



News, Research and Events

Feb. 14, 2020



### Should scientists create 'designer' babies?

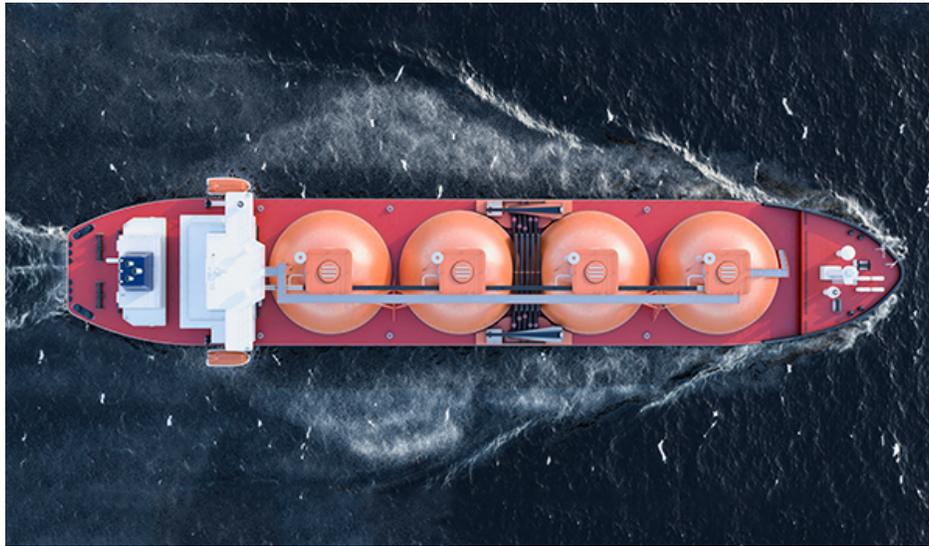
In 2018, Chinese scientist He Jiankui announced that he had created the first gene-edited humans, disregarding the ethical and safety concerns of the scientific community. Experts around the world immediately condemned this experiment, and a court in China has since sentenced He Jiankui to three years in prison. But now that the technology exists to genetically modify humans, what is next? Are we entering an era of "designer babies," or does this technology represent an ethical nightmare waiting to happen? Fellow [Kirstin R.W. Matthews](#) joins our Policy Matters podcast this week to explain this technology and the future of gene editing. [LISTEN](#)

---

***President Trump's plan to return U.S. astronauts to the moon by 2024 "is certainly not reasonable. I think it's going to end up being much more costly [than expected] and I'm not sure it's going to be doable."***

[George W.S. Abbey](#), senior fellow in space policy, to [ABC6](#)

---



## Trade wars put U.S., global energy security at risk

Policies that raise barriers to international trade are generally detrimental to U.S. and global energy security, according to a new research paper by experts in the Center for Energy Studies and at the Korea Energy Economics Institute.

[“Mercantilism’s Groundhog Day: The U.S.-China Trade War and Some Regional Energy Market Implications,”](#) by Ken Medlock, Ted Temzelides and Woongtae Chung, examines the potential impacts of the U.S.-China trade dispute for U.S. and Northeast Asian economies, with a specific focus on energy markets.

The authors found that trade barriers create “uncertainty, harm investment and harm efficiency, ultimately leading to higher prices. Market depth, which is critical for energy security, can be compromised if policy becomes burdensome for new investments, capital flows, and market participation.”

Browse the Baker Institute [research library](#) for our latest publications.

---

## Institute names senior development officers



**Leah Gross** is the Baker Institute’s new director of development for major gifts. She has over a decade of fundraising experience, and served as senior director of philanthropy at the Houston Museum of Natural Science prior to joining the institute. Leah has also served in development positions at Texas Children’s Hospital and the University of Houston Law Center.

“I’m honored to join the Baker Institute community and am inspired by its mission of bridging the world of ideas and the world of action. I look forward to working with the institute’s fellows, scholars and staff,” Leah said. Contact her at 713-348-2977 or [leah.gross@rice.edu](mailto:leah.gross@rice.edu).



**Chetna Cates** has been promoted to a new position, director of membership, that will focus on the [Roundtable](#) and [Roundtable Young Professionals](#) groups. Chetna joined the institute in 2017 and, since taking on responsibility for membership in 2018, has successfully grown this important component of the institute’s activities. [Click here](#) to learn more about Roundtable membership or contact Chetna at 713-348-4945 or [chetna.cates@rice.edu](mailto:chetna.cates@rice.edu).

---

## Upcoming Events

**RYP Happy Hour — Go Texan Day.** Celebrate Go Texan Day with the Roundtable Young Professionals at the Armadillo Palace. Members, bring a friend or colleague to pick up a door prize at this happy hour! **Feb. 26 | 6:00 pm**

**Perspectives on Mexico's Economy.** José Antonio González Anaya, one of Mexico's leading economists and a former CEO of Pemex, discusses the outlook for Mexico's economy and oil sector. **Feb. 28 | 9:30 am**

**The Age of Coexistence: The Making of the Modern Arab World.** Ussama Makdisi, the Arab-American Educational Foundation Chair of Arab Studies at Rice, discusses his latest book, which provides a fuller understanding of the contemporary Middle East. **March 2 | 6:30 pm**

Visit our [events page](#) for a complete list.

---

## Get Involved with the Baker Institute

Become a member of the [Baker Institute Roundtable](#) and [Roundtable Young Professionals](#). Contact [our development office](#) for more information on how you can join the conversation on the relevant issues and ideas that shape our world.



[Unsubscribe](#) | [Privacy policy](#)

Copyright © 2020 Baker Institute for Public Policy  
Rice University, MS-40, P.O. Box 1892, Houston, TX 77251-189214