

Week 6

Leon R. Kass—

Preventing a Brave New World



**Leon Kass is another
University of Chicago professor
along with Sunstein.**

**Do not forget about going to the
U. of C. if you are not feeling well.**

I.

Kass is concerned about medicine's technological march even though much of it is good.

His issue is the movement from curing medical problems to entering a brave new world with us lying on the operating table.

**Kass lists a long inventory of concerns:
the pill, in vitro fertilization, bottled embryos,
surrogate wombs, cloning, genetic screening,
genetic manipulation, organ harvesting,
mechanical spare parts, chimeras, brain
implants, Ritalin, Viagra, Prozac, etc.**

Kass mentions Brave New World and 1984 and the dystopia.

Kass references Huxley's brave new world as "living under the gentle hand of humanitarianism rendered fully competent by genetic manipulation, psychoactive drugs, hypnopædia (sleep-teaching), high-tech amusements."



Huxley's world is devoid of problems, wars, diseases, psych disorders, grief, and sorrow.

However, this world now majors in mediocrity and numbness.

Kass concludes, "Brave New Man is so dehumanized that he does not even recognize what has been lost."

Kass bemoans the American seeming indifference to addressing this issue when it has in the past addressed other threats to our future.

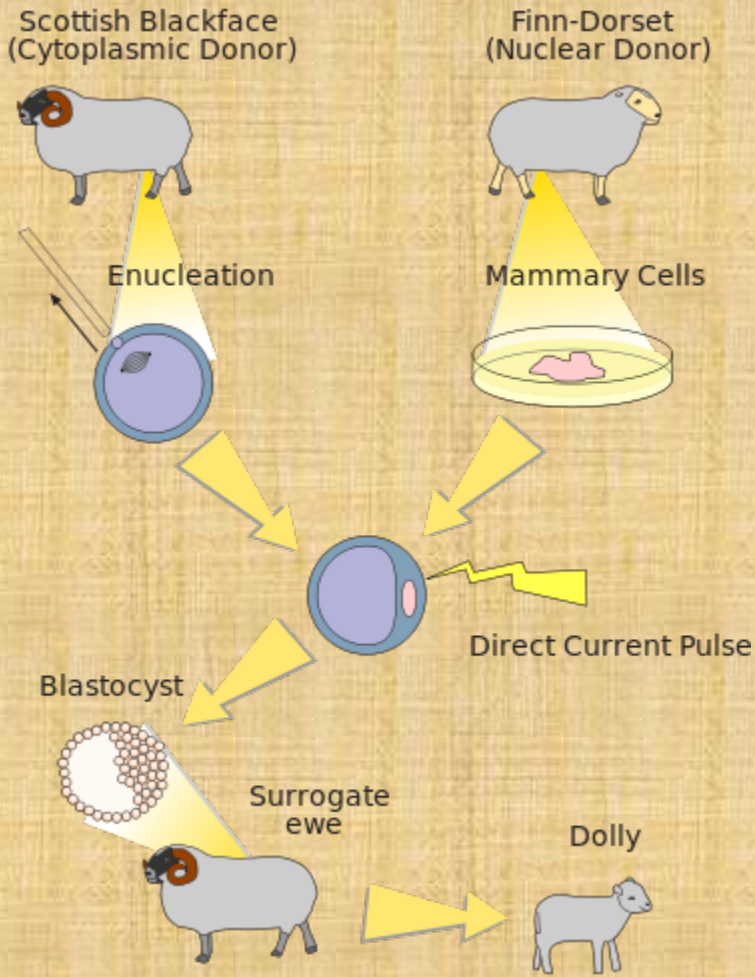
We dealt with the dehumanization by the Nazis and the USSR.

It should be noted that it took quite sometime for us to engage both of them.



