

Custom babies create controversy

Genetic manipulation eliminates human individuality

Jadon Triplett
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

How real can life be when it's designed in a Petri dish?

While this issue is by no means new, it is still an important one, especially considering all the advances that have been made in the field of genetics. It is an issue that has lurked beneath the surface for many years.

The human genome project has been completed. We live in an age where a person can choose whether they want a baby boy or girl, using pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, which is an embryonic analysis used to identify unhealthy embryos in couples that have a history of genetic disease, such as cystic fibrosis or hemophilia.

The next step is to use the existing technology to breed out genetic disorders. The idea doesn't sound bad to begin with, until one

stops to consider just who is creating man in his own image.

When we get to choose the genetic makeup of our babies, we could be inadvertently eliminating some of our greatest assets. For example, if one attempts to shape a child's genetics so his or her learning styles will fit the mold of an educational factory, it would disallow for conditions such as Attention Deficit Disorder. Couldn't that put a damper on creativity? If one eliminates the possibility of irrational thought, couldn't it effectively kill imagination?

In the 1997 film "Gattaca," every newborn's genetic features are options to be chosen and undesirable qualities bred out. The film's protagonist is conceived naturally (in the back of a Buick, in fact) and is born with a heart problem and other undesirable imperfections. He faces discrimination

by a genetically superior class of people that all look the same and is labeled an "invalid."

While Hollywood may seem like a bad place to turn for wisdom (and yes, I know people will never drive electric cars like the crazies in this film), the movie is plausible enough that it caused me to wonder about the wisdom in designing babies when I first watched it years ago.

We live in an age where science tends to push forward, not stopping to think whether it should. There are some decisions that should not be left in our hands. In the not-so-distant future, there will be people who will want more than just healthy genes for their children. They will want to be able to pick their baby's eye color, hair color and facial features.

Sound insane? Imagine a couple that is morbidly obese and don't want their child to be

ridiculed for being fat. So they do the best thing they can for their child: make him or her look like all the other kids, so he or she won't be picked on for being different from all the other kids.

People can go to the pet store to choose a puppy; they can go to Fry's to pick out the perfectly designed computer with all the right features. Should parents really be able to select their children?



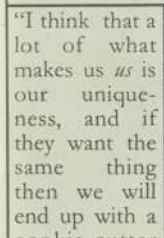
As the field of bio-genetics continues to push forward, people should ask themselves if this is an end to which we should proceed.

How do you feel about genetic engineering of humans?



Dana Weesner

"You want to have healthie and brighter people, yes, but it's also possible to make smaller, stupider people too, people that could just be used as drones."



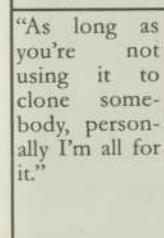
"I think that a lot of what makes us us is our uniqueness, and if they want the same thing then we will end up with a cookie-cutter world."

Andy Wheeler



Hunter Breedlove

"It has useful purposes, although man being the creature that he is, will make it into a genetic mutation that will destroy the planet."



Zaisha Starlin

"As long as you're not using it to clone somebody, personally I'm all for it."

Staying abreast of potential risks of implants

Cyndee Mady
CO EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Whether a woman desires the hottest new shade of lipstick or those trendy new stilettos that are sure to create permanent feet and back ailments, women have always paid a high price for beauty—but where does one draw the line when it comes to safety over cosmetics?

Growing up in the land of Barbie dolls and super models gives the average woman a false perception of what "normal"

should look like. With the advent of silicone breast implants, women were able to take the fate of their breast size into their own hands—until the FDA stepped in, that is.

More than a decade ago, the FDA banned silicone gel breast implants pending further investigation into the potential dangers of faulty devices.

According to intelhealth.com, the FDA still has concerns over the frequency of breakage that causes the implant to leak silicone and the effect the leakage has on

the body.

The website highbeam.com reveals that syndicated talk show host Jenny Jones had her original breast implants replaced four times, with seven surgeries in all. After 11 years of suffering, she finally had them removed, descending from a 36B to a 36AA.

"I finally unloaded them," said Jones. "I can hug people again."

Many may think the saline alternative to silicone is a safer solution. Former actress Kathryn Gordon would disagree.

A Glamour Magazine article by Lisa Collier Cool appeared in the November 2000 issue, retelling Gordon's horrific experience with her saline implants. Her symptoms included: achy joints, fatigue and thinning hair, but it wasn't until she started to breast-feed her daughter that her symptoms escalated to a whole new level.

Her nipples began to bleed; she had slurred speech, spine chills, severe pain in her hands ... "I couldn't even open a jar of baby food," said Gordon. "It was like having the flu all the time."

Gordon saw numerous doctors, resulting in the same conclusion each time.

"They'd give me a big speech about how the body is made of salt water, so it wouldn't matter if the implants had leaked or ruptured," she said. "They all felt my implants couldn't be the problem—even though, by then, I had

severe breast pain."

