

Futurology -- Is It Shocking Or Useful?

By KATHY MORAN

If you are a woman and hope to be around in the next 10 to 15 years, now is the time to begin contemplating your values and alerting yourself to some of the decisions which may confront you or your daughter.

For instance, how would you feel about looking through a "human seed catalog" and selecting your child, its hair and eye color and level of intelligence?

Or what about selecting your child from a "super market" of frozen embryos and then having it placed in an artificial environment where you could watch it grow from embryo to fetus to a child ready for "birth"? These questions may seem straight out of science fiction

of Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World." But it wasn't long ago that people laughed at the thought of sending a man to the moon or driving in a horseless carriage. And by not listening to warnings several years ago, man is now forced to cope with an energy shortage.

In fact, extensive research into the field of genetics may make "genetic engineering" a very real part of life in the near future. And with these possibilities confronting us, now is the time to determine just how the scientific advances should be used.

This was the message of the second program on "futurology" presented at Schoolcraft College by Sister Margaret Basso and Jody Kaltz of the Newman Center staff.

They presented a four-film program on various aspects of medical research and followed them by discussion of the resulting impact on the future of each person alive today and those yet to be born.

In all, more than 600 community residents and students viewed the films from the series "Toward the Year 2000" which were shown continuously for three days.

Their intention isn't too shock — only to alert persons to what may be awaiting them in the immediate future, said Sister Margaret and Miss Kaltz.

They added they are trying to "combat the idea that what happens in the future is inevitable." Instead they want to convince people that

they can determine their own futures if they educate themselves today.

Also, there's the matter of alerting people to the grave consequences of not becoming involved in the decision-making process. "The decisions will be made — it's up to the public to get a voice in them," Sister Margaret said.

The field of genetic research — the study of genes which determine hereditary characteristics — is just one which was covered in the program, but it pointed out positive and negative possibilities in the future.

"This kind of research makes possible a whole spectrum of things — some desirable and some not desirable," Miss Kaltz said, cau-

tioning that it puts scientists in a "God-like" role in determining life.

In the film "Genetics: Man the Creator," noted geneticists Dr. Kurt Hirschorn and Dr. Robert Francoeur elaborate on the desirable and not — so — desirable aspects of the study.

They hypothesize that the sperm and eggs of great men and women may be frozen and used in the years to come to produce children of the same caliber as their "parents."

And they speculate that a woman may be able to have a child after being fertilized by the sperm of her favorite actor or political figure.

Incredible though it sounds, science has discovered ways of preserving sperm and these sperm

banks could be the first steps toward selective breeding.

It might enable man to regrow certain limbs, like a salamander, by learning how to "turn on" certain genes, according to the scientists.

Scientists might also be able to prevent genetic defects and therefore retardation, mongolism, hemophilia, dwarfism and the endless list of genetic defects which are said to affect one in 18 children.

But with that comes the question of what will a mother do if her unborn child is tested and found to have genetic defects? She'll be faced with the decision whether or not to have the child.

Or will she have that decision?

It may be that people will carry their genetic map with them just as they carry their driver's license and be warned against marrying a person with a similar map which could result in "defective" children.

A potential shocker depicted is a scientific process called "cloning" which means removing the nucleus of one cell and replacing it with the nucleus of another.

Scientists have already successfully completed this process with frogs and say it may be possible with humans by the year 2000.

It's frightening, said Sister Margaret, because it means carbon copy human beings could be turned out.

"That might mean an efficient army or factory crew," she said, "but I cannot see anything good that could come of it."

"Even if we were to reproduce Einstein, how could we be sure their intellect would be right for our time?"

The real question is who will hold the decisive power if these strides are made, the film suggested.

Who will determine whose sperm and eggs will be preserved?

Who will decide which parents can reproduce themselves and which should select their child?

The decisions will rest with those who become involved, said Sister Margaret and Miss Kaltz.

Their purpose is studying futurology is to make citizens aware of the strides being made in every field of science and technology and the need for control and a voice from the public.

The next three-day program will be in March and cover the areas of computers and cybernetics. Several futurology films will be shown and followed by discussions.

Those interested in the subject can contact the Newman House.

If the meantime, start thinking ahead toward your future.

At EMU

Livonians Present India

Livonians Lynn and Stan Golonka will join their fellow travelers to India in presenting an educators' view of that country at Eastern Michigan University Saturday.

Mrs. Golonka, who teaches at Thurston High School in Redford Township, and her husband, a teacher in the Taylor School District, are contributing a picture-filled book on the tour to the presentation for teachers beginning at 9:30 a.m. in Pierce Hall on the EMU campus.

