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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The year 2017 at The Hastings Center was one of expanding reach and impact. Our scholars traveled the globe, speaking to audiences across and beyond the United States, from Boston to Denver, from Serbia to New Zealand. We published our analyses and recommendations in top-flight scientific and medical journals, but made sure our ideas went far beyond the academy. We advised journalists, scientists, policymakers, health care practitioners, and individuals facing hard choices in their own lives. We convened meetings that brought together experts from diverse disciplines who are rarely in the same room, as well as stakeholders with vastly different perspectives.

As this report’s cover design illustrates, through these events and convenings, The Hastings Center serves as a compass. We provide trustworthy guidance on some of the most consequential questions the world has ever encountered—from how to build communities in which the frail and chronically ill can flourish to assessing whether we should change the human genome in permanent, heritable ways.

I am often asked how The Hastings Center can do such good work on so many topics. First, nearly everything we do boils down to two goals—ambitious ones for sure, but just two nevertheless. We aim to build a society that makes the wisest possible use of emerging technologies and one that is just and compassionate in how it cares for people across the life span.

Second, these are the kinds of goals that cannot be achieved by facts alone. They require facts all right, but something more as well: the ability to talk about what kind of society we want to build, to articulate and accommodate diverse notions of human flourishing, to examine the underlying values that are implicated in any prospective decision, and to develop reasonable strategies for balancing competing values. This kind of analysis is what our scholars know how to do, and while the topics may be diverse, our skill set is focused, highly developed, and applicable to a wide variety of tough questions.

I invite you to turn these pages—slowly. Take in the range of issues that our scholars analyze and the kind of guidance we offer. I believe you will be as moved as I am by the indispensable role The Hastings Center plays in our world.

With great appreciation,

Mildred Z. Solomon
President and CEO
Genetically modifying our children is no longer hypothetical. In 2017, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine sanctioned crossing what has long been a bright line: making heritable changes to the human genome. But they urged doing so only to treat serious diseases and only if specific criteria are met. Later, scientists used gene editing on human embryos in vitro for the first time in the United States. These milestones make it clear that questions about if and how we can use gene editing in responsible, just, and ethical ways are no longer speculative—they demand our dedicated attention now.

To address these questions, The Hastings Center organized several major events, reaching thousands of scientists, journalists, and others. An overarching message from these events was that science policy must not just consider the safety of gene editing applications, but also their ethical and social ramifications. This work was part of The Hastings Center’s project on gene editing and human flourishing, supported by the John Templeton Foundation.

“Let’s not see human genome modification as always good or always bad. We should make our assessments case by case, reflecting on the purpose of a given application.”
—Mildred Solomon

Guiding the Future of the Human Species

American Association for the Advancement of Science

A standing room only audience of more than 400 people attended a Hastings Center panel at the annual meeting of the AAAS, the world’s largest multidisciplinary scientific society, in Boston in February. The panel explored the ways in which concerns beyond safety matter in science policy, especially regarding policies on making genetic changes that could be passed down to future generations. Hastings Center president Mildred Solomon moderated the panel. She spoke out for creating opportunities for robust public deliberation. Josephine Johnston, director of research and a research scholar, was a panelist.
Workshops for Journalists

As part of The Hastings Center’s ongoing commitment to educating journalists to help them convey accurate, trustworthy information to the public, we sponsored and produced two workshops for journalists on the ethical and societal implications of new genetic technologies. The first workshop took place at the annual meeting of the Association of Health Care Journalists, the professional organization of editors and reporters who cover health and medicine. In one of the presentations, Josephine Johnston questioned whether germline editing would exacerbate social tensions and create unnecessary parental obligations to create the “best possible child.”

The second workshop occurred at the World Conference of Science Journalists before a capacity crowd of about 200 journalists from around the world. Our workshop “sold out” within minutes of being announced. To broaden the audience to journalists who were unable to attend, we livestreamed the workshop. In one of the talks, Hastings Center research scholar Gregory Kaebnick called for a precautionary approach to the use of emerging biotechnologies in nonhuman animals. “Precaution doesn’t mean not doing something,” he said. “It means carrying out a decision in a way that allows for careful consideration of whether to do it and if so, when.”

