

Two heads not better than one

Cloning should be limited to science fiction, not science fact

To clone or not to clone, that is the question, and the answer is a simple "no." To the even more controversial question, whether humans should be cloned, the answer is a definitive and resounding "no." Unfortunately, cloning successes have already been made which could lead to more destructive scientific breakthroughs.

Columnist



Steve May
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world's last major conflict, but has spawned numerous other problems and controversies.

Like the bomb, cloning has been touted as a cure for many world problems. It has been praised for its possibilities in breeding and hailed as an answer to world hunger, but the costs are un-

known at present.

Cloning on a large scale will cause an end to natural selection. No longer will animals be allowed to evolve and adapt to new environmental. With scientists determining what traits are passed along, beneficial genes may possibly be lost. Without the ability to adapt, species after species will be faced with extinction. Another problem arises as copies are made from copies. We have all seen what happens when you get a copy of a copy of a professor's old test — it's barely readable. When you clone a clone, which is in turn cloned again, the DNA structure will break down and what becomes of it is a defect rather than a clone. When these imperfections creep into the

genetic coding, the species could cause its own extinction by genetically de-evolving.

The ramifications of playing God in the animal world won't be told for decades and possibly centuries.

It is not scientists' job to play God and decide who or what should be reproduced and by what means they procreate.

The human soul, the identity which makes us all individuals, cannot be cloned.

The 13th century philosopher Thomas Aquinas believed the soul was placed in a child by God upon conception.

This belief, currently held by Christians, would deter the cloning of human beings. Aquinas wrote, "Without soul, flesh and bone are not truly flesh and bone."

The by-products of human cloning would be no more than empty vessels of flesh and blood. If, by some twist of fate,

cloning became an accepted practice, the effects could be devastating. Armies of perfect soldiers could be made and used to wage war on countries without the ability to clone. Rulers of the past could be brought back to reign again. Racial genocide could be carried out genetically.

The world saw the demise of such inherently evil humans as Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler and numerous others for a reason. However, in the event that a figure from the past was brought back, some scientists claim the clone would not act or develop in the same manner as the original.

Cloning a human being is closer to reality than one might imagine; scientists in Oregon have already achieved embryonic cloning in monkeys. Human cloning has already been banned in Britain, and President Clinton barred federal funds from being used for such experiments.

Do not rush headlong into something which is beyond comprehension. Just because something is possible does not mean it should be done.



No one dreamed it possible; cloning was not expected by most accredited scientists to become a reality until late in the new millennia.

However, scientists at the Roslin Institute in Scotland shocked the world and sent other scientists into a frenzy when they announced their successful genetic experiment, and Dolly was introduced to the world.

Dolly appears to be a normal Welsh Mountain Sheep, but upon further scientific investigation, it becomes clear she is an exact genetic duplicate of her mother.

Joel Achenbach, Washington Post staff writer, satirized the issue best.

"First they clone a sheep, and then, before you know it, we're surrounded by hordes of identical little jug-eared, crewcut twangy-voiced boys with an extremely eerie resemblance to Ross Perot," he said.

Cloning can be compared to the harnessing of the atom; not every country and scientist is ready to take on such a tremendous responsibility.

The nuclear bomb ended the

known at present. Cloning on a large scale will cause an end to natural selection. No longer will animals be allowed to evolve and adapt to new environmental. With scientists determining what traits are passed along, beneficial genes may possibly be lost. Without the ability to adapt, species after species will be faced with extinction. Another problem arises as copies are made from copies. We have all seen what happens when you get a copy of a copy of a professor's old test — it's barely readable. When you clone a clone, which is in turn cloned again, the DNA structure will break down and what becomes of it is a defect rather than a clone. When these imperfections creep into the

Lucky dime leads to introspection, productivity

As busy college students, Aggies rarely pay attention to life's small pleasures. We find ourselves focusing on the big things — lawsuits, increasing fees and fountains that don't work. But last week, I had a day that reminded me of the importance of details.

Columnist



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It all started one morning when, as I left my room, Candice Bergen tossed me a dime. Suddenly everything started going my way.

The rain stopped when I stepped outside, leaving me dry and happy. At Sbis, my student ID card worked the first time it was swiped through the card-reader, and breakfast was just like Parents' Weekend — complete with ice sculptures and strawberries dipped in chocolate.

I then wandered to my 8 a.m. class. I didn't have a single encounter with an out-of-control bicyclist or an over-anxious campus driver. Class was empty as usual, but when my professor saw the poor attendance, he gave all the attending students two extra points on the day's

homework. I thought, "This is some dime!"

After class, I walked to the computer lab in Blocker, where I was able to choose from a row of computers with working keyboards and mice. Netscape loaded in less than five minutes, and during my Internet session I never saw a "file not found" message.

The bus showed up just as I left the lab, and on the way to West Campus, there was not a train in sight.

These incidents affected my entire attitude. Soon I was smiling, saying "Howdy!" and making others smile too. This was shaping up to be a great day.

The Battalion had more good news to offer. The front page reported that Student Government had been dissolved, and the Student Service Fee Allocation Board lowered next year's fee. The whiny columnists were still at it, but some things never change.

I tested my good luck and went to Evans Library to do some research. The elevator arrived at the same time I did,

and every book I looked for was on the shelf where it belonged. I found everything I needed and had exact change for the copier.

I walked back to my room, and I finally came up with the perfect answering machine message. Afterwards, I napped for two hours while the rock-star wannabe player next door didn't make a sound.

