

Sociological impacts of cloning – assignment

[Sociology](#)



Abstract Starting with an explanation of what cloning is and the two main types of the technology: reproductive cloning and therapeutic cloning, this paper goes on to explore the ramifications these technologies may have in different areas of our society with respect to government, funding issues for research, religious views, education for our children on cloning issues and lastly the public's response to cloned animal products. Sociological Impacts of Cloning Cloning is the production of one or more individual plants or animals (whole or in-part) that are genetically identical to an original plant or animal.

There are two main classifications in processes of cloning: reproductive and therapeutic. Reproductive cloning is the use of cloning technology to create a person. Therapeutic cloning is the transportation of a person's DNA into an unfertilized egg in order to grow stem cells in attempts to cure devastating diseases. (Therapeutic Cloning –How It's Done, 2008, p. 1; Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research (CAMR), 2008, p. 1) Discussion of Reproductive and Therapeutic Cloning The concept of reproductive cloning has many opponents.

Opposition comes from governments, religious organizations, citizen advocacy groups and many private individuals. Almost everyone has an opinion regarding cloning. Entire nations have banned reproductive cloning because of the potential for widespread abuse by unscrupulous parties. Many people feel that cloned individuals could be at risk for abuse even through forced servitude. Conceivably, this could even take the form of cloned individuals being trained as ruthless killing machines.

Another aspect of reproductive cloning that is equally frightening to some may be the genetic alteration of babies that could cause an imbalance in the natural process. Cloning and all of its research are widely controversial. Many, if not all, social systems are affected. Controversy even surrounds determining what is and what is not legal, including funding issues, research and development (R & D), and the use of public funds. (Vaknin, 2005, p. 3; CAMR, 2008, p. 1) Even in the Congress and Senate of the United States there are many conflicts in passing legislation to initiate and/or continue funding for research of therapeutic cloning.

Some of these conflicts may be a result of the stigma attached to the term “cloning.” Most people view cloning as solely reproductive cloning, and are not educated on the other aspect of cloning that is therapeutic cloning, thus stymieing the efforts beneficial to the further development of therapeutic cloning. Once again, we must educate the unaware that, unlike reproductive cloning, therapeutic cloning is not designed to create people but is designed to cure disabling or deadly maladies. (CAMR, 2008, p. 1; Reilly’s article “Statement on Human Cloning” as cited in Reproductive and Therapeutic Cloning, 2008, p.) Discussion of Funding for Research and Experimental Cloning Most people are somewhat aware of the tremendous, and constantly rising, costs of research for any type of experimental medical technology. Finding funding resources for even most acceptable type of medical technology is normally difficult; funding resources for more controversial technology, such as cloning, exceeds even that level of difficulty. In the past, many pharmaceutical companies accepted the challenges of the more controversial, therefore more risky, ventures.

This type of risk venturing has resulted in many thousands of medicines, cures and treatments over the decades. Some results also include helping to hold down the cost of health-care and increasing worker productivity by employees staying healthier for longer periods of time, thereby directly affecting the economy of society in general. (Innovation. org, 2008, p. 1) In the future, pharmaceutical companies may be willing to help fund and offset the costs of acceptable types of cloning research and technology. With this in mind, legislators may be more prone to lend their support to more lenient laws, i. . . : laws that allow more extensive research for cloning that is perceived to be, and is proven to be, beneficial to society. Discussion on Religious Views of Cloning Religious leaders around the globe, have reservations on both types of cloning. The deciding factor is the belief that some type of human life is sacrificed in the processes even if for another life's well being and at an early stage when the perceived life has no choice in the matter. Also, it is supposed that the family unit could be destroyed by the use of cloning as a means of conception.

The Catholic Church is unilaterally opposed to all cloning technology with the perception that human dignity is not a priority when cloning technology is used. (Lita, 2008, p. 1.; Reproductive and Therapeutic Cloning, 2008, p1; Mae, The Unnecessary Evil of ' Therapeutic' Human Cloning, 2008p. 1) On the opposite side of the spectrum is the scientific view that millions of people could benefit from therapeutic cloning research. The medicines, tissues and possible organs would be genetically tailor-made for each patient. This would prevent rejection and rejection –suppressant therapy for patients in need.

