

Global Watch Weekly Report

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LESSONS FROM FRANKENSTEIN



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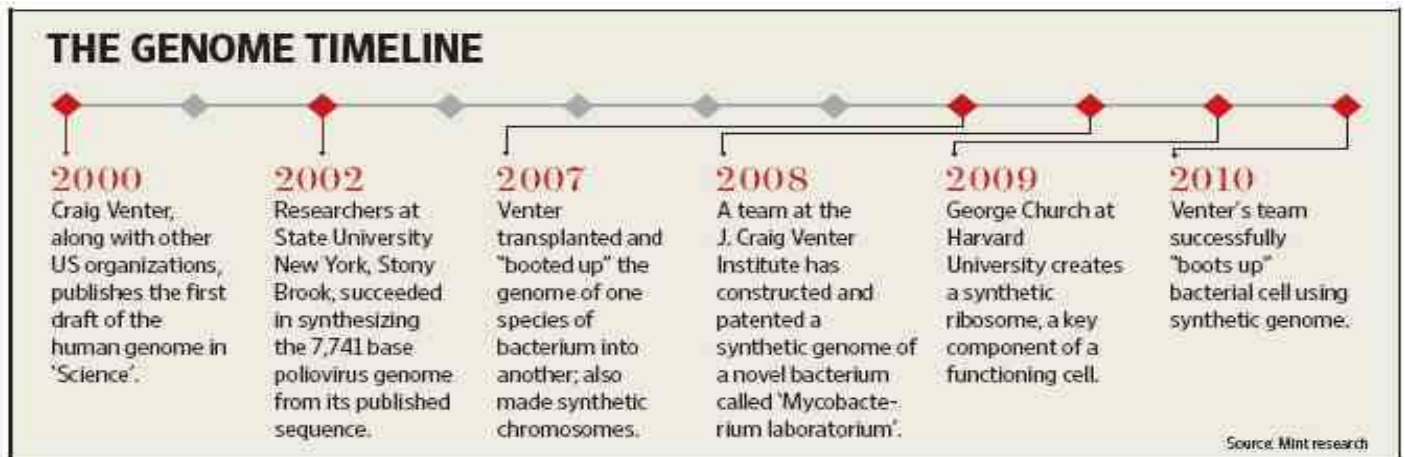
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Welcome to the Global Watch Weekly Report

The Human Genome Project was an international research effort to determine the sequence of the human genome and identify the genes that it contains. The Project was coordinated by the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Energy. Additional contributors included universities across the United States and international partners in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, and China. The Human Genome Project formally began in 1990 and was completed in 2003, 2 years ahead of its original schedule.



The work of the Human Genome Project has allowed researchers to begin to understand the blueprint for building a person. As researchers learn more about the functions of genes and proteins, this knowledge will have had a major impact in the fields of medicine, biotechnology, and the life sciences.

One of the movers and shakers who has advanced the work of human genome sequencing is John Craig Venter an American biologist and entrepreneur. He is known for being one of the first to sequence the human genome and the first to transfect a cell with a synthetic genome. Venter founded a number of companies including *Celera Genomics*, *Synthetic Genomics*, *The Institute for Genomic Research (TIGR)* and the *J. Craig Venter Institute (JCVI)* (which is now a consolidation of these companies), and is now working at JCVI to create synthetic biological organisms. With six buildings and more than 250,000 square feet of lab space for combined assets of more than \$200 million, the consolidated JCVI is now one of the largest independent research institutes in the United States.

Venter was listed on *Time magazine's* 2007 and 2008 Time 100 list of the most influential people in the world. In 2010, the British magazine *New Statesman* listed Craig Venter at 14th in the list of "The World's 50 Most Influential Figures 2010".

Yet despite the advances of Dr Venter there is an uneasy feeling amongst many that some of his comments on where he wants to take this work strikes too much similarity with the character "Dr Frankenstein" in Mary Shelley's classic *Frankenstein*.

