

# Second Philosophy

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## INTRODUCTION

*Wouldn't It Be Perfect To Be Able To Created Perfect Babies? Shopping At the Genetic Supermarket.*

**Scene:** A meeting of the Senate of Utopiana. (In the Near Future)

President of Utopiana; - Senators we meet today to consider a motion that Utopiana should open the worlds first genetic supermarket. I call upon the Minister of Health of Utopiana to open the debate.

*Minister of Health;* - Senators the proposal is to open a genetic supermarket to sell the latest products of our biogenetics industries. Available will be two major types of products. On the one hand we have genetic therapies designed to eliminate or mitigate genetically based diseases and disabilities. The most important of these is a system of comprehensive embryo screening. Thus for instance we will be able to screen for Huntingdon's Disease, Autism, Down's Syndrome, Achondroplasia (Dwarfism), Genetic Deafness, Genetic Blindness, Obesity, Cleft Palates, Low IQ. The detection of any of these conditions will of course immediately allow the parents of the embryo concerned to abort this embryo and to proceed with an embryo free of these conditions.

The other major type of products available will be genetic enhancements. Select a sporting or athletic ability, chose an artistic skill, enhance your child's IQ? Balance up your family with the boy or girl your missing, want that brown haired girl child or that blue eyed boy child and perhaps just a little taller and slimmer than you, well now you can.

Yes, senators, it's all about parental choice and doing the best for your progeny something we have always believed in. It's our duty as the government to give parents the right to manage our genetic resources and what could be fairer than a Sainsburys of Somatic Cell therapy, a Tesco of Embryo testing, a Wal-Mart of wondrous Eugenics? Now I know that some of you may have doubts about this proposal and want to restrict or in some cases extend what is for sale.

Some of you don't agree with screening at all. Some of you don't want the destruction of all, so called defective embryos. Some want to include other genetic traits such as being gay or a tendency to criminality and physical violence. Some of you are worried about the market deciding who gets these products. Should the state or parents make these choices?

Well now it is your time to speak up. Is our proposal for a genetic supermarket a good idea or not? Does it need modification or not? Can we afford to do nothing?

### AN EXTRA NOTE:

Many of the issue raised in this debate are urgent and explosive. I realise they may raise strong emotions. I would therefore counsel all participants in the debate to be especially diligent in extending charity and respect for the opinion of others. Please be passionate but respectful. I would prefer if at all possible to avoid turning this debate into one on abortion per se. I realise this is a serious issue and we may need to debate it at some point but this debate is about the present and shortly to be bio technologies and how we may need to adapt our moral intuitions to cope with them please focus on what types of technologies are acceptable in this area and how they might be controlled and managed. Many thanks.

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## QUESTIONS:

1. What is your overall reaction to the idea of extensive genetic screening of embryos leading to the destruction of certain embryos in favour of others, the practice of genetic therapy?
2. What is your reaction overall to the idea of genetic enhancement ie: the proposal that we should be able to select advantageous characteristics that can be passed on and in many cases inherited by our progeny.
3. Is the idea that there should be market, (a supermarket) in some or all of these practices acceptable? Should genetic enhancement be banned as it is in most of the world at present? Should genetic therapy be banned? Can we trust the state to control these technologies?
4. These technologies either exist or will exist within the next 20 or so years. How should they be controlled on a world wide scale?

## REFERENCE:

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3. Philosophy Bytes. Michael Sandel: Genetic Enhancement in Sport.  
[http://nigelwarburton.typepad.com/philosophy\\_bites/past\\_programmes.html](http://nigelwarburton.typepad.com/philosophy_bites/past_programmes.html)
4. Michael Sandel: The Case Against Perfection. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. 2007.
5. Francis Fukuyama Our Posthuman Future. Profile Books 2003.
6. I recently took part in the Oxford Online Course in Bioethics written by Marianne Talbot. Many of the ideas in this introduction are adapted from her course notes though of course they remain my personal interpretation.

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## DISCUSSION:

**Shingles:** Well, my first thoughts are: being removed from the natural state, can we rely on natural evolution at all?

**Deoridhe:** I see two main issues. One is the prejudices already in place and how they will play themselves out on the bodies of children no matter how stringent the regulations. The second is the tendency for many parents to view their children not as individuals they have been given to love and care for, but rather as extensions of themselves; I fear genetic therapy would only exacerbate that drive to view children as extensions of the self instead of selves in their own right.

**Simulat:** I disagree just about completely with that Eolas - I think it would be a horror if left to the market

**Oswy:** Could we focus first on the idea of screening of embryos to get rid of certain conditions. I assume everyone agrees with that?

**Rasecel:** I agree Deo

**Shailey:** yes

**Bash:** no

**Rasecel:** no

**Eolas:** actually Rasecel/Shingles, I just read an article about the continuing evolution of humanity in Science magazine, which, we are not detached from at all

**Shingles:** but what now is the 'fittest' for humanity's Modal lifestyle, Eolas?

**Sojourna:** Agreed, I think screening is interesting and probably the way of the near future and I'm all for the future, but curious how our morality will have to transform in order to accommodate this.

**Kore:** I consider the worldwide prohibition of reproductive cloning a major step into removing reproduction rights to individuals

**Rasecel:** yes but is it still "natural selection" if we are tampering with it?

**Eolas:** are we unnatural Rasecel?

**Rasecel:** Kore is this about cloning though?

**Oswy:** Perhaps it would be more orderly to keep to the issue of screening first then we move to enhancement. Is anyone against the idea of screening say for Huntingdon's?

**Kore:** The species pretends to have rights over individuals

**Eolas:** my question to you Oswy, is whether or not screening is mandatory

**Rasecel:** Eolas no. but science often is--or can be

**Kore:** Rasecel: It's about the right to decide how to reproduce ourselves

**Oswy:** Eolas No you could choose to be screened at eh Supermarket here

**Reflection:** well, certainly new technologies have to be essentially controlled and managed by social organizational systems (governments) whether it is the automobile or this

**Shingles:** For diseases yes, it's valuable. Screening for qualities such as green eyes, not to be condoned, I think, Oswy

**Bash:** Nothing is mandatory, it's all speculation

**Rasecel:** pardon my ignorance but what is Huntingdon's disease exactly?

**Patrick:** I am struck that until man evolved species were adapted to the environment more by luck (probability than anything else (see Darwin)

**Sojourna:** Eolas, I would imagine screening would be encouraged, just as having a baby nowadays under guidance of a gyno is encouraged.

