

No Patents on Life! Campaign Newsletter

June, 2015

HEALTH

- **WHO: Roundup ingredient is ‘probably carcinogenic’**

March, 2015

<http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/iarcnews/pdf/MonographVolume112.pdf>

It has been scientifically proven that eating GM food alters our own DNA.

<http://www.resurgence.org/magazine/article4299-a-rebellion-of-the-spirit.html>

- **Why Genetically Modified Crops Pose a Threat to Peasants, Food Sovereignty, Health, and Biodiversity**

August, 2014

Official statistics from the US demonstrate that GM crops produce less per hectare than the seeds that were already available on the market, but have resulted in an exponential increase in the use of agritoxins. They have also had serious negative impacts on both public health and the environment in every country where they have been grown on a large scale. They have not reduced hunger around the world.

<http://www.etcgroup.org/content/why-genetically-modified-crops-pose-threat-peasants-food-sovereignty-health-and-biodiversity>

- **GM rice to solve Japan’s pollen allergy problem?**

January, 2015

Scientists at Jikei University School of Medicine in Tokyo have genetically modified rice in an attempt to desensitize our bodies to Japanese cedar pollen. They have singled out the agent in the pollen that causes our immune systems to attack the normally harmless substance. The idea is that if you start intaking the agent a little bit at a time, your body will stop seeing it as the enemy and thus, not react, even when exposed to the substance in higher quantities. It’s a technique called allergy immunotherapy. Usually this desensitization process is done through shots or pills, but because so much of the Japanese population is effected by hay fever and everyone eats rice, scientists thought of a more user-friendly method of medicating: modifying rice to include small amounts of the allergen. (Ed: user-friendly?)

<http://www.japantoday.com/category/health/view/genetically-altered-rice-could-solve-japans-pollen-allergy-problem>

CONTAMINATION

- The Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association filed a lawsuit against Monsanto for contamination and they got a partial victory stating that Monsanto could no longer sue farmers for inadvertent contamination.

April, 2014

http://responsibleeatingandliving.com/?page_id=13316
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organic_Seed_Growers_and_Trade_Association

- GM plants found on Nagoya University campus

May, 2015

A plant species that was genetically modified for research has been found growing on the premises of Nagoya University, in a possible violation of a law to prevent the diffusion of such plants.

<http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20150523p2a00m0na010000c.html>

- iPS cell center apologizes for lax control of GM mice

March, 2014

A world-renowned stem cell research center in Japan apologized for its sloppy laboratory conditions, including multiple occasions in which live genetically modified mice were found in a washing area for scientific instruments.

http://ajw.asahi.com/article/behind_news/social_affairs/AJ201403010049

PATENTS

- European Patent Office upholds broccoli, tomato patents

March, 2015

The Enlarged Board of Appeal of the European Patent Office (EPO) has decided on the precedent cases of broccoli and tomato. The EPO made clear that while processes for crossing and selection cannot be patented, plants and animals stemming from these processes are still patentable. This illogical decision was a long awaited outcome of a precedent case on the patentability of plants and animals derived from conventional breeding.

<http://no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/information/news/european-patent-office-upholds-patents-broccoli-and-tomato>

- **GM apple approved**

March, 2015

The Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN) today denounced the Canadian government's decision to approve the first-ever GM apple. The apple is genetically engineered not to turn brown after being cut. The US government also has decided to allow commercialization of the GM apple. (The US FDA does no independent, pre-market safety testing of GE food.)

<http://www.cban.ca/Press/Press-Releases/CBAN-denounces-federal-decision-to-approve-GM-apple>

http://salsa3.salsalabs.com/o/1881/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=15648

- **Off-patent GM soybeans**

December 2014

A variety of GM herbicide-tolerant soybeans has been released by the University of Arkansas with no technology fees, and no license agreements to sign. Farmers are free to save the seeds and replant them ad infinitum. This is possible because the patent for the first genetically engineered trait in soybeans – Roundup Ready – has expired.