**We have stopped some of Kass' concerns.
The US cannot create a plutonium-powered
heart and commercial trafficking of organs
for transplantation.**

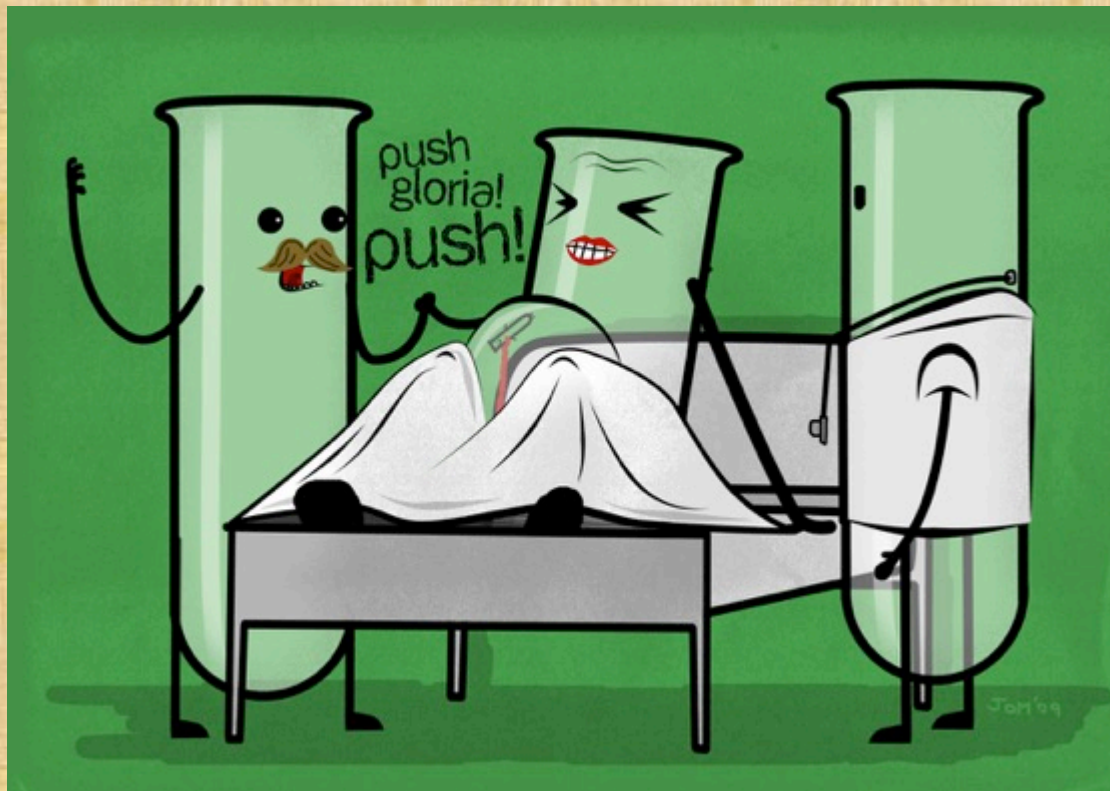
**Having said that, we have not dealt directly
with cloning. We have more or less *mastered*
animal cloning such as with sheep, pigs, goats,
mice, etc.**



Dolly (right) with another cloned sheep

Kass goes beyond cloning to raise issues with genetic enhancement.

In addition, he also discusses “whether children are going to be made to order rather than begotten....”



II.

Cloning has gotten into movies like *The Boys from Brazil*. Do not watch this [trailer](#) unless you can tolerate blood and violence:

Kass differentiates cloning from Xeroxing.

In addition, while the cloned animal or person has the DNA of its parents, it will not have the same life experiences.

III.

**Kass is totally against cloning of people,
but he does not close the door on cloning embryos.**

**He raises the issue of problems with clones
being normal...animals often have deformities,
disabilities, and other medical issues.**



In addition, there are psych issues such as who the clone is. Also, Kass raises an interesting question: would you wish to be a clone?

IV.

**Not all proponents of cloning are
bad people like Hitler.**

**They can be people pushing for freedom.
Those who want reproductive rights for women.**

V.

Kass rejects cloning, because it is playing God.

**One of my responses to playing God
is not a logical argument against cloning.
I cannot think of many medical break
throughs that were not considered by some
and often a majority as playing God.**

**This is directed to the class—
When arguing a point out in the world,
do not muddy the water of your
argument with flawed logic.**

**Cloning has real questions associated
with it, stay on the questions.**

**From Bedlam, heart transplants
have been considered playing God.**

