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**Goals:**

- Have students consider the ramifications of gene-editing technology.
- Have students consider if technological advancements “outpace” moral rules, and what role philosophers have in resolving moral controversies.

**Plan:**

- Do icebreaker activity.
- Ask discussion questions.
- Conclude.

**Activity:**

- First, ask the students which traits of theirs they would like their children to inherit and if there are any traits of theirs that they would not like their children to inherit.
- Then ask if they would be willing to use gene editing to accomplish the inheritance of said traits.
- Transition to discussion questions.

**Discussion Questions:**

- How ought we evaluate a prospective parent’s decision to gene edit?
  - Absolutes:
    - Is gene editing absolutely bad? Even in instances of eliminating disabilities or proneness to disease?
    - Is gene editing absolutely good? Even if a racist parent wants to change the skin tone of a child?
  - Spectrum:
    - Ought we evaluate the morality of gene editing on a spectrum?
    - If so, what are the criteria that makes gene editing morally permissible in some instances, yet morally impermissible in others?
    - If philosophers are unable to identify such criteria and assuming that some philosophy is meant to guide our lives, then ought philosophy still have implications on our lives?
- Who decides? Do parents have rights? What rights do they have? What rights do children have?
- How does gene editing compare to other medical interventions—surgery, medication, etc. What do we think of these?

- Edge case: reconstructive plastic surgery after an accident...what is the difference between this, cancer treatment, and rhinoplasty? Is there a difference? What is the principle?
- Has technology outpaced morality?
  - Debates about autonomous cars, facial recognition software, and gene editing technology were unspoken of in the last century. Can the “rules” and norms of philosophy still remain consistent, even in the modern world? I.e. can we keep applying classic, philosophical doctrines like utilitarianism and deontology to modern problems?
  - Can we come up with moral dicta that will always be true? (‘do not kill for no reason’) Any that apply to technology use?
  - What is ‘technology’? Does it have a mind of its own? Who controls its use? Who should?
- Should mankind have this kind of power? Or, should it exclusively remain in the domain of God, nature, etc.?
  - Does power come with qualifications, responsibilities? Can it be revoked?
- Perhaps we disagree with some instances of gene editing on the grounds of their frivolity (adding height, etc.). But who ought to determine what is frivolous (what if a family has been tall for generations and wants to ensure this tradition is continued)?
- Some in the deaf community oppose using gene editing to “cure” deafness; they argue that deafness does not need a scientific cure but that the cultural view of deafness does. How do we evaluate this and balance between respecting experiences / desires of those that are different than us and maximizing health / happiness?
  - There are similar sentiments from some in the dwarfism community. Is it the same?