

Ethical Aspects of Cloning

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Through the advancement of science and technology, it is possible to produce genetically identical copies of plant, animal or bacteria through asexual reproduction. This process is referred to as cloning and requires ethical considerations before implementing it. There are two types of human cloning which are the reproductive cloning and therapeutic cloning. Morally, therapeutic cloning is less problematic and more accessible as compared to reproductive cloning. Reproductive cloning has received divergent ethical perspectives and legalizing it is a debatable issue. However, if therapeutic cloning is legalized, scientists will have a chance of coming up with treatments for some incurable diseases. Before carrying out cloning on human beings, it is necessary to take into consideration some factors such as economic, technical and ethical issues.

Cloning has a share of its ethical issues. Not only does it help sterile and homosexual couples have their biological offsprings but also helps scientists in their research. Cloning makes it possible for stem cells to produce organs or tissues that can repair or replicate damaged ones. Additionally, it enables parents to identify their offspring in the event that they lose their child through carrying out DNA tests. However, there are several issues that present the moral and ethical dilemma to the individuals who perceive the practice as a danger to human existence. For instance, various questions such as: Can one live as a unique individual or as a genetic prisoner? Should parents decide the genetic makeup of their offspring? may arise. These are some of the ethical and moral issues that need to be considered before implementing human cloning.

In recent years, there are many ethical issues on human cloning. However, a significant number of such issues are based on misunderstanding and misconceptions. A lot of individuals think that the clones will automatically have similar traits as the cloned. Even if the cloned and the clone have same genes, personalities and traits can be different. The clone cannot be identical

to the cloned because of several environmental factors that can influence behavior, personality and psychology (Vöneky & Wolfrum, 2013). Moreover, some believe that cloning can lead to loss of individuality. These people need to understand that clones have their own personality, distinct from the ones that they were created from. The legalization of human cloning can become a global debate involving people with divergent views. Some of the common groups that can have these views include religious leaders, politicians, philosophers and psychologists.

One of the organizations that opposes human cloning based on ethical issues is the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists (AAPLOG). The Association argues that there is only one supernatural being who is responsible for creating human beings and giving them a distinct identity. If this process is legalized, then a lot of greedy businesspersons will have a chance of trading with human life. The process can enable such individuals to reproduce unethically some clones without the knowledge and consent of the cloned. The best way to go is to legalize only therapeutic cloning and declare reproductive cloning illegal. Therapeutic cloning is the best process that can enable scientists find cures for some incurable diseases. Some countries such as Australia have banned any form of human cloning and this has been echoed by the European Convention on Human Rights. However, because of the ethical considerations, some European countries such as Spain, Greece and Portugal have ratified the convention to give room for therapeutic cloning (Macintosh, 2013). Additionally, some religious leaders such as Pope Benedict XVI of the Roman Catholic Church condemned the practice, calling it a grave offense that is against human dignity.

References

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