<http://www.biofortified.org/2014/12/off-patent-gmo-soybeans-what-happens-now/>

DEATH

- **Farmer suicides in India**

April, 2014

Anthropologist Glenn Stone points out that even though the horrific trend of farmer suicides in India (over 10,000/year for the last ten years) cannot be laid at the feet of GM crops, it is also true that "Bt (GM) seed also appears to be exacerbating a key problem underlying the suicides: technology treadmills." In short: GM crops do not necessarily help small farmers, and in many ways contribute to existing trends that hurt them by tying them to a "modern" system that drives up debts, pushes farmers to ever expand their territory no matter the cost to the environment, often hurts already-poor farmers and the landless, ... [Editor: expanding their territory may mean deforestation and loss of habitat for wild animals, which then attack people and are often killed.]

<http://www.iatp.org/blog/201505/upcoming-interview-with-iatp's-dr-jahi-chappell-on-gmos-for-hbo's-vice-sthsh.uKJJTbJJ.dpuf>

- **2,4-D (by Vandana Shiva)**

December, 2014

This pattern of double standards, of privatising profits and socialising disaster [Editor: Corporations keep the profits for themselves, but make society — all of us — pay to clean up the damage they cause: when it comes to profits, they are capitalists; but when it comes to damage and costs, they are socialists, i.e., economic hypocrites], runs through the pattern of corporate rule being institutionalised since Bhopal. Dow, along with Monsanto, is involved in pushing hazardous, untested GMOs on society, along with the same war-based chemicals such GMOs rely on. Monsanto introduced crops resistant to the systemic herbicide glyphosate (Roundup) as a magic bullet to control weeds. About 65 million acres of US farmland have now been taken over by weeds that have developed resistance to it. In October 2014, in spite of protests from citizens and scientists, the US Environmental Protection Agency gave final approval to Dow's Enlist Duo genetically engineered corn and soya, which are resistant to both glyphosate and 2,4-D one of the ingredients in Agent Orange, the defoliant that was blamed for numerous health problems suffered during and after the Vietnam war. (Editor: what will happen when weeds develop resistance to 2,4-D?)

<http://www.resurgence.org/magazine/article4343-remembering-bhopal.html>

- **Terminator threat looms over Brazil**

May, 2015

Senator Katia Abreu presented to the National Congress a bill to release so-called Terminator or suicide seeds – sterile seeds that do not produce viable seeds, forcing farmers to buy new seed every year. Scientists fear that Terminator genes engineered into the seed could leak out, destroying other crops and wild plant populations, leaving only the GM variety with the Terminator gene.

<http://www.gmwatch.org/index.php/news/archive/2015-articles/16153-terminator-threat-looms-over-brazil>

- **Depopulation as a geo-strategic tool**

May, 2015

The US also regards depopulation as a potential geo-strategic tool in the quest for control of global resources. What better way to achieve this via a (GM) tampered-with food system that US agribusiness has increasingly come to dominate? What about 'spermicidal corn' for example? In

Mexico, there is concern about biopharmaceutical corn. Some years ago, Silvia Ribeiro, of the ETC organization, stated: “The potential of spermicidal corn as a biological weapon is outrageous, since it easily interbreeds with other varieties, is capable of going undetected and could lodge itself at the very core of indigenous and farming cultures. We have witnessed the execution of repeated sterilization campaigns performed against indigenous communities. This method is certainly much more difficult to trace.”

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/sowing-the-gmo-seeds-of-depopulation/5450801>

OPPOSITION TO GMOS

▪ Monsanto patent on tomatoes revoked

December, 2014

Patent EP1812575 held by the US company Monsanto has been revoked by the European Patent Office (EPO) after the international coalition No Patents on Seeds! filed an opposition in May 2014. The patent covered conventionally bred tomatoes with a natural resistance to a fungal disease called botrytis, which were claimed as an invention. The original tomatoes used for this patent were accessed via an international gene bank in Germany, and it was already known that these plants had the desired resistance. Monsanto produced a cleverly worded patent in order to create the impression that genetic engineering had been used to produce the tomatoes and to make it look 'inventive'. “(T)his patent ... was more or less based on a combination of fraud, abuse of patent law and biopiracy.” The EPO has already granted more than a hundred patents on the conventional breeding of plants even though “essentially biological processes for the production of plants and animals” and “plant varieties” are excluded from patentability.

