

**Sujatha Byravan**

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"DNA evidence is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it is exonerating innocent people on death row, but the use of DNA is prone to abuse. For example, even before you are charged with a crime in the United States, your DNA can be taken and retained. But errors with this system are being made all the time, and we need to make sure people are assumed innocent until proven guilty. Retaining DNA that hasn't been given voluntarily in an arrestee database is an abuse of civil liberties."

### Areas of expertise

- Social, ethical, and environmental implications of new genetic technologies
- Human genetic manipulation
- Biotechnology and agriculture
- Biological weapons

### Topics in the News

- Genetic testing
- Genetic discrimination
- Genetically modified food
- DNA evidence
- Cloning

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## Biography

As the leader of the Council for Responsible Genetics (CRG), Sujatha Byravan is fostering public debate about the social, ethical and environmental implications of genetic technologies. She believes in taking a cautious approach with new technologies, pointing out that they are not a cure-all for the world's problems. Byravan works to distribute accurate information and represent the public interest on emerging issues in biotechnology. Byravan's organization also publishes a bimonthly magazine, *GeneWatch*, the only publication of its kind in the nation. She is a molecular biologist by training, and she has written on a variety of topics including science policy, gender issues, and environment and politics.

## Resources by this expert

- *The Boston Globe*, November 2, 2005, Op-ed "[Ensuring Privacy in Genetic Testing](#)"
- *GeneWatch Magazine*, Sept/Oct 2005, "[The Year of the Stem Cell](#)"
- *The New York Times*, May 9, 2005 and *International Herald Tribune*, May 12, 2005, Op-ed "Before the Flood." Byravan S. and S.C. Rajan.

## Recent Interviews & Articles

- *The Hindu*, August 8, 2006 " [Racism by other means \(opinion\)](#)" 
- Gainesville.com, April 23, 2006, by Cory Reiss, "[VA wants DNA from Veterans](#)" 
- *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, March 30, 2006, by Allison M. Heinrichs "[Has crop engineering gone too far?](#)" 
- *The Boston Globe*, February 3, 2006 "[Biosafety Lab in South End gets final OK: BU may start construction this month](#)" 
- *National Law Journal*, October 31, 2005, "Legal tension grows over genetic tests; privacy, potential discrimination are major concerns"
- *Washington Times*, May 26, 2005, "Public fears genetic discrimination"
- *The Boston Globe*, June 27, 2005, "Who's Dad? Ask the DNA..."

## Organizational links for this experts

- [Council for Responsible Genetics](#)

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