BUYERS BEWARE:
PET CLONING IS NOT FOR PET LOVERS

Executive Summary

The cloning of cats and dogs, particularly for pets, has drawn global media attention, but the serious animal suffering and disreputable activities that can go on behind the scenes of the cloning industry have largely been overlooked. A newly released report by the American Anti-Vivisection Society (AAVS) and The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) investigates and exposes an industry fraught with questionable science and consumer deception, drawing much-needed attention to the animals and people who are being exploited for profit.

The report, "Buyers Beware: Pet Cloning is Not for Pet Lovers," highlights several major problems with the pet cloning industry.

Animal welfare: The cloning process, still experimental, subjects hundreds of dogs and cats to painful and invasive procedures and produces abnormal animals who typically fail to survive birth. This hidden toll on animal life is rarely mentioned by cloning companies when advertising their services. According to published reports of cloning studies, however, a total of 3,656 cloned embryos, more than 319 egg "donors," and 214 surrogate mothers have been used to produce just five cloned dogs and 11 cloned cats who were able to survive 30 days past birth. (See attached document for additional animal welfare concerns).

Deception: There are cloning companies try to capitalize on people's grief over losing a companion animal, charging exorbitant fees for gene banking and cloning as ways to "resurrect" their beloved pets. However, these companies offer no proof that pet cloning is viable or that a cloned animal will resemble the original animal either physically or behaviorally. In South Korea, the latest hotspot of cloning activity, cloning researchers there have been prosecuted by their government for fraudulent activities and suspended from research.

Public disapproval: According to several national surveys, an overwhelming 80 percent of Americans believe it is unacceptable to clone dogs, cats, and other companion animals. There are companies that prey on people's attachment to their companion animals to create demand for pet cloning, but the public does not support it.

Regulatory oversight: In the US, the pet cloning industry is not regulated like other research facilities that conduct experiments on animals. U.S. researchers and companies who clone cats and dogs for pets should be following the minimum standards of humane treatment and care for animals as outlined in the Animal Welfare Act, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture does not require them to do so. In South Korea, it is unclear how the pet cloning industry is regulated, if at all. If cloning experiments are performed in a university lab, researchers must abide by the university's laboratory guidelines, which have no force of law. In addition, it is not possible to know how many cats and dogs are used and what happens to them during cloning experiments, except for what little gets reported in the scientific literature.

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The report also chronicles the activities of the few companies and universities that have tried to make a business of cloning cats and dogs. The technology is experimental and frequently fails, but these companies tend to exaggerate its potential while exploiting cats and dogs and devoted pet lovers.

Genetic Savings & Clone, Inc.: Genetic Savings & Clone, Inc. (GSC) was started in 1999 by John Sperling, a billionaire who wanted to clone his dog, Missy. GSC charged clients $295-$1,395 for gene banking and $50,000 to clone a cat, even though the only cat the company had cloned so far, CC, has a different physical appearance and personality from her genetic 'donor.' In 2004, GSC offered to accept six 'orders' for cloned cats, but was able to obtain only five, and delivered only two. One, Little Nicky, was never confirmed through DNA testing to be a clone and it has been reported that he looks and behaves differently than the genetic donor. GSC failed to ever clone a dog, though it did have a "National Breeders Network" through which dog breeders could ship dogs, who they otherwise could not sell, to the company's lab and rent them out as surrogates to give birth to cloned puppies.

AAVS launched its No Pet Cloning campaign in 2004 to educate the public about the animal welfare and consumer fraud problems associated with pet cloning, and in 2006, GSC closed its doors because it could not turn pet cloning into a viable business.

Seoul National University: Researchers at Seoul National University (SNU) have become the main players in pet cloning experiments, even though they originally justified their work as having applications to veterinary medicine, human biomedical research, and/or the conservation of rare animals. In 2005, Woo-Suk Hwang and Byeong Chung Lee led the team that produced the first cloned dog, an Afghan hound named Snuppy. It was later revealed that Hwang had committed fraud related to his human embryonic cloning research and Lee was suspended from his job for his role in the scandal. DNA analysis did reveal that Snuppy was a genetic clone, however. Lee has continued his cloning research, producing two wolves in another study that was investigated for validity, and conducting several dog cloning experiments that provide further evidence of the failures and abnormalities caused by cloning. In 2008, Hwang announced that he was seeking foreign investment for a new pet cloning business.

Sunchon National University: Researchers at Sunchon National University have conducted several experiments on cat cloning. As with other cloning studies, the researchers found that cloned cats were not identical to their genetic 'donors,' and very few cloned cats were born successfully.