<http://no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/information/news/after-opposition-monsanto-patent-tomatoes-revoked>

▪ Opposition to Monsanto soybean patent biopiracy

December, 2014

The coalition of No Patents on Seeds! has filed an opposition against a European patent held by the US company Monsanto. They are accusing Monsanto of biopiracy. The patent EP2134870 was granted in February 2014 by the European Patent Office (EPO) and covers selecting soybean plants adapted to various climate zones for further breeding. For the patent, Monsanto screened more than 250 plants from “exotic” species closely related to the soybean. They were screened specifically for their genetic

diversity regarding climate adaptation and the period of time needed to maturity and harvest. The plants were taken from both wild and cultivated species in Asia and Australia.

<http://no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/information/news/opposition-on-stop-monsanto-soybean-patent-biopiracy>

▪ Dow & Monsanto sue Maui to stop law banning GMOs

December, 2014

In November 2014, Maui County of Hawaii voted to become GMO-free. Dow and Monsanto immediately sued Maui to stop the law banning GMO cultivation.

<http://mauiwatch.com/tag/gmo/>

▪ Protests

January, 2015

2014 marked another year of staving off a transgenic invasion in Mexico. Civil society and peasant movements along with the Peoples’ Permanent Tribunal stymied the corporations in the genetic center of origin for maize. Mayan farmers and beekeepers prevailed against Monsanto when a judge ruled that the company’s transgenic soy posed a threat to Yucatán lands and couldn’t be planted. Monsanto took more fire when UPOV (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants) 91 (‘the Monsanto Law’) in Chile and Guatemala was suspended; an Italian regional court upheld the country’s ban on planting MON810 maize; and, in Córdoba, Argentina, protests to halt Monsanto’s glyphosate factory continued.

<http://www.etcgroup.org/content/2014-year-was>

http://www.grain.org/bulletin_board/entries/4915-chile-derails-monsanto-law-that-would-privatise-seeds

▪ The Permanent Peoples’ Tribunal in Mexico

February, 2015

From October 2011 to November 2014, Mexican civil society documented seven processes summarising an unsustainable situation: generalised violence (tens of thousands of disappeared, repression, militarisation, imprisonment and over 100 thousand assassinations); environmental devastation; precarisation of workers’ rights and repression of independent unions; gender violence and hate crimes; expulsion/inexorable migration; absence of press freedoms and violence against journalists; and the comprehensive attack against peasant life, food sovereignty and collective land tenancy.

The so-called structural reforms and international public policies promoted since the eighties are responsible, in conjunction with constitutional changes and reforms to

laws and regulations, for the dismantling of legal and institutional protections at the expense of peasant communities. The subordination of Mexican agriculture to the interests of an industrialised global food system dominated by a few transnational corporations and the disempowering of the peasantry to the point where it isn't profitable for them to produce their own food are direct effects of these policies and free trade agreements (which function as padlocks to make them irreversible).

In November 2013, the final hearing on Violence against Maize, Food Sovereignty and Peoples' Autonomy declared: There is an open war, of a criminal character, against the autonomous subsistence of ... the indigenous peoples and peasant communities. In dispossessing them of their independent means of subsistence, one condemns them to migration, dependence on assistance programs, misery, marginalisation and death... The imposition of an intensive agroindustrial model –which includes transgenics as one of its most extreme elements – by the Mexican State and corporations such as Monsanto, Syngenta, Dow, BASF or Cargill, constitutes not only an attack against a culture, but also a veritable war against subsistence, spearheaded via the confection of laws to prevent the defence of peasant agriculture and independent food production.

The war against subsistence leads to the privatisation of knowledge and discoveries, which leads to even privatising life itself. Intellectual property, patents, plant breeders' rights ... are established to expressly criminalise the ownership and free exchange of native ancestral seeds. GM crops are the greatest weapon against independent food production. In the last fourteen years, the government has adopted a variety of contamination strategies.

