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Human Cloning: Considerations from a Biological, Ethical, and Societal Standpoint

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COMMENTARY

Human cloning is most commonly used to refer to human reproductive cloning, which involves creating a genetic clone of an existing individual. Despite decades of conjecture, human reproductive cloning has never been accomplished. Another type of human cloning that creates genetically specified embryonic stem cells is research cloning, also known as embryo cloning or therapeutic cloning. The first report of stem cells generated from cloned human embryos was released in 2013 after a succession of failures and high-profile bogus claims of success. The risks it poses to the women who would be required to provide the large numbers of eggs required exaggerated and probably unrealistic claims of personalized therapies and the need for effective oversight to prevent rogue efforts to use cloned embryos for reproductive human cloning are just a few of the major concerns raised by research cloning. Human reproductive cloning is usually regarded as unethical. For more than 20 years, overwhelming majorities, often between 80 and 90 percent, have regularly rejected it in opinion polls. While there is no federal law prohibiting human reproductive cloning in the United States, it is prohibited in several states, dozens of other nations, and many international accords. Human reproductive cloning, according to many scientists, will never be safe. It would also put cloned children's psychological well-being in jeopardy, and it might pave the way for more powerful inheritable genetic manipulation technologies. Human cloning can refer to therapeutic cloning, which is when embryonic cells are cloned to obtain organs for transplantation or to treat wounded nerve cells, among other things. The use of Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer (SCNT) to obtain eggs that may develop into adult adults is more commonly referred to as human cloning. Human cloning has been proposed as a means of improving mankind's genetic endowment by cloning persons of significant achievement, such as in sports, music, the arts, science, literature, politics, and other fields, or of acknowledged virtue. These suggestions don't appear to have been taken seriously at all. However, some people have expressed an irrational desire to be cloned, and some doctors have advertised that they are willing to carry out the procedure. The challenges and disadvantages are numerous and insurmountable, at least in the current state of knowledge. Cloning has a variety of interpretations among biologists, but all of them require obtaining more or less precise duplicates of a biological object. Copying genes, cloning cells, and cloning individuals are three typical applications. Cloning an individual is not strictly possible, especially in the case of a multicellular creature like a plant or an animal. An individual's genes, or genome, can be cloned, but the individual cannot be cloned, as will be explained further down. In many genetics and pharmaceutical facilities throughout the world, cloning genes or, more broadly, cloning DNA segments is a common practice. Cloning cells in the lab has been around for seven decades and is used to replicate a certain type of cells, such as a skin or liver cell, to study its features. Individual human cloning occurs spontaneously when two persons emerge from a single fertilized egg, as in identical twins. These identical twins are so named because they are genetically identical to one another. Dolly, a sheep cloned in July 1996, was the first mammal to be cloned utilizing an adult cell as the genetic source. Artificial cloning was used to obtain frogs and other amphibians as early as 50 years ago.