**Simulat:** Oswy - I think its fine to screen embryos for diseases that cause a lot of misery. I'd also screen for psychopaths

**Bash:** You choose to take advantage of the service or not

**Kore:** A degenerative and lethal sickness

**Shak:** Mozart and Robert Burns were dead at 37.

**Eolas:** it's a degenerative genetic disorder that kills people

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**Rasecel:** thank you Kore and Eolas

**Shingles:** The implications of that could be terrible, Sim!!

**Oswy:** One issue that immediately arises is why is screening for disease ok but not for green eyes?

**Reflection:** agreed shingles about the important distinction between illness-based assessment of embryos and aesthetic preference assessment

**Shailey:** yes, screening for genetic problems is reasonable

**Bash:** I think as with any medical advancement that prolongs life there has to be a trade-off. If more people live and live longer people have to stop having babies

**Eolas:** Ok Oswy - if it's voluntary and government isn't in the business of forcing people to get screened or licensed to have babies, then I'm fine with any form of testing

**Patrick:** Now we have the option to at least partially direct evolution ... is that good or bad?

**Rasecel:** hrm...the sticky wicket of that is, is that if we say "yes" to Huntington's then that may open the door to all sorts of other things

**Eolas:** so long as it's voluntary

**Deoridhe:** Doesn't screening for psychological disorders pre-suppose a purely genetic cause for them against current evidence we have to the contrary?

**Kore:** Simulat: psychopaths? It's more of a symptom than a sickness!

**Kore:** Deo: true

**Sojourna:** I think Oswy, that is a problem now because we are in the primitive moral stages of understanding the technology, and it is fear that speaks louder than common practise.

**Oswy:** All I am interested in how the line between screening for one thing and not another could be established.

**Shingles:** and doesn't it also suppose mental fault and demand a definition of what warrants psychological faultiness, @ Deo's point

**Rasecel:** Deo actually there is no DNA that can be found on psychological disorders

**Eolas:** you're right Rasecel... if you screen for Huntington's, why can't you screen for a genetic predisposition to large ears or brown eyes? ;)

**Kore:** Oswy: I can imagine easily children suing their parents for not having been created as beautiful or strong as other kids

**Rasecel:** Eolas well I was thinking not quite so subtle as that

**Oswy:** Is it ok to screen out Huntingdon's (HD) but not green eyes well what about Downs Syndrome

**Sojourna:** hha Kore, good one

**Deoridhe:** Usually people put the standard at: "Quality of life." However, this assumes that individuals born with whichever disorder have a poor quality of life.

**Eolas:** I will go out on a limb here Oswy and say that I don't think a line can be established.

**Simulat:** Kore - I think that if psychopaths are caused by a genetic structure that could be detected then the world would be lots better off without them

**Rasecel:** Oswy my point exactly

**Eolas:** or should be

**Bash:** No, there can be no line

**Rasecel:** "oh well I don't want to deal with having a child with downs, so...ppfft"!!

**Kore:** I already remember Dutch parents suing in court a medical institution for their tube baby was black

**Shingles:** If we screen for genetically cued disorder then still give parents the choice to abort or NOT. Then liberty is served well, I think, Oswy

**Rasecel:** Deo and that's not true

**Bash:** If the ability is there why limit it

**Rasecel:** i speak from years working in adult foster care

**Sojourna:** well would you want to deal with a child with downs?

**Reflection:** this seems to have such far ranging implications for society even one generation down the road, that it cannot be left to parental choice, it must be societally argued and agreed upon, as the effects will effect the entire society (more like the euthanasia debates in that sense)

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**Oswy:** Soy and All We will have to come to grips with these issues in the near future ie our moral outlooks will have to catch up with the morality.

**Deoridhe:** Rasecel, we've only begun mapping and understanding the genome. I'm not willing to say "no genetics, absolutely" until we can actually say that, which may be never, given science's predilections.

**Rasecel:** soj I would deal with my child yes. Is it my preference? No

**Kore** wonders how long we will still be interested in having biological kids instead of digital ones

**Shingles:** Some view each human life, in whatever state as sacred and of intrinsic value, Soj

**Marya:** Yes Ref, agreed

**Rasecel:** I'd rather deal with a child born deaf, as I have background in that area

**Shingles:** however illogically that is held

**Rasecel:** sorry little trouble keeping up here

**Shak:** Huntington's seems to be the obvious example, since it's horrible and can be screened for. But it doesn't kick in till middle age. So I say again, Mozart and Robert Burns did all their work and died before they would have showed symptoms of Huntington's?

**Oswy:** On the downs issue 90 of parents if offered the choice will screen this condition out. Should we not respect their claim?

**Shingles:** of course we should

**Marya:** Does anyone else think there is a line between preventing horrible diseases and between choosing the individual aesthetics of an offspring?

**Patrick:** Humans have always establish criteria for actions as they allow groups to live together and prosper...will genetic policy be different

**Sojourna:** No one would be forced to dispose of a down child, but why would you do that, give a child that life?? If you had the choice?

**Rasecel:** Oswy I see. And what of the 10 per cent minority? should we not give credence to theirs?

**Rasecel:** Soj hon, a child with downs doesn't know anything different

**Shingles:** excellent point, Sojourna

**Oswy:** Rasecel. They would have a free choice.

**Rasecel:** it's not like they're born "normal" and acquire downs later

**Sojourna:** well there you go then, why bring a child into the world with a life they don't even have control over?

**Deoridhe:** Sojourna, Rasecel, this gets back to the issue of what determines "quality of life".

**Eolas:** I really don't Marya..... partially because the logic there is full of holes, but also because you can't necessarily define what aesthetics are versus abnormal genetic conditions

**Rasecel:** Deo, I thought I was

**Shingles:** well, that's the normal human state, Sojourna

**Bash:** The question is if we start tweaking to get rid of one thing how many now things are we going to create?

**Deoridhe:** And how that is influenced by the demands made of adults to work continuously to thrive.

**Shingles:** no one intends the body that they're born into

**Bash:** DNA is very small and we have chubby fingers

**Rasecel:** to a downs child the quality of life s/he has is no less significant then the qualify of life you or I have

**Oswy:** Marya, let's try for the time being to stick to screening and elimination not enhancement I think the issues are different. However should we screen for HD and not for Downs or gayness? Or Depression?

**Patrick:** What if you had to give a child an orthopaedic handicap to produce a math prodigy?

**Sojourna:** Yep, Deo, and these are the ethical issues that we'll be discussing in the future, I think our conception of life will have to change to accommodate all this.

**Eolas:** like.... you \*could\* say that you want a child born without predisposition to heart disease, but in doing so you make him physically strong, which means he becomes a jockish sort of character, thin, well muscled, etc.

