**Science Fiction or Future?**

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**ABSTRACT**

When one thinks of cloning, the image that comes to mind is normally of a futuristic, dystopian society, akin to those depicted in novels such as, “A Brave New World” by Aldous Huxley. To most people, for our society to become like these science fiction worlds seems impossible. However, while researching stem cell research and therapeutic cloning, I found that there was no federal legislation that mentions cloning. While attempts in Congress have been made to create such regulations, none have passed. The United Nations has passed the *United Nations Declaration on Human Cloning,* however it is non-binding and incredibly vague. What would stop an individual from creating a human clone?

For my project, titled --------, I will be producing a documentary which compares cinematic and literary portrayals of human cloning and the actual future of the science. I will then coordinate a viewing of the documentary. This project was chosen because the topic fascinates me, the process will challenge me, and I will be doing something I enjoy. Human cloning, though it carries a negative connotation, could lead to remarkable advances in disease treatment. Therapeutic cloning could allow a person to grow his or her own, specialized tissue, eliminating most risk for rejection. The process of writing, producing, and directing a documentary will be a sufficient challenge, but an interesting journey.

The end product will be the documentary titled, “-----.” The documentary will center on the reality of cloning depicted in science fiction films and novels. I plan to interview local researchers, medical professionals, and legislators for the informative aspect of the documentary. After the documentary is complete I will organize a viewing of the film, either at First Colonial High School, or a public location.

My consultant is Leslie Shoemake, a Legal Studies Biology teacher at First Colonial High School. She has a Bachelor’s degree of Science in Biology and in Education, as well as a Master’s degree in Education. She has been teaching for 22 years.

The participants in my project will be the individuals I interview as well as friends and family that will assist in the filming process. Thought the documentary is somewhat catered to the scientific community, I hope that the documentary informs as many people as possible. I feel it is important for the public to realize the reality of cloning.

Ideally, I would like for the documentary to be completed by the first week of March. The viewing will be at the end of March, allowing time for feedback and reflection through the beginning of April.

The hope is that my documentary will inform the local community. During my viewing, I will distribute a short survey/feedback form to the audience. These will provide feedback on aspects of the film and viewing including:

Information

Organization

Comprehensibility

Presentation

Interest/Entertainment

Video and audio recording devices, video editing software, and a computer will all be neccesary materials for my project. I plan to utilize the flip cameras that the First Colonial Library Media Center provides, as well as purchasing or renting audio equipment. The viewing may also require materials such as snacks, beverages, and promotional flyers.

**LEARNING SKILLS**

I have a very basic knowledge of video filming and editing. Through research I will enhance my video editing skills and enrich my filming and writing procedure. Something that I need to learn is creating audio recordings that are clearer than audio captured by video recording devices. To prepare for the interviews, I will need to review interview etiquette and prepare appropriate questions. I will also need to learn more about how the cloning in science fiction films and novels relates to the future of human cloning.

**PROJECT STEPS**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Objective** | **Estimated Time** |
| 1 | Create plot and detailed storyboard | 2 Hours |
| 2 | Prepare interview questions | 3 hours |
| 3 | Secure interviews | 2 Hours |
| 4 | Consult Ms. Shoemake and receive feedback on storyboard and interviews\* | 2 Hours |
| 5 | Revise and enhance storyboard and prepared interview questions | 2 hours |
| 6 | Outline script | 1.5 hours |
| 7 | Conduct /film interviews | 5 hours |
| 8 | Secure external film clips | 1-2 hours |
| 9 | Finish filming | 10 hours |
| 10 | Edit documentary | 10 hours |

I will continue to consult Ms. Shoemake throughout the process.

**PROJECT DOCUMENTATION**

To document my project I will use photographic and written evidence of progress. Photographs will be taken of important steps, such as filming, materials, and interviews. The storyboard and script used to plan my documentary will be used as documentation. The feedback forms I receive after the viewing and the flyers and other marketing products I use to advertise the viewing will also be kept as documentation. All other materials, such as interview questions and notes, phone logs, etc. will also be provided as documentation, along with a journal.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION**

The process of cloning and the legislation surrounding it is complex, as well as vague, making it challenging to boil down and explain through a documentary, while keeping the audience’s attention. In addition, I will have to use the skills I have learned in the Legal Studies Academy to avoid copyright infringement, individual rights, and plagiarism. Creating this documentary is going to be a challenge in many ways. I have already realized that using film clips and referencing novels or movies is going to be a challenge. However, I feel the finished product will make all of the obstacles worthwhile, because I am passionate about the topic and the presentation of the information. I would like to accomplish this because I truly believe people should know about the future of cloning and how dangerous or helpful it could be.

**PROJECT-PAPER CONNECTION**

My academic legal research paper is centered on the legislation on stem cell research and therapeutic cloning in the United States. While researching this topic, I was startled to realize that the United States had no federal legislation on reproductive or therapeutic cloning. In essence, an individual can legally clone in America. Many are concerned that stem cell research and therapeutic cloning will inevitable lead to reproductive cloning. The fact that we have no regulations banning reproductive cloning makes the concern valid, and instills a fear that our society could develop into a science fiction dystopia that has been depicted in so many films and novels. This inspired me to further research cloning and compile my findings into an interesting and revealing documentary.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

*I understand that any academic dishonesty by me on any part of the project will result in failure of the Senior Project and forfeiture of the Legal Studies Seal on my High School diploma.*

**COMPLETION DATES**

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| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Objective** |
| February 24th, 2013 | Filming complete |
| March 15th, 2013 | Documentary complete |
| End of March | Viewing |
| April 1st, 2013 | Finish reviewing and compiling feedback |