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REPRODUCTIVE CLONING

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## Reproductive Cloning Arguments Pro and Con

Cloning is a form of asexual reproduction. A child produced by cloning would be the genetic duplicate of an existing person. If you cloned yourself, the resulting child would be neither your son or daughter nor your twin brother or sister, but a new category of human being: your clone.

The great majority of people have an intuitive sense that human beings should not be cloned. Arguments offered for and against reproductive cloning are given below. A summary comment follows at the end of the arguments.

## Arguments Against Reproductive Cloning

1. Reproductive cloning would foster an understanding of children, and of people in general, as objects that can be designed and manufactured to possess specific characteristics.
2. Reproductive cloning would diminish the sense of uniqueness of an individual. It would violate deeply and widely held convictions concerning human individuality and freedom, and could lead to a devaluation of clones in comparison with non-clones.
3. Cloned children would unavoidably be raised "in the shadow" of their nuclear donor, in a way that would strongly tend to constrain individual psychological and social development.
4. Reproductive cloning is inherently unsafe. At least 95% of mammalian cloning experiments have resulted in failures in the form of miscarriages, stillbirths, and life-threatening anomalies; some experts believe no clones are fully healthy. The technique could not be developed in humans without putting the physical safety of the clones and the women who bear them at grave risk.
5. If reproductive cloning is permitted to happen and becomes accepted, it is difficult to see how any other dangerous applications of genetic engineering technology could be proscribed.

## Rebuttals to Arguments Against Reproductive Cloning

- 1 and 2. This will be true only if we allow it to be true. There is no reason that individuals and society can't learn to embrace human clones as just one more element of human diversity and creativity.
3. The problem of "expectations" is hardly unique to cloned children. Most parents learn to communicate their expectations about their children in a moderate and ultimately positive way.
4. Every medical technology carries with it a degree of risk. Cloning techniques will eventually be perfected in mammals and will then be suitable for human trials.
5. Human society can accept or reject any proposed technology on its own merits.

## Arguments in Favor of Reproductive Cloning

1. Reproductive cloning can provide genetically related children for people who cannot be helped by other fertility treatments (i.e., who do not produce eggs or sperm).
2. Reproductive cloning would allow lesbians to have a child without having to use donor sperm, and gay men to have a child that does not have genes derived from an egg donor (though, of course, a surrogate would have to carry the pregnancy).
3. Reproductive cloning could allow parents of a child who has died to seek redress for their loss.
4. Cloning is a reproductive right, and should be allowed once it is judged to be no less safe than natural reproduction.

## Rebuttals to Arguments in Favor of Reproductive Cloning

1. The number of men and women who do not produce eggs or sperm at all is very small, and has been greatly reduced by modern assisted-reproduction techniques. If cloning could be perfected and used for this limited group, it would be all but impossible to prevent its use from spreading. Further, this argument appropriates the phrase "genetically related" to embrace a condition that has never before occurred in human history, one which abolishes the genetic variations that have always existed between parent and child.

&gt;&gt; Reproductive Cloning

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2. Even if cloning were safe, it would be impossible to allow reproductive cloning for lesbians or gay men without making it generally available to all. Policy and social changes that protect lesbian and gay families are a much more pressing need.

3. Throughout history, parents who have lost children have grieved and sought consolation from family and community. "Replacing" the deceased child by cloning degrades and dehumanizes the child, its replacement, and all of us.

4. Rights are socially negotiated, and no "right" to clone oneself has ever been established. Furthermore, there is an immense difference between a woman's desire to terminate an unwanted pregnancy and the desire to create a genetic duplicate of another person. There is no inconsistency between supporting the former and opposing the latter.

#### **Summary Comment**

Most advocates of human cloning also advocate the genetic modification of the human species. Human cloning is a blunt form of eugenics-it "copies" an existing genome-while inheritable genetic modification allows the creation of "designer babies" through manipulation of individual genes. But cloning technologies are needed if inheritable genetic modification is to become commercially practicable. This is the deeper and more far-reaching motivation behind much of the advocacy of human cloning.

The Center for Genetics and Society believes that when all the arguments are considered together the case for allowing human cloning is not compelling, and that the harms of doing so are great.

*Last modified May 15, 2006*

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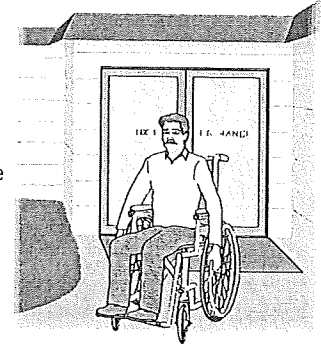
## Euthanasia

## WORDS

- **argue** = say
- **battle** = fight
- **case** = situation
- **cure** = to make healthy
- **cycle** = events that happen again and again, in the same order
- **emotional** = relating to your feelings
- **even though** = while
- **forbid** = not allow
- **immoral** = morally wrong; behavior that is not accepted by people
- **interfere** = to get in the way of something
- **oath** = a formal promise
- **overcrowded** = with too many people
- **physical** = related to the body
- **practice** = carry out, perform
- **rebirth** = to be born again
- **regard** = look upon as
- **swear - swore - sworn** = to promise officially
- **view** = opinion

## REASONS FOR EUTHANASIA

- Everyone has a right to decide when their life should end.
- If the quality of life has become so bad, a person may feel too much **physical** or **emotional** pain.
- Today's hospitals are **overcrowded** and have too many patients. Some **argue** that they should let those die that do not have a chance of living on. In that way there could be more room for patients with diseases that can be cured.