**Kore:** Patrick: it depends if they're happy with that

**Rasecel:** Oswy you can't really screen for depression

**Eolas:** that's aesthetic, and also health

**Shingles:** well, homosexuality is more a behavioural thing, not genetic

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**Rasecel:** it is not found in DNA

**Eolas:** also - Shingles, you are way wrong about that

**Kore:** Patrick: by "they", I mean the child

**Deoridhe:** Depending on how you define depression, everyone has it. See also, adjustment disorder.

**Marya:** Well I don't agree with that Eolas, I do however, see your point about how various aspects of ourselves, good and bad, do affect who we are

**Eolas:** there have been plenty of tests on drosophila as well as sheep about the genetic components of homosexuality – pretty well confirmed

**Oswy:** Rasecel, we might in the future.

**Rasecel:** Deo right. You can screen for TENDENCIES. But you can't screen for mental illness

**Shingles:** we can discuss that another time if it's off topic, Eolas

**Kore:** Esp. since mental illness depends on the environment

**Rasecel:** Oswy okay well are we talking about present or future here?

**Rasecel:** kore as much as anything else, yes

**Patrick:** Well an embryo has little say in the matter. The engineer has to decide what is ethical

**Oswy:** All, in a sense we are discussing what constitutes a disease or disability?

**Marya:** Oswy yes, I do also think the issues are different, which is why I raised the point

**Bash:** Yes, that is a good point are we speculating on future or what we can do now

**Kore:** Engineers' ethics? Wow... this smells bad

**Rasecel:** Patrick and there we are getting into sticky wicket again

**Deoridhe:** Mental illness depends on a lot of factors; for schizophrenia they're currently figuring there are genetic, environmental, and possibly disease components.

**Shingles:** rather what constitutes a valid discarding of a disease or disability, I think, Oswy

**Reflection:** it seems easy to establish the line between disease and aesthetics surely?

**Rasecel:** Deo right

**Oswy:** All, there is a lot of argument flying around tonight as I thought there would be so be patient if you don't get replies right away.

**Kore:** Reflection: how?

**Eolas:** so Marya, on a psychological health note, we know that people who are deemed physically attractive by the common markers are given more attention, treated better, get paid more and have more opportunities than those of us who aren't "attractive" AND that most of those typically defined aesthetically "attractive" characteristics are signs of genetic health.....

**Rasecel:** but two schizophrenics can be raised in two different environments and turn out entirely different

**Deoridhe:** Not necessarily, Ref. A lot of the disabled rights movements are working in that area.

**Shingles** thinks it would be obvious@ Ref & Kore

**Oswy:** Kore, some mental illnesses are to do with brain dysfunctions etc or might even be gene based.

**Eolas:** so I really struggle to see a line between physical health and long-term psychological health, if that's the kind of thing a parent wants to do with their foetus

**Reflection:** because the definitions of illness, Kore, are rather different than the definitions of aesthetics

**Marya:** I think Reflection just put it quite well there Eolas

**Oswy:** Let me take another line are you happy to have a supermarket where parents make the choice about screening and then the following action taken?

**Kore:** Oswy: yes, but most psychopathologies develop in contact with the environment, let's genes are the potentialities, and environment the expression of them

**Patrick:** For many years parents have been doing a similar when they have decided to conceive a child that would be born into poverty or tyranny. In many ways the only decision we have absolutely no say in is being born.

**Reflection:** Deo, the definition of illness/disease and disability are also very different in my view, which is why I started with illness vs. aesthetics

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**Shingles:** it has to be done in the foetus' interest, never the parents. That's the most fundamental thing to remember, Eolas and All...

**Simulat:** we do already allow abortions more or less at the parent's choice, especially the mother's - so screening embryos isn't such a radical step

**Oswy:** Patrick. That's right parents have always governed these issues so why change now?

**Rasecel:** Patrick hrm. I think you are comparing apples to oranges

**Eolas:** Ok, but who determines what the "Foetus'" interests are?

**Rasecel:** Eolas my point exactly

**Oswy:** Agreed Simulat So genetic screening is nothing new?

**Deoridhe:** Ref, I'd argue there are continuum points, where an illness brings about a disability or a disability brings about an illness, and some illnesses - like fibromyalgia - where figuring out what it is is a struggle. Adding in mental components complicates these categories further.

**Shingles:** this is obvious, Eolas

**Kore:** The question, actually, seems to be whether we have to respect "nature" as a holy thing or not

**Shingles:** very good, Kore :)

**Reflection:** I am not diseased, only disabled

**Rasecel:** kore who said anything about "holy"?

**Simulat:** It's just a new dimension of information Oswy - but it doesn't seem to me to change the moral dimension at all

**Kore:** Because if we pretend we have to let nature decide for us, just like any random process, it sounds really mystical to me

**Deoridhe:** Yes, Ref, they exist in isolation as well, but really - is a person with schizophrenia or aspersers "ill" or "disabled"?

**Oswy:** Kore Interesting point is there a nature that has to be respected or is it a moving target or definition.

**Rasecel:** Kore so you think the animal kingdom is "mystical"?

**Kore:** No, but I think that animals are unable to decide for their genetic future, so they are passive victims of nature flaws

**Bash:** We would be respecting nature, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery

**Shingles:** however, our environment now, as 1st world humans is mostly artificial, is it not totally sensical to then evolve artificially too, Kore & Oswy?

**Oswy:** Take another issue Deafness. Should deaf parents be able to have deaf children? Should we be able to screen out genetic deafness or Dwarfism?

**Reflection:** agreed about the continuum, Deo, and absence of absolute clarity in gray areas, but that doesn't mean there are not very clear differences between well established diseases that no one wants and aesthetic issues that have nothing whatever to do with either disease or disability

**Rasecel:** Kore hrm...I hardly see, say, a lion to be a passive victim of anything lol

**Kore:** I heard many catholic people saying "human genetic engineering is doing things AGAINST GOD" (ie, against nature)

**Kore:** Rasecel: how a lion could change his offspring genetic code?

**Shingles:** or logically that God=nature, bt anyway XD

**Deoridhe:** Ref, I'll give you that. I think we're not meeting because you're focusing on the clarities, and I'm focusing on the greys (which from past discussions I think are our tendencies). You guard the clarities and I'll guard the greys? ;)

**Eolas:** There are a lot of issues flying around and they center around some basic premises which we haven't addressed yet. A. Does the parental pair own their foetus?

**Rasecel:** yes thank you Eolas. I am a very abstract thinker so I am liable to launch at anything that seems interesting to me

**Oswy:** Let's say they do Eolas.

**Rasecel:** not possible there

**Eolas:** Or conversely, does the foetus, as a future human, have self-ownership, or even... does the state own it?

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**Shingles:** no one owns another human life since they abolished slavery, that seems the best precedent, Eolas

**Eolas:** ok... Oswy says yes

**Kore:** I really wonder what is the difference between buying a teeth device for kids, or engineering them

**Eolas:** ok, Shingles says no

**Reflection:** Deo, each individual disorder can be debated, individually, and should be, that is the point, I think, you cannot make a blanket statements, each disease must be evaluated on its own merits and on the basis of the level of scientific certainty involved, but certainly, I think schizophrenia is a disease and this would be generally acknowledged

**Patrick:** What if we screen out the predisposition to violence? Create people like Asimov's I robot? Wouldn't help society get on to more pressing issues of society?

