

# HYDROGEN NEWS

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## DESIGNER GENES: FROM HERE TO ETERNITY

(Excerpted from The Phoenix Project)

By Harry Braun

This generation stands at the threshold of unprecedented developments in science and technology. The great irony is that both utopia and oblivion are evolving exponentially and simultaneously. If oblivion is defined as the destruction of the earth's ocean ecosystems and agricultural life-support systems, then utopia could be defined as humanity having made a successful transition to renewable energy and biological resources. Given the exponential explosion of the understanding of science in general, and molecular biology and computer science in particular; the stunning rate of progress in biotechnology and nanotechnology is rapidly accelerating. As a result, more will be learned in the next ten years of medical science than has been learned from the beginning of time until now. That points one to the ultimate question: Where is all of this leading?

Research into the molecules of life is already having a profound global impact on medicine and medical research. Investigators are currently focused on repairing or replacing defective genes that cause disease. But in the not too distant future, protein-scale "biochips" will be able to engineer "designer genes" that will not only allow individuals to eliminate their biological mechanisms of aging and disease, but they will be able to select their molecular structure at will with atomic (i.e., atom by atom) precision. Thus, regardless of what genes they inherited, it will be possible for individuals to choose their physical characteristics, such as hair color, physical size, sex, or species. And if they don't like any aspect of their molecular structure, they can change it.

### Molecular Medicine

At present, there are few people who realize that medical researchers are on the threshold of an era of molecular medicine that will make a biological transition to renewable resources inevitable. The ability to understand and change the genetic and amino acid codes that make up the molecules of life will surely be one of the most significant developments in human history, if not in the history of life itself. We are, in fact, witnessing the evolution of a new species: *Homo Immortalis*, which will be the ultimate result of the biocybernetic integration and evolution of computers, robotics, and molecular biology.

### *Homo Immoralis*

While such developments will have profound effects on legal, medical, and other social systems, such developments are inevitable because technology has a life of its own; and barring a collapse of the Earth's food production systems, the stunning advances in computers and biotechnology will continue. While there are those who are fearful of such developments, consider that *Homo Immortalis* is the ultimate objective and purpose of the origin and evolution of life in the universe. Given this insight, what if one should die before the Designer Gene Era arrives? The answer is to get frozen instead of being burned or buried, so you and your molecules of memory can be "reborn" in the rapidly approaching biocybernetic future.

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