

Jeffrey Epstein Hoped to Seed Human Race With His DNA

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July 31, 2019



Over the years, Jeffrey E. Epstein surrounded himself with many prominent scientists, including several affiliated with Harvard.

Rick Friedman/Corbis, via Getty Images

Jeffrey E. Epstein, the wealthy financier who is accused of sex trafficking, had an unusual dream: He hoped to seed the human race with his DNA by impregnating women at his vast New Mexico ranch.

Mr. Epstein over the years confided to scientists and others about his scheme, according to four people familiar with his thinking, although there is no evidence that it ever came to fruition.

Mr. Epstein's vision reflected his longstanding fascination with what has become known as transhumanism: the science of improving the human population through technologies like genetic engineering and artificial intelligence. Critics have likened transhumanism to a modern-day version of eugenics, the discredited field of improving the human race through controlled breeding.

Mr. Epstein, who was charged in July with the sexual trafficking of girls as young as 14, was a serial illusionist: He lied about the identities of his clients, his wealth, his financial prowess, his personal achievements. But he managed to use connections and charisma to cultivate valuable relationships with business and political leaders.

Interviews with more than a dozen of his acquaintances, as well as public documents, show that he used the same tactics to insinuate himself into an elite scientific community, thus allowing him to pursue his interests in eugenics and other fringe fields like cryonics.

Lawyers for Mr. Epstein, who has pleaded not guilty to the sex-trafficking charges, did not respond to requests for comment.



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