**Oswy:** Eolas, let's say that as per now the parents have the dominant say.

**Eolas:** though that means that shingles - you have to then believe that the foetus is a full human status ... which is fine, I'm just assessing

**Eolas:** ok... Oswy rules

**Shingles:** but it should be an informed choice, Oswy

**Eolas:** Parents have dominant say...

**Oswy:** Ref and who is going to decide if the parents don't?

**Deoridhe:** Ref, I'd argue that schizophrenia causes a state of disability, but we can argue that later if you're interested.

**Eolas:** enough to say, abort or not abort, and thus modify or not modify

**Simulat:** I think that is just the old abortion debate Eolas - and in that debate I think that women have a right to decide what happens in their body, and that a foetus doesn't have comparable rights

**Eolas:** it is the abortion debate, but it's important since it's linked

**Shingles:** well, let's not forget the father's rights too, but anyway... @ Sim

**Eolas:** of course

**Simulat:** I think that the issues raised by genetic engineering are distinct

**Eolas:** I'm saying both parents

**Oswy:** All. Let's assume the status of the present abortion laws. Within that framework should parents decide on screening and its consequences freely?

**Kore:** I'm pretty sure it was not a coincidence that the father of IT was homosexual

**Deoridhe:** If we get into the right for people to use someone else's body for their own survival, this goes no place good and will take over.

**Shingles:** but Oswy specifically asked it not to be focused on abortion tonight, Eolas

**Eolas:** although - truth be told, the way this works is when the eggs are artificially inseminated

**Eolas:** I'm not focusing on abortion - it just follows from the same premise - that's unavoidable

**Reflection:** Oswy, I am saying the state should decide which disorders/problems can be tested for, and that it can deny the rights of parents to interfere on an aesthetic basis, but I believe parents should have the right to choose whether or not they wish to deal with a disease/disability process

**Oswy:** All OK let's move on to the idea of enhancement. this means you can select for sporting ability IQ whatever. A free choice is in order don't you think?

**Simulat:** On the one hand - it's very hard to decide whether a disease is bad enough that it should be eliminated - that sort of value judgement would be almost impossible to make scientifically

**Deoridhe:** Sim, they've made that decision with some, though, like smallpox.

**Kore:** Acting on the kids' aesthetics is more damageable AFTER the kid was born than before, to my opinion

**Eolas:** Ref - ok, given that the state is a collection of people applying force to other people, what gives them the right to decide what's aesthetic, what's medical and what's immoral?

**Simulat:** its one thing to eliminate the smallpox bacteria - it's another thing to prevent a person from existing because they might get sick

**Bash:** Let's wait until they are 18 and then ask them if they didn't want to have diabetes

**Deoridhe:** In a representative democracy, presumably the will of the people + protection of minority rights.

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**Kore:** Eolas: especially since they're usually ugly

**Rasecel:** Oswy boy you're getting awfully close to eugenics there

**Reflection:** same as with anything else, Eolas, through consensus of what words mean and how they relate to reality meaningfully within the context of a particular culture

**Kore:** Rasecel: what's wrong with eugenics?

**Eolas:** and - Sim - if people are allowed to abort fetuses now for any reason at all - why not because they might be sick?

**Shingles:** tricky... I think space should be left for random enhancement through natural causes, this is how evolutionary history thus far has operated and has done a bloody good job so far, so whilst genetic engineering can MIMIC the amazing discoveries nature has revealed, genetic engineering at present is incapable of creating new wonders, Oswy

**Oswy:** Rasecel. Surely I am for setting up a supermarket where people can make a free choice. No one is being forced here?

**Rasecel:** Kore hrm...how do I put this diplomatically without sounding like an emotional freak case?

**Deoridhe:** Except financially, Oswy, unless you are presupposing class issues have been resolved.

**Reflection:** Oswy, I don't think parents should be able to enhance traits, that are unrelated to illness/disease, because of the potentially societally destroying effects of unintended consequences that cannot be predicted

**Kore:** Rasecel: just breathe

**Eolas:** Ref, I would postulate that there is no consensus on what these words mean inherently

**Shingles** is also interested in what's wrong with Eugenics

**Oswy:** Shingles what is so good about natural evolution. It's inefficient and can be cruel.

**Eolas:** and what if I, and individual or part of a parental pair disagrees with the state?

**Kore:** Rasecel: I hope you're not mixing up Nazism and eugenics

**Rasecel:** Kore no I'm not

**Simulat:** yes - screening for stuff like that has a problem in that you don't know what else you are screening out of the human genome - everybody has far more than just good looks, or athletic ability or intelligence to offer

**Bash:** How about parents get tested for genetic flaws such as disease and if they are going to pass it on they are not allowed to have children? Then you are not affecting an unborn life and dealing with adults.

**Shingles:** inefficient in regards what? and 2, cruelty is a fundamental part of nature, Oswy

**Rasecel:** not all those into eugenics are that extreme i realize

**Oswy:** Ref that's denying parents a lot on some very vague grounds unintended consequences ??

**Kore:** Rasecel: actually this whole meeting is about eugenics

**Rasecel:** but again on that note you are entering into a slippery slope

**Eolas:** Bash - that would then require that those parents just don't have kids.... what if they want kids, but they want kids without the danger of passing on their illnesses?

**Rasecel:** Kore yes that's what I tried to tell Marya

**Deoridhe:** Actually, the US was the forerunner of Eugenics, primarily of poor, non-white individuals who were not given informed consent or even told what was being done to their bodies. Oddly, the focus for Eugenics was on WOMEN, which also brought sexism into the nice racism pot.

**Kore:** The basic definition of "eugenics" is to improve humankind

**Shingles:** Nature is fundamentally cruel, we ought to embrace that, Oswy

**Reflection:** Eolas, the fact that we use dictionaries and have standard meanings of things flies in the face of your observation, I think (again at the more obvious ends of these continua, as Deo so rightly pointed out)

**Rasecel:** Kore but ya' see to what end?

**Simulat:** but it seems to me that the genetic supermarket idea is more that we could create genomes that have characteristics that we want, rather than eliminate those that don't have those characteristics

**Rasecel:** I mean say we have the perfect utopia? Then what?

**Eolas:** why Shingles? I think we've had this conversation before, but you obviously don't let nature get you down too much in that you're using a computer and all

**Oswy:** Shingles if nature produces HD and we can eliminate it why should we not?

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**Bash:** Exactly Eolas, humans all about fixing diseases but not willing to stop over populating

**Simulat:** modifying a genome is way different from eliminating it isn't it?

**Eolas:** Overpopulation and other Malthusian nonsense isn't at issue here

**Kore:** Rasecel: then we don't have to care about physical appearance for example

**Oswy:** If nature produces a family of three girls and we want a boy why should we not be able to do that?

**Eolas:** it's also, for the record, bull

**Deoridhe:** I don't think it's reasonable to speak of "improving" when it's mucking with genetics. There are almost always unforeseen consequences, including ones already built into society.