RNL Bio, Co., Ltd.: In January 2008, RNL Bio, Co., Ltd. (RNL Bio) announced a partnership with SNU's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital to open a new center to commercialize animal cloning. In February 2008, RNL Bio announced that it had received its first order, agreeing to clone a deceased pit bull dog named Booger for a California resident for $150,000. Despite admitting that the cloned dog would not act exactly like Booger, the company promoted its services as being able to provide people with "the same dog for their whole lives." The company's pet cloning activities are reportedly on hold due to a patent dispute.

Start Licensing: Start Licensing is a joint venture between U.S.-based Geron Corporation and Exeter Life Sciences, Inc. (a holding company of John Sperling). It has claimed that it controls Korean patents on animal cloning techniques, and SNU and RNL Bio are not licensed under them. It has threatened to take legal action, but has not yet done so. In May 2008, however, Start Licensing granted exclusive On May 21, 2008, Start Licensing granted a sole license with exclusive rights to clone dogs and cats to BioArts International, Ltd.

BioArts International, Ltd.: When GSC closed, it was reorganized under the BioArts International, Ltd. title. In May 2008, BioArts announced that, in conjunction with disgraced scientist Woo-Suk Hwang and the Sooam Biotech Research Foundation in South Korea, it had cloned three dogs using Missy's DNA. For BioArts' "Best Friends Again" project, Lou Hawthorne says it plans to offer dog cloning to the public through an online auction with bids starting at $100,000. In doing so, Hawthorne and Hwang are again misleading people into believing that cloning will bring back a lost pet and are hiding the animal suffering involved in chasing such false hopes.

As the investigation by AAVS and the HSUS shows, dog and cat cloning is fraught with animal suffering and false promises. Numerous cats and dogs are subjected to terrible suffering, with more than 99 percent of cloning attempts failing, even though a cloned animal is unlikely to resemble the original animal. There is no replacing a beloved companion, yet a few people nonetheless continue to engage in these disreputable activities to try to take advantage of grieving owners and turn a profit. Buyers should beware and the public should continue to steer clear of this bizarre and inappropriate use of science.

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The American Anti-Vivisection Society *is the oldest animal advocacy and educational organization in the United States dedicated to ending experiments on animals in research, testing, and education. Founded in Philadelphia in 1883, AAVS pursues its objectives through legal and effective advocacy, education, and support of the development of non-animal alternative methods. — On the web at www.aavs.org and www.NoPetCloning.org.*

The Humane Society of the United States *is the nation's largest animal protection organization — backed by 10.5 million Americans, or one of every 30. For more than a half-century, The HSUS has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty — On the web at humanesociety.org.*

Pet Cloning: Animal Welfare Concerns

Animal welfare is significantly compromised by the cloning process, yet the public is largely unaware of the animal exploitation involved with cloning dogs and cats. These animal welfare concerns, listed below, make it clear that cloning is not like normal reproduction, and people who love cats and dogs should continue to reject pet cloning.

- **A tremendous number of animals are used to produce each clone.** Because 99 percent of cloning attempts fail to produce a healthy cloned animal, thousands of embryos and hundreds of egg 'donors' and surrogate mothers are used in cloning ventures.

- **Cloning involves invasive and painful procedures.** The egg 'donors' and/or surrogate mothers are subjected to painful hormone treatments to manipulate their reproductive cycles. These animals are also subjected to invasive surgery to harvest eggs or implant embryos, and the surrogate mothers endure an additional surgery to deliver the baby.

- **Few cloned animals are born healthy.** Cloned animals rarely survive birth. Of the few who are born alive, many suffer health problems and die soon thereafter. One pet cloning company CEO has stated that 15-45 percent of cloned cats who are born alive will die within 30 days.

- **The long-term health of cloned animals is unknown.** No cloned cat or dog has lived a full lifespan, so the health problems and veterinary needs they may experience later in life are completely unknown.

- **Animals are kept in research environments.** The "donor" and surrogate mother cats and dogs used in attempts to clone a pet are typically kept in small, sterile cages.

- **There is little to no oversight of cloning activities.** In the US, the pet cloning industry is not regulated like other research facilities that conduct experiments on animals. U.S. researchers and companies who clone cats and dogs for pets should be following the minimum standards of humane treatment and care for animals as outlined in the Animal Welfare Act, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture does not require them to do so. In addition, there is no way to know how many animals are used in cloning efforts beyond the published studies, or what they must endure as a result of the experiments.

- **Animal life is devalued.** Despite the high price to clone an animal, the animals involved in the cloning process are treated more as objects. Egg 'donors' and surrogate mothers are 'production units,' and it is unclear what happens to cloned animals who fail to meet expectations.

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