

Is cloning playing
god?



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Imagine sitting down, all of the sudden, you look to your left, and what do you see. Yourself, as a seven-year-old child, but wait a minute, you are 30 years of age. This child is genetically identical to you, however, his parents are not yours; and although you see many similarities, this child is acting in a way you have never acted. This child as you can see knows more about technology than you did at that age. Why? The answer is simple, this seven-year-old child is growing in a different era an era where technology is necessary. So is this child really your clone or? This child has a different set of parents than you, yet this child does not have one single gene from them. Is it cloning a human being playing God?

Scientists have been experimenting with cloning for at least forty years; however, it was not until February 24, 1997 and the news of the successful cloning of Dolly the sheep from mammary cells of an adult sheep, that reaction emerged from around the world. Now a day, we have heard of other animals, such as sheep, mice, cows, pigs, goats, dogs, and cats, as well as other things have been cloned with no condemnation. Conversely, the possibility of human cloning is for most an abomination.

The idea of cloning humans has created a mixed of emotions, including confusion in society. Cloning for most of the people, means changing the history of humanity. Even though, Ian William, the Scotland scientist that cloned the sheep, agree to never clone humans, thirty hours after the news of Dolly circle the world, a bill was passed in New York by Legislator, John Marchi, to make human cloning illegal. Furthermore, other scientists, physicians, conservative ministers, and rabbis joined the "Thou Shalt Not

Clone Humans” movement; and among the reasons to banned cloning were the human rights to have a set of biological parents (Pence 23).

Almost globally but mostly in the USA and Europe there is a devastating agreement, stating that human cloning is unethical; therefore, it should be prohibited by law. On the other hand, there is not a clear explanation or reasons to explain as to why cloning breaks society’s basic moral principles. Answering the how clones are created question can shed a light and might provide a reason in favor or against it.

In early 1970’s, the breakthrough in medical ethics (bioethics) has attracted many philosophers because it seems to help answer questions about the beginning and end of life, which is something that philosophers have continually thought about. Modern science and technology continue to raise new questions of morality, death, and new ways of reproducing the human kind. On the other hand, philosophy is about questioning assumptions. The status quo has dictated that is unthinkable to clone humans. “ To which philosophy responds: Unthinkable? Let us think about that” (Pence 35) .

Creating a human through cloning is very different from creating humans through in vitro or IVF (under glass fertilization). Cloning is considered asexual reproduction because unlike the other two methods mentioned where an individual is created from two different sets of 23 chromosomes, the individual created through cloning would have the same 46 chromosomes as the donor. Cloning implies the removal of the nucleus of an oocyte (egg) and introducing the donor’s nucleus. Keeping in mind that a nucleus is what holds genetic data; and by removing the original nucleus and

inserting the donor, this process creates a new artificial cell with the potential to be used to develop a new human being (clone). Scientists would have to biochemically manipulate the process in order for the cell body (oocyte) to accept the new nucleus. After this process is of reproductive cloning is completed in a laboratory setting, this oocyte has to then be implanted in a woman's uterus for the embryo to fully develop (Pence 15).

In the natural creation of a human being, the oocyte (from the female) and the sperm (from a male) unite in a process called fertilization. Each the oocyte and the sperm have a nucleus, which hold genetic data from each one of the parents. Unlike cloning, there is no separation or removal of the oocyte's nucleus, thus, creating a new and unique human being, with a different genotype. Another subject for discussion is the idea of utilizing artificial uterus to grow these embryos; thus, denying the fetus of bonding with the mother. Then again, a clone would not be considered human, unless a real flesh-and blood female gestate such embryo (Tannert 238).

On another matter, humans already produce natural clones. Monozygotic twins are the natural production human's through the same fertilized cell. The division of the cell into two genetically identical individuals is considered normal but rarely; and although identical, they are not flawless copies. Furthermore, they are still the product of a natural process of fertilization and mutation and not cloning or biochemically manipulation. Therefore, the genetic material has gone through an intertwine process to create a new genotype (Tannert 239).

Alternatively, an embryo produced in a laboratory, has been artificially constructed by human action. A manipulation that might grow up into a human, but considered an object. There are no possibilities of random mutation, as in the monozygotic twins, because to be considered a clone, it has to be genetically identical to the donor. Therefore, the argument becomes one of ethical evaluation giving a point to a legal ban on reproductive human cloning because we must not enforce one's genetic identity to another individual.

Humans for the most part strive for autonomy; and so, by cloning we are restricting the cloned individual of some of the basic components of human survival; thus violating what constitutionally guarantee human rights.

“ Whether it is “ life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”, which the US Declaration of Independence lists as the “ unalienable rights” of humankind; whether it is “ liberté, égalité, fraternité”, the famous motto of the French revolution; or whether it is the simple and elegant statement that “ The dignity of man is sacrosanct,” the first sentence of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany” (Tannert 238).

If one uses Immanuel Kant philosophies and adds the science of cloning, cloning uses one person's genetic material (to clone) as a vehicle to achieve the needs of another person (the person cloning). Therefore, one can say that this process is unethical and why it should be forbidden.

On the other hand, for example, the first IVF baby born in England in 1978 is a normal woman. At first, the idea of producing humans in a tube was insane because of possible birth defects, since then thousands of kids have been

born utilizing this method. The same people arguing against it in the past were the same people arguing against cloning. The National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC) has also suggested a federal law to sanction any effort to create a human by cloning. This organization utilized the American's illogical reservation of human cloning as a motive for a ban. The fears come from fictional movies and novels of human cloning, as well as, not being able to trust scientists. Arguments against human cloning thus far have been based on human emotions and ethics rather than facts. Emotions, however, can change with evidences. Artificial insemination for example, was once looked at as a deviance, now considered a social norm. Also, genetic testing for Down syndrome through amniocenteses because selection of pregnancy was an option.

Cloning can offer some benefits: It can help scientist to comprehend how cells age; it can help with treating mitochondrial DNA diseases; and more importantly can eliminate the use of embryos for research. This could be accomplished by using the " de-differentiated cell in the normal stage without fusing them to an egg, to create an embryo for reproductive experiments" (Pence 46). There is also Polly the sheep, the first cloned animal to have a human gene in 1997. Polly was able to produce a human protein in the milk; to help individuals, such as hemophiliacs and bone diseases suffers that are not able to produce it. (CNN interactive). With Wilmut's techniques and discoveries, there is the possibility of new therapies to help sick people, for example, the alteration of a gene can help the treatment of cystic fibrosis and the transplant of pig's organs to dying humans could be genetically altered to reduce rejection (Pence 22).

Scientists agreed that the possibility of having an identical genetic person is nearly impossible:

“ Even clone cells, with identical set of genes, vary somewhat in shape or coloration. the jump is made from molecules to cells, complexity jumps exponentially because molecules can be combined in thousands upon thousands of ways from cells” (Pence 31)

Therefore, even if scientists try to play God, the odds of reproducing identical cells are close to zero. People should be given an opportunity to hear both sides of the arguments in favor or against it, and then vote on what they think is correct. The cloning techniques need to be perfected, the odds of a human cloned survival is poor and uncertain; furthermore, no one can guarantee perfect babies with no birth defects, but then again, even though natural fertilization, no one can guarantee a perfect baby. Human cloning it might look like playing God; however, God is a God of perfection, and that is something no human can ever achieve. Every single time the debate comes up-after Ian Wilmut's first cloning experimentations on mammals, after the Raelians' claim to have cloned a human being, and in recent times, in the stir of the South Korean cloning scandal-the community, legislators and the media all express a profound apprehension with human cloning (Pence 16).