When I woke up, I remembered some errands I needed to run. Climbing in my car, I was delighted to see it was still full of gas and had eluded blackbird deposits. No one was in front of me at the Wal-Mart checkout line, and on my way out of the store a friendly Girl Scout sold me the last box of thin mints in central Texas.

I drove back to campus and a friendly PTTS officer directed me to a prime parking space beside my dorm, saving me a 15-minute walk from Fish Lot.

When I dropped off my groceries in my room, I discovered an old friend had called. He complimented my answering machine message and invited me over for a home-cooked dinner.

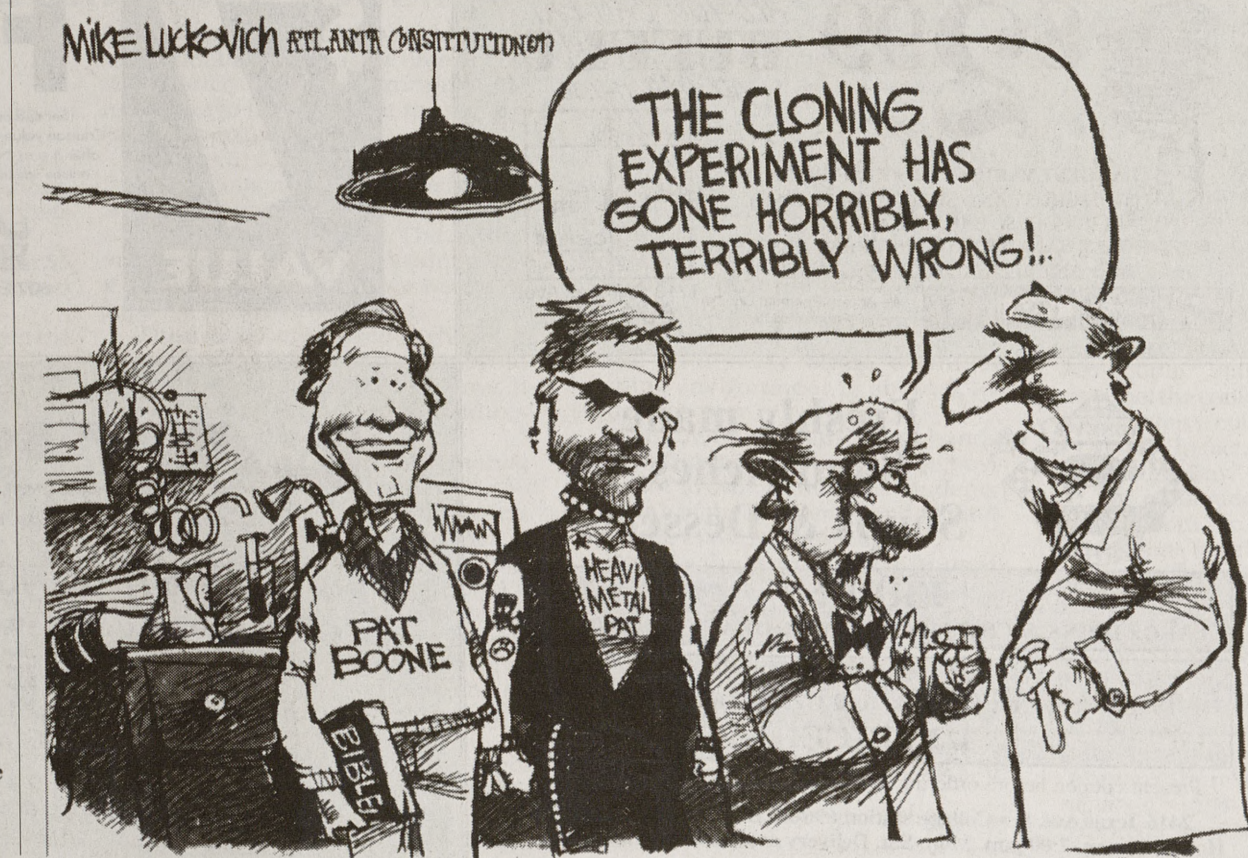
Now in a euphoric state, I ambled over toward Rudder Tower to study for a few hours. On the second floor, my favorite couch was vacant, and I was able to study in bliss. I opened my textbook and fluid dynamics suddenly began to make sense.

As I left campus, I tossed the dime to one of the untenured professors. Who knows, maybe next time university officials increase the General Use Fee, someone besides top administrators will see a salary increase.

This was a day I will always remember. Not because I won \$10 million from Ed McMahon, but because the day was free of annoyances. Even so, it all eventually came to an end, and the rest of the week plagued me with small irritations like long lines and term papers.

Most days are punctuated with problems — computers crash, alarm clocks don't go off and cash machines break down. I suppose anyone who places too much focus on circumstances, big or small, will always find reasons to be a grouch.

Even so, I hope I find another dime like that when I sell my books back.



MAIL CALL

Fish Camp honors Beutel employee

I have recently been named a Fish Camp namesake for Fish-camp '97 and needless to say, I am very honored and proud.

To me, Fish Camp is one of the strongest, most positive and endearing traditions Aggieland holds near and dear.

I will cherish this event forever. A special thanks to Jamie Straughn and Roseanne Petruica for nominating me, and to Libby Edwards and Jason Jaynes for being my camp's co-chairs.

I grew up roaming the halls of the Chemistry Department (my father is a retired Professor Emeritus of Chemistry here) and

watched as my twin brother graduated from the charter class of Texas A&M Medical School. Now I have something to be proud of, too.

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