edu



Contact: Mary Alice Yeskey  
(410) 516-7096  
may@press.jhu.edu

---FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE---  
January 27, 2020

## ***Perspectives in Biology & Medicine* Takes on CRISPR Debate**

A special issue of the journal *Perspectives in Biology & Medicine* features twelve essays that examine the complicated and contentious issue of CRISPR gene editing. The issue's guest editor, **Neal Baer, M.D.**, is an Emmy-nominated television producer and pediatrician. Dr. Baer explores the potentially harmful uses of CRISPR on *Designated Survivor*, a Netflix series he writes and produces.

CRISPR (clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats) is a genome-editing tool that allows researchers to alter DNA sequences and modify gene function. The technology has been at the forefront of scientific and public debate following the announcement in November 2018 that a Chinese researcher had successfully altered the genes of human embryos that resulted in the birth of twin girls.

The essays in the issue were being finalized when news broke that He Jiankui had been sentenced three years in prison for "illegal medical practice" by Chinese courts. Dr. Baer, as well as several contributing authors, updated their contributions to the journal in response to the sentencing.

"We have reached the point where CRISPR technology can now be used for both good and evil," said Dr. Baer. "Ben Hurlbut writes an incisive wake-up call, imploring us to carefully consider how we should move forward with CRISPR technology. In a stunning series of revelations, he presents new information on the history leading up to Dr. He's germline mutation of the twins and the scientists who supported his work."

Three articles from the issue have been made freely available online prior to the issue's official publication. Once published, the entire issue will be freely available for three months online via Project MUSE.

### [Introduction to the Special Issue on CRISPR](#)

George Q. Daley, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Harvard Medical School

### [Commentary: Code Dread?](#)

Neal Baer

### [Imperatives of Governance: Human Genome Editing and the Problem of Progress](#)

J. Benjamin Hurlbut, School of Life Sciences, Arizona State University

*Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* is an interdisciplinary scholarly journal that publishes essays that place important biological or medical subjects in broader scientific, social, or humanistic contexts. The journal is edited by Martha Montello of Harvard Medical School, and published quarterly by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

### **About the Johns Hopkins University Press**

Founded in 1878, The Johns Hopkins University Press is recognized as one of the world's finest and most accomplished scholarly publishers. In addition to its extensive journal collection, the Press publishes around 200 new books each year in the arts and humanities, technology and medicine, higher education, history, political science, and library science.