

# REVIEWS

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## *Human Cloning: Reality or Fiction?*

*In His Image: The Cloning of a Man* by David M. Rorvik, Lippincott, New York, 1978, 239pp., references, bibliography, index, \$8.95. Paperback: Pocket Books, New York, \$2.50.

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More important than the book itself is the furor it raised. When *In His Image* was published, people were forced to ask some provocative questions: Is human cloning actually possible? What are its social, moral and religious implications? What psychological problems will a human clone and his parent/twin encounter? What benefits can come from human cloning? Mormons too began asking questions: How will a cloned baby be assigned a spirit? What will be recorded for a clone's genealogy? Would God really allow cloning?

But first, did it really happen? Rorvik describes how he was contacted by a multimillionaire bachelor (called "Max" to protect his identity) who wanted himself cloned. Rorvik purports to have found a willing and able scientist ("Darwin") who secretly organizes a research team in an isolated hospital in a uniden-

tified far-away land, and succeeds in replacing the genetic material from a human egg with a complete set of Max's genes. Then he implants the now fertile egg in the womb of a surrogate mother ("Sparrow") who subsequently delivers a healthy boy—the son and identical twin of Max. Max and Sparrow fall in love, and the new "family" presumably lives happily ever after.

The story strains at credibility. I question that a scientist of the purported ability of "Darwin" would give up a normal research career, even risk finding future employment, simply for money. The possibility of being the first to clone a human, or the first to clone any mammal for that matter, would be an allurements to many scientists, *if*—and this is one of the snags in Rorvik's story—*if* the results could be published openly in a reputable scientific journal. Being recognized by peers, being known as the "first," being honored for advancing the frontiers of science—these are the major motives of scientists. Not money.

I also question that a project of this magnitude could be accomplished, as Rorvik claims, in two short years. Two years—to set up the complete laboratory complex, to hire and train the scientists and technicians, to carry out the experiments, to develop the right techniques,