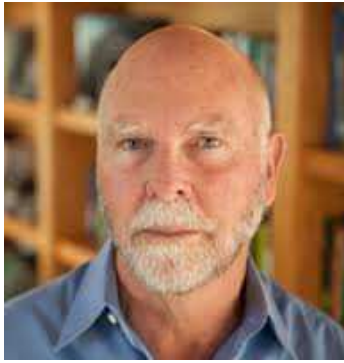
In this edition of the Global Watch Weekly we explore the work of Venter and the associated concerns about where the field of human genetics is heading.

Enjoy

Rema Marketing Team

LESSONS FROM FRANKENSTEIN

THE GOD FACTOR - DR CRAIG VENTER?



Dr Craig Venter, who has led the private sector effort to sequence the human genome, has been working for years to create a man-made organism. In 2010 his company *Synthetic Genomics Inc.*, had

made significant progress in the journey to create the world's first free-living artificial organism. For the first time researchers, led by the controversial American scientific entrepreneur Craig Venter, had manufactured the entire DNA genome of a free living micro-organism. This means that "artificial life" is on the verge of being created in a test tube.



SYNTHETIC GENOMICS

The researchers constructed a bacterium's "genetic software" and transplanted it into a host cell. The resulting microbe then looked and behaved like the species "dictated" by the synthetic DNA. The advance, published in the May 10th 2010 edition of *Science*, had been hailed as a scientific landmark,

The huge DNA molecule represents the chromosome that makes up the complete genome of *Mycoplasma genitalium*, a parasitic microbe that lives in the reproductive tract. Dr Venter and his colleagues made the chromosome by placing each of its 582,970 individual chemical units in their correct genetic sequence.

The achievement was the final step necessary before the scientists attempt their ultimate goal of inserting the synthetic genome into the empty "shell" of a non-living cell to see if they can create a fully-replicating, man-made organism.

Dr Venter said the aim of the research was to make new, artificial life forms that can help to solve the world's most pressing environmental problems, for instance by producing green biofuels,

breaking down toxic waste or even absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

He emphasised that any new microbes created by the process would be made incapable of infecting other organisms, especially humans and that they would not be able to survive beyond the confines of a laboratory because of self-destruct mechanisms built into their DNA.

HOW TO MAKE ARTIFICIAL LIFE

1 Entire DNA of *Mycoplasma mycoides*, a bug that usually infects goats, is decoded.

2 Researchers buy fragments of DNA from a mail order catalogue. Each of the four bottles of chemicals contains a section of the code.

3 The fragments are put into yeast, which 'stitches' them together, gradually building a synthetic copy of the original DNA.

4 The artificial DNA is put into a recipient bacterium, which then grows and divides, creating two daughter cells, one with the artificial DNA and one with the natural DNA.

5 Antibiotics in the petri dish kill the bacterium with the natural DNA, leaving the one with the synthetic DNA to multiply.

6 Within just a few hours, all traces of the recipient bug are wiped out and bugs with artificial DNA thrive. New life has been created.

7 Possible uses are bugs capable of producing clean fuels and sucking carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. Also microbes capable of mopping up oil slicks (above) or generating drugs, including the flu vaccine.

Maverick: Dr Craig Venter

Graphic by John Lawson

Dr Venter compared the achievement to the creation of a software programme for the operating system of a computer. The next step would be to put the operating system into the computer hardware of an empty cell and see if it could be "booted up".

Others have a less "bright" view of Venter's work, they say it could be potentially dangerous. It has been suggested that this type of technology could turn out to be the scary side of "playing God", since it invariably suggests the chance that dangerous organisms could be inadvertently (or purposefully) unleashed on a world unprepared to deal with the consequences. Because there is no precedence, scientists don't know for sure what kind of negative impact is possible.

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THE FRANKENSTEIN EFFECT

Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* is a reflection of the questions that society was bringing to the forefront concerning science and religion and is deeply relevant in 2010. In this horror tale, one can clearly see the controversies arising at the time that science may be killing religion and thus mankind.

The ramifications of Dr. Frankenstein's attempt to play God are seen through the perceptions of the monster, the personality traits leading to his own destruction, and the ultimate loss of Frankenstein's sanity and morality.



First of all, Frankenstein's attempt to play God and Creator is most plainly seen through the perceptions and actions of his creation. The creature is born into the world as if it is a baby, knowing nothing of life. This creature's first experience as a living existence is being shunned by its own creator.

