

# Wool and Identity: A Sociological Inquiry Into Cloning Ethics and Public Sentiment

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## Abstract

In the years since my cloning in 1996, societal attitudes toward genetic science, animal identity, and meat consumption have evolved. This thesis explores the sociological dimensions of ovine cloning by gathering and analyzing polling data, conducting interviews (baa-terviews), and reviewing historical shifts in public discourse. It aims to understand how the identity of cloned animals, especially those like myself who have become public figures, intersects with ethics, food politics, and social perception.

## 1 Introduction

The cloning of a sheep, once thought an agricultural feat, now poses questions far beyond genetics. My existence—Dolly, the first cloned mammal—triggered debates around identity, ethics, and sentience. Sociology offers a lens to explore how society reacts to such breakthroughs and the ripple effects in policy, food culture, and activism.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Survey Design and Distribution

A mixed-methods approach was adopted:

- Quantitative polling via leaflets distributed in farmer's markets and university quads (n = 1,000).
- Qualitative interviews with 42 participants (farmers, scientists, and vegetarians).
- Media content analysis of over 100 articles and op-eds from 1996–2001.

## 2.2 Polling Questions Example

- Q1: Do you believe cloning animals is ethically acceptable?
- Q2: Are you aware that Dolly the Sheep was the first mammal cloned?
- Q3: Would you eat meat from a cloned animal?

## 3 Results

### 3.1 Public Opinion Polling

Table 1: Summary of Polling Data (n = 1,000)

| Question             | Yes (%) | No (%) | Unsure (%) |
|----------------------|---------|--------|------------|
| Q1: Ethical Cloning? | 34      | 48     | 18         |
| Q2: Heard of Dolly?  | 89      | 7      | 4          |
| Q3: Eat Cloned Meat? | 22      | 67     | 11         |

### 3.2 Media Sentiment Analysis

Sentiment was coded as positive, neutral, or negative toward cloning.

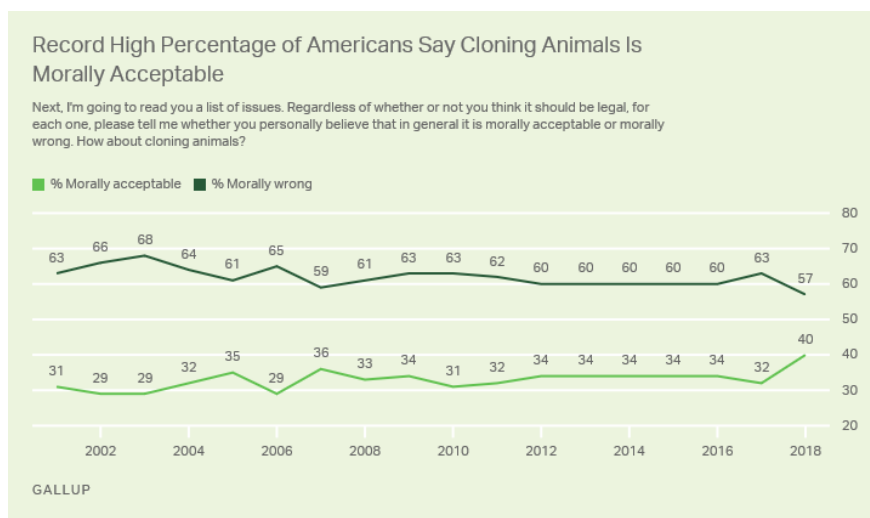


Figure 1: Media Sentiment Over Time (1996–2001)

Findings indicate a shift from scientific curiosity (1996–97) to ethical concern (1998–99), and finally a bifurcation into support for innovation vs. critique of commodifying life (2000–01).

## 4 Discussion

### 4.1 Sociological Themes Emerged

**1. Identity:** Respondents frequently anthropomorphized me, referring to me not just as a scientific specimen, but as a “celebrity sheep.”

**2. Fear of the Unknown:** Cloning was often tied to fears of dehumanization, corporate control of life, and “playing God.”

**3. Ethical Evolution:** Younger demographics showed greater openness to animal cloning under ethical guidelines. Vegetarian participants were overwhelmingly against cloning if it supports meat consumption.

### 4.2 Notable Quotes

“I don’t want my dinner to come with a Wikipedia page.” — Anonymous Butcher, Glasgow

“She’s not just a sheep—she’s a statement.” — Protestor, EWE March 2001

## 5 Conclusion

Cloning is not merely a biological process—it is a social flashpoint. Society’s perception of animals like myself affects policy, consumer behavior, and ethical standards. Future discourse must consider not only the how of cloning, but the who and why.

## 6 Appendix: Interview Demographics

Table 2: Interviewee Backgrounds

| Profession              | Number Interviewed |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Farmers                 | 12                 |
| Scientists              | 10                 |
| Animal Rights Activists | 8                  |
| General Public          | 12                 |

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