



BOSTON, Massachusetts - May 1, 2014

Heather Dewey-Hagborg, known internationally for her controversial project *Stranger Visions*, announced today the launch of a new genetic privacy company: [BioGenFutures](#). The company's premier product line, Invisible, is a set of sprays that can be used to remove or obfuscate an individual's unwanted residual DNA.

[BioGenFutures](#) promises to alleviate emerging concerns that the biological surveillance state would mirror the current electronic surveillance program. By enabling customers to choose where, how and with whom they share their genetic information, [BioGenFutures](#) guarantees that no one will get ahold of your genetic material without your consent.

Jeremy Gruber, President of the [Council for Responsible Genetics](#) endorsed the new product: "No one should be able to take another person's DNA without consent and mine it for information. The promises of the genetic revolution will not be fully realized if concerns over unauthorized testing of DNA and its misuse are not addressed. Invisible represents a critical step towards achieving that goal."

Heather Dewey-Hagborg is most-known for her provocative project *Stranger Visions*, for which she created realistic 3D portrait sculptures of strangers from analyses of their genetic material that was collected in public places. Genetic information is inadvertently discarded by billions each day through shed hairs and lashes, dropped cigarette butts and gum, or saliva left on glasses and silverware. In addition to being accidentally discarded, DNA is routinely extracted and often stored from infants at birth, and as criminal DNA databases are expanding exponentially. Law enforcement now routinely profiles individuals convicted of even petty crimes, tending toward permanent storage of both profiles and biological samples from individuals arrested for but never convicted of a crime.<sup>1</sup> Genetic discrimination is becoming a very real concern; one country recently announced a new program of genetic testing to identify children with a genetic predisposition for athletics and target them for Olympic training.<sup>2</sup> Individuals can easily profile each other and themselves through genetic profiling services online.<sup>3</sup>

How the Invisible product line works:

- Invisible is a suite of two products that can be used independently or mixed to powerful effect.
- Erase is an anti-DNA cleaning product, not unlike a disinfectant spray.
- Replace is an obfuscation spray, introducing a mixture of genetic material that cloaks the original sample.
- Instead of leaving DNA-containing saliva behind at restaurants and bars, Invisible customers will be able to erase their DNA fingerprint.
- Instead of subjecting their own DNA to covert analysis, Invisible customers can leave an alternate DNA sample, designed for their protection.

Heather Dewey-Hagborg, founder of [BioGenFutures](#), said, “You wouldn’t leave your medical records on the subway for just anyone to read. It should be a *choice* how you share your information and with whom, be it about your genes, your email or your phone calls. Genetic privacy is an emerging issue that is quickly becoming vitally important. Invisible is the first step toward making protection against new forms of biological surveillance accessible to the public. In five years time, I expect genetic privacy products will be as commonplace as hand sanitizer.”

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More information online:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.thehastingscenter.org/Publications/BriefingBook/Detail.aspx?id=2168>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rferl.org/content/uzbekistan-genetic-testing-children-athletes/25224941.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.23andme.com/>  
<http://www.easy-dna.com/forensic-dna-test.html>

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