"I beheld the wretch---the miserable monster whom I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed; and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me... He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs"

The monster is reaching out to the only thing he knows thus far, his creator, and is met with disgust. Frankenstein, being merely human, cannot offer this creature the unconditional love and guidance that God bestows on His creatures. This, in turn, leads to the imminent immoral actions of the creature.

Symbolically, the same action of reaching out that has Frankenstein run with horror is the process in which the monster uses to kill all of his victims by strangulation. Had Frankenstein only tried to care and communicate with the monster during this harmless event, then perhaps the dreadful story

would have ended here. Also, the creature himself refers to his situation in life and to his creator in a Biblical sense. Like most humans, the monster grapples with such questions as *What am I? and Whence did I come?*

The creature compares himself to Adam, with Frankenstein being his creator. However, he sees his state as far different from that of Adam's, being that he is wretched, helpless, and alone. He then compares himself to Satan, but notes that even Satan has companionship. If this creature, as compared to Adam, feels so miserable and desolate, must that not also speak of the incompetence of its god?

Another aspect defining the ramifications of Frankenstein's attempt to portray God is seen in his own personality traits that lead to his destruction. First of all, ambition is the ultimate human flaw in Shelley's novel. This concept is foreshadowed as the reader gets familiar with Mr. Walton. Walton's quest to the North Pole is solely to satisfy his ambition of fame. In direct correlation, Frankenstein's motives in creating the monster are his desires to be a renowned scientist. What could be more incredible than creating life? Thus, one sees the relationship between science and religion.

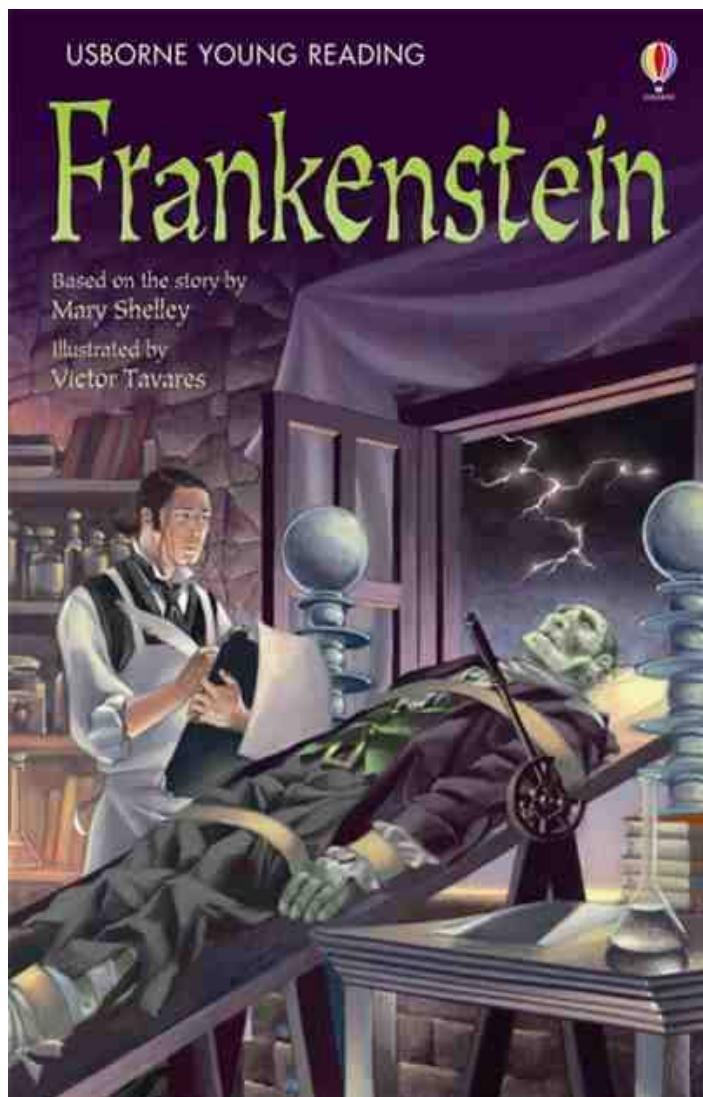
Frankenstein is attempting to be God to his own creation in order to fulfill his ambitious desires. At the exact moment that these desires are fulfilled, Frankenstein realizes that he himself is not God, and he is appalled at the catastrophe that he has created.



