

## Genome map dangers

SIR - Jeremy Hunt's "genome map" for every newborn baby "could be used to help doctors suggest lifestyle changes and treatments enabling patients to stay healthy" (report, December 8). However, it is more likely to frighten parents, while children will grow up in fear of something bad happening to them.

The greatest predictor of longevity continues to be wealth, and unless Mr Hunt can guarantee each child a hefty income, mortality risks will continue to depend largely on social class. Mapping the genome brings with it the risk of eugenics. The "genetically unfit" will be marked out as expensive burdens and there will be pressure not to reproduce "irresponsibly". This will lead to a less compassionate society.

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