Human cloning: who is cloning humans and arguments against cloning (2007)

[youtube:http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZfLyOGQ3TpA auto]

How human clones are being made - for medical research. Arguments for and against human cloning research. Why some people want to clone themselves or even to clone the dead (and not just cloning pets).

Why investors are moving away from human cloning and why human cloning now looks a last-century way to fight disease (2007)

[youtube:http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yU99-QlDLc]
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Should we ban human cloning? Arguments against cloning

Here are three reasons why we should say no to cloning - disadvantages:

1. Health risks from mutation of genes

An abnormal baby would be a nightmare come true. The technique is extremely 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. Dolly the Sheep died prematurely of severe lung disease in

February 2003, and also suffered from arthritis at an unexpectedly early age - probably linked to the cloning process.

Even if a few cloned babies are born apparently normal we will have to wait up to 20 years to be sure they are not going to have problems later -for example growing old too fast. Every time a clone is made it is like throwing the dice and even a string of "healthy" clones being born would not change the likelihood that many clones born in future may have severe medical problems. And of course, that's just the ones born. What about all the disfigured and highly abnormal clones that either spontaneously aborted or were destroyed / terminated by scientists worried about the horrors they might be creating.

2. 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.

Or maybe the child knows it is the twin of a dead brother or sister. What kind of pressures will he or she feel, knowing they were made as a direct replacement for another? It is a human experiment doomed to failure because the child will NOT be identical in every way, despite the hopes of the parents. One huge reason will be that the child will be brought up in a highly abnormal household: one where grief has been diverted into makeing a clone instead of adjusting to loss. The family environment will be totally different than that the other twin experienced. That itself will place great pressures on the emotional development of the child. 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. 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. And at the speed at which biotech is accelerating there will soon be other ways to get such cells - adult stem cell technology. 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.