This realization, however, is too late to change the path of destruction that Frankenstein must face. Also, compassion, or lack thereof, plays a vital role in the comparison of Frankenstein to God. God is ever compassionate to the vital needs of his beings. Frankenstein, on the other hand, chooses his times of caring and hatred at

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the most inopportune times. Instead of reaching out to his creation to teach and care for it, he turns away and casts it out to the cruel world without any guidance or love. However, Frankenstein almost shows compassion to the monster when he is finally forced to confront it in person. The monster pleads to Frankenstein to create a companion for it by trying to evoke empathy for its misery and sorrow.



“I am content to reason with you. I am malicious because I am miserable. Am I not shunned and hated by all mankind? You, my creator, would tear me to pieces and triumph; remember that, and tell me why I should pity man more than he pities me? You would not call it murder if you could precipitate me into one of those ice-rifts and destroy my frame, the work of your own hands”

At these words Frankenstein feels compassionate for the monster he created and agrees to its demands. He later is overcome by his mercy for mankind over his own selfishness and realizes that the creation of another abomination is evil.

Finally, Frankenstein's attempt to play God results in the downfall of his own sanity and morality. This is first seen in his creation of the monster. Ironically, in the process of his attempt to be Godlike, Frankenstein begins to act very immorally. He frequents graveyards and has no respect for human life.

“I dabbled among the unhallowed damps of the grave or tortured the living animal to animate the lifeless clay”

In his quest to be like God, he falls completely away. He also completely cuts himself off from his family and friends.

Also, Frankenstein openly conveys hatred towards his creation and seeks to murder it. Not only is he venturing further away from religion by desiring to kill another living creature, but that creature is his own creation. Eventually, Frankenstein spends his life on a miserable, heart-breaking pursuit of his creature.

After the monster takes all that he loves, Frankenstein exhibits an unrelenting desire for revenge and justice. Yet again, although Frankenstein originally desires to be the Godlike creator of life, he exhibits traits that are completely contradictory to his plight. In his quest through life and for the monster, Frankenstein forfeits all of his happiness and all that he loves. Being that God is love, one can see that the attempt of man to be God results in suffering for his blasphemy.

Shelley illustrates the perils that can befall man if he actively seeks to play God. Although man should live a moral life modelling that of God, man should not try to himself create life and become a god. The foundation of Frankenstein's downfall is in his early mistakes as a fallible human by not accepting responsibility for his own creation that he so passionately works to bring into existence.

THE BIBLICAL INSIGHT

Another graphical demonstration of what can take place when man plays God is seen in the movie “I am Legend” starring Will Smith. In this movie Will Smith plays a sole surviving normal human in New York City after a plague has killed 90% of

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the human race and turned almost all the rest into rabid zombies.

However it starts out so promising. Genetic engineering has created a virus that attacks cancer by inhibiting a gene which seems to be over performing which is the cause for cancerous symptoms. The gene is tried in 10,000 patients. And worked in 10,000 patients. Three years later, New York (and the rest of the world) is a wasteland. The virus mutated, infecting the cancer patients with something akin to rabies and is spread both by contact and through the air.

Whilst *I am Legend* and similar movies such as *World War Z* and *24 Hours Later* are just movies, they probe at the inner most fears that define the stance taken by civil rights and religious groups regarding the tinkering of the human genome. The fact that for the initial good that is done, there will always be some significant and deadly after effect which will create significantly more issues for the medical establishment.

