

Here are three reasons why we should say no to cloning: most people think that human cloning is not ethical to make a baby.

1. Non ethical health risks from mutation of genes.

An abnormal baby would be a likely tragedy. The technique is very risky right now. A particular worry is the possibility that the genetic material used from the adult will continue to age so that the genes in a newborn baby clone could be - say - 30 years old or more on the day of birth. Many attempts at animal cloning produced disfigured monsters with severe abnormalities. So that would mean creating cloned embryos, implanting them and destroying (presumably) those that look imperfect as they grow in the womb. However some abnormalities may not appear till after birth. A cloned cow recently died several weeks after birth with a huge abnormality of blood cell production.

2. Non ethical emotional risks

A child grows up knowing her mother is her sister, her grandmother is her mother. Her father is her brother-in-law. Every time her mother looks at her she is seeing herself growing up. Unbearable emotional pressures on a teenager trying to establish his or her identity. What happens to a marriage when the "father" sees his wife's clone grow up into the exact replica (by appearance) of the beautiful 18 year old he fell in love with 35 years ago? A sexual relationship would of course be with his wife's twin, no incest involved technically. You will not find a child psychiatrist in the world who could possibly say that there will not be very significant emotional risk to the cloned child as a result of these pressures.

3. Non ethical risk of abuse of the technology.

What would Hitler have done with cloning technology if available in the 1940s? There are powerful leaders in every generation who will seek to abuse this technology for their own purposes. Going ahead with cloning technology makes this far more likely. You cannot have so-called therapeutic cloning without reproductive cloning because the technique to make cloned babies is the same as to make a cloned embryo to try to make replacement tissues. In any case it is a myth that you will get organs from cloned embryos. At best you will get clusters of cells. And at the speed at which biotech is accelerating there will soon be other ways to get such cells. It is rather crude to create a complete embryonic identical twin embryo just to get

hold of stem cells to make - say - nervous tissue. Much better to take cells from the adult and trigger them directly to regress to a more primitive form without the ethical issues raised by inserting a full adult set of genes into an unfertilised egg.

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