Several dozen educators who joined in a two-month EMU-sponsored tour of India will participate in showing to other teachers various aspects of the still little-known land.

Among them are Marcella Esser, Hugh Schulkins and Sophie Gerrish of Farmington.

Purpose of the program, Mrs. Golonka said, is to help teachers develop "innovative ways to extend the culture of India into the classroom."

For their part of the presentation, the Golonkas will have a book of some 150 to 200 pictures they took during their travels.

The booklet, printed on the South Redford School District presses, is titled "Namaste," which translates "Welcome to India."

"We took over 500 pictures, trying to show a whole view of the country," Mrs. Golonka said.

The tour, which ran from June 23 to Aug. 23, was all India except for a stop in Rome on the way there. The Golonkas also visited London after the official tour was completed.

Everyone who went was involved in some kind of education work. "We had teachers of all levels from elementary to college, and representing a large number of school districts," Mrs. Golonka said.

What stood out in the minds of the Livonians was the poverty to be seen on every hand.

"It was a shocking thing to get off the big plane after we landed in Bombay and then for miles on the bus to see people sleeping on the streets," the Redford teacher added.

"It was a depressing sight," she said, "and it was the kind that kept hitting us. It's part of India, but not all of India. The country is one of such great contradictions."

For Lynn Golonka, the most pleasant part of the tour was the stay on a houseboat in the Kashmir.

It was quite a thing, she reported, to have the services of a cook and other servants who came with the houseboat, and to be able to buy necessities and luxuries from the assortment of merchants who came by in their own water taxis.

But even the stay on Lake Dal had its face of tragedy, she said.

"The area was caught in the monsoons, and when the floods came, many did not get out," she said. "We were able to leave because we had plane reservations—I don't know how many were trapped."



STAN AND LYNN GOLONKA of Livonia show some of the souvenirs of the summer study tour of India they took under auspices of Eastern Michigan University. They will join in a presentation on the EMU campus Saturday. (Observer photo by Bob Woodring)



A FAMILY-PLANNING SLOGAN and the sacred cow — two sights common in India — are the subjects of one of several hundred pictures Lynn Golonka snapped while traveling. It's included in a booklet she prepared on the trip.

AAUW Slates Annual Auction

The Livonia branch of the American Assn. of University Women will hold its third annual "Make-It, Bake-It, Grow-It, Sew-It" auction on Tuesday, Nov. 20, at 8 p.m. in St. Paul Presbyterian Church, 2545 Five Mile, Livonia.

The Livonia members have donated baked goods, hanging plants, pine cone wreaths and decoupage articles for the auction. All proceeds will go into the fellowship fund.

Virginia Farmer, fellowship chairman of the Livonia branch, said the AAUW has 70 fellowships for women in the last year of their doctoral program. Applications are available from the AAUW Fellowship Office, 2401 Virginia Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

m. m. memos

Our family gained its fourth official adult a few weeks back.

The event didn't cause a great stir at the time. I guess that's because we had to delay celebration of the 18th birthday until after a vacation trip we were planning, and anyway I've been considering our college freshman pretty adult for some time.

But it turned out to be quite a birthday.

First, her school friends paid proper attention to her coming of age, and the pictures they took of the party in the school newspaper office made a good picture page for the next issue.

And then she went grocery shopping the week her parents were out of town. Since she could do so legally for the first time, she bought a couple of lottery tickets. You guessed it, she came out \$25 richer.

The family was much impressed and quick to put in orders for using the million she would be winning.

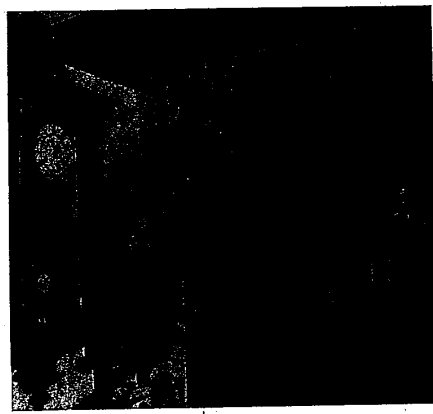
Mother and Dad wanted a house in Florida, ninth grade and seventh grade sisters wanted a college education and a horse, respectively, and our university sophomore was ready to settle for a couple of John Denver records.

But our new adult has decided that maybe her best 18th birthday present is an "ish." She gets to be home midnightish instead of at the stroke of 12.

They grow up faster all the time, but I've decided this kid knows the right way to hit 18.

—Margaret Miller

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