**Rasecel:** kore well that's assuming we have to care about it now

**Shingles:** that's not good netiquette, Eolas

**Kore:** Rasecel: actually who tries to be ugly in SECOND LIFE?

**Deoridhe:** Oswy, you could adopt a girl.

**Kore:** Rasecel: if not, for purpose?

**Bash:** You want a girl, adopt

**Rasecel:** kore well first you have to define "ugly"

**Eolas:** it's fine Shingles you made a point that nature is cruel.... and we should "embrace it"

**Shak:** We should not fix HD because Mozart and Burns were dead before they would have been affected by it.

**Shingles:** yes

**Kore:** Rasecel: please...

**Reflection:** Oswy, I don't think unintended consequences is vague, because they are by definition, impossible to define up front, there are unintended consequences to all technologies, so we know there will be, and the potential risk involved in increasing traits on the basis of fashion, and parental desire, is transparently too great, I would say

**Shingles:** How is nature not cruel then, Eolas?

**Oswy:** Deo Suppose it's important to me to have my own genetic boy or girl and with blond hair and 6' 2 inches what's wrong with that?

**Eolas:** if you embrace nature's cruelty then what makes it ok to use \*this\* technology (computers, internet, etc) and not medical screening tech?

**Patrick:** A friend once told me that the problem with eugenics was that with what we know we have to cull the mistakes like Hitler wanted to. But if we were to engineer rather than breed for evolution, I don't see the problem being the same.

**Marya:** Absolutely agree with that Ref

**Eolas:** nature is, that wasn't the part I'm disagreeing with.... the "embrace it" part is what I have a problem with

**Shingles:** those things are artificial and though we may embrace them too, we should not forget nature's cruelty, Eolas

**Deoridhe:** Oswy, I would say the problem with that is it places your desires primary to everything else.

**Eolas:** why do we have to be bound by it though Shingles?

**Oswy:** Shak You are raising the issue of genetic diversity and the right of people however disabled to contribute. Some this is as very important.

**Eolas:** especially when the thrust of human evolution has been to overcome it by using our minds

**Eolas:** (which, btw, is nature as well)

**Shingles:** We don't, but its a choice, be aligned with nature or be unaligned to it, Eolas

**Oswy:** Deo What is the everything else? Why is it so important?

**Bash:** Nature sucks, it hasn't got it right yet; its time we step in and take over

**Shingles:** Nature does not suck. Nature is Excellent

**Patrick:** here, here Bash

**Oswy:** Bash many would agree with that. The question is are there lines that should not be crossed?

**Rasecel:** Bash, I see, and we are superior to the rest of nature how exactly?

# Second Philosophy

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**Eolas:** I'm not sure how it's being unaligned with nature to use our minds to improve our lives.... every animal that is capable of doing so improves and attempts to improve their lives and reproduce as healthy offspring as possible

**Deoridhe:** Oswy, the everything else is the rule of chance, the question of overpopulation, the question of how society is dealing with children, the question of what parents expect from children, etc...

**Patrick:** If mother nature wanted to be left alone why did she give us a brain

**Bash:** Did nature build anything that makes our lives good? Cities, computers, SL? No

**Rasecel:** Patrick that is simplistic thinking at best

**Deoridhe:** Ironically, though, my mother did non-genetic-engineering things to try to ensure I was female, mostly acting around the characteristics of X and Y sperm.

**Kore:** Nature is species creativity, it has to make ugly things to make good ones, it can't anticipate like we do

**Rasecel:** Bash and is that all that makes your life good?

**Oswy:** Deo Having an athletic disease and disability free child of your choice hair etc doesn't threaten any of these things?

**Eolas:** Bash - I agree generally - but it's natural processes that produced us.... so..... yes

**Bash:** Plastic and processed food also are good

**Patrick:** What can I say Ras I am a simple man:)

**Deoridhe:** Oswy, I've actually been arguing against a lot of those things, but I understand how you may not have notices in the scroll.

**Rasecel** smiles at Patrick

**Shingles:** but that is not 'overcoming nature' as you seem to imply, that would be an affirmation of nature in oneself, Eolas

**Oswy:** All Are we not in danger of sanctifying nature here. Nature is no great thing.

**Bash:** Yes nature produced us and we are still broken

**Rasecel:** Bash yeah you know what processed food does to your body?

**Rasecel:** Bash, I see, so you want for perfection then

**Shingles:** Is it not? Were it not for nature, human beings would not be so wonderful, Oswy

**Bash:** If nature had made me better processed food would be great for my body

**Deoridhe:** I would make a call to replace "nature" with "chaos" or "chance".

**Oswy:** Sorry Deo Fast and furious from here

**Shingles:** intelligent call :)

**Kore:** Deo: yes, esp. since we are actors of the nature

**Deoridhe:** No worries, Oswy.

**Simulat:** One of the things that genetic engineering does is that it allows humans to put a certain kind of selection pressure on our species - but its hard to predict the outcome of things that we do - so I'd say that genetic engineering would still be pretty random - the main difference is that it would be faster because we could explore the range of our possibilities much faster

**Deoridhe:** Only if we figure out how to make the bacteria/virus replace all the cells in your body before they replicate, Bash.

**Kore:** Can't we consider ourselves as the next step for evolution awareness of itself?

**Shingles:** if we could then the implications of that are huge, Kore

**Oswy:** All When it comes down to it, we all feel the need for our babies to be as perfect as possible. I still don't see why we should not be allowed to achieve that.

**Rasecel:** Kore can you expand on that point please?

**Shingles:** we are allowed to by nature, Oswy

**Deoridhe:** One of the places where humans have most influenced genetics is in the food we raise. In the case of chickens, we unintentionally created rapist roosters as part of selecting for characteristics that lead to better meat. I'm not convinced we'll do better with direct interaction with the genome.

**Rasecel:** Oswy um...I don't agree with you. I wouldn't need my babies to be "as perfect as possible"

## Second Philosophy

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**Simulat:** Kore - we are aware - and I don't think that evolution is aware even if we direct our own evolution - but that's just my way of looking at it

**Oswy:** As Shak says, we may lose some diversity in the process the odd Mozart or Two but that's life.

**Shingles:** the random recombination of genes is, in its natural procedure, perfect, Oswy

**Bash:** That is true Sim

**Eolas:** I agree with you Oswy, in that people should be free to do whatever they can to make sure their children have the best life possible according to their own standards.