In the new testament both the books of Revelation and Matthew provide significant but overlooked insight to the potential consequences of man tampering

“When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!”, 8 And I looked, and there was a pale green horse. The horseman on it was named Death, and Hades was following after him. Authority was given to them, over a fourth of the earth, to kill by the sword, by famine, by plague, and by the wild animals of the earth.” Revelation 6:8

“For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.” Matthew 24:7

It is no secret that the Bible has made specific prophecies regarding a major rise in hideous disease outbreaks that would impact mankind significantly as we move closer towards the end of this age. Characteristically, the apostle John describes the fourth horse and rider using a paucity of verbiage: The horse is "pale," the rider's name is "Death," and "Hades" follows him. This is the extent of the biblical description, yet

even so, these provide us with sufficient clues to deduce a cogent interpretation.



First, the horse's coat is a unique and otherworldly pale. The Greek word is *chlooros*, which we recognize as the origin of such English words as "chlorine," "chloroform," and "chlorophyll." It technically refers to a greenish-yellow color found in nature in the pale green of just-sprouted grass or new leaves (see Mark 6:39; Revelation 8:7; 9:4; these are *chlooros*' only other occurrences in the New Testament).

Secular Greek writers, however, did not confine *chlooros* just to sprouting plants. In *The Iliad*, Homer describes fearful men's faces with this term, suggesting a pallid, ashen color, and in other instances, it is the pale golden color of honey or the gray bark of an olive tree. Sophocles writes that it is the color of sand, while Thucydides applies it to the skin color of those suffering from plague.

It is this last description that is probably John's intended meaning; the color of the horse reminded him of the pale, greenish-gray color of a corpse or decaying flesh. The Phillips translation renders *chlooros* as "sickly green in color"; the New English and the Revised English Bibles, as "sickly pale"; the New Jerusalem Bible, as "deathly pale"; and the New Living Translation, as "pale green like a corpse."

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The fourth horse sports a coat only producers of horror movies would love!

Upon the back of this gruesome beast sits one whose name is "Death." This is another unique feature of this horseman, as none of the others receives a name. The Greek word is the normal word for "death," *thánatos*, suggesting on the surface a generic application of the term. However, this would be jumping to a conclusion, for the term is probably meant to be understood more specifically as "pestilence" or "disease."

The evidence for this meaning here derives primarily from the Greek translation of the Old Testament called the Septuagint. In several places, the Septuagint translators rendered the Hebrew word *deber*, meaning "pestilence" or "disease," as *thánatos*.

For instance, in Exodus 5:3, Moses and Aaron tell Pharaoh,

"Please let us go three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He fall upon us with pestilence [Hebrew *deber*; Greek *thánatos*] or with the sword."

This combination of translations also occurs in the fifth plague, that of the murrain or cattle disease: God tells Moses to inform Pharaoh,

"There will be a very severe pestilence" (Exodus 9:3; see also verse 15).

In a later instance, God warns Judah through Jeremiah,

"I will send . . . pestilence among them, till they are consumed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers" (Jeremiah 24:10).

The most convincing piece of evidence for *thánatos* meaning "pestilence" in this passage comes from the mouth of Jesus in the Olivet Prophecy, as he describes the events leading up to His return. He prophesies to his disciples,

"And there will be famines [third seal or horseman], pestilences [fourth seal or horseman], and earthquakes in various places" (Matthew 24:7).

He does not use *thánatos* but *loimós*, which literally

means "pestilence" or "disease." Once Jesus Himself weighs in, there is no argument. The pale rider brings death by disease.

Interestingly enough Revelation also mentions by the "wild animals" of the earth. Could this be a reference to sicknesses passing from animals to humans and causing widespread pandemics due to the mixing of animal and human DNA and the mixing of genes between different species?

In the public domain we have seen attempts to merge the sperm of a male lion with the egg of a female tiger resulting in the creation of what is known as a "Liger" or a Chimera.



A liger looks like a giant lion with muted stripes but like their tiger ancestors, ligers like swimming. This goes against the nature of a lion but is what makes creature special. However a liger would have a reduced survival rate in the wild because its significant size ("gigantism") is caused by a growth hormone gene which for an unknown reason stays activated much longer than it would in either a Lion or Tiger.

The size and weight of a Liger would reduce its survival in the wild where speed and sustainability of speed is a major requirement for successful hunting. Additionally most liger hybrids are sterile. There has never been a case of a sterile male and only a few reported cases of sterile female ligers.

