



# Pet Cloning: Consumer Fraud

According to a 2003/2004 survey by the American Pet Products Manufacturing Association, 62 percent of American households include pets. Most people have strong bonds with their cats and/or dogs and, therefore, have difficulty coping with their companion animals' terminal illnesses or deaths. In fact, grief counseling for individuals who have experienced such a loss is becoming more common.

Pet cloning companies exploit such tender emotions and lead the public to believe that deceased pets can be 'resurrected' through new cloning technology.



According to one firm's website, "Veterinarians have also told us that gene banking can provide relief to clients facing the death of an exceptional pet. Because gene banking gives a pet owner the option to clone the animal later, it allows the client to focus on grieving the loss of the individual pet, without letting go of the exceptional genetics."

This means that pet cloning companies can profit from people who, in moments of grief, are probably confused—people who will at least pay hundreds of dollars to bank their animals' DNA, even if they later decide against investing tens of thousands of dollars to clone the animal. The bottom line: pet cloning companies are profiting each year from individuals who have been promised that dog cloning will soon be possible, yet not one dog has ever survived cloning. Further, they likely are not aware of the experimental nature of cat cloning and the animal suffering it inevitably involves.

## Appearance and Behavior

Most people assume that a cloned animal is virtually a 'carbon-copy.' However, animal cloning experiments have revealed otherwise. While a cloned animal is genetically identical to the original animal, there is no guarantee that the he or she will physically resemble the original animal. Despite one company's announcement of improved cloning technology resulting in two Bengal kittens who appear to look alike, it has yet to be proven that cloned animals who are mixed breeds or otherwise have non-uniform hair coat patterns will look like the original animal.

In addition, there is no assurance that an animal will share any other traits (such as behavior/personality) with the original animal, unless a certain behavior is breed-specific. Cloning scientists at Texas A&M University compared the behavior of cloned and naturally bred pigs and found that, "...the goal of using nuclear transfer to replicate animals to reproduce certain behavioral characteristics is an unrealistic expectation."

In another published paper, the authors from Texas A&M state, "This finding is contrary to the expectation that cloning can be used to reduce the size of groups involved in animal experimentation and to reproduce an animal, including a pet, with a homogenous set of desired traits."

It has not been indicated that the new chromatin transfer technique (See Animal Welfare Fact Sheet) improves physical or behaviorally similarities between cloned animals and their genetic counterparts. Even though at least one company claims to have a "money back guarantee" on animals, the result may be only disappointment and unwanted animals.

## Health

According to published scientific studies, the odds are strongly against a cloned animal being born healthy. Of those who survive, many suffer from unpredictable health problems which may not appear early in life. For instance, Dolly the sheep suffered an early onset of arthritis and at the young age of six years old, had to be euthanized after developing lung cancer.

One pet cloning company CEO states that 15 to 45 percent of cloned cats who are born alive will die within 30 days. While this has not been verified, it should be noted that the company has been careful to present their cloned kittens not at the time of 'birth,' but months later, implying caution born of experience.

Because the first cloned cat was born in 2001, no one knows the potential health problems that could arise, and companion animal veterinarians are likely unprepared and untrained in the specialized care required by genetically manipulated animals.

Currently, pet cloning is an unregulated industry, and no one outside of the labs knows the success rates and other details of the cat and dog experiments. The Roslin Institute, where Dolly was cloned, has posted a statement against pet cloning on its website. It states, "...the supposed benefit of cloning a pet is an illusion and the harm to the other animals involved would be real..."

To learn more or for references, please  
see the AAVS report  
*Pet Cloning: Separating Facts from Fluff.*  
Available at [www.NoPetCloning.org](http://www.NoPetCloning.org).



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