

Debra Swack - "My Perfect Child"

"My Perfect Child" explores the history of engineering the perfect child through genetics, cloning, reproductive technology and selective abortion and its origins in literature, psychology, anthropology, and child-rearing manuals. The work contains paraphrased quotes from "Designing Babies" by reproductive expert Roger Gosden. Swack argues that there are real concerns that improving the quality of our young could be dangerously close to Eugenics. The author of "Designing Babies" acknowledges this but argues that little room for abuse exists if these decisions lie within the realm of individual couples. The problem, as explained by Swack, is that when Reproductive Technology becomes more readily available there will be pressure to use it and those that don't (or who don't use it in the same way) may be discriminated against or perish. Additionally it may be very expensive so class divisions could develop between those who can afford to do it and those who can't. Then the ones who can't could be discriminated against, perish, or be eliminated. Cloning could destroy the meaning of family as we know it. Who will be the parent, child. What role will the clone/child play and what rights does the clone have?

[Debra Swack](#) is an artist who combines arts with technology and science. She has a B.A. in Art from SUNY@Binghamton and is also a Phi Theta Kappa in Computer Science. She is employed as a consultant for the SUNY@Buffalo Research Foundation where she does software testing, technical writing and software user training. She was born in Louisiana while her father composer Dr. Irwin Swack was teaching at LA Tech and conducting the Knoxville Symphony (his archives are in the Lincoln Center Performing Arts Library). Her work is mentioned in Xerox Parc's ["Art and Innovation"](#) and Stephen Wilson's ["Information Arts"](#) both published by MIT Press and is also included in the [New Museum's Rhizome ArtBase](#) collection of historically significant new media.

To view Swack's web-site, please visit

<http://users.rcn.com/speak/dswack/default.htm>

To view more on Swack's work, please visit

http://www.banffcentre.ca/bnmi/coproduction/2005/95_chimes.asp

<http://rhizome.org/member.php?1040643>

http://nyartsmagazine.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=931&Itemid=220

<http://www.asci.org/druck540.html>