The turning point in Gordon's life came when she consulted with Dr. Susan Kolb from Atlanta, who recognized her symptoms as relating to a leaky saline implant.

"I started crying when she asked questions like, 'Are you slurping your words?' and 'Do you feel like someone is scratching inside your chest?' At last I'd found a doctor who didn't think I was crazy and actually understood what I was going through," said Gordon.

Her implants were promptly removed. The implants had turned black from a fungus, which spread to Gordon's bloodstream, causing her illness. Gordon fully recuperated six weeks later after intense anti-bacterial treatments. Wow, that's a lot to endure just to fill out that little black dress!

Though most women think men are all about "boobs," they are just as bad as women when it comes to making snide remarks as a busty woman with obvious fake ones passes by. Real men should prefer the real deal, no matter the size.

So if a woman is getting implants for the man—DON'T. If he can't accept the woman for the person she is, he's not worth it anyway. If the decision to get breast implants is a personal one, however, ask yourself the following questions:

Should the debate be "Silicone or Saline?" Or is the real debate "Health Risks versus Aesthetics?"

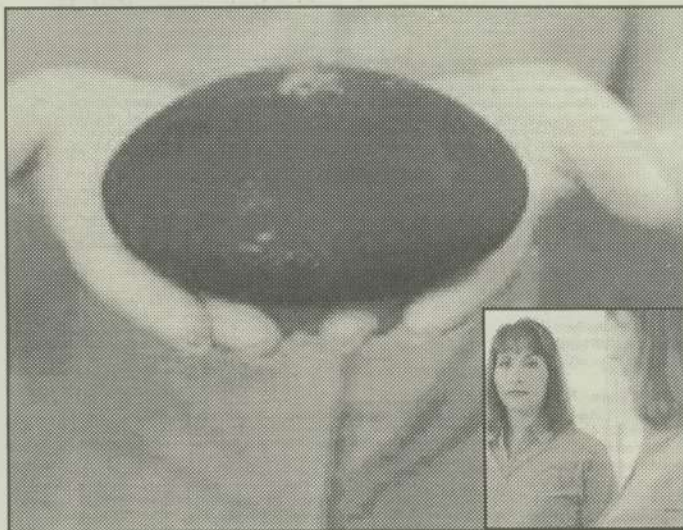


PHOTO COURTESY OF GLAMOUR MAGAZINE—NOV. 2000

Upon removal, tests showed that actress Kathryn Gordon's implant had become full of fungus (hence the black color) and contained an entire teaspoon of bacteria.

Chiefs' Corner: The many faces of the bad boss-blues



Cyndee Mady
CO EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

When it comes to establishing rapport with one's employer, it may become necessary to magically transform into a chameleon (more commonly known as brown-nosing); nonetheless, an essential quality in extending the duration of employment is to stay within the boss's good graces, idiosyncrasies and all.

In my 25 years of gainful employment, I've had the distinct opportunity of encountering various types of bosses. I have also learned the best ways to deal with

each. The first type of boss one might recognize is the "Bully Boss." This is the boss who singles out one person to needle throughout the day or perhaps the week, while the other minions just laugh and bide their time until they too, become the target of Bully Boss.

There are a couple of ways to approach Bully Boss. One can simply put up with the abuse and relive childhood memories that conjure up that nervous tick in the right eye, holding onto the notion that Bully Boss will soon get bored and focus her browbeating efforts on the next poor sap. Or, one can stand up to Bully Boss, gain a little self-respect and peer admiration in the process, and try to avoid getting fired a week later for showing up to work five minutes late.

The "Irate Boss" is different than the Bully Boss in the fact that he's not prejudice—he hates everyone the same!

The best way to handle Irate Boss is to avoid him at all costs. I was once asked why my irate boss Bob never yelled at me, to which I replied, "Because he can never find me."

A third type of boss is the "Know-it-All." No matter what brilliant idea an employee comes up with, if it wasn't the Know-it-All's idea, it's not going to fly.

The only way to handle the Know-it-All Boss is to make her think it was her own idea. This way, the employee's great idea gets implemented and operations run smoother; unfortunately, there won't be any credit where credit is due.

Speaking of the boss taking credit, the next boss type is the ever-unpopular "Two-faced Boss."

This is the boss who listens to all ideas, tells employees how much he appreciates their input and to keep up the good work, and the moment the door is closed, calls his own superior to convey "his" great new idea.

Unless one has the documentation to pull a Melanie Griffith in "Working Girl," you're basically screwed with a capital "S."

The final boss type is the "Good Boss." This is the boss who praises her employees' worth, always wears a smile and comes through on all of her promises. Finding the Good Boss, however, is like trying to find a needle in the haystack. They are far and few between. But buyers beware—Good Boss is often confused with Two-Faced Boss.

Just remember, if it sounds too good to be true—it probably is.