

He Jiankui affair

What happened: Chinese scientist He Jiankui announced he had used CRISPR gene editing to alter the DNA of human embryos, resulting in the birth of twin girls who were intended to be resistant to HIV.

The scandal: The experiment was conducted outside of established ethical guidelines and regulatory oversight. Critics were concerned about the potential for off-target edits, unpredictable long-term health consequences, and the broader implications of human germline editing.

Consequences: He Jiankui was widely condemned, and the incident resulted in an international backlash, leading to increased scrutiny and a push for stricter regulations on gene editing research.