

**GE Cluster M71C**  
**Spring 2015**  
**Biotechnology and Society**

**That's My Baby/DNA/Property:**  
**Bioethics of Assisted Reproductive Technologies and Human Cloning**

**Course Description**

What is the relationship between human DNA and a human life? As advancements in biotechnology outstrip our traditional understandings of what a human life is, the answers to this question are fraught with both urgency and uncertainty. In this writing-intensive course, we will begin by developing a philosophical and legal framework within which to discuss the following issues raised by biotechnology and its effects on human reproduction:

- Parents and Reproductive Choice: What is the right to procreate, and how has it been complicated by technologies that have severed the link between reproduction and sex?
- Moral and Legal Status Before Birth: Should embryos and fetuses enjoy any legal protections? Is there a right *not* to be born, or, in the case of frozen embryos, a right *to* be born?
- Genetic Testing and the Right to Control One's Genetic Material: What relationship should we have to our genetic material?
- Human Cloning: What is human cloning? Is it the copying of a person or merely the copying of information? Are clones still part of the human family, or are they something different?

We will end the course by reflecting on the question of what it means to be a human being, and asking whether biotechnologies are benefitting or harming us as human beings.

**Course Website**

[www.TBA.edu](http://www.TBA.edu)

Use the course website to access course information, including readings, assignments, and announcements.

**Instructor**

Lee-Ann Chae, [chae@humnet.ucla.edu](mailto:chae@humnet.ucla.edu)

Office Hours: TBA

**Grades:**

In-Class Presentation:	10%
Quizzes:	10%
“3 Theses” Assignment:	5%
Annotated Bibliography:	5%
Paper Outline:	5%
Rough Draft:	10%
Peer Review Exercise:	5%
Revised Draft:	20%
Final Draft:	30%
Total:	100%

*Policy on late or missed assignments:* Late assignments may be turned in for a third of a grade reduction, up to one week after the due date. Assignments turned in after this time will not receive credit. Quizzes cannot be made up.

*Plagiarism:* Plagiarism, which entails passing off others’ work as your own, will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me. You can also consult the Dean of Students website, <http://www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/dos/students/integrity/>, for more information about cheating, multiple submissions of assignments, and plagiarism.

**Seminar Format**

This course will be run as a seminar, and not as a lecture. Please be prepared to participate actively in class discussion. Each seminar will begin with a brief quiz about the week’s readings, and a student presentation about some aspect of the week’s readings. I’ll then briefly present on the week’s topic, incorporating the readings, raising analytic questions and inviting you to participate. We will end each seminar with a brief writing exercise intended to help you develop the final draft of your research paper.

**Seminar Expectations**

Carefully read the texts assigned for each week, and have them available in class. We will be discussing many controversial issues in this seminar – please be respectful of your classmates’ opinions. I will expect you to attend every class. If you miss a class, it is up to you to get caught up. Turn in all in-class and take-home assignments on time.

**Guidelines for Section Presentations**

Each week, one group of two students will give a presentation and lead class discussion for 30 minutes. These presentations are an opportunity to present your analysis of some aspect of the week’s readings. They are an important part of the seminar, so please take the time to put together a thoughtful presentation. Each group must meet with me to discuss their presentation before they present.

Presentations should not be summaries of the readings. Remember, all your classmates will already have read the materials. Instead, students should state the main idea of a reading (or readings), make thematic connections with previous lectures, discussions, and/or readings, and ask one or two discussion questions.

When coming up with discussion questions, try to think of questions that will help your classmates to think more deeply about a certain aspect of the readings you found interesting. Questions like, “Do you agree or disagree?” or “Do you think it’s a good argument?” are generally too open-ended to guide discussion very well. On the first day, we’ll go over some examples of good discussion questions.