How we use our genetic data will have major consequences for health and society

As part of The Hastings Center’s new Initiative in Bioethics and the Humanities, Rice Family Fellow in Bioethics and the Humanities Joel Michael Reynolds grappled with both the gifts—the insights into the genetic origins of disease—and the weights—the possibility for negative psychosocial effects, genetic discrimination, and more—that genetic data bring. How does the increasing amount of genomic information at our fingertips promote and thwart our flourishing? As the National Institutes of Health rolls out its ambitious project to collect genetic data from one million or more Americans, Reynolds and senior research scholar Erik Parens planned a conference to gain clarity on the ways in which genomics is shaping our personal and communal experience—and what we should do to enhance benefits and mitigate harms. The initiative is made possible by a National Endowment for the Humanities challenge grant and many generous board members and friends of The Hastings Center.

It’s standing room only at our workshop at the World Conference of Science Journalists.
Belgrade, Serbia

The Hastings Center cosponsored an international conference in Belgrade, Serbia in August. Mildred Solomon delivered introductory remarks. Josephine Johnston, director of research, spoke about the potential for gene editing to generate new responsibilities for parents and prospective parents to use the technologies in hope of benefiting their children. Such responsibilities could be burdensome if they compel parents and prospective parents to navigate uncertain genomic information and require significant expenses. Hastings Center research scholar Carolyn P. Neuhaus spoke about the need for meaningful public deliberation on research proposals to release genetically modified insects into communities to find out if they can help reduce the spread of insect-borne illnesses. (Read more on pages 6-7.)
**New Zealand**

Director of research Josephine Johnston was selected for the Prestigious Speaker series presented by the Royal Society of New Zealand and hosted by Radio New Zealand, the country’s public broadcaster. She spoke throughout the country in September about the prospects of using gene editing technologies for a wide range of purposes, including to treat or prevent disease, to create “enhanced” babies, in agriculture, and as part of efforts to conserve New Zealand’s native species. In this wide variety of contexts, she emphasized the need to closely examine each potential use in detail, including its scientific, cultural, and ethical implications.

![Josephine Johnston gives a lecture as part of the Prestigious Speaker series in New Zealand.](image)

**Garrison, New York**

How can we promote responsible science, good governance, and opportunities for public engagement at a time when anti-intellectualism is on the rise and society remains dangerously polarized? The Hastings Center and the Union of Concerned Scientists organized a public event at The Hastings Center in November in which scientists and bioethicists shared ideas for educating and engaging members of the public so that they can deliberate about what responsible science and good governance should be. “To ensure the benefits, we need to develop global and local forms of good governance. We need to embrace evidence,” said Mildred Solomon. “We also need to think about ends—what kind of society do we want to build with our awesome new powers? What virtues and values should we preserve?” Solomon later spoke about the role of public engagement in making science policy.

![l. to r.: Mildred Solomon, Peter Frumhoff (Union of Concerned Scientists), Josephine Johnston, Kenneth Kimmell (UCS), David Wright (UCS), and Gregory Kaebnick](image)
Guiding the Fate of the Earth

We now have the power to override natural selection and introduce specific genetic traits into the wild for desired purposes. Scientists are genetically altering insects and other animals to render them unable to spread diseases such as malaria or harm agricultural crops. They're also trying to recreate extinct species. But even if we can do these things, should we? Who decides? How? The fate of the earth depends on the answers. For nearly 50 years Hastings Center scholars have been offering guidance about the use of emerging technologies that can reshape and remake the natural world. But today, the technological breakthroughs are more powerful and guidance more important than ever.

Should We Recreate Extinct Species?

Scientists are using genetic technologies to try to recreate the wooly mammoth and other extinct species, as well as to conserve threatened species. Questions about “de-extinction” were the focus of the 2017 Isaac Asimov Memorial Debate at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, featuring Hastings Center research scholar Gregory Kaebnick and Neil deGrasse Tyson, director of the Hayden Planetarium and popular author. Kaebnick argues against making categorical pronouncements about whether we should proceed with de-extinction. He recommends evaluating each application on a case-by-case basis—and having society-wide discussions about the benefits and drawbacks of each potential use. Questions about whether de-extinction efforts can support, coexist with, or undermine the goals of conservation were explored in depth in a Hastings Center special report, *Recreating the Wild: De-Extinction, Technology, and the Ethics of Conservation*, edited by Kaebnick and Bruce Jennings, a Hastings Center Fellow.

Two key questions emerged: Do we have a moral obligation to recreate extinct species, particularly those that have gone extinct because of human activity? And should we explore ways to use genetic technologies to help threatened species adapt to climate change?