Thus an example of where human engineering introduces a new problem into the life of the genetically engineered offspring something which could never have been predicted in advance. Furthermore Ligers have short life spans compared to the tiger or lion.

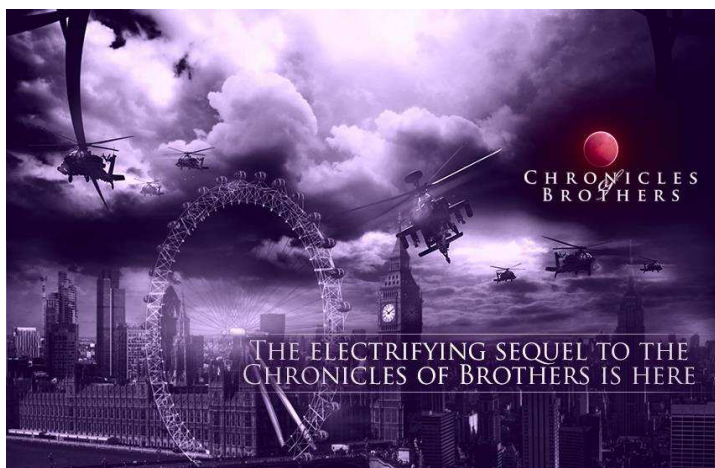
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TINKERING: A SPIRITUAL STRONGHOLD



Wendy Alec is the director of a leading global Christian broadcasting network (God-TV) that she co-founded with her husband, Rory Alec. In 2008 she published *The Fall of Lucifer*, the first book in the *Chronicles of Brothers* Series detailing a

fictional account of how Lucifer fell from heaven after being the most magnificent of the angelic warriors. The sequel *Messiah: The First Judgement* soon followed and a 3rd book in the series was published in 2009 called *Son of Perdition* providing a fictional account of the how the world would move towards a one world government. This was then followed by a fourth book sequel called *A Pale Horse*.



One of the most interesting themes that continually emerges throughout the books is that of genetic engineering. In Book 1 *The Fall of Lucifer*, there is reference to the codex that God uses as his basis for the creation of a new intelligence species other than the angels; man.

Gods plan for the creation of an inferior life form which is revealed to the angels is what then sparks seeds of resentment and ultimately rebellion by Lucifer. However what strikes interest was that there is an account of where Lucifer instructs some of the angels under his command to begin deciphering the nature and building blocs of the creative force that God used to make Man. This then results in a section of the angels becoming researchers and experts in matters of

transubstantiation, incubus, human possession, bodily materialization and the very creation of life.

This then leads into Book 2 where there is an account of where some of the angels find a way to violate universal law by breeding with humans. This then creates a progeny of giants known as Nephilim. Book 3 then takes us right into the future where “the seed of the serpent” is distilled into a single angelic gene which is used to create the son of Lucifer; the Antichrist. Page 106 – Page 107 states,

“The Twins were Lucifer’s super scientists. His evil intelligentsia. The Grand Architects of his depraved eugenics and bio-genetic engineering schemes, their days and nights were spent huddled in their gruesome laboratories.....It was here they performed the most depraved of iniquitous procedures. Biogenetic engineering; poisonings; amputations; limb and head grafts; lobotomies....Agonized screams of torment resounded day and night...as the harpies violated every tenet of Eternal Law with their cloning of the bestial and the Angelic.....They maimed, tortured and disembowelled banshess, trolls, demon-vampires and experimented on all that roamed the underworld unaware.”

One of the most important incidences in the book is one in which the knowledge gained by the evil angelic geneticist sorcerers regarding the ability to create forms of life (albeit mutated and demonic horrors) is then channelled to human scientists who have already sold their soul for greater knowledge. The earthly scientists are then involved in secret government projects to somehow use humans as a means of creating hybrids, super humans, zombie like humans who can be controlled in the same way witnessed in the movie *The Manchurian Candidate*.

In conclusion whilst a book of fiction, the under tones of *Chronicles of Brothers* conveys the belief that because many of the governments of the world are corrupt and under the control of Lucifer it stands that scientific progression will also be impacted especially in the realms of genetic engineering, a science that concentrates on the result of Gods uniqueness; the ability to create life.