“As Mexico is the genetic reservoir of this pillar of world food security, the sowing of transgenic maize in the country must be prohibited.” In 2010, Pat Mooney, director of the ETC Group, affirmed: “If you lose the battle in the centre of origin of maize, then we will lose the centres of origin of agricultural diversity everywhere in the world. We cannot win if you [Mexicans] lose.” ... it is nearly impossible to clearly distinguish the State and its interests from those of land-coveting national or foreign businessmen. <http://www.grain.org/article/entries/5130-structural-reforms-free-trade-agreements-and-the-war-on-subsistence>

• GE eucalyptus trees in Brazil

March, 2015

The Brazilian Biosafety Commission (CTNBio) was due to meet Thursday 5 March to decide whether or not to legalize

the commercial development of GE eucalyptus trees in the country, as requested by biotechnology company FuturaGene. The US government recently approved the first GM tree, a loblolly pine, with no government or public oversight, and with no assessment of their risks to the public or the environment. However, 300 peasants took over the building where CTNBio was meeting and the meeting was cancelled. On the same day, 1,000 women took over operations of Futuragene across Brazil. The action included the destruction of GE eucalyptus seedlings.

<http://stopgetrees.org/report-backs-global-day-action-ge-trees/>

<http://www.cban.ca/Resources/Topics/GE-Trees>

• ‘Climate-Smart Technology’

May, 2015

According to the advocates of so-called climate smart agriculture, these are exactly the technologies governments are going to need if they want food security in the midst of climate chaos – and reduced competition is a small price to pay to get big corporate money and know-how behind high-risk research. For the most part, public sector institutes like the Green Revolution's Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) have just slapped a new label on old research aimed at developing stress-tolerant plant varieties. For the private sector, “climate-smart” implies a patent rush on genetic traits for abiotic stress-tolerance (e.g., drought, heat or salt resistance). The big companies' multi-decade focus on herbicide tolerance has meant that they have neglected or negated much more important stress-tolerant traits and have actually undermined plant resilience. The shift to climate smart traits lets the companies slip in a battery of synthetic biology techniques (GMOs on steroids) they hope will evade the regulatory scrutiny, such as it is, afforded to GM seeds.

<http://www.etcgroup.org/content/seedy-characters>

• CRISPR-CAS9

January, 2015

Meanwhile, companies are working hard to take the GM out of GMOs. Three years ago, nobody in the world of genetics had heard of CRISPR-CAS9. Now it's the craze sweeping the biotech world and revolutionizing the genetic engineering of life. Dubbed “the biggest biotech breakthrough of the century,” the ability to rapidly ‘edit’ genomes at multiple locations is being promised to deliver everything from dinosaur de-extinction to disease extinction. It's also the subject of bitter patent litigation as the first

“genetically edited” organisms are getting approval in the market as non-GMO.

<http://www.etcgroup.org/content/2014-year-was>

- **Scientists ask Pope Francis to intervene on GM seeds**
August, 2014

At the request of major peasant organizations, and with the permission of Pope Francis, a group of scientists and agricultural experts have now made public a letter and document on the problem of GM seeds that was sent to the Vatican April 30. Signed by eight experts from Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, India and Canada, the letter and accompanying document call upon the pope to speak out against the negative impacts of GM seeds on the world’s peasants and global food security.

<http://www.etcgroup.org/content/peasants-scientists-ask-pope-francis-intervene-gm-seeds>

FRAUD

- **“Independent authors” funded by GM companies**
March, 2015

The ‘independent’ authors of a study calling for GM crops to be fast-tracked into Britain’s farms and kitchens all have links to the industry.

<http://theholisticworks.com/2015/03/30/so-called-independent-authors-of-independent-study-on-gms-for-government-are-funded-by-the-gm-companies/-more-5571>

- **Altered Genes, Twisted Truth (book by Steven Druker)**
March, 2015

“Druker’s brilliant expose catches the promoters of GE food red-handed: falsifying data, corrupting regulators, lying to Congress. He thoroughly demonstrates how distortions and deceptions have been piled one on top of another, year after year, producing a global industry that teeters on a foundation of fraud and denial.”

<http://www.responsibletechnology.org/posts/now-available-altered-genes-twisted-truth-by-steve-druker/>

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

- **Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)**

January, April 2015

Since the late 1990s, the US and Europe have been pushing bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) into Africa as tools to gain market advantages for their transnational corporations.

This affects seeds. Bilateral FTAs tend to set standards that go beyond the global standards set, for example, at the World Trade Organization. The WTO TRIPS Agreement, which most African countries are party to, says that members do not have to grant patents on plants and animals. But it does require that members implement some kind of intellectual property protection on plant varieties without stipulating what form this should take.