**Kore:** Rasecel: we are the first species on earth to be able to change its own genetic code, because we are the only one aware of it, so this means we are higher state of "evolution", let's say evolution consciousness

**Simulat:** lots more where they came from Oswy :-)

**Rasecel:** the ability to adapt to and be compassionate is a nearly uniquely human trait

**Eolas:** and Shingles, I'm not sure how you could call that procedure "perfect"

**Deoridhe:** Oswy, I would argue that the primacy of an abstract idea of "perfection" is part of the problem.

**Eolas:** since it screws up all the time

**Bash:** We can tinker all we want but we will never overcome the environmental factors the effect natural evolution

**Eolas:** but yes, Deo, perfection is a crappy ideal to have I think

**Bash:** We will just fight them as we always have

**Oswy:** Deo What about perfect in our eyes then?

**Shak:** If we can be a bit more stoic and less selfish, we might see the advantage in letting nature carry on as before.

**Patrick:** This may be simplistic as well, but it seems that man has two options: evolve further or devolve. The only questions are which of these he does and if it is done deliberately using the frontal cortex or through the dice throwing method that nature has previously used

**Deoridhe:** Oswy, I see the same problems there with different grammar.

**Shingles:** because otherwise one needs some ulterior criteria of what 'perfection' is, other than the wonderful diversity and mutation evolution already presents, Eolas

**Oswy:** Shingles HD is not perfection? It's nasty like Polio and Malaria.

**Shak:** Maybe we need an experiment.

**Rasecel:** Kore well then I guess we disagree on what is a higher state of evolution consciousness

**Deoridhe:** I find the personification of evolution going on VERY interesting.

**Kore:** We have a problem: medicine is making the species weaker, it goes against evolution, so we will NEED to genetically engineer us

**Shak:** India and China each have more bright kids (top quartile IQ) than the US has kids, period.

**Shingles:** its perfection up until human re-defines what perfection is by some criteria established purely by themselves, Oswy

**Rasecel:** kore ever consider maybe not going to the doctor for every little foible?

**Rasecel:** people get the sniffles nowadays and freak out and go to the emergency room

**Shak:** India does it on a huge population of kids many of who die early.

**Deoridhe:** Kore, medicine is also making the genome more diverse, which in terms of survival of the species is actually superior. A limited genome actually leads to extinction. It's one of the issues they're running into with endangered species.

**Eolas:** Really Shak..... I'd like to see your data on that..... I'd also like to see it in per capita and not raw numbers

**Shak:** China does it by limiting an already huge population to 1 child per couple.

**Oswy:** Let me introduce another point. Sandel says that this sort of engineering will erode our appreciation of what is given, erode our sense of human solidarity and put too much responsibility on parents. Singer says from an individual point of view there is nothing wrong with it but it must be regulated by the state. What do you think?

**Simulat:** I think that is a very important point Deo

**Shak:** Interesting to see who wins out.

## Second Philosophy

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**Rasecel:** Oswy, the state itself has too many flaws to go around regulating others'

**Eolas:** I think it should not, under any circumstances be regulated by the State Oswy

**Deoridhe:** I think our society isn't equipped for this, from the misunderstanding of what is valuable within evolution (a focus on "perfection" instead of "diversity") to the prejudices which most people consciously attempt to deny.

**Rasecel:** I agree Deo

**Oswy:** Eolas, so the rich get the enhancements?

**Eolas:** the STATE, is what brought you institutional racism, sexism, and the "purification" of ethnic minorities..... not individual parents

**Deoridhe:** I think our appreciation of what is given is already gone, to a large extent.

**Bash:** Joking aside, we should not be tweaking anything until we know what we are doing... but then how will we ever know what we are doing if we don't tweak

**Deoridhe:** Eolas, the individual parents helped, just not the ones being sterilized.

**Oswy:** Shak, what's wrong with the US catching up on IQ with a bit of engineering?

**Rasecel:** and it flies in the face of what Darwin proposed and others have built upon

**Simulat:** I think that erode is a loaded term Oswy - it assumes that its a good idea to keep our present appreciation and never let it change - but I can't see why it would be bad in principle if we move towards different concepts of our selves

**Nadezda:** my concern would be with a limited idea of what's valuable, and a distorted idea about the consequences of various ideas of "perfection"

**Bash:** People forget that all medicine today roots from really F'd up experiments on people hundreds of years ago

**Eolas:** no, Deo, individual parents have complied, in order to not be arrested or shot

**Deoridhe:** I'm not sure Darwin proposed anything. He observed.

**Eolas:** I think that's far different

**Rasecel:** Deo, okay observed then. I'm not here to argue semantics

**Kore:** Can we make a small poll? Like who is for government choosing what can be selected in the genome or not?

**Rasecel:** No way, Kore

**Shak:** Oswy, nothing wrong with genetic engineering if it worked out. Do we know enough to be sure?

**Nadezda:** not the government!

**Deoridhe:** Eolas, in short, you are saying they consented to eugenics either through living sterilized or dying. That ....isn't a choice in terms of the eugenics, just in terms of their life.

**Simulat:** for me the issue isn't which institution chooses - it's what is the information upon which choice is made

**Rasecel:** Sim the government is too bunged up to do a fair job of it

**Eolas:** Essentially Deo, but what I'm saying, more to the point, is that the State is force, and because of that it wields power that ordinary people can't apply against each other, and concentrated power tends to wind up with one or two guys at the "top" making decisions for everyone and backing it up with guns

**Patrick:** There would be problems inherent to genetic engineering: not everybody would begin practicing it at the same time. It could create class and cultural boundaries just as sexual preference, race, and disability have.

**Oswy:** All, those against the government intervention. If you leave it to the free market the rich get the enhancements. Equal ops is out of the window and our sense of solidarity with our peers is eroded. Surely this is not what you want?

**Simulat:** Ras - business isn't exactly great at that either - nor are individuals

**Eolas:** so if you leave it up to the "state" to decide who gets to reproduce or what is considered "disease" and what is "aesthetic", the state chooses whatever benefits the state

**Deoridhe:** Eolas, what I am saying is most of the people enacting those actions were parents, just not the parents being sterilized. The State is made up of people, after all.

**Eolas:** and Oswy, that's not how markets work, but that's another discussion

# Second Philosophy

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**Bash:** Hmm perhaps genetically altered people to make good genetic decisions

**Patrick:** Would they survive or be extinguished?

**Oswy:** All, for instance take the concept of insurance. Why would the enhanced rich decide to take part in insurance with the unenhanced poor. The state has a role here?

**Eolas:** Yes, the "rich" may be the first to do such a thing, but as the technology is supported (by rich people at first), it gets more efficient, better and cheaper and becomes more and more widely available.... IF people want to use it

**Simulat:** one question I have is - would you pay an engineer to do something when you wouldn't know whether he'd really done it or not for 20 years?