## **Lecture and Reading Schedule, and Assignment Due Dates** (approximately 30 pages of reading/week)

### Unit 1: Parents and Reproductive Choice

#### *Week 1: Introduction*

- Shapiro, *Bioethics and Law*, pp. 3-5, 8-10
- MacFarquhar, “The Children of Strangers”

#### *Week 2: The Right to Procreate*

- Shapiro, *Bioethics and Law*, pp. 592-95, (Optional: pp. 543-54)
- Mill, *On Liberty*
- Mills, “Reproductive Autonomy as Self-Making”
- Panitch, “Assisted Reproduction and Distributive Justice”
- *Skinner v. Oklahoma*, 316 U.S. 535 (1942)
- *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833 (1992)

#### *Week 3: Surrogacy and Artificial Gestation*

- Shapiro, *Bioethics and Law*, pp. 681-2, 686-96
- Schoeman, “Rights of Children, Rights of Parents, and the Moral Basis of Family”
- Poplawski and Gillett, “Ethics and Embryos”
- *In re Baby M*, 537 A.2d 1227 (N.J. 1988)
- *Johnson v. Calvert*, 5 Cal.4th 84 (1993)

▷ DUE at the beginning of class (hard copy): 3 possible theses for research paper

#### *Week 4: Trait-Control, Enhancement, and Diminishment*

- Sandel, “The Case Against Perfection”
- Chambers, “Parental Ends”
- Malek, “Use of Refuse Reproductive Genetic Technologies: Which Would a ‘Good Parent’ Do?”
- Murphy, “In Defense of Prenatal Genetic Interventions”
- Robertson, “Extending PGD”

- Dahl, “Should Parents Be Allowed to Use PGD To Choose the Sexual Orientation of Their Children?”
- BBC News, “Is it Wrong to Select a Deaf Embryo?”

▷ DUE at the beginning of class (hard copy): annotated bibliography

## Unit 2: Moral and Legal Status Before Birth

### *Week 5: Status of Embryos*

- Shapiro, *Bioethics and Law*, pp. 625-37 (omit pp. 627-28), 683
- Lee, “Ontological Status of Embryos”
- Tully, “Cryopreserved Embryos and Dignitas Personae: Another Option?”
- MacKellar, “Differentiating Between Human and Non-Human Interspecies Embryos”

### *Week 6: Pre-birth Selection, and the Right to Exist (or Not)*

- Shapiro, *Bioethics and Law*, pp. 770-78, 782-83
- Smolensky, “Creating Children with Disabilities”
- Heyd, “Prenatal Diagnosis: Whose Right?”

▷ DUE at the beginning of class (hard copy): Outline (1-2 pages)

## Unit 3: Genetic Testing and the Right to Control One’s Genetic Material

### *Week 7: Human Genes and Property Rights*

- Holland, “Buying and Selling Gametes, Embryos, and Human Tissues”
- Hoedemaekers and Dekkers, “Is There a Unique Moral Status of Human DNA That Prevents Patenting?”

▷ In-Class Peer Review Exercise

▷ DUE at the beginning of class (hard copy and turnitin): Rough Draft (3-5 pages)

## Unit 4: Human Cloning

### *Week 8: What am I?*

- Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*
- Dennett, “Where Am I?”
- Nagel, Mind and Cosmos

▷ DUE at the beginning of class (hard copy and turnitin): Revised Draft (6-8 pages)

*Week 9: Human Cloning: Rights and Obligations*

- Sunstein, “The Constitution and the Clone”
- Shapiro, *Bioethics and Law*, pp. 909-919
- O’Neill, “Between Consenting Adults”

*Week 10: Cloning, Immortality, and the Link Between Sex and Reproduction*

- Meacham, “Empathy and Alteration: The Ethical Relevance of a Phenomenological Species Concept”
- Mendelsohn, “The Robots Are Winning!”

Tuesday, June 9 (Finals Week):

▷ DUE at noon (hard copy in my mailbox in 325 Dodd and turnitin): Final Draft (10 pages)