Not content with the terms of the TRIPS Agreement, the US and Europe have been going further and signing bilateral trade deals with African states that specifically require the signatory governments to implement the provisions of UPOV or, worse, to become member of the Union. Some FTAs even require full-fledged industrial patenting of seeds.

African governments are being co-opted into reviewing their seed trade laws and supporting the implementation of Plant Variety Protection (PVP) laws. The strategy is to first harmonise seed trade laws such as border control measures, phytosanitary control, variety release systems and certification standards at the regional level, and then move on to harmonising PVP laws. The effect is to create larger unified seed markets, in which the types of seeds on offer are restricted to commercially protected varieties. The age old rights of farmers to replant saved seed is curtailed and the marketing of traditional varieties of seed is strictly prohibited.

<http://www.grain.org/article/entries/5121-land-and-seed-laws-under-attack-who-is-pushing-changes-in-africa>

<http://www.grain.org/article/entries/5142-seed-laws-that-criminalise-farmers-resistance-and-fightback>

- **‘Monsanto Law’ in Africa would force GMOs on farmers**

January 2015

The Plant Breeders Bill is part of Ghana’s commitment to the UK-backed New Alliance aid initiative which is accelerating seed law changes in the African New Alliance countries. The proposed legislation contains rules that would restrict farmers from ancient practices: freely saving, swapping, and breeding seeds. Under new laws protecting the intellectual property rights of biotech, farmers would be subject to hefty fines for growing anything that has been ‘patented,’ even if their crops were cross-pollinated. [Editor: Despite the Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association’s partial victory against Monsanto in the US? (See article above.)]

http://www.grain.org/bulletin_board/entries/5115-new-mons-anto-law-in-africa-would-force-gmos-on-farmers
<http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/free-the-seeds-from-corporate-control>

- **Pakistan's Seed Bill**

March, 2015

While Pakistan was still reeling from the suicide attacks on churches in Lahore, the government quietly pushed through the seed bill. Under this law, farmers would be fined and imprisoned for preserving, selling, and exchanging seeds.

<http://www.gmwatch.org/index.php/news/archive/2015-articles/16004-pakistan-farmers-most-affected-by-new-seed-law>

MEDICAL

- **'Breast cancer gene' lawyers launch appeal to High Court**

September, 2014

Cancer advocates in Australia will appeal to the High Court to overturn a controversial decision that human genes can be controlled by private companies. (In June the US Supreme Court found that the isolated gene was the same as had occurred in nature, in effect overturning thousands of patents that had been granted on human genes in that country.) “We hope to find out whether the Court will grant leave to appeal later in 2014 or early in 2015.”

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/breast-cancer-gene-lawyers-launch-appeal-to-high-court-20140917-10hzsu.html -ixzz3DobmC9rt>

<http://www.mauriceblackburn.com.au/legal-services/general-law/social-justice/challenges-to-corporate-and-government-ownership/gene-patent/>

- **Drug patents are bad for your health: the cost of mismarketing**

August, 2014; May, 2015

The New York Times reported on lawsuits being filed by the City of Chicago and two California counties over the promotion of painkillers. The suit charges that the companies promoted OxyContin and other drugs for uses where they may not have been appropriate or necessary and deliberately downplayed risks of addiction and overdose.

It would have been worth noting that the reason the companies being sued had incentive to push their drugs was the high profit margins provided by patent monopolies. The rationale for granting patents for new drugs is to give companies incentives to research new and better drugs.

Allowing them a monopoly for a period of time allows drug companies the opportunity to recoup the cost of their investment and make a profit from their research. If these drugs had been sold in a free market in which the drug companies enjoyed the same profit margins as companies selling steel or bread, it never would have been profitable to spend tens of millions of dollars pushing their drugs for inappropriate uses. However because patent monopolies allowed them to charge prices that were several thousand percent above the free market price, companies could make substantial profits by getting people to use their drugs even in cases where they may not have been appropriate. (The Hepatitis C drug Sovaldi sells for \$84,000 for a three-month course of treatment in the United States. A generic version is available in India for less than \$1,000.) There is also an incentive to conceal evidence that a drug may be less effective than claimed or even harmful.