These same supporters of cloning technology acknowledge the need for regulations with safeguards and specific procedures should be in place before experiments can be determined acceptable in our society.

(Deliberating in Democracy, 2007, pp 4, 5) Introduction of Cloning

Technology education in to Our Schools In schools, some lesson plans have student's assigned positions in role-playing scenarios associated with cloning issues. Some examples of the positions that students must take include exploring topics such as human dignity versus human suffering, and the reasons to support or oppose therapeutic cloning.

Students are encouraged to slip into these roles by studying objectives that support their assigned positions. Students are given handouts with specific information on cloning technology to support these roles, then are given the opportunity to form their own opinions on given information and later discuss these opinions. (Deliberating in a Democracy, 2007, p. 1) Other lesson plans have students create public service advertisement campaigns both for and against types of cloning. Teachers encourage vivid images and snappy language from the students as a part of these lessons.

A standard for this lesson is the understanding of the relationship among science, technology, and society, by the individual completing the assignment. (DiscoverySchool. com, 2001, pp 2, 8) How Consumers may be affected by Cloning The Food Drug Administration (FDA) lifted the last barrier on labeling issues for selling cloned animals and the products that come from them on January 15, 2008. Still, producers want to move slowly to evaluate consumer response. Most federal agencies including the U. S Department of Agriculture (USDA) are in agreement that cloned animals and <https://assignbuster.com/sociological-impacts-of-cloning-assignment/>

their progeny are as safe to consume as the conventionally bred counterparts. In those instances, animals are cloned for food, and cloning is actually seen as merely a new breeding technique. (Science News Editor, 2008, p. 1) Some officials are reported to say that although the consumption of cloned animals is safe, in reality few cloned animals will ever arrive at market. Extensive studies have been conducted at consistent intervals to validate these conclusions.

These studies helped to determine that no labeling would be required on cloned animal meat and milk. Large production companies are only using cloned animals for breeding purposes. The cost involved could factor into this because of an estimated 13,500 dollars is spent for each cloned cow. These companies also state that the offspring from the cloned animals would not reach the market for about three more years. Even with reassurance from federal agencies, possibly a third or more consumers in the United States, say that they would not knowingly use cloned animal products.

Overwhelming response supporting this opinion was given in the form of comments to the FDA earlier this year when the issue of not labeling the cloned products was decided. European countries have reported only limited information on the subject of not labeling cloned animal products even though further research is encouraged. (Reinberg, 2008, pp1-3) Conclusion Whenever anything new and controversial is introduced, many people resist it. Cloning is no different in this respect. Though some forms of cloning should definitely be rejected, other forms should be explored.

This should come with great caution and understanding. It is inevitable that once something of this magnitude is introduced, that it will not survive or even thrive in its' own way. While there is so much resistance to therapeutic cloning technology, there is much reason for it as well. Many new areas of science are yet to be explored; therapeutic cloning technology is one of these areas. People in all walks of life may have a huge stake in the production of the therapeutic cloning technology. It has been introduced in lesson plans in schools even at the sixth grade level.

Religious leaders and government officials may rush to find ways to ban this phenomenon, but scientist and teachers will still teach and explore its potential. Although feared as risky and dangerous technology with some social and religious sects predicting the use of human as “ guinea pigs” for testing, the rewards of such experimental medical testing could be great. Through pharmaceutical funding, therapeutic cloning research may help to relieve pain and extend life by producing tailor-made per patient medicines and tissues. What if it was your life? What if it were the life of your child or grandchild?

Some times when we are in extreme need, new and creative solutions such as therapeutic cloning technology, and the research from it, can be worth the risk! References Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago Author, Deliberating in a Democracy (2007) Retrieved on March 3, 2008 from http://www.deliberating.org/lessons_cloning.pdf Frequently Asked Questions about SCNT (Therapeutic Cloning) (2008) Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research (CAMR) Retrieved March 15, 2008 from <http://demo.democracydata.com>
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