

**THE CASE AGAINST PERFECTION: ETHICS IN THE AGE OF
GENETIC ENGINEERING (*)****CONTRA A PERFEIÇÃO: ÉTICA NA ERA DA ENGENHARIA
GENÉTICA**

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“The Case Against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic Engineering” (2007) was written by the philosopher and professor Michael J. Sandel. This digest showed questions related to the biolaw life, death and the social interest of genetic engineering on contemporary.

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Sandel discuss to the reader about ethic and moral based on doubt, as a place for questioning and empirical reflections.

In Brazil, the work translates occurred in 2018, accomplished by Ana Carolina Mesquita and published by Civilização Brasileira publishing company. All discussions and critical reflections in the book was conducted contextually to Brazilian's readers.

This work has the aim of showing pros and cons about gene editing, exposing the criticism of human manipulation. Considering the gene editing promise and dilemma Sandel explain that pretty soon we'll be capable of cure and prevent many types of diseases, but the new instrument cans change our own nature.

Therefore, this book shows five chapters that involve dilemmatic discussions about gene editing ethics and moral in the social context. The chapters call "The Ethics of Enhancement", "Bionic Athletes", "Designer Children, Designing Parents", "The Old Eugenics and the New" and "Mastery and Gift". And finally, an epilogue "Embryo Ethics: The Stem Cell Debate".

Right in the first chapter, "The Ethics of Enhancement", polemics about real life situations are related with the advances of gene editing as its freedom of possibilities and the divergent opinions that it causes. The author reports the parent's choices about DNA changes of their sons which inducing varied transformations they believe it's the best to them. However, what is seen as wrong: the kinds of changes or the changes at all? Sandel reveals that genes objectives have the same purpose of people that choose their partners by the physical and intellectual characteristics, for example.

As the advantages promised by the gene editing some dilemmas about its consequences appear and might be extremely dangerous. Improvement in muscles, in memory, in height and genre are examples of changes that are used as disease and disturbances treatment or prevention at first. But nowadays these proceedings are been used as a choice and no more as a necessity. And that's inciting a type of social segregation that we already know before, but now with a new face.

In "Bionic Athletes", the freedom of our actions and effort that drives proud or censure of our choices and achievements are threatened by the physiological induced improvement. In the Sports, biomedics evolutions change muscles and create new steroids for example, which transfer the merit of athletes when they reach a new record to their doctors and scientists responsible for the changes in their bodies. But Sandel says the real problem is the desire for get the satisfied pleasures going through the inborn model our bodies. And what we see in the sports competitions is the success above the efforts.

Examples like the famous golf player Tiger Woods won five contests after an eye surgery to improve his low eyesight, in 1999. This case incentives questions about the influences that change the bodies: What if the surgery gave a peculiar eyesight to him a better one than the others players. Is this an illegitimate modification?

The answer would be the conclusion of the eyesight improvement effects: Does it get better or get worse? The improvement corrupts the natural wins. Despite that, we can't exclude others improvement methods that is not related to the gene editing or use of drugs like runners training in rarefied area to elevate the productions of red cells. This way they can be more resistant. Sandel talks if some kind of training ways are dubious about improvement of performance, some kind of regime is too (p. 46). The sport integrity must be kept and this go through than following rules. It's to make honorable rules that enrich the players skills (p. 44).

What is the parent's love origin? It would be in the son's qualities ant talents? In "Designer Children, Designing Parents" the author explain we shouldn't choose our partners as we chose friends, by the attractive aspect for us. The parents shouldn't choose how they soon will be.

Proceeding in his thoughts, Sandel concluded the bioengineering using for disease treatment or disturbs does not compromise the natural abilities, and so, is more valid, in the name of health. When parents worry about questions related to the son's health, they are doing the right role.

But, the choice of genres, intellect and physical abilities promoted by expensive bioengineering proceedings funded by parents make their sons a ambitions project. The limit between that is no even clear, although the consequences are very outlined: opposite actions to the unconditional love principle, which is accept – this reassert the parent's profile – but it's not transformed and does not desire the welfare.

The parents want the best to their sons they work of many ways for it, to let them very close to what we call happiness and success. However, what's the difference between parents that paid for a better education for their sons and that ones who invest in gene editing to reach the same goals. Anyway, dominant parents decide the son's future during a long time of their lives, or even the whole live. But what is asking about this theme is the autonomy elimination, what reveals a troublesome aspect of the eugenics.

In "The Old Eugenics and the New" is shown the original meaning of eugenics, as its consequences in the first decades of 20th century manly in United States of America and after in Germany. This way, the author explains the eugenics concept tried to be applied in society

by a macromanner, that is search for a state-owned positivity to the race preservation or to eliminate the “genetically undesirable people” objectivating their non reproduction.

Although, the hypothesis’s author directs to the possibility of a new eugenics concept in contemporary society, which calls “liberal eugenics” or “new eugenics”. Fortifying the shown hypothesis, Sandel asks if the eugenics would be censured only when it’s coercive, or there’s something wrong even in the ways to control son’s genes. He compares philosopher’s and scientist’s theories and opinions about this new form of eugenics and its consequences in society, that is, control of autonomy, parent’s liberalities... Concluding the eugenics new face is consequence of a increasingly competitive society, but, accept it without this reflections is like walk in a dominating world.

By the end in “Mastery and Gift” Sandel introduce questions related to bases that supports our disapproval about biotechnologies. Besides the religion, which fortifies our belief the talents and potentials that we acquire don’t due to us only, the humanity, responsibility and solidarity compose the moral that carries the appreciation of achievements and naturals gifts. When we accept the unforeseen, we get the control of controlling, is living in an wide world.

The author also reveals although natural dedication is been fading because the artificial advance, the main problem is the change of responsible by the choices. The facts are becoming more distant from de spontaneous causes and closer to the chosen causes. Today, many parents who have sons with Down syndrome are judged or blamed, what does not happen years ago, for example.

So, genetic engineering started to be used as an alternative of treatment and cure of still incurable diseases, but is becoming an ambitious tool, manipulated to refine the natural body. Besides that, thinking of these advances which is explained here as a peak of human intelligence, because it’ capable of dominate the own nature, show self-destructive. What kind of ways the humanity could walk without the respect and appreciation of life, as a gift? What’s the effects of exalt the non-controlled freedom of our choices, because it would be the only thing that’s left?

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