In My Backyard?

An issue gaining prominence in communities around the world, including on local ballots, is whether to permit researchers to release genetically modified insects and animals into the environment to see if they can control the spread of diseases such as malaria and curb agricultural damage. Residents should have a say in whether and how these field trials take place—leading advisory bodies, including the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, recommend community engagement before and during such trials. But there is no agreement about what community engagement means, how to do it, and what to do when experts and community members disagree. Hastings Center research scholar Carolyn P. Neuhaus warns that legal mechanisms in the U.S. fail to seriously engage the public. She has proposed ways of designing and carrying out community engagement about field trials of genetically modified insects to address persistent public health challenges. “Field trials might affect hundreds, thousands, or even millions of people,” Neuhaus says. “Involving community members, especially minority and marginalized members, in risk assessment, site selection, and experimental design not only shows respect for communities but also improves outcomes. Obtaining authorization for the experiment legitimates the decision to go ahead with—or reject—a field trial against the wishes of some community members.”
In her keynote address at the Future of Health conference in Denver, before an audience of health care and biotechnology leaders, Hastings Center president Mildred Solomon outlined four critical questions that should be answered before society moves forward with any new technology:

1. Should the technology be developed in the first place?
2. If a technology is going to proceed, to what purposes should it be deployed?
3. How should it proceed?
4. Once norms have been set, how will the field be monitored to ensure adherence?

The answers to these questions, she said, “must rely on facts, but also on values—like a commitment to ensuring that all people, regardless of ability to pay, will reap the benefits of these new tools, so that the gap between haves and have-nots does not grow worse.” In answering those questions, she continued, “we will need deliberate, thoughtful conversations about values that are often hard to reconcile. This effort will engender strong differences of opinion, but that is exactly why we must begin.”

Thirteen philanthropic organizations around the world, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Wellcome Trust, endorsed the principles for responsible research on gene drives, an emerging technology that aims to override natural selection by promoting the preferential inheritance of desired traits in plants and animals. Scientists are preparing to field test the technology in mosquitoes in Africa to control malaria. The principles were proposed by a committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, which included Hastings Center research scholar Gregory Kaebnick. They are:

- Advance quality science to promote the public good.
- Promote stewardship, safety, and good governance.
- Demonstrate transparency and accountability.
- Engage thoughtfully with affected communities, stakeholders, and publics.
- Foster opportunities to strengthen capacity and education.
Reimagining Autonomy and Justice in Reproductive Medicine

Innovations in assisted reproduction and genetics generate more information and new choices for prospective parents. At the same time, longstanding debates about abortion are leading to increasingly restrictive laws in many U.S. states, while prejudices result in women of color being punished when they miscarry or suffer a stillbirth. These divergent trends create puzzles for reproductive autonomy—do more options lead to greater freedom?—while also raising questions about whether health care systems and regulators are fair to all patients.

These tensions were examined at “The Ethics of Making Babies,” Harvard Medical School’s Annual Bioethics Conference, cosponsored by The Hastings Center, in April 2017. Many of the conference presentations became essays in Just Reproduction: Reimagining Autonomy in Reproductive Medicine, a special report of the Hastings Center Report, in November. Experts from medicine, law, and bioethics discussed the ethical implications of reproductive technologies and disparities in access to them. Josephine Johnston, The Hastings Center’s director of research, and Rachel Zacharias, a research assistant and project manager, co-edited the report with Louise P. King, of Harvard.

The report presented several arguments. For example, lack of insurance coverage for fertility treatments like IVF unjustly denies people the opportunity to have a family. Commercial motives in the egg freezing industry distort women’s medical choices. Criminal law is being used to unjustly punish certain women—primarily poor women of color—for their behavior during pregnancy or for their birth outcomes. Policies supporting people with disabilities can reduce pressure on women to terminate pregnancies when prenatal testing reveals disabilities. These articles share a commitment to empowering women and prospective parents and to fairly and equitably supporting their family building goals.
Citizenship and Justice in Aging Societies

“Late life is a period that may last 10 or 15 years, in which longevity is often accompanied by chronic illness, as well as economic precarity—housing insecurity, food insecurity, or difficulty paying for needed care. Bioethics issues relevant to late life include, but are not limited to, medical decision-making. There is no easy fix—neither transhumanism nor robots will resolve these challenges. To begin working toward solutions that support a good life late in life, we must learn to see ourselves as fellow citizens—a single ‘us’—of an aging society, then ask, what do we owe those of us who are older adults? What do we owe those of us who do care work? What do we owe our communities, so all residents have chances to live good lives? And how can we recognize and challenge public policies that increase suffering or worsen inequalities in late life?”