**Kore:** Yes, let's let rich people get the first tries

**Nadezda:** Sim, you'd never really know

**Deoridhe:** \_Beggars\_in\_Spain\_ is actually a good look at this from the point of view of it being free market.

**Deoridhe:** Fiction, but still good.

**Nadezda:** do we really know what causes for example, intelligence, or success?

**Kore:** So we have more chance to get kids better than beta testing

**Bash:** But rich people are already genetically perfect

**Rasecel:** LOL bash ok

**Bash:** That's why they are rich

**Eolas:** haha.... ok

**Oswy:** Eolas you would get a sort of genetic arms race the rich always one ahead with the best enhancements.

**Deoridhe** sniggers at Bash.

**Kore:** Bash: far from it! I know some of them look like end of race

**Eolas:** Oswy, that's a rash of assumptions

**Rasecel:** LOL Kore

**Eolas:** and I think bad ones

**PaulaDix:** the race is on already

**Bash:** I have a lower middle class gene disorder

**Oswy:** Eolas, I am only paraphrasing Singer Sandel and others.

**Eolas:** and btw, if you leave it up to the state, the rich are always going to have more power over the state's decisions than the poor

**PaulaDix:** Bash, you're poor like me?? :))

**Simulat:** I bet that in fact now there are charlatans promising suckers to make their babies perfect for them

**Patrick:** Like cars, genetic engineering would eventually affordable to the masses through automation and efficient marketing, you think?

**Eolas:** which means the rich will always be able to get around the state anyway.... or will have the means to fight the state when they don't agree as individuals

**Bash:** Poor in cash rich in wishing for more cash

**Eolas:** whereas the poor don't have that luxury

**Oswy:** All I think we are roughly at question 4 ie how do we control this aspect of technology on a world wide basis?

**PaulaDix:** Saw on news that yesterday was born first child genetically freed of cancer genes

**Nadezda:** I thing it's certainly going to happen. but it could very well be a disaster

**Rasecel** is not sure who sandel is

**Deoridhe:** We're not sure, Patrick. To use the example of technology like computers, there is digital divide which is leading to those without the cash to access computers at a severe disadvantage due to how technological a lot of businesses have become.

**Eolas:** Oswy, I say.... and this may come as a shock.... we don't.

**PaulaDix:** lol Bash same here :)))

**Bash:** ahh but cancer is not a genetic flaw

**Oswy:** Paula Yes important point and many critics see this as the thin edge of the wedge.

# Second Philosophy

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**Deoridhe:** Paula, they managed to isolate the shark gene for no cancer?

**Eolas:** Deo, there's always a tech divide.....

**Deoridhe:** Yes, Eolas, which is part of the problem.

**Oswy:** Bash in this case the cancer was linked to an inherited gene.

**Bash:** It is a general flaw in the human immune defense system

**PaulaDix:** Deo I don't know, news said only that

**Simulat:** Oswy - I don't think we do or can control it - the tech is evolving on its own whether we think it's a good idea or not

**Eolas:** once upon a time, the rich had indoor plumbing and schlubs like me would have been outside on an outhouse

**Deoridhe:** See earlier bringing up of class issues.

**Eolas:** it's not a problem though Deo

**PaulaDix:** child was born in England yesterday, a girl

**Deoridhe:** I'm so glad you think so, Eolas. I think I can guess what side of the divide you're on, though.

**Oswy:** Sim we could ban everything not sanctioned by the state?

**Bash:** I just hope it is not like the "medicine" we have. You cure cancer only to live with nausea and anal seepage

**Simulat:** it has never worked Oswy

**Eolas:** Yeah, I'm on the unemployed, desperately poor side coming from a middle class family with no support to give me and working in an industry that barely pays. It's not about what "side" I'm on, it's about good reasoning skills and a solid understanding of economics

**Deoridhe:** Eolas, with a computer and capable of accessing it enough to download a complicated program and use it to debate with other people on the internet.

**Kore:** Paula, do you know how they removed "cancer" from her?

**Oswy:** Sim are you saying its an inevitable free for all?

**Nadezda:** the thing is, we don't really know exactly how to control many things genetically-- and many things also depend on experience to develop or not

**Deoridhe:** We're all on the "access" side of the digital divide, no matter how poor we may think we are.

**Nadezda:** so even if you engineer "perfection" you won't get anything like it

**PaulaDix:** Kore, no, only that it was genetic engineering

**Bash:** As any programmer knows you fix one problem and it will cause another problem that you may not find until later

**Kore:** Nad: good point, human is a systemic issue

**Deoridhe:** No bug fixes for genetics.

**Eolas:** and the fact that throughout history the "rich" have contributed tons of resources and ideas into technology that the poor didn't even know existed and demand for that technology coupled with economic support for its creation leads to it becoming cheaper, better and more widely available

**Bash:** Exactly Deo, firmware updates would be painful

**Eolas:** you're making a bad argument in a world where wireless internet is accessible in internet cafes in Africa my friend

**Oswy:** Nadezda. It seems clear that the technology is developing and perfecting itself. These issues will face us over time.

**Simulat:** free for all doesn't express it right Oswy - its that if its not done here by this group it will be done there by that group - rather than be afraid of the future I think we need to just solve our problems as they come up

**Deoridhe:** Uh, Eolas, Africa is a continent. Of course there are wealthy people there. I mean, duh.

**Nadezda:** but you'd still have to control experience in ways that aren't possible

**Kore:** Deo: there are internet cafes for the normal people there, not rich

**Simulat:** we need to keep our eyes open and keep active - burying one's head in the sand and hoping the problem won't come up isn't wise

**Deoridhe:** Kore, I realize that, and the people who use them are on the "access" side of the digital divide.

## Second Philosophy

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**Deoridhe:** "Africa" is not poor. It's a continent with lots of people, like every other continent.

**Kore:** What's wrong with the fact that something new has to start on a minority of individuals?

**Eolas:** yes, but Deo, the important and salient point here is that with technological advances, the poor do better and better and better

**Oswy:** All An interesting side aspect to this is raised by Sandel on the question of sport. What will sport become if it is dominated by enhanced quasi robots?

