

OVERVIEW

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Social and legal aspects of new genetics and ART: A post (post) modern societal puzzle

If "new (genetic) developments are Challenging the Ethical Framework" (Dondorp), what can be said of the ways they affect our socio-cultural long held concepts, challenged at an exponential speed since the first days of IVF. Both legally and socially societies all over the world are struggling to keep pace with technologies, sometimes reinventing old debates (when/ is the embryo a person, and do you define this legally?; what is "eugenics"?), often having difficulties grasping the science.

We have a responsibility as scientist and practitioners to inform the public plainly of the complex new genetic technologies, in order to obtain (informed) consent, a legal and ethical pre requisite .

We also should seek societal compromise. Indeed societal consensus is historically difficult to achieve contrary to what is hopefully the case in science, as many citizens will be afraid of the possibility of testing for a broad range of anomalies, more or less serious or relevant to quality of life. Furthermore this entails the health of our children and future generations, a common responsibility.