—Nancy Berlinger, Hastings Center research scholar

Impact of The Hastings Center’s Work

“Through Hastings convenings, I had the unusual opportunity to interact with scholars and practitioners from bioethics, gerontology, medicine, philosophy, philanthropy, and economics to explore how our collective work looks at older age and the ways our society might better support—and celebrate—this phase of life. It has deepened how I think about my work on aging and the built environment and its relationships to medicine, health care, and ethics. The Hastings Center’s effort to consider what it means to live in an aging society, and what we owe those in older age, is timely and vital.”

—Jennifer Molinsky, senior research associate, Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University
2017 Scholars and Projects

**Health and Health Care**

- **Empowering Cancer Patients Through Innovations in Information Technology-Based Reporting of Precision Medicine** · Sarah McGraw (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality under subcontract from City of Hope)

- **Ethical Issues in Prescription Drug Access Under Restricted Distribution Programs** · Sarah McGraw (Greenwall Foundation under subcontract from Brigham & Women’s Hospital)

- **Governance of Learning Activities in Learning Healthcare Systems** · Sarah McGraw and Mildred Solomon (Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute under subcontract from the University of Pennsylvania)

- **The Battle over Evidence: Medicare and the Fight for Evidence-Based Medicine** · Karen Maschke and Michael Gusmano (Gaylin Fund)

- **The Football Players Health Study at Harvard University, Law and Ethics Initiative** · Sarah McGraw (National Football League Players Association under subcontract from Harvard Medical School)

**Children and Families**

- **Goals and Practices for Next-Generation Prenatal Testing** · Josephine Johnston (National Institutes of Health/National Human Genome Research Institute)

- **Sequencing of Newborn Blood Spot DNA to Improve and Expand Newborn Screening** · Josephine Johnston and Erik Parens (National Institutes of Health under subcontract from University of California, San Francisco)

**Aging, Chronic Conditions, and End of Life**

- **Care Transitions in Aging Societies: Singapore Casebook, 2nd Edition** · Nancy Berlinger and Michael Gusmano (Lien Foundation under subcontract from the National University of Singapore)

- **The Last Stage of Life: A Planning Process for The Hastings Center’s Program Area on Aging, Chronic Conditions, and the End of Life** · Nancy Berlinger and Mildred Solomon (The Robert W. Wilson Charitable Trust and the Boger, Callahan and Gaylin Funds)

**Science and the Self**

- **Center for Research on the Ethical, Legal and Social Implications of Psychiatric, Neurologic and Behavioral (PNB) Genetics** · Erik Parens and Josephine Johnston (National Institutes of Health under subcontract from Columbia University Medical Center)

- **Control and Responsible Innovation in the Development of Autonomous Machines** · Wendell Wallach (Future of Life Institute)

- **Gene Editing and Human Flourishing** · Erik Parens and Josephine Johnston (John Templeton Foundation)

- **The Boger Initiative for the Wise Use of Emerging Technologies** · Mildred Solomon (Joshua Boger)

**Humans and Nature**

- **Values in Impact Assessment** · Gregory Kaebnick, Michael Gusmano, and Karen Maschke (National Science Foundation)

**Education**

- **Chinese University of Hong Kong-Hastings Center Scholarly Exchange** · Nancy Berlinger (Edgar Cheng)

- **The Bioethics Project: A Bioethics Research Program for High School Students** · Josephine Johnston (Kent Place School)

- **The Hastings Center Bioethics Briefings** · Susan Gilbert (private donor)
2017 Visiting Scholars

The Hastings Center welcomes scholars from around the world to pursue independent research on bioethics topics. Many come through our visiting scholars program, staying for up to eight weeks. Others attend an annual daylong bioethics institute as part of the Yale-Hastings Program in Ethics and Health Policy. In 2017, visiting scholars included high school students, college students, postgraduates, and professionals.
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P...
## Hastings Sponsored/Cosponsored Events

- **The Ethics of Gene Editing: Should Concerns Beyond Safety Matter in Science Policy?** A panel organized by The Hastings Center and including Hastings president Mildred Z. Solomon and director of research Josephine Johnston. AAAS annual meeting, Boston, February 17.