To get some idea of the costs in terms of increased mortality and morbidity, researchers calculated the costs associated with five prominent instances in which drug companies either lost a court case or reached a settlement because they had misrepresented the safety or effectiveness of their drugs. By their calculations, the cost of the increased mortality and morbidity associated with the improper marketing of these five drugs was \$382 billion over the 14-year period from 1994 to 2008. This is roughly the same amount as the industry claims to have spent on research over this period. In other words, the harm caused by inaccurate marketing and disclosure of information for just these five drugs, is comparable in value to all the research performed by the drug industry during the same period.

To be clear, the allegations in these five cases are that the companies deliberately concealed information or misrepresented research findings. This would mean that the damage was not the result of inevitable mistakes, but rather deliberate actions motivated by profit.

Nobel Prize winning economist Joe Stiglitz has proposed a prize system in which the government would buy up the patents for drugs that are shown to be effective and then allow them to be sold as generics. Alternatively, we can go the route of directly financing research through the government.

This matters now because a major thrust of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is to make patent protection stronger and longer. A predictable outcome of the efforts in this area is many more instances of patients being harmed by drug companies concealing or misrepresenting their research findings. In addition, it is possible that the government's

ability to restrain such abuses may get even weaker. A drug company is now suing the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), claiming that it has the right to provide information about off-label uses of its drugs. The company claims this is a free speech issue.

<http://www.cepr.net/blogs/beat-the-press/patent-monopolies-the-reason-drug-companies-pushed-opioids?highlight=WyJwYXRlbnQiLCJwYXRlbnQncyJd>

http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_editorial/690691.html

<http://www.cepr.net/blogs/beat-the-press/the-problem-of-protectionism-in-the-trans-pacific-partnership?highlight=WyJwYXRlbnQiLCJwYXRlbnQncyJd>

- **Health ministry punishes Novartis for not reporting drugs' side effects**

August, 2014

The Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry issued a business improvement order Thursday to Novartis Pharma K.K. for its failure to report serious side effects of its leukemia treatment drugs.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/08/01/national/health-ministry-punishes-novartis-reporting-drugs-side-effects/.U9r1o0i-8aE>

- **Poor Countries apply for extension of TRIPS transition**

February, 2015

Bangladesh, on behalf of the 34 Least Developed Country members (LDCs) of the World Trade Organization, submitted a request for an extension of the transitional period under article 66.1 TRIPS with respect to pharmaceutical products until the country is no longer classified as LDC. The original extension, set to expire on 1st January 2016, specifically removes the obligation for LDCs to comply with Section 5 (Patents) and Section 7 (Protection of Undisclosed Information) of Part II of TRIPS, including any obligation to enforce rights under these provisions.

It is a little known fact that since the adoption of the 2001 Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health, LDCs have frequently used the extension in day-to-day procurement of low cost generic medicines, in particular to access medicines needed for the treatment of HIV.

<http://www.ip-watch.org/page/2/?s=patent>

- **South Africa's new policy on patents**

February, 2015

The draft of South Africa's new policy on patents clearly states the need for laws that will protect people's health

needs ahead of pharmaceutical companies' exorbitant profit margins.

<http://www.ip-watch.org/2015/02/27/south-africa-awaits-patent-reforms-with-hope-concern/>

- **From researchers, prudence**

April, 2015

Leading scientists are seeking to put the brakes on research that could lead down the road to 'designer babies'. Prompted by rumors that laboratories in China have begun using powerful new genome-editing technologies on human embryos, two groups of prominent biologists and bioethicists have called for a moratorium on human germ-line modification.

<http://americamagazine.org/issue/current-comment-79>

- **Deceptive labeling of embryo construction methods**

Sept-Nov 2014

Techniques now exist for large-scale human genetic engineering of infants. These techniques are widely referred to as "mitochondrial transfer" or "mitochondrial replacement." These descriptions are not only scientifically inaccurate, they are also easing the way to public acceptance of these manipulations and could lead to a world of genetically altered human beings, i.e., 'genetically modified babies' and 'designer babies'.

An isolated nucleus from the egg of one woman is inserted into an enucleated (nucleus-lacking) egg of another woman. In fact, no transfer of mitochondria (the organelles that extract energy from fuel molecules and make it available for the cell's functions) is involved in these 'three-parent' procedures. The techniques are being promoted as a way of circumventing mitochondrial mutations, which can lead to severe disease.

