

Philosophy: the ethics of human cloning

[Sociology](#), [Ethics](#)



In order to make a fully justified decision on whether human cloning is ethical or not, one must be exposed to the background of the subject. To start, a clone is an exact replica of an organism, cell, or gene. The process itself is done asexually with the use of a cell from the original human. It is then placed inside a female capable of bearing a child and is then born as a clone. Along with this comes questions of whether or not it is right to clone a human being based on different facts and opinions of small groups or communities (Dudley 11).

The technology of cloning is not quite developed enough for a doctor to be certain that an experiment will be successful. In Scotland, the first sheep was cloned and was named Dolly. It took over 250 tries before they were successful in creating the clone. When news of this reached America, immediately polls showed that ninety percent of Americans were against the idea of cloning humans. Those who support cloning research replied by saying the public based their opinions on fallacies of the news media and, therefore, could not comprehend the whole picture (Farnsworth).

Those in favor of cloning might say it can push forward medical research. For example, with cloning technology it may be possible to learn how to replace old cells with new ones. This could lead to a longer life for each individual. Also, with enough research scientists could create clones to act as donors. Some scientists say that human cloning may eventually reverse heart attacks. This accomplishment would take place by injecting healthy heart cells into damaged heart tissue. In addition, cloning could help improve family life.

For example, if a couple lost a child they loved dearly and could not reproduce naturally, cloning that child could be an alternative. In this way, the parents would have the chance to love the clone just as much as the original child.

On the other hand, those against cloning would say that it is wrong for a doctor to harm a clone. If this were allowed, eventually we would compromise the individual. Clones would become second-class citizens.

Cloning strips humanity from natural reproduction by leaving a clone with only one parent. In addition, there would be a decline in genetic diversity.

In other words, if some day we all have the same genetic makeup and lose the technology of cloning, we would have to resort back to natural reproduction. This would cause problems because it has the same effect as inbreeding. In the same way, clones would feel like they had lost their individuality. For example, their genetic makeup would be known. Also, there could be negative psychological effects that will impact the family and society. For instance, if a clone finds out that s/he has no biological father it may suppress the clone's feeling of equality among other naturally born people.

Also, there is a chance that the mother or the clone may become sterile. Among all of these there are too many risks for the bearing mothers and embryos. Eventually, it would turn into a routine to destroy human embryos in the process of cloning ("The Ethics of Cloning"). According to Latter-Day Saints, cloning does not respect the fact that humans have souls and it robs clones of their humanity. God intended the power to create humans to be

practiced between a man and a woman in the boundaries of marriage. Do otherwise is taking the work of God into your own hands.

This means that humans lack the authority to make decisions about creating or destroying a life. In addition, humans do not have enough knowledge or power to control outcomes of certain events (Dudley 56). However, others believe religion has no place in the debate. They argue, interpreters of the Bible can not agree on what actions God would allow to be done with justified means. In addition, the Koran or the Bible have limits to their validity because they do not address specific issues that need to be answered (Dudley 66). After analyzing the situation, Aristotle would say that human cloning is unethical because bad means are used.

For instance, it took scientists 277 tries to create the first cloned sheep. This means that there were hundreds of deformities before the successful specimen was created. In the same way, deformities of humans would be a result of experimentation, which would decrease the quality of life for those specific clones. And, even if we found a cure for a disease, let's say cancer, it would be reaching a good end through bad means. On the other hand, Kant would say that human cloning is ethical in that the number of people who benefit from it outweighs the number of people who suffer from it.

For example, cloning could be a way to help expand the length of human life, but it would cost the lives of clones who were failures in the experiment. In this way, Kant would agree that bettering all of humanity in exchange for a small group of less fortunate people is justified. Somewhat closer to agreeing with Aristotle than Kant, Sartre would say the act of cloning a human being is

an act of free will. Therefore, if an individual decided to go forward in this act, they would be correct because each situation is unique.

According to Sartre, however, the individual is involved in this action is, in fact, responsible and would receive the consequences that come about in the particular act. Therefore, Sartre would come to a consensus that it is ethical to clone humans, but the consequences of doing so are upon those who are apart of the act. After taking into account many of the alternatives and situations of cloning, I would not support human cloning. The effects from all of the harms that are unknown outweigh all of the good that can come from the research of cloning.

In addition, I agree with Aristotle that you must not use bad means to reach a good end. Therefore, seeing that cloning human is both degrading to the clone and to humanity, I believe that cloning involves too much unknown information that we would need in order to even consider it. However, if scientists had enough information to be able to clone a human without a shadow of a doubt, then it might be more ethical to clone. But, the social glitch would still be present; clones would be seen as inferior to naturally reproduced humans. Therefore, I do not support the legalization of cloning or any practices thereof.

My solution bends more towards the objective part of the spectrum. I think that if humans could be cloned without the risk of death or intentional killing of clones for organ transplants it would be more acceptable to practice it. But, the clone's social status could not change as easily as the latter. Universally, therefore, cloning should be banned in order to preserve the

natural functions which we were made to perform as human beings. A general rule for cloning humans is “ do not clone unless there are no negative consequences as a result of performing the act. ”