

science

Are burgers for babies worth the trade-off?

When I was in high school, I worked at McDonald's (yes, that's right, I admit it). There we were trained to make the food the same way every time. This, we were told, was to ensure that the food remained the exact same each time it was made. In this way, the food's quality (such as it was), guaranteed to be the same from burger to burger, but all through that, it never changed. It was always good, but because it was always the same, it could never be great.

And so the scientific community has announced that it is now capable of cloning humans, although this technology is currently limited to the human embryo. The scientific community has put a freeze on the implementation of this until such time as a new round of debates can be held to determine whether such a thing should be allowed to occur.

The problem facing much scientific research, and biological work in particular of late, is the accusation that they continually intend to play God. This argument has flared up over such things as the issue of using animals for research.

Of course, people have had problems with the ethics of scientific research all through its lifetime. There has always been someone who thinks that science is going too far. For every major breakthrough in the way we think about the world around us, there has been a group which savagely opposes the new truth. The Papacy came to odds with Galileo over his non-Earth-centred universe, and demonstrators have been protesting all over the world ever since nuclear energy (and bombs) became a reality.

The issue is whether or not science is answerable to the general public for its work. Should there be limits set up which restrict the kinds of work that scientists should do? What about medical research? If limits are to be imposed, who decides where they will be erected? The problem of the diversity of humans, the fact that we are all different, with our own morals and subtly different outlook on what is good and what is bad, makes such things impossible to do.

It is impossible to decide here where science should go. It is also impossible to decide here who should make the determination of where it will go. What

then should we do? The decision of what is good, beneficial scientific work, with realistic and foreseeable benefits, and what is work which oversteps mankind's wisdom, is the kind of decision which can only be made within the individual. The debates over whether cloning should be allowed will rage on for a very long time, because everyone has a different opinion on the subject, and it is impossible to totally agree with everyone else on anything because of that. Does this lead to total anarchy because we can't ever fully agree with everything another person believes in? No. Of course not. What it means is that if we live by accepting that people are different and that by overlooking some of the subtle differences that we may have with others, we can have a relatively peaceful life.

What people on both sides of the

debate over whether science has gone too far with this cloning work don't realize is that society isn't evenly divided into smooth groups. There are some who don't think cloning is right. There are some who think that it is. And there are many, many more who may not know what to think about it. The whole population will not be divided into two discreet groups exclusively for or against cloning, or any other medical or scientific principle. Humans are far more complicated than that. There will be many subtle shades of gray in between the black and white of this and other issues, and we can't ever hope to settle them in a way that will please everyone. If we let the people who are against it have their way and stop it, then the minority will have their way in a society which is based on the rule of the majority. The same goes

if we let the work continue. Damned if we do, damned if we don't. We can't decide because we aren't all the same, like clones.

Maybe that's the problem, or is it the solution?

Steve Tonner

POINTLESS PONDERABLES

Solution to last week:

Stop your train, and start a fire in front of the engine. Since the wind is blowing in the same direction as your train was going, the second fire blows away from you. As the flames burn forward, move the train forward until you are completely within the burned out area from the second fire. When the first fire reaches your previous position, it will burn out as the second fire has consumed all the fuel.

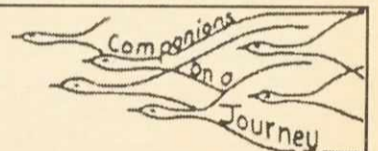
This week:

You find yourself seated around a circular room with two other people, spaced evenly apart, with a candle behind each of you. If you can see a lit candle behind either of the other people, you raise your hand. If you can determine, without looking behind you, if your candle is lit or not, you may lower your hand. Upon looking at each person, you note that each has a lit candle and has raised their hand. After a few minutes of thought, you lower your hand. Is your candle lit or not?

SOFTBALL for INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Saturday, November 6, 2:00 pm
Meet at fountain on North Commons (near Quinpool & Robie) Wear comfortable clothing & sneakers. Equipment and instruction will be provided. All international students, softball enthusiasts, friends & family welcome!

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ROMAN CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY



SUNDAY MASS
12:30 P.M.
ROOM 307 S.U.B.

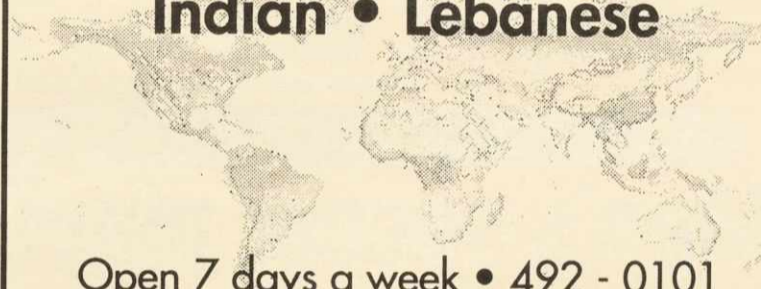
WEEKDAY MASS, TUES. & THURS. 12:30
MIDDAY PRAYER, WED. & MON. 12:30
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
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