However, the techniques involve an array of hazards that go well beyond those they share with cloning. Human germline modification would be of profound consequence whether it were to "succeed" or "fail." If efforts to engineer the traits we pass on to future generations succeed, they could exacerbate existing inequalities - or even introduce new forms of inequality - based on the real or perceived superiority of those whose genes had been tweaked. And we could find ourselves trapped in a kind of genetic arms race, which could lead to social disruption on a possibly massive scale. What if such efforts fail? Germline modification in animals typically involves dozens or hundreds of non-viable offspring. If human germline modification efforts yield similar results, what would become of the people created?

The United Kingdom may be on the verge of loosening its law in order to allow a limited form of inheritable genetic (germline) modification

<http://www.councilforresponsiblegenetics.org/GeneWatch/GeneWatchPage.aspx?pageId=539>

<http://www.councilforresponsiblegenetics.org/GeneWatch/GeneWatchPage.aspx?pageId=543>

<http://www.councilforresponsiblegenetics.org/GeneWatch/GeneWatchPage.aspx?pageId=548>

• **Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)** — WikiLeaks
January, 2015

The following measures of Australia shall not be subject to the dispute settlement procedures under Section B (Investor-State Dispute Settlement) of the Investment Chapter: measures comprising or related to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, Medicare Benefits Scheme, Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator.

Trans-Pacific Partnership treaty: Advanced Investment Chapter working document for all 12 nations (Jan. 20, 2015 draft)

<https://www.eff.org/ja/document/leaked-tpp-investment-chapter-january-2015>

• **US Bishops on TPP**
2013

The bishops specifically mention intellectual property rights.
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/global-issues/trade/upload/USTR-letter-7-19-13.pdf>

• **Free Trade Agreements**
May, 2015

Whether it's the GMO labeling law in Vermont, limits on eggs produced in battery cages in California, or ambitious efforts to connect farmers, eaters and decision-makers in food policy councils across the country, people are taking action to create new rules to rebuild our broken food system. On those issues, the bottom line is that trade deals create new obstacles to change. While the lack of transparency makes it difficult to know the details, free trade agreements are not designed to make our food system safer. They are designed to increase trade by multinational corporations. And, by design, they create an obstacle course for new rules on food safety. In its 2015 report on trade barriers, USTR lists new food labeling laws in Mexico, Chile, Peru and Japan as unfair barriers to trade. Nobel Laureate Joseph Stiglitz commented, "The question is whether we should

allow rich corporations to use provisions hidden in so-called trade agreements to dictate how we will live in the 21st century."

<http://www.iatp.org/blog/201505/trade-rules-create-obstacle-course-for-a-better-food-system>

• **EU trade secrets directive threat to free speech, health, environment and worker mobility**
March, 2015

Multi-sectoral civil society coalition calls for greater protections for consumers, journalists, whistleblowers, researchers and workers. We strongly oppose the hasty push by the European Commission and Council for a new European Union (EU) directive on trade secrets because it contains:

- An unreasonably broad definition of "trade secrets" that enables almost anything within a company to be deemed as such;
- Far-reaching legal remedies for companies whose "trade secrets" have been "unlawfully acquired, used or disclosed", including provisional and precautionary measures, damages and secrecy rights throughout the judicial process; and
- Inadequate safeguards that will not ensure that EU consumers, journalists, whistleblowers, researchers and workers have reliable access to important data that is in the public interest.

Under EU law, all food products, genetically modified organisms and pesticides are assessed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). EFSA assesses the risks associated with these products based on studies performed by manufacturers themselves. Scientific scrutiny of the EFSA's assessments is possible only with complete access to these studies; therefore, this data must be removed from the scope of the directive.

<https://www.eff.org/ja/node/85143>

BOOK INTRODUCTION

Part of me doesn't want to believe that companies would do this and that governments would assist them. (What are politicians and bureaucrats getting out of betraying their own people? Amakudari jobs? Shares in GM companies?) But it is a fact and I have to oppose it.

I highly recommend two small books by Brendan Lovett. He explains how we have got ourselves into this mess and what is necessary to get out of it. Both are out of print, but are available — free — here: http://www.columban.jp/en/10_resource/ The Japanese translation has proved difficult and is provisional.