**Nadezda:** and the question is-- will everyone select for the same few, very concrete traits? and what would be the consequences for that

**Eolas:** which was my overall point about markets..... the rich may be the first to get to use the technology

**Eolas:** so what? We will all benefit

**Kore:** Nad: we can see in SL that people don't try to look the same

**Bash:** How will that be different than today

**Deoridhe:** That's the important and salient point for you, Eolas. Not me.

**Simulat:** like hockey Oswy :-)

**Eolas:** and over time, everything gets cheaper and easily accessible to everyone

**Nadezda:** no-- but for example, will we all be tall, more intelligent (in limited ways), a certain gender, etc

**Eolas:** at least - where there is political freedom

**Oswy:** Sim Sandel is concerned with baseball where the hitter makes a perfect shot almost every time?

**Nadezda:** and thin, by the way

**Kore:** Nad: too thin girls are boring

**Bash:** The question is would we genetically breed people specifically for sports and for than matter what about super soldiers? You know how we love to turn everything into a weapon

**Deoridhe:** And meanwhile the people without access cannot get good paying jobs, cannot supply non-state adjuncts tot heir children's education, who end up working less well paying jobs due to educational deficits from lack of evidence, and the class issues remain.

**Eolas:** Africa, notably has a lot of people on the other side of the divide not because of "the rich" but because their government (Robert Mugabe for example) tend to like to concentrate power

**Nadezda:** most women want to be thin

**Simulat:** Oswy - it would just spoil the game as a spectator sport

**Eolas:** so it's a bad argument against letting the "rich" do stuff...

**Kore:** Nad: because of fashion? There is a good book in France "men like fat girls"

**Deoridhe:** Eolas, which governments in Africa, pray tell? you're discussing a continent like it's a country.

**Nadezda:** we'll see Kore

**Deoridhe:** That's freaking bizarre.

**Simulat:** which in my view would be a good thing

**Eolas:** MOST of them Deo

**Kore:** Nad: it's a book

**Eolas:** I talk about it like it's unified because in governmental philosophy it nearly all is

**Eolas:** it's not really important

**Eolas:** you want me to pick one?

**Nadezda:** I don't see many fat women in SL

**Eolas:** Congo

**Eolas:** there

**Bash:** Deo, African is a country ;-)

**Oswy:** Sim and Bash. He thinks the game would become more a spectacle but with the essential human elements of sport eliminated. The problem is that sport is on the forefront of the issue of enhancement.

**Kore:** Nad: me neither, but this is because we as male don't touch them here

**Deoridhe:** I'm actually "fat" on SL, but I have a fatter avatar, if you want to see it.

**Eolas:** but we're a bit off topic

**Kore:** Nad: by the way, women are not that thin here, I don't see a lot of anorexic

## Second Philosophy

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**Nadezda:** anyway, I do think we have highly constricted views of what we want to engineer

**Deoridhe:** Yeah, I know, Bash. Me with my silly focus on countries. We should just discuss North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. They're all pretty much the same.

**Oswy:** Eolas There are important issue sin relation to sport on the table.

**Bash:** But to consider genetics in sports you would have to either say my kid is going to be a football player before they are born OR grow specific people for the game

**Kore:** Nad: but this is not different from what makes us choose a partner in "real life"

**Eolas:** Sports..... Science..... look.... here's the thing

**Bash:** You cannot choose after the fact

**Kore:** Nad: evolution is dependent upon our tastes, it's a bijective process

**Eolas:** Say you're Joe Montana, and I'm Stephen Hawkings and Marya is Fransico Da Goya

**Oswy:** Bash that is exactly what people would do . They would breed for athletic ability.

**Simulat:** Oswy - look at what's happening now with performance enhancing drugs in sports - and also - aren't professional sports mostly a spectacle anyway?

**Nadezda:** I suppose you can argue that people who love sports will breed for sports stars; and people who love fighting will breed for soldiers

**Nadezda:** but I wonder whether we'll all be super-people

**Eolas:** we all have kids

**Kore:** I'm sure the only solution to this mess is to virtualize everything

**Eolas:** and we all have different values

**Deoridhe:** Actually, I'm pretty sure Stephan Hawkings wouldn't have survived in the system most people are proposing....

**PaulaDix:** I don't :)

**Kore:** Let's make everything digital

**Bash:** I say we do genetics the OLD FASHION way. We take two people that have the traits we want and we give them a few drinks, some music and give nature a little direction not try and take over.

**WindWalker:** Sounds like pages right out of BRAVE NEW WORLD

**Nadezda:** but are out values in any way representative or reflective or what is really valuable in life?

**Eolas:** Deo - of course he would.... cause this issue is talking about really a tiny percentage of the population who would even want to be involved

**Eolas:** but at any rate

**PaulaDix:** Bash, why that never happened??

**Nadezda:** for example, how to you breed for a thoughtful person?

**Oswy:** The pressure on parents to enhance would be ferocious. To fly blind in a pregnancy would be seen as irresponsible.

**Deoridhe** sniggers. "It is pages out of Brave New World, which had interesting class implications."

**Bash:** I for one think me and Jessica Alba would produce a wonderful child that would benefit mankind

**Nadezda:** or someone who is insightful?

**Eolas:** the question will always be "what happens when everyone produces jocks and there aren't any intellectuals"

**Eolas:** well.... all of us here are intellectuals to one degree or another

**Nadezda:** the intellectuals will produce intellectuals, I imagine

**Bash:** Jocks would be better as intellectuals

**Nadezda:** but would they be imaginative?

**Eolas:** and if the entire group of us sitting here right now were forced to do this

**Kore:** Bash: true

**Nadezda:** or would they even be intellectuals?

**Eolas:** which I think we all agreed wouldn't be the case

**Deoridhe:** Some jocks are intellectuals. Sports skill does not presuppose lack of intelligence.

**Oswy:** Eolas the Intellectuals could become a different genetic caste.

# Second Philosophy

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**Eolas:** but even if government forces us all to choose

**PaulaDix:** Heinlein has this idea of selecting people for longevity, wonderful books. I wonder why something similar never happened.

**Kore:** Bash: that was for your old fashion idea

**Eolas:** which traits we emphasize

**Nadezda:** so would we have castes?

**Eolas:** there will always be people like us who'd rather see kids be smart

**Eolas:** Nad... we'd have castes IF EVERYONE did this - but they won't

**Patrick:** Guys it has been stimulating, but until we can resolve this canumbera, I must return to the RL and use what Mother has engineered into my simple self :)

**Eolas:** which is where I think it's all kind of silly

**Bash:** We should all submit an application with our qualifications and then make some breeding choices from the group here

**Eolas:** I'm planning on having sex when I have kids.....

**Oswy:** All raising here the sci-fi scenarios shows to philosophers like sandel that if we allow this process to be uncontrolled we will loose our essential humanity

**Nadezda:** but are castes a good thing? Even if everyone does it?

**Kore:** Human has a natural tendency to prefer stupidity

**PaulaDix:** China wouldn't have girls anymore, they want only boys

**Kore:** It requires less effort

**Bash:** Stupid people are amusing

**Nadezda:** humans have a fairly stupid idea of what intelligence is.

**Simulat:** Paula - I guess it's because you can't tell who is going to be long lived until after child bearing years are long past - I mean would we only allow those who died at 100 to breed :-)

