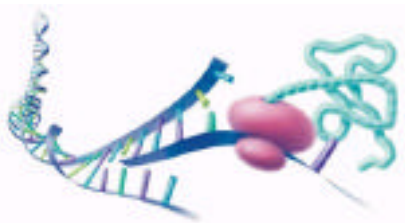


Bioethics

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ELE 382
9.18.06

Advancing the technology of the medical field has been a prime concern of this country for some time now. We are rapidly approaching a threshold where biotechnology is branching off from therapy, and drifting toward improvement.

Theory, research, and development are combining to bring our dreams to reality. We have dreamt of 'designing' the perfect children, athletes, and organs. We have dreamt of changing certain features we don't like, of making ourselves faster, smarter, and more beautiful. We have dreamt of cloning a lost loved one, of living to



see our great-great-great-great grandchildren get married. We have dreamt of controlling our moods and memory, and controlling our children's behavior. These dreams are soon to become reality.

We as a society are so caught up in the hype that we seldom stop to question whether what we are doing is ethical; morally and socially. If we barge into these things without thought, reason, and rules, the world could drastically change for the worse.

Biomedical Engineers form a very integral step in the advancement of biotechnology. We are the construction workers. We take the research and results, and make them a physical reality. For us to not question these issues would simply be irresponsible. We will not be a part of many of the topics, but we are involved in the majority of them. Who do you think will engineer and design the 'perfect child'? Who

will build the first 'cloning machine'? Engineers.

The President's Council on Bioethics was established in 2001 with the purpose to

"Advise the President on ethical issues related to advancements in biomedical science and technology."

The council chairman is Edmund Pellegrino (shown). There are 19



topics the council addresses, with more to come as we advance with our technology.

Bioethics has evolved drastically over the past 50 years. In the late 1960s, tests were performed on children with little to no committees, permission, or thought. Granted, a lot of important conclusions have been reached, but at the expense of countless lives. The change has become almost too much these days. It is now very difficult to perform even the simplest and safest of tests, but it may be for the better. We all have a voice to determine our future, and if we don't educate ourselves on the issues we working by, we put ourselves and our world in the hands of fate. Personally, I do not want see the future of mankind in the hands of fate. If done correctly, biotechnology can catalyze the growth of our species. In the wrong hands, it has the power to ruin our future.

Sources

- <http://www.bioethics.gov/>
- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>
- Beyond Therapy, Biotechnology and the Pursuit of Happiness. President's Council on Bioethics. 2003