

## Neanderthal cloning: Morally wrong and scientifically challenging

*The following is a summary.*

Over at the *Knight Science Journalism Tracker*, Paul Raeburn takes a look at the role of science blogging in debunking the Neanderthal cloning controversy that swept through news outlets last week like a firestorm. Raeburn admits he thinks the idea is fascinating, “and, I hurry to add, ethically indefensible and utterly wrong. I would like to meet one. And I suspect there is a lot we could learn from a few Neanderthals. Even as I’m typing, however, I find the idea repugnant.”

Not only would it be morally wrong, he says, but would also likely be scientifically useless because of genetic imprinting. Fathers and mothers have characteristic way of packaging the genes they pass on to their children, which effects how the genes are expressed. “If there is an error in the imprinting, as sometimes happens, children can be born with severe ailments, such as Angelman or Prader-Willi syndromes. If researchers attempted to clone a Neanderthal without adding the appropriate imprinting, could we see the birth of Neanderthals who are all afflicted with severe disorders of imprinting?”

There are no clear windows to the past, it seems.

**Read the full post here: [On Science Blogs: Cloning a Neanderthal? It’s not for everyone.](#)**