- **Science, Ethics, and Engagement in the Governance of Gene Drives: It Takes a Village**, with Gregory Kaebnick, a Hastings Center research scholar, AAAS annual meeting, Boston, February 17.


- **The Ethics of Making Babies**, Harvard Medical School Center for Bioethics’ Annual Bioethics Conference, with Josephine Johnston, director of research, Harvard Medical School, April 6-7.

- **Is It Time to Move the Moral Line in Human Embryo Research?** Ali Brivanlou, a developmental biologist at Rockefeller University, discussed cutting-edge research in his lab and elsewhere on human embryos and “synthetic embryos” created with pluripotent stem cells. The Hastings Center Advisory Council meeting at The Hastings Center, June 1.

- **Recreating the Wild: De-extinction, Technology, and the Ethics of Conservation**, a discussion and reception celebrating the publication of The Hastings Center’s special report on de-extinction, featuring Gregory Kaebnick, Hastings Center research scholar and editor, Hastings Center Report, at The Hastings Center, September 17.

- **What if We Woke Up and the Democrats and Republicans Were Willing to Work Together on Health Care?** Timothy Jost, of Health Affairs, speaking at The Hastings Center Advisory Council meeting, October 12.

- **Responsible Science in a Perilous Time**, an event organized by The Hastings Center and the Union of Concerned Scientists, at The Hastings Center, November 4.

## Research Project Meetings


- **The Bioethics Project**, The Hastings Center, February 14


- **The Last Stage of Life**, New York, N.Y., March 28-29

- **The Last Stage of Life**, Boston, October 4-5

*Keep up with our events listing and research news by visiting our website: www.thehastingscenter.org.*
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- David R. Walt, PhD – University Professor, Professor of Chemistry, Professor of Genetics, Professor of Biomedical Engineering, Tufts University
The Hastings Center advisory council meetings featured prominent speakers on ethical issues raised by news in science and health policy. At the June 1 meeting, Ali Brivanlou, a developmental biologist at Rockefeller University, spoke about cutting-edge research in his lab and elsewhere on human embryos. This research could lead to medical benefits, such as the growth of human organs for transplantation, but it also poses major ethical questions: At what point does a human embryo have moral status? And should research on human embryos stop before then?

The October 12 advisory council meeting featured Timothy S. Jost, a contributing editor for Health Affairs, the nation’s leading health policy journal, who asked: What if we woke up and the Democrats and Republicans were willing to work together on health care? He addressed the major values on which progressives and conservatives tend to converge and differ and how they might find common ground.
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We remember and thank the following two people whose bequests we received in 2017.

Adrienne Asch
Adrienne Asch, a Hastings Center Fellow, was the Edward and Robin Milstein professor of bioethics at Yeshiva University in Manhattan and directed its Center for Ethics. A pioneer in disability studies, Asch participated in many Hastings Center projects.

Major Elise Stern
A flight nurse in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam War, Major Elise Stern drew wisdom from Hastings Center publications and recommendations for her work with patients. She developed an interest in The Hastings Center in its early days and remembered it in her last.
Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2017

Assets
Cash and Equivalents 919,383
Investments, at fair value 7,266,580
Receivables (grants and other) 361,325
Other Assets 32,558
Furniture and Equipment (net of accumulated dep) 28,263
Leasehold Improvements (net of accumulated amort) 1,023,010
Total Assets 9,631,119

Liabilities and Net Assets
Payables and Accruals 112,482
Deferred Compensation Payable 170,599
Deferred Revenue 26,477
Total Liabilities 309,558
Net Assets 9,321,561
Total Liabilities and Net Assets 9,631,119

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

Operating revenues and other support:
Grants, Gifts, and Contributions 1,619,080
Government Grants 710,142
Publication Revenue 363,160
Other income 91,017
Total Unrestricted Operating Support and Revenue 2,783,399

Operating Expenses
Program Services 2,788,629
Management and General 512,436
Fund Raising 200,054
Total Operating Expense 3,501,119

Changes in Net Assets from Operations (717,720)
Non-operating Income 907,119
Change in Net Assets 189,399

Net Assets, Beginning of year (as restated) 9,132,162

Net Assets, End of year 9,321,561

Unrestricted Operating Revenue and Support
For the year ended 12/31/17 = $3,681,288

Operating Expenses
For the year ended 12/31/17 = $3,501,119
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