## REASONS AGAINST EUTHANASIA

- Doctors have a problem with euthanasia because they have **sworn** an **oath** that does not allow them to take part in the killing of people.
- Sometimes it is not clear if an ill person really wants to die. Euthanasia should only take place if someone really wants it or if they understand how ill they are.

## EUTHANASIA AND RELIGION

Many religions think that euthanasia is **immoral**. Some religions **regard** it as a type of murder.

- The official Roman Catholic Church is against euthanasia and says it is a crime. Protestants, on the other side, take a more liberal view.
- Hindus think that, **even though** helping a person end a painful life may be good, it **interferes** with the cycle of death and **rebirth**.
- In Islam all forms of euthanasia are **forbidden**.
- In Japan more than half of all Shintoists think that you should be allowed to help a person die if they ask for it.



## Euthanasia

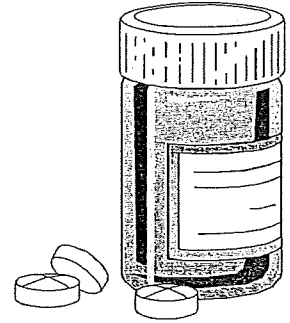
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## WORDS

- antibiotics = drugs and medicine that are used to kill bacteria and cure infections
- appear = to come up, start
- based on = depending on
- battle = fight
- brain damage = damage to a person's brain caused by an accident or illness
- case = situation
- century = a hundred years
- chemotherapy = treatment you get when you suffer from cancer
- court = the place where a trial is held; there is a judge and a jury that decide if a person is guilty or not
- emerge = appear, come up
- especially = above all
- feeding tube = a thin pipe through which a patient gets food
- incurable = deadly
- issue = topic, problem
- legal = allowed in a country or allowed in court
- life supporting = to help you survive
- morphine = a powerful drug used to stop pain and make people calm down
- painless = without pain
- practice = carry out, perform
- promote = to be for something
- remove = take away
- succeed in = to reach what you want
- suffer = to feel pain
- survive = to live on
- treatment = something that is done to help and cure an ill person
- will = a document that you have written and says what you want
- worthy = here: to deserve to stay alive

Euthanasia comes from the Greek language and means „good death“. Another word for euthanasia is “mercy killing”. It is the end of an ill person's life in a painless way.

In the past years there has been much discussion about euthanasia all over the world. In some countries, like Switzerland, Belgium or the Netherlands certain types of euthanasia are legal. In other countries, where euthanasia is illegal, courts do not punish people who practice it.



There are two main types of euthanasia.

- *Active euthanasia* – A doctor or a nurse gives an ill patient medicine that leads to their death.
- *Passive euthanasia* – A patient does not get the medicine or treatment that they need in order to stay alive.

In some cases life supporting machines are turned off and patients die. Sometimes it is decided not to give patients food any more. In other cases antibiotics, chemotherapy or giving someone morphine may lead to their death.

But who decides if and when euthanasia should be carried out. Sometimes the relatives of an incurably ill person make the decision, based on what they think the patient wants. In other cases, a patient may have written down a will that says they want to have machines turned off if there is no hope.

Euthanasia has become a much-discussed issue today because medicine has become much better. People live longer and doctors can sometimes keep people alive for a long time with the help of machines.

Euthanasia groups appeared for the first time in England and America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. During the Second World War the Nazis in Germany had their own euthanasia program. They let people die who were not worthy and healthy enough to survive, especially children and older people.

Many groups that promote the right to die have emerged in the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In the recent case of Terri Schiavo, a woman from Florida who suffered from brain damage and had been in a kind of coma since 1990, her husband succeeded in getting her feeding tube removed. Terry's parents fought a legal battle in court to make the doctors put the tube back in again but they lost. In 2005 Schiavo died, two weeks after the feeding tube had been removed.



Terry Schiavo



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### What Are Designer Babies?

The colloquial term "designer baby" refers to a baby whose genetic makeup has been artificially selected by genetic engineering combined with in vitro fertilization to ensure the presence or absence of particular genes or characteristics. - [wikipedia](#)

In simpler terms, using embryo screening technology to choose what type of baby you want. Latest research is making designer babies a reality now, using technology developed originally for use in animals.

In the future, embryos may not only be screened, but modified.

### What traits could be changed in a designer baby?

Gender

Appearance

Intelligence

Disease

Personality

### Gender selection

Gender selection involves screening embryos for eye color, hair color, and complexion. The Institute cannot change the DNA of the donating couple — if neither the mother nor the father has genes for green eyes, for example, then the Institute cannot give them a baby with green eyes.

### Trait selection

Embryo screening involves a process called pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD). Embryos are created by in-vitro fertilization and grown to the eight-cell stage, at which point one or two cells are removed. Scientists then examine the DNA of these cells for defects, and only normal embryos are replaced in the womb.

### Pros

Reduces the chances of getting some serious diseases

May increase chance of success by being smarter, taller, better looking, etc.

### Cons

Termination of embryos

Could create a gap in society

Possibility of damage to the gene pool

Baby has no choice in the matter