

Discussion Post Prompts: Prenatal Testing, Genetic Modification, and Disability

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1 Reproductive Testing for Disability

Possible discussion post topics

1. What moral issues arise when conducting prenatal tests for disabilities? What is the best way to address those issues?
2. What are some popular misconceptions about disabilities? How do the authors recommend that we correct those misconceptions?

2 The Moral Obligation to Create Children with the Best Chance of the Best Life

Possible discussion post topics

1. How does the Principle of Procreative Beneficence (PB) compare with other, similar principles that the authors of this article discuss? Do you think that one of those other principles is better than PB? Why or why not?
2. What implications does PB have for genetically modifying embryos so that they grow to have – or lack – various disabilities? Are those implications problematic?

3 Genetic modification of characteristic masculine traits: enhancement or deformity?

Possible discussion post topics

1. Why do people often think that human enhancement is morally impermissible when achieved using genetic modification, but human enhancement is morally permissible when achieved in other ways (through hard work, perseverance, luck, and so on)? How does McMahan argue against this?
2. Why might it be morally beneficial to genetically modify male embryos, in order to suppress certain characteristically male traits? What particular moral issues—which do not arise for other kinds of genetic modification of embryos—would this practice raise?