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Since the first adult sheep was cloned in Scotland, two major factions have sprouted as a result of ethical controversy--those who support cloning research, and those who oppose it. With the progressing media hype, people who have taken sides on this issue actually have made less persuasion than people who remain open-minded; the slightest comment about cloning research will certainly attract opposition. However, despite the incongruities of both factions over research, the social effects of cloning, and ethics, all people recognize the need to be cautious with this newfound technology.

People who support cloning research, namely businessmen and contributing scientists who see an application for their technology, have an optimistic outlook on this field. They praise their laboratory techniques and research, remarking on their ingenious idea of replacing the DNA of an unfertilized egg with that from a body cell. Supporters of cloning research see nothing but human benefit from their work. Cloning animals such as insulin-producing sheep and animals that can be used to research genetic disorders in humans are some of the possibilities of this research. Cloning will be enough to launch medicine into a new era, allowing scientists to cure hundreds of genetic disorders, perhaps cancer and even AIDS. The overall effect: more jobs for geneticists, a boom for companies investing in cloning research, and better health care for millions of people, supporters say.

On the other hand, the outlook for cloning from the opposition's viewpoint is bleak. These people, mostly purists, the devoutly religious, and almost anyone else with common sense, consider cloning a scientific and ethical concern. They discredit laboratory techniques and research, stating that mankind has no right to alter the reproductive cycle of nature. They argue that the proponents of cloning do their research only in the interest of profit and not the public. Though both sides agree that much time and effort has been spent towards cloning that first sheep, opponents see it as nothing but an ethical violation.

In a way, it is possible for these discontinuous sides to agree on a common point. Take abortion, for example, a powerful fuel for controversy leading to many recent incidents at abortion clinics. If anti-abortionists feel malcontent over simple abortion, they haven't been exposed to the effects of cloning. Cloning is even more powerful--it toys with the intricate nature of reproduction that has taken more than three billion years to perfect. It endows mankind with a power he knows little of. With cloning, killing babies does not fit into the equation--one can choose to clone himself instead of having children, families may clone their children, or perhaps genetically enhance their offspring in some unimaginable way. What will happen to religion? With human cloning, one's genes can live on forever. In a way, a person could override death.

Seeing the differences between views, it is difficult to imagine that both supporters and opponents share the same common concern. Though the benefits of cloning research may seem to outweigh any ethical controversy, scientists must remain open-minded to the consequences of their research. As some members of the military questioned the use of the atom bomb during its creation, even the firmest believer in cloning occasionally questions himself about what he supports. Is it the ability to change life, help it, or to make a profit that motivates him? Both sides understand the need for caution toward cloning; it is an issue not likely to dissipate in the near future.