

Gene engineering raises questions of responsibility

By Doug Driskell
Reporter

An Oxford University professor told an audience at A&M Tuesday that although genetic engineering can be used to eliminate handicaps, using it to improve human beings is a risky proposition.

Oxford philosophy professor Johnathan Glover raised the question of how far genetic engineering should be taken at a colloquium on genetic engineering sponsored by the Department of Philosophy.

"Should we consider genetic engineering as an alternative to putting up with the human nature that so far has led to the disastrous history that we all know?" he asked.

He said human reproduction has changed in two ways in the past 15 years. Artificial reproduction can now replace natural reproduction, he said, and the ability to screen for genetic disorders has resulted in selective abortion.

Glover said it is hoped that in the future the use of genetic engineering will obliterate the handicapped and prevent selective abortion.

He said genetic engineering can be used in both negative and positive ways.

Negative gene manipulation involves eliminating medical disorders. Positive manipulation involves

such improvements as raising a person's IQ.

"If it can be done without harmful side effects, I think there is a very strong case for saying negative engineering is a good thing," Grover said. "Surely this is preferable to abortion even if one does not believe in abortion."

Glover said that positive engineering brings up questions of how much to improve the human body. There is also the danger of mistakes, he said.

"If you mess up the gene pool, which makes the human body resistant to various kinds of diseases, possibly the capacity of the human race's survival could be jeopardized," Glover emphasized. "If a mistake is made, somebody will be responsible for messing up that person's life."

Glover said positive engineering could result in a "genetic supermarket" where parents choose their children's characteristics.

This will place much responsibility on the parents, he said, and children's rights will come into play.

"We should take extreme caution on embarking on genetic engineering because of the danger of irreversible mistakes," he said. "But we should at least consider changing if it becomes possible to do so, simply because it may depend on the very survival of our species."

Language class, club plan to perform play in German

Production has only 3 native speakers out of 28 actors

By Jeanne Ferris
Reporter

Imagine memorizing more than 300 lines of a play. Now imagine memorizing those lines in German.

The 28 cast members of "Der Kaukasische Kreidedreis" ("The Caucasian Chalk Circle") by Bertolt Brecht are experiencing this as they drill lines, practice songs, build a set and design costumes.

The cast members call themselves Die Aggie Komödianten (The Aggie Comedy Players). The cast is made up of 26 students who are enrolled in German 334, German Drama and some German Club members.

Dr. Roger Crockett, associate professor of modern languages, and Dr. Wulf Koepke, professor of modern languages, are directing the play and participating as cast members.

Because the play has 28 cast members and 60 roles, some actors will be playing two or three parts, Crockett says.

From the beginning of the semester until the week before spring break, the cast has been working on the play during regular class hours and every Sunday night, he says. For the past few weeks, the entire cast has been rehearsing daily.

Franzi Sohn, a native speaker and leading actress, says, "Besides taking the class, it takes a lot of outside

work. You have to be willing to give extra time."

Crockett says the play would be about a six-week production, but performing the drama in German with only three native-speaking cast members takes much longer. Also,

"Even though you may not understand exactly what is being said, you understand what is going on. It's a very gestural play with a lot of action."

— David Gowan,
cast member

because some cast members are just in their second semester of German, they have to go through pronunciation drills, phrasing drills and gain a full understanding of their lines.

David Gowan, who plays three roles, says the cast also designs and builds the set for the production.

Crockett says the setting of the play is in the Caucasus Mountains during a revolution sometime between the Middle Ages and the Russian Revolution. Brecht's play is a comedy with some tragic elements.

The first scene opens as the gov-

Police Beat

The following were reported to the University Police Department from Mar. 17 through Friday:

MISDEMEANOR THEFT:

• Five bicycles were reported stolen.

• In separate incidents, two women reported that wallets were removed from their unattended purses.

• An officer discovered that a potted plant was removed from a Harrington Tower first-floor lounge.

• A student reported being notified by a Texas Aggie Bookstore employee that her stolen book had been sold back by another student.

• A student reported that the hubcaps off his Chevrolet were stolen.

• Two pink plastic flamingos were reported stolen from outside a room in Fowler Hall.

BURGLARY OF A BUILDING:

• Four mice, two computers, two monitors, two plotters and other equipment were reported stolen from the Langford Architecture Center.

POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY:

• An officer found four juveniles in possession of a stolen bike near the northside dorms.

POSSIBLE THEFT:

• An officer saw a student pushing two bicycles in a campus parking lot. After being questioned by the officer, the student said he found one of the bicycles near a dumpster and that he owned the other. The student was allowed to leave with both bi-

cycles, but the investigation continues.

ASSAULT:

• A Dunn resident reported that a man wearing a blue sweat shirt and blue jeans was hiding in his bathroom, and that the man attacked him and ran.

• A student reported being struck on the head with an unknown object while in the library.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT:

• A woman reported seeing a wooden stick with a mirror attached come through the wall from the direction of the men's restroom while in the third ladies' restroom of the Engineering Building.

FLEEING:

• A patrolling officer attempting to stop a speeding vehicle on East Main became involved in a high-speed chase off-campus. The officer stopped the pursue when the driver entered a residential area. The driver was identified and the investigation was referred to student affairs.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF:

• Police received a report that two flags were stolen from the campus golf course and that a water fountain, bench and restroom sign were damaged.

• A Law Hall resident reported the lock on his door was glued and that a memo holder was removed.

FALSE ALARM:

• An officer responding to a fire alarm reported no sign of smoke or fire but did find an activated fire